

Dirge for the Year

Percy Bysshe Shelley

1824

1.

Orphan Hours, the Year is dead,
Come and sigh, come and weep!
Merry Hours, smile instead,
For the Year is but asleep.
See, it smiles as it is sleeping,
Mocking your untimely weeping.

2.

As an earthquake rocks a corpse
In its coffin in the clay,
So White Winter, that rough nurse,
Rocks the death-cold Year to-day;
Solemn Hours! wail aloud
For your mother in her shroud.

3.

As the wild air stirs and sways
The tree-swung cradle of a child,
So the breath of these rude days
Rocks the Year:—be calm and mild,
Trembling Hours, she will arise
With new love within her eyes.

4.

January gray is here,
Like a sexton by her grave;
February bears the bier,
March with grief doth howl and rave,
And April weeps—but, O ye Hours!
Follow with May's fairest flowers.

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