

# Immortal Autumn

By Archibald MacLeish

I speak this poem now with grave and level voice  
In praise of autumn, of the far-horn-winding fall.

I praise the flower-barren fields, the clouds, the tall  
Unanswering branches where the wind makes sullen noise.

I praise the fall: it is the human season.

Now

No more the foreign sun does meddle at our earth,  
Enforce the green and bring the fallow land to birth,  
Nor winter yet weigh all with silence the pine bough,

But now in autumn with the black and outcast crows  
Share we the spacious world: the whispering year is gone:  
There is more room to live now: the once secret dawn  
Comes late by daylight and the dark unguarded goes.

Between the mutinous brave burning of the leaves  
And winter's covering of our hearts with his deep snow  
We are alone: there are no evening birds: we know  
The naked moon: the tame stars circle at our eaves.

It is the human season. On this sterile air  
Do words outcarry breath: the sound goes on and on.  
I hear a dead man's cry from autumn long since gone.

I cry to you beyond upon this bitter air.

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Archibald MacLeish was born in Glencoe, Illinois, and attended Yale University where he was a member of the Skull and Bones secret society. After college, he enrolled at Harvard Law School, but he put his studies on hold to become first an ambulance driver and later a captain of artillery during

World War I. He graduated from Harvard in 1919. MacLeish's long and prestigious career includes several years practicing law, writing and editing for Fortune magazine, and a five-year stint as Librarian of Congress. He received numerous fellowships, grants, honorary degrees, and awards. He won three Pulitzer Prizes, including one for his verse drama, J.B.