

Striptease



I have unashamedly watched her
dress and undress herself.

She does it so slowly,
the ultimate tease.

Her technique is flawless.

She doesn't *put on* her clothes,

she simply *manifests* them

one cell at a time,

in a show designed

for time-lapse photography.

She doesn't *take off* her clothes,

she simply *sheds* them.

I have unashamedly watched her,
this 80-year-old apple tree
behind the cabin.

Week by week
the brown, wrinkled, naked body of her Sleep-time
has subtly and softly been materializing
a gossamer-green garment
for her awakening.

In the Autumn months
I watched with equal fascination
as she sensuously disrobed.
Wantonly she invited every passing zephyr
to assist.

Often in a frenetic dance
she discarded hundreds of leaves at once
like a wet puppy dog after a swim.
Occasionally, the music would change,
to the Dance of the Seven Veils
and seductively, she would shed
a single petal at a time.

She was preparing herself
for the Night-time of her nakedness.

Now she is ready again
to dream of the lovers
who will impregnate her
and give her soft green leaves
to maternally caress
the rosy cheeks
of her ripening apple-children.

In comparison we humans
are pitiful.

Apart from our hair
we have to beg, borrow and steal
our clothes.

Our pathetic imitation
of the robe-manifesting apple tree
is an epidermis
covered in dead skin cells!

Yet we strut arrogantly
on the walkway of the fashion show of life,
in stolen duds.

Scavengers and killers that we are
we swagger about in the discarded pelts
of dead animals.

Thieves and plagiarists that we are
we steal the handiwork of the silk worms
and the cotton of the plants,
like pre-pubescent girls
raiding the well-stocked closets
of their teenaged sisters.

We started this early as a species,
Adam and Eve stripped the fig tree
to cover their own guilt.

And so I unashamedly watch her
dress and undress herself.
You have to be really quick
to see something move
that slowly.

Namasté,

Tír na nÓg
March 2013

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Seán', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.