- Reference to the Irish Catholic soldiers who went abroad because weren’t allowed to be catholic soldiers in Ireland
- Birds symbolise freedom

- Spun = idea of people in Ireland held together
- Hangman = child’s game that is now reality for the heroes
‘Was it for this the wild geese spread... For this that all the blood was shed,’
- Irish folk tale about girls whose brothers were turned to geese and flew away – death and loss
‘And call those exiles as they were In all their loneliness and pain, You’d cry, ‘Some woman’s yellow hair’
- Tradition in Ireland of idealizing these people as heroes but Yeats sees the pain and loneliness
- Fionnuala, an Irish Goddess, idea that romantic love/goddess or principle of Irish Nationalism inspires them
- Were and hair = para rhyme, so close to the ideal, uncomfortable/hopelessness

‘The names that stilled your childish play,’
Link to Among School Children: children are responsive to heroes when they act out adult/fantasy roles
‘All that delirium of the brave?’
Link to Easter 1916: ‘what excess of love bewildered them,’ They are bewildered by their love + delirium can be a disordered state, the three heroes represented disorder to the status-quo