## William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)

## 14 The Rose Tree

'O words are lightly spoken,'	
Said Pearse to Connolly,	
'Maybe a breath of politic words	
Has withered our Rose Tree;	
Or maybe but a wind that blows	5
Across the bitter sea.'	
'It needs to be but watered,'	
James Connolly replied,	
'To make the green come out again	
And spread on every side,	10
And shake the blossom from the bud	
To be the garden's pride.'	
'But where can we draw water,'	
Said Pearse to Connoliy,	
'When all the wells are parched away?	15
O plain as plain can be	
There's nothing but our own red blood	
Can make a right Rose Tree.'	
1921	

(From The Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats. 2nd. ed.

London: Macmillan, 1950)