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### **The language and poetry of flowers**

**London, 1877**

The Death of the Flowers.

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## THE DEATH OF THE FLOWERS.

THE melancholy days are come, the saddest of the year,  
 Of wailing winds, and naked woods, and meadows brown and sere.  
 Heap'd in the hollows of the grove, the withered leaves lie dead ;  
 They rustle to the eddyng gust, and to the rabbit's tread ;  
 The robin and the wren are flown, and from the shrubs the jay,  
 And from the wood-top calls the crow, through all the gloomy day.  
 Where are the flowers, the fair young flowers, that lately sprang  
 and stood

In brighter light, and softer airs, a beauteous sisterhood?  
 Alas ! they all are in their graves, the gentle race of flowers  
 Are lying in their lowly beds, with the fair and good of ours.  
 The rain is falling where they lie, but the cold November rain  
 Calls not from out the gloomy earth the lovely ones again.  
 The wind-flower and the violet, they perish'd long ago ;  
 And the brier-rose and the orchis died amid the summer glow ;  
 But on the hill the golden-rod, and the aster in the wood,  
 And the yellow sunflower by the brook, in autumn beauty stood,  
 Till fell the frost from the clear cold heaven, as falls the plague  
 on men, [and glen.

And the brightness of their smile was gone from upland, glade,  
 And now, when comes the calm mild day, as still such days will  
 come,

To call the squirrel and the bee from out their winter home ;  
 When the sound of dropping nuts is heard, though all the trees  
 are still,

And twinkle in the smoky light of the waters of the rill,  
 The south wind searches for the flowers whose fragrance late he  
 bore,

And sighs to find them in the wood and by the stream no more.  
 And then I think of one, who in her youthful beauty died,  
 The weak, fair blossom that grew up and faded by my side :—  
 In the cold moist earth we laid her, when the forest cast its leaf,  
 And we wept that one so lovely should have a life so brief,  
 Yet not unmeet it was, that cherished friend of ours,  
 So gentle and so beautiful, should perish with the flowers.

*W. C. Bryant.*