

William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)

9 *Crazy Jane and the Bishop*

Bring me to the blasted oak  
That I, midnight upon the stroke,  
(*All find safety in the tomb.*)  
May call down curses on his head  
Because of my dear Jack that's dead. 5  
Coxcomb was the least he said:  
*The solid man and the coxcomb.*

Nor was he Bishop when his ban  
Banished Jack the Journeyman,  
(*All find safety in the tomb.*) 10  
Nor so much as parish priest,  
Yet he, an old book in his fist,  
Cried that we lived like beast and beast:  
*The solid man and the coxcomb.*

The Bishop has a skin, God knows, 15  
Wrinkled like the foot of a goose,  
(*All find safety in the tomb.*)  
Nor can he hide in holy black  
The heron's hunch upon his back,  
But a birch-tree stood my Jack: 20  
*The solid man and the coxcomb.*

Jack had my virginity,  
And bids me to the oak, for he  
(*All find safety in the tomb.*)  
Wanders out into the night 25  
And there is shelter under it,  
But should that other come, I spit:  
*The solid man and the coxcomb.*

1929

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