William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)

       THE SECOND COMING

    Turning and turning in the widening gyre
    The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
    Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
    Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
    The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
    The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
    The best lack all conviction, while the worst
    Are full of passionate intensity.

    Surely some revelation is at hand;
    Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
    The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
    When a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi
    Troubles my sight: a waste of desert sand;
    A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
    A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
    Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
    Wind shadows of the indignant desert birds.

    The darkness drops again but now I know
    That twenty centuries of stony sleep
    Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
    And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
    Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?