

Literary Exercise:

- a) Read the two versions of the poem
- b) Which one did you enjoy reading more? Provide evidence from the poem that compares them.
- c) Do you know this poet? How would knowing the poet affect your "reading" of it?

*William Butler Yeats (Irish) 1865-1939*

The Sorrow of Love

(first printed version, 1892)

- I. The quarrel of the sparrows in the eaves,  
The full round moon and the star-laden sky,  
And the loud song of the eversinging leaves,  
Had hid away earth's old and weary cry.
- II. And then you came with those red mournful lips,  
And with you came the whole of the world's tears,  
And all the sorrows of her labouring ships  
And all the burden of her myriad years.
- III. And now the sparrows warring in the eaves,  
The crumbling moon, the white stars in the sky,  
And the loud haunting of the unquiet leaves,  
Are shaken with earth's old and weary cry.

The Sorrow of Love

(final version, 1925)

- I. The brawling of a sparrow in the eaves,  
The brilliant moon and all the milky sky,  
And all that famous harmony of leaves,  
Had blotted out man's image and his cry.
- II. A girl arose that had red mournful lips  
And seemed the greatness of the world in tears,  
Doomed like Odysseus and the labouring ships  
And proud as Priam murdered with his peers;
- III. Arose, and on the instant clamorous eaves,  
A climbing moon upon an empty sky,  
And all that lamentation of the leaves,  
Could but compose man's image and his cry.