A coastal landscape with waves crashing on a beach under a cloudy sky. The sky is filled with soft, grey and white clouds, and the sun is visible in the upper left corner, creating a bright glow. The waves are dark blue and white, crashing onto a sandy beach. In the distance, there are low hills or mountains.

## JANUARY

The slow grey waves are washing the edge of the sea.  
The beach stones whisper their meeting and farewells.  
Yesterday's snow glows on the dark shell of the trees.  
Jewellery of night hangs softly on frost covered leaves.  
Beneath a curtain of clouds, the small town is asleep.

A line of light blurs the horizon with the coming dawn.  
The old year is closing as the new is about to be born.  
White birds are pinned to the sky like feathered arrows.  
The god of this month both opens and closes the door.  
Janus has two faces: one widens and the other narrows.









## FEBRUARY

These winter flowers,  
Crocuses, blue to the very sky,  
And snow drops,  
Clusters of white doves folding their wings,  
Gather themselves into silence,  
And bloom  
With tender petals  
On the hinge of spring.









## MARCH

March, you are a month of patience,  
setting our eyes to the rising sun,  
the old life is over, its forms and faces,  
but the new life has not yet begun.

Before the bud and the promise of leaf,  
in the waiting hour, the skeleton tree  
draws moisture from the soil beneath,  
and so must we draw strength inwardly.

About our feet the purple primrose  
rises to greet the sun's soft caress,  
the hawthorn blossom and tulip grows  
and so must we reach out to bless.







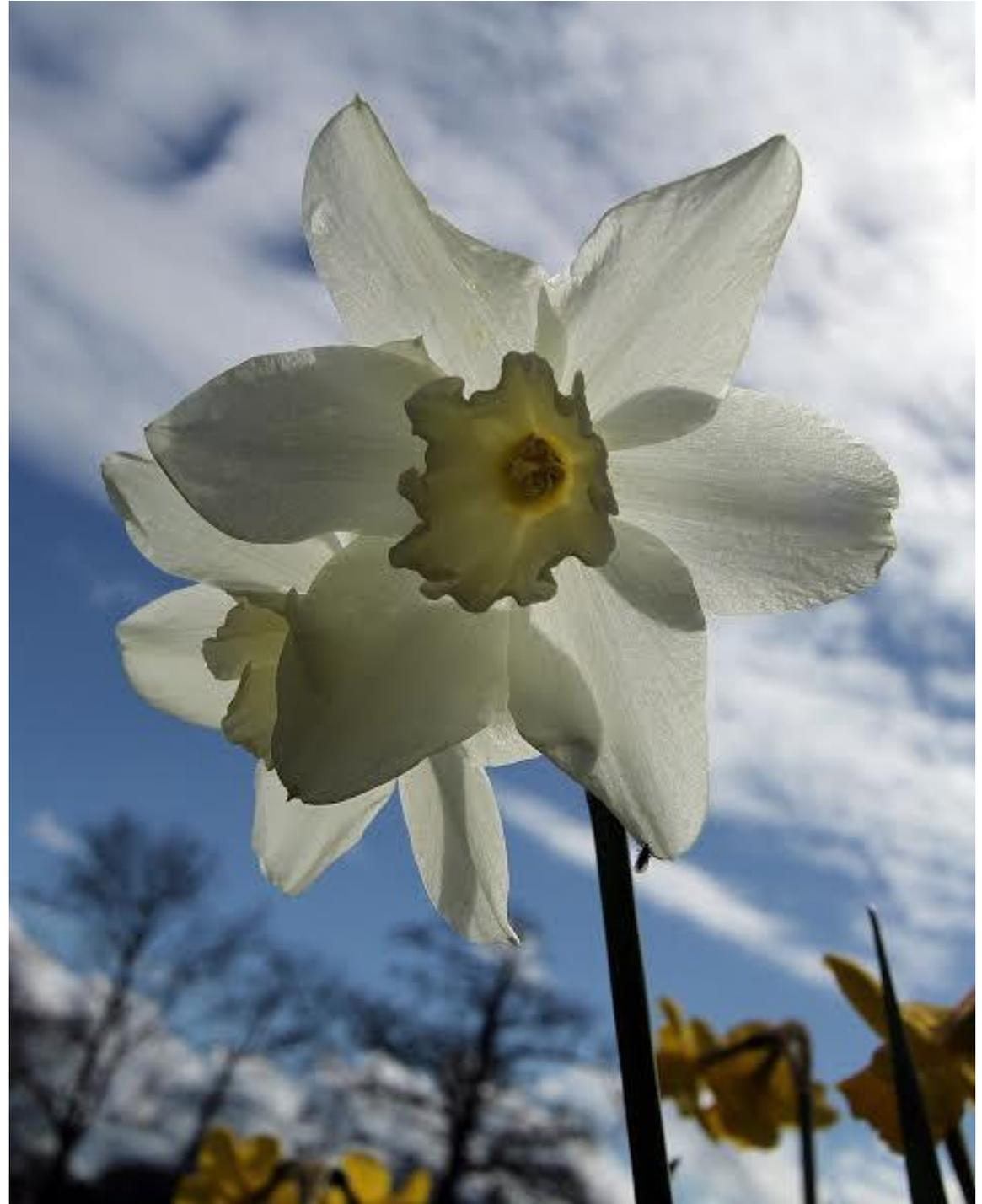


## APRIL

Christened by the sunlight,  
Baptised into the day,  
As into the first hour,  
The perfume of summer  
Like an opening flower  
Sets free the silver dreams  
That flicker in my mind.

This silence that echoes  
The calling of the sun,  
This teaching that deepens  
Bunches of daffodils  
Into concentrated gold,  
Are schools of learning,  
Centuries of wisdom distilled.









## (Dis)MAY

Having lost something I search.

What was it that I lost?

The earth springs new and lush,

Swell of wild garlic, new leaves

The trees wrapped tight in ivy.

But how the mind is fettered

With thought, caught, caged,

Cumbered with age and distraught.

On this path I walk overhung

By leaf in the teeth of the sky.

Cooped in a car like a cage,

The landscape framed

By a window, by a pane.

By a city staged. The lamplight

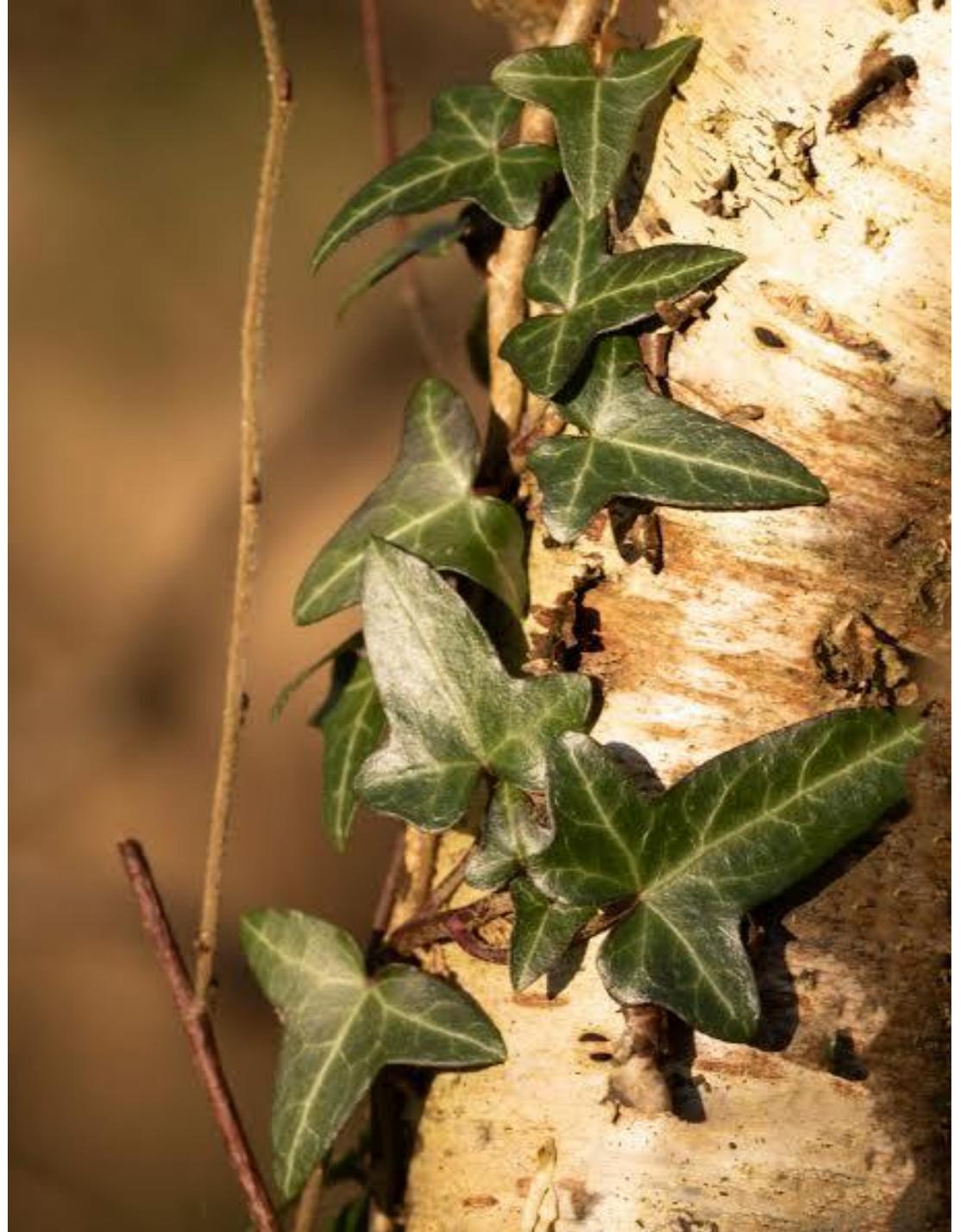
Frightens the night away.

What was it that I lost?

I think it was May.











## JUNE

The pigeons are amorous again,  
strutting their dance. This year  
summer came sudden and late  
but luxuriant after the long rain.  
Now the heat and wetness make  
double fuel for the fertile earth.  
Slow spring has gathered its pace  
and sweats its way into summer.  
The unblinking sun and the roses  
give to the sky and garden a face  
with blue eyes and a red mouth.  
Every sunset simmers and shines,  
a golden necklace dipped in wine.  
Every dawn is announced in song,  
a thousand birds singing along.  
For Juno is the goddess of youth  
when all seems easy and smooth.













## JULY

Love belongs to eternal things  
to soft mists at dawn  
when blue grey sleep  
touches the horizon  
with butterfly wings.

Love belongs to the rising sun  
when the warmth of day  
and coolness of night  
blush for a moment  
in silent delight.

Love belongs to the break of day  
where birds sing  
with heart and soul  
rabbits run to and fro  
and ravens go out on patrol.

Love belongs to the midday heat  
transfiguring nature  
with luminous light  
turning fields of wheat  
into immortal gold.

Love belongs to the cool of eve  
where lambs full grown  
go back to their fold  
and the mother sheep  
fall asleep on the grass.

Love belongs to the fading light  
where the pale moon rises  
like a fairy ghost  
and the stars appear  
like the heavenly host.

Love belongs to deepening dark  
where nothing is seen  
and the beat of your heart  
in a quiet dream  
is all that is heard.

Love belongs to eternal things  
for all this world  
in its magic and beauty  
is as soft to the touch  
as butterfly wings.











## August

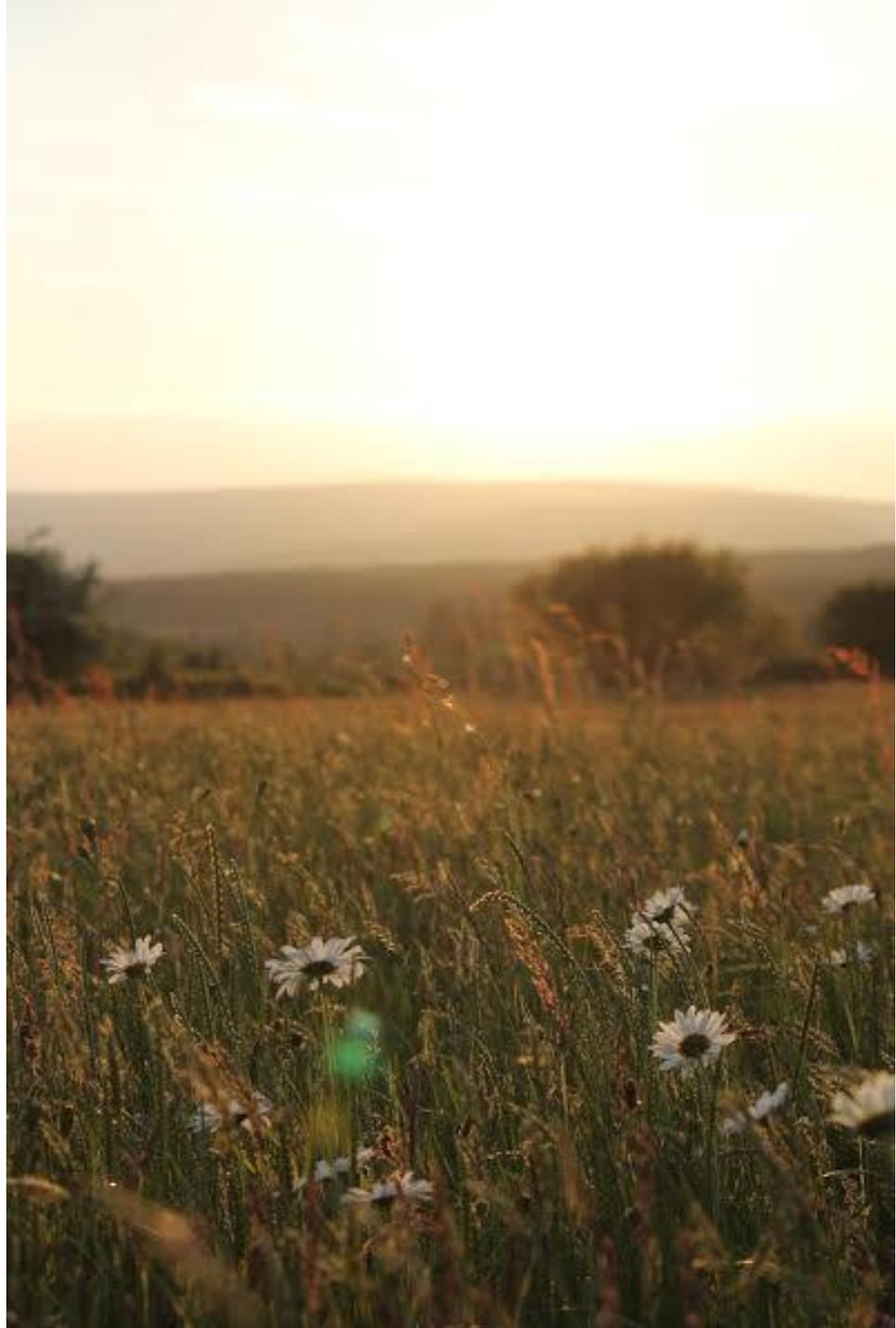
I walked this day's eve within a woodland glade  
that slanting sunrays blazed with furnace flare,  
when, of a sudden, a view like burnished gold  
opened at the end of the woodland path there.

No cloud-shade dimmed the great sea of wheat  
the evening hour had laid all level with the light,  
it billowed, blue stalked, as if some Midas hand  
had leafed through the full ocean as it swayed.

Beyond this, on the rising hill, a purple moorland,  
caught in the rose-like haze of the setting sun,  
framed by two dark trees that I stood among,  
glowed like the window of some cathedral old.

On this last day of the last month of summer  
I gazed, as through stained glass, onto another  
world, shimmering in gold, in purple and rose,  
and though August is past this light never goes.











## SEPTEMBER

If strangers ask when Ireland best is viewed  
I'd answer, When harvest is already done  
and wheat in bundles lies lazy in the sun.  
Then nature comes to claim what is unused  
and the fields are full of flowers many hued.

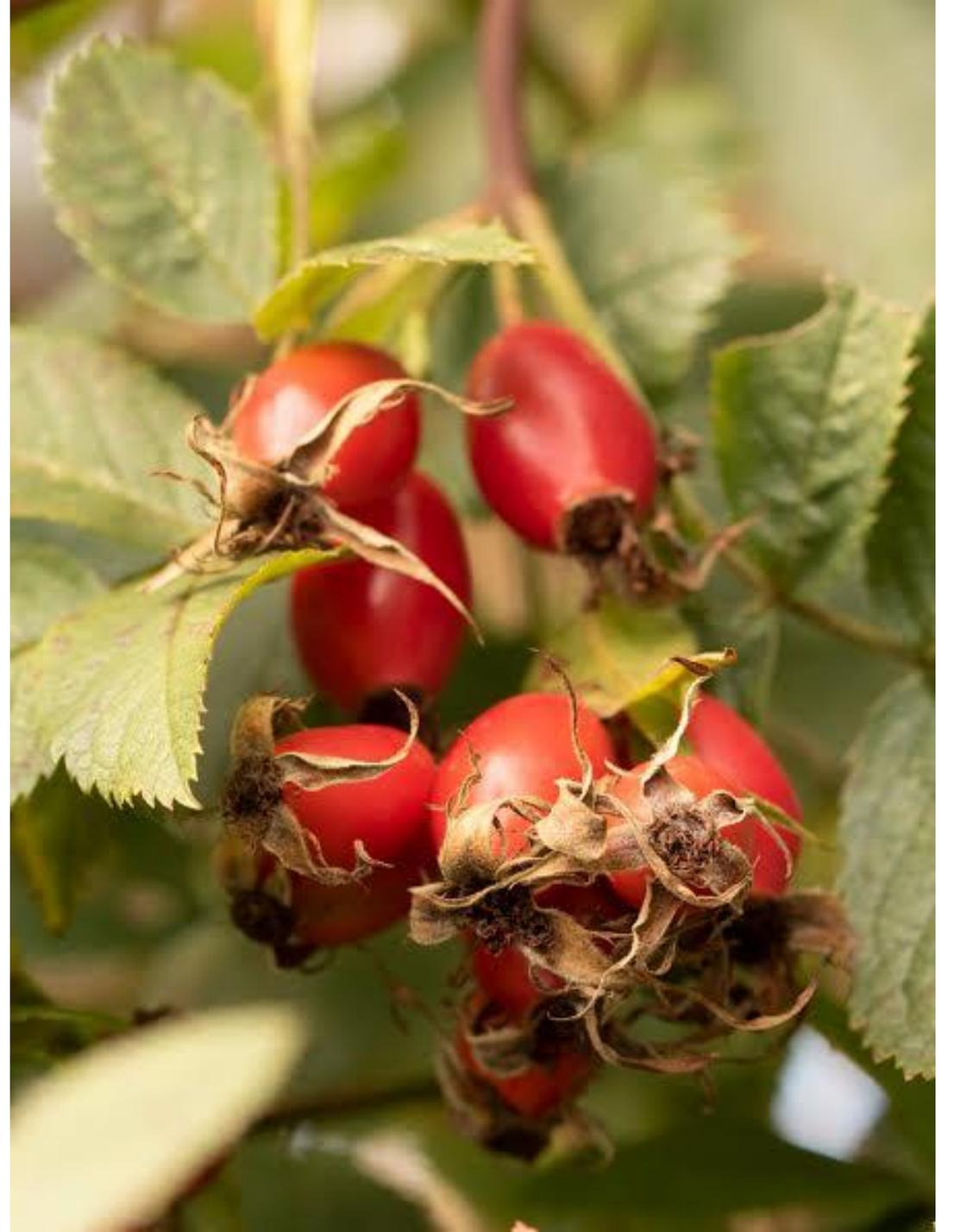
Then hedgerows their crimson garment wear  
of fuchsias dropping petals to the ground,  
and every bramble succulent is crowned  
with berries more forward than the thorn.  
For summer saves its richest blood till now.

But last I tell the white secret of the morn  
when woven silver marks the spider's trail  
over parsley wild, hares-foot and thistle tail.  
This late summer's lace, so beautifully worn  
by weeds, is, for the Gael, nature's Holy Grail.









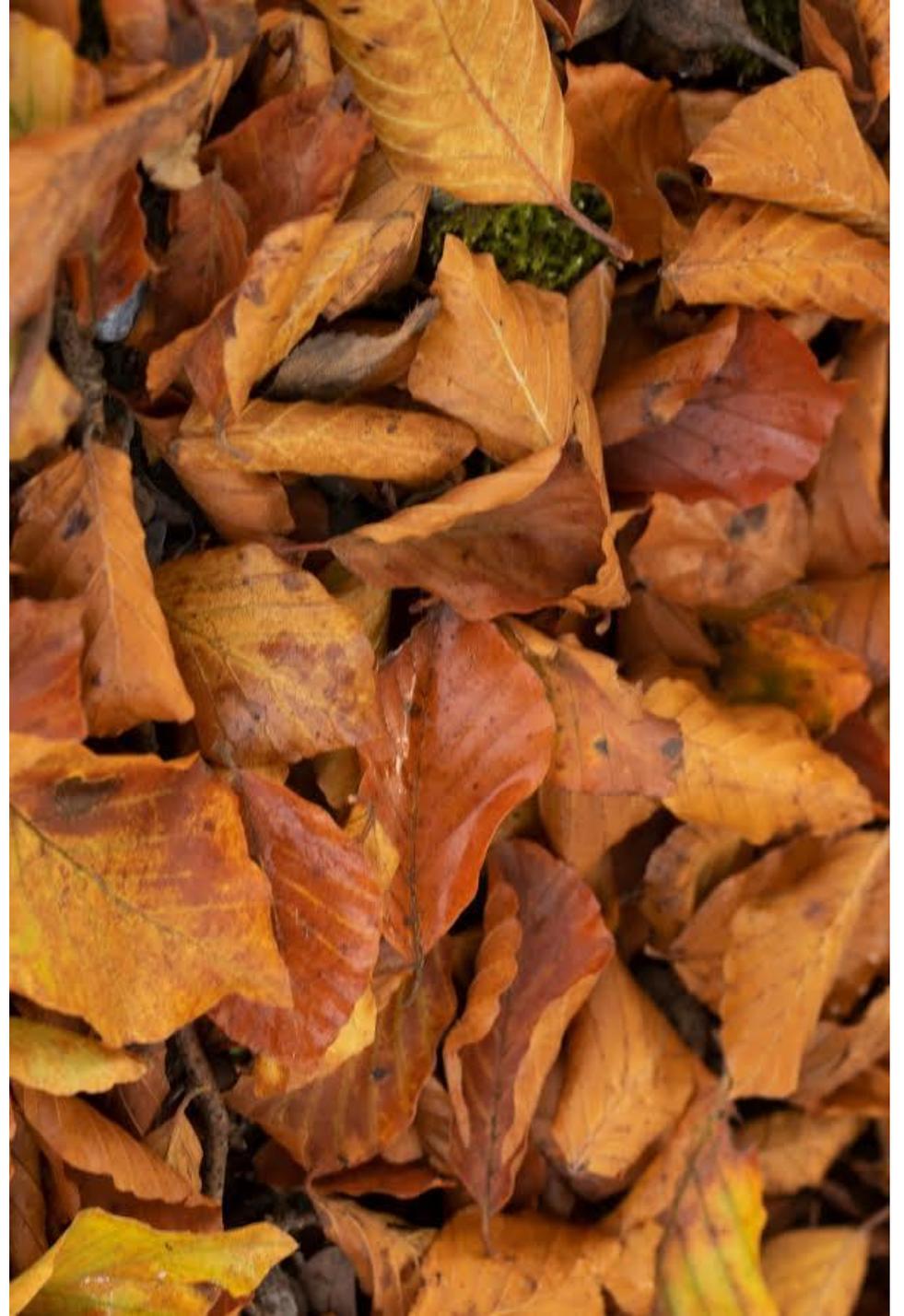


## October

The path I tread on is strewn with leaves yellow ochre, burnt umber, earth orange and the squirrel red of the copper beech. Hanging high up above my head, canopied in a dome, are golden branches of an oak with thin silver elms that rise like smoke.

Through a tunnel of auburn fire I hasten. All summer's splendour has been piled as for a final conflagration, crisp and dry, to flare up and glow just for a little while. A momentary beauty the senses indulge before the rain and frost turn all to mulch.

Then, of a sudden, all Autumn is set ablaze with the flare of a match: the slanting rays of the setting sun like tongues of flame run through the thatch and forest frame 'till everything is turned in a sudden flash into gold, and then is gone, and all is ash.













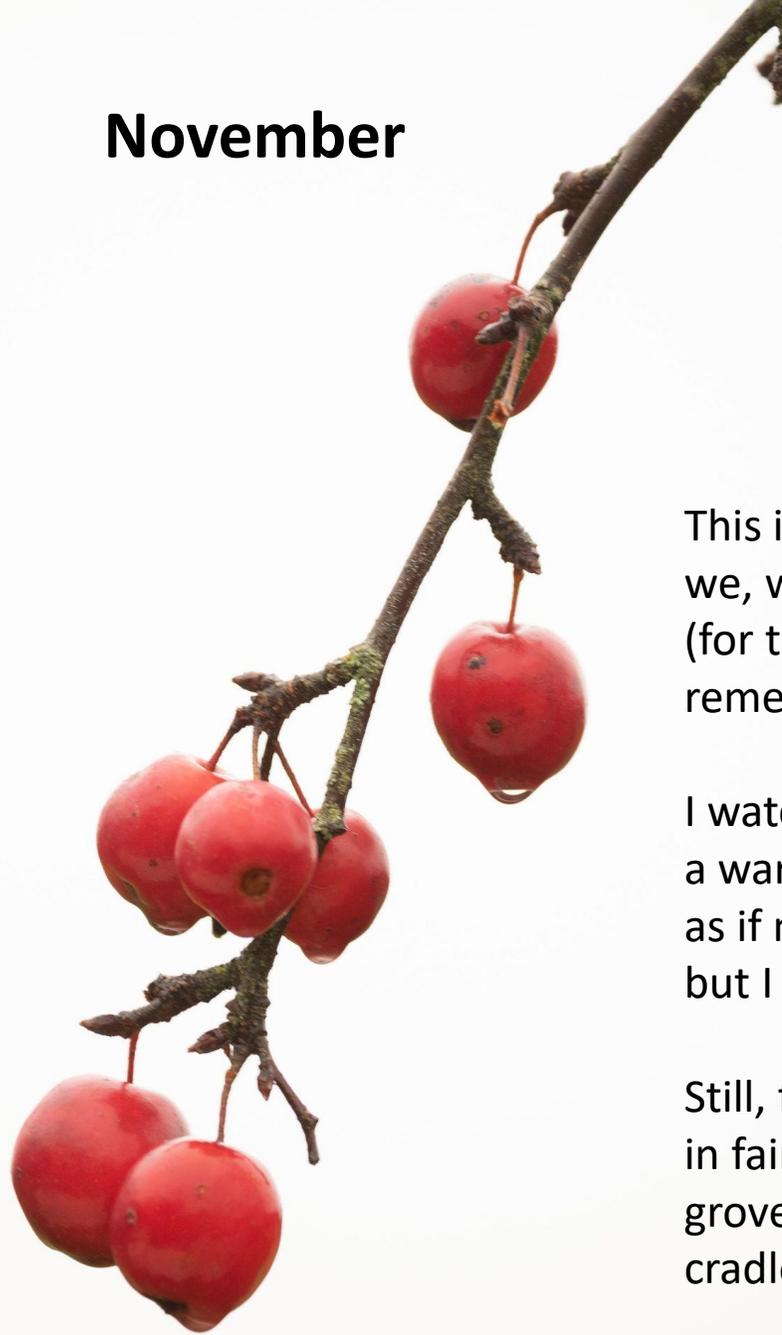


## November

Autumn is burning low - only the rosehips and the sloe give colour in the hedgerows. The crab apple tree still wears her clothes, so for tea, gin and jelly the gardener picks.

Days are shrinking - only last leaves linger like crumpled parchment of books unread, old libraries floating like smoke over-head, the branches beckon with a twisted finger.

Frost has stolen out and trapped the dew hiding in the shadow and made her bright. See, she rims around the leaves with light when sun rises or with the hunter's moon.



This is the month we remember our dead, we, who are living, who are still breathing, (for they may be living yet), those grieving remember those who have gone on ahead.

I watch through a window and as I breathe a warm mist throws a haze upon the pane as if my November were all abblur with rain but I wipe it off again quick with my sleeve.

Still, for one small moment, I could believe in fairy lands, ferns and forests, shadowed groves where the dead can sleep hallowed, cradled by the gossamers the fairies weave.









## December

This is the time of winter light - misty but bright, transparent with dew, like we're looking through a sheet of white all day long hung against the sky, so diffused one cannot say where shines the sun.

Nature is wearing her veil. The valley is shrouded, opaque, ice on the puddles and frost on the ferns. The last winter daisy raises her head but it burns to be out in the cold. The dense forest is clouded.

This is time also to fold our lives back leaf by leaf and go deep into ourselves, go back to our roots. The tree may be bare but the heart is still beating, the holly has its berry but it is not for the eating.

There is a sap that needs to grow heavy in winter and fall toward the earth, without bearing fruit. It is time to go inward and find shelter in the dark, to weather the blizzard before we open our heart.

