  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?