

Now the leaves are falling fast

- Wystan Hugh Auden

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Section - Poetry

"Now the leaves are falling fast", a

beautiful lyric, has been written by W. H. Auden. Auden is one of the greatest vigorous poets of modern era. He is a famous dramatist, critic, translator and editor. He won the Pulitzer prize in 1948 for his The Age of Anxiety.

In this poem the poet talks about the frustration that are found in human life and the aspirations that are not fulfilled.

Now the leaves are falling fast in

Nurse's flowers will not last

Nurseries for the graves are gone

And the prams go rolling down

Through these lines, the poet says that man is moving very fast towards death. Nothing will last still our life will go on. The agent of death will pluck us from our real delight. It means that their life ended. It also shows that the life-cycle goes on like pram goes on rolling on. And again he says in second stanza:-

Dead in hundreds at the back

Follow wooden in our track,

The poet sees autumn as the arrival of old age and death of humans. One day, the messenger of death comes and takes us away from the world. According to him, death

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is sure. So everybody has to die. After death, all go to the grave. The poet also gives the example of wicked persons that disturb the gentlemen. They run after their food but at last get nothing to eat. He explains in fourth stanza:-

And the Nightingale is dumb,

And the angel will not come.

The nightingale becomes dumb. In the same way human beings become physically weak and inactive and get separated from the crowd of the people at the time of end of the last journey. But the poet shows an optimistic approval that when we come to end of our life we hear the melodies sound of waterfalls.

Cold, impossible, ahead

Lift the mountains lovely lead

Whose white waterfall could bless

Travellers in their last distress.

In the last stanza, the poet says that cold stretches, the head of the mountain is covered with snow. White water-fall is seen. All the things look like the travellers in the end of life. So the poet says that in the last stage of life, the old man feels loneliness. He becomes inactive and dies.

In short, this poem reveals the frustration and crisis in modern life. Last the poet clearly wants to say through this poem that everything or all sensitive organs are also fall down from the life of man as

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The leaves of trees fall down. It is universal truth. That no living beings are immortal, everything has to die. As it happens to the trees and plants. Thus we see that this poem is a blending of pessimism and optimism.