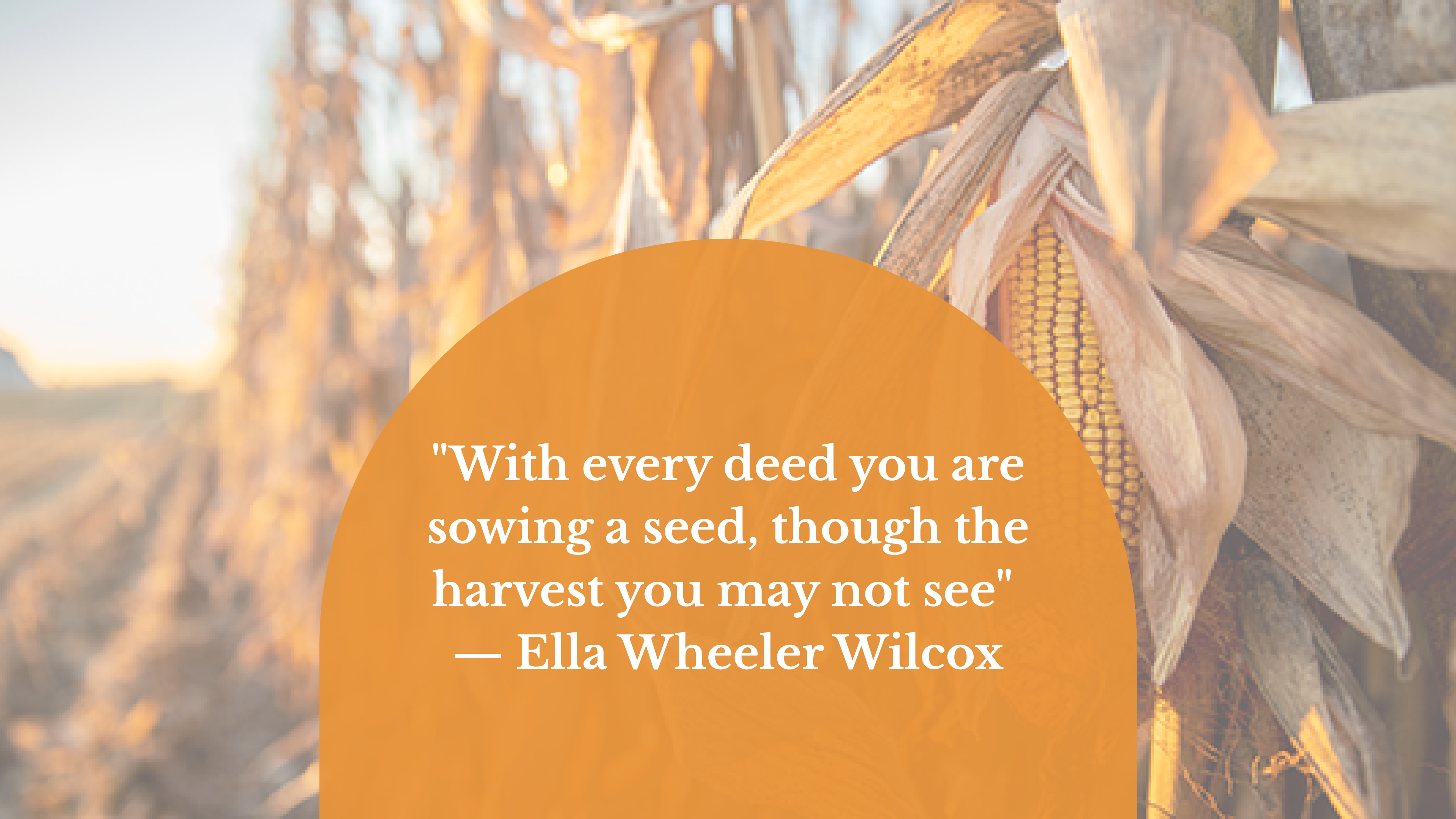


irish poetry therapy network

CYCLES OF PLENTY:
POETRY IN THE HARVESTING SEASON

facilitated by María Ortega García





*"With every deed you are
sowing a seed, though the
harvest you may not see"
— Ella Wheeler Wilcox*



Rogue Corn

By Nikki Wallschlaeger

My fav event as harvest season approaches
is the rough seed that escaped the plots.

If there's a cornfield adjacent to another bed
of vegetables, you can count on imperfection,

you can see stalks standing where they're
not supposed to be, the winds have ideas,

seeds who choose wildness, here they are,
with red potatoes, alfalfa, peas, sunflowers,

they look pleased w/ themselves, outfoxing
clever farmers, making it to the unplanned

ground where nobody is around, recovering
where the amiable dirt will welcome them.

Seeds are so fun and determined,
there's no concept of liberty, no need for it,

guaranteed if I were a seedling I'd abstain,
you know I would, I'd find a way to renounce

what's expected of my common name,
gliding over the roads until a dream takes root

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- What is your favourite event during this season?
- What would you do if you were a seedling?
- What is expected of your common name, as a seed, as a human, as a living being?
- Write a poem with the title "Rogue me"

Equinox

By Elizabeth Alexander

Now is the time of year when bees are wild
and eccentric. They fly fast and in cramped
loop-de-loops, dive-bomb clusters of conversants
in the bright, late-September out-of-doors.
I have found their dried husks in my clothes.

They are dervishes because they are dying,
one last sting, a warm place to squeeze
a drop of venom or of honey.

After the stroke we thought would be her last
my grandmother came back, reared back and slapped

a nurse across the face. Then she stood up,
walked outside, and lay down in the snow.

Two years later there is no other way
to say, we are waiting. She is silent, light
as an empty hive, and she is breathing.

- Write on the line: “they are dervishes because they are dying”
- What does being “wild and eccentric” evoke on you?

And Now It's September, By Barbara Crooker

and the garden diminishes: cucumber leaves ruffled and rusty, zucchini felled by borers, tomatoes sparse on the vines. But out in the perennial beds, there's one last blast of color: ignitions of goldenrod, flamboyant asters, spiraling mums, all those flashy spikes waving in the wind, conducting summer's final notes.

The ornamental grasses have gone to seed, haloed in the last light. Nights grow chilly, but the days are still warm; I wear the sun like a shawl on my neck and arms. Hundreds of blackbirds ribbon in, settle in the trees, so many black leaves, then, just as suddenly, they're gone. This is autumn's great Departure Gate, and everyone, boarding passes in hand, waits patiently in a long, long line.

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- Write on the line: "I wear the sun like a shawl on my neck and arms"
- Write a poem with the title "and now it's September"

First Fall

By Maggie Smith

I'm your guide here. In the evening-dark
morning streets, I point and name.
Look, the sycamores, their mottled,
paint-by-number bark. Look, the leaves
rusting and crisping at the edges.
I walk through Schiller Park with you
on my chest. Stars smolder well
into daylight. Look, the pond, the ducks,
the dogs paddling after their prized sticks.
Fall is when the only things you know
because I've named them
begin to end. Soon I'll have another
season to offer you: frost soft
on the window and a porthole
sighed there, ice sleeving the bare
gray branches. The first time you see
something die, you won't know it might
come back. I'm desperate for you
to love the world because I brought you here.

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- **Write on the line:** “The first time you see something die, you won't know it might/ come back.”
- **Write a poem with the title “I'm your guide here”**