

Sonnet 84: While one sere leaf, that parting Autumn yields

By Anna Seward

While one sere leaf, that parting Autumn yields,
Trembles upon the thin, and naked spray,
November, dragging on this sunless day,
Lours, cold and sullen, on the watery fields;
And Nature to the waste dominion yields,
Stripped her last robes, with gold and purple gay —
So droops my life, of your soft beams despoiled,
Youth, Health, and Hope, that long exulting smiled;
And the wild carols, and the bloomy hues
Of merry Spring-time, spruce on every plain
Her half-blown bushes, moist with sunny rain,
More pensive thoughts in my sunk heart infuse
Than Winter's grey, and desolate domain
Faded like my lost Youth, that no bright Spring renews.



Born in Derbyshire, British Romantic poet and novelist Anna Seward was the daughter of a clergyman and the only one of four children to reach adulthood. Her close friend, Honora Sneyd, was adopted into the family and served as the muse for many of Seward's poems. Seward is often referred to as the Swan of Lichfield, and many of her poems are concerned with romantic themes.