

Autumn Is Not a Season

but a gaudy arena where Summer and Winter  
collide, where a played-out princess  
falls to a truculent new monarch:  
She's thrown out of her palace overnight,  
a moat of black chrysanthemums  
surrounding it, ice bars at the windows,  
gray shades drawn, smog stationed  
on the perimeter to stop sun's spying  
on the new regime. An always-ready fusillade  
of sleet keeps subjects bowing. Summer  
and her courtiers retreat  
to regroup between Capricorn and Cancer.  
And you who stay  
must shed your ripe skin to blend with snow.

Glenna Holloway