

APPENDICES

Poems by Dylan Thomas

Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night

Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no lightning they 5
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight, 10
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light. 15

And you, my father, there on the sad height,
Curse, bless me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And Death Shall Have No Dominion

And death shall have no dominion.
Dead men naked they shall be one
With the man in the wind and the west moon;
When their bones are picked clean and the clean bones gone,
They shall have stars at elbow and foot; 5
Though they go mad they shall be sane,
Though they sink through the sea they shall rise again;
Though lovers be lost love shall not;
And death shall have no dominion.

And death shall have no dominion. 10
Under the windings of the sea
They lying long shall not die windily;
Twisting on racks when sinews give way,
Strapped to a wheel, yet they shall not break;
Faith in their hands shall snap in two, 15
And the unicorn evils run them through;
Split all ends up they shan't crack;
And death shall have no dominion.

And death shall have no dominion. 20
No more may gulls cry at their ears
Or waves break loud on the seashores;
Where blew a flower may a flower no more
Lift its head to the blows of the rain;
Through they be mad and dead as nails,
Heads of the characters hammer through daisies; 25
Break in the sun till the sun breaks down,
And death shall have no dominion.

The Conversation of Prayer

The conversation of prayers about to be said
By the child going to bed and the man on the stairs
Who climbs to his dying love in her high room,
The one not caring to whom in his sleep he will move,
And the other full of tears that she will be dead, 5

Turns in the dark on the sound they know will arise
Into the answering skies from the green ground,
From the man on the stairs and the child by his bed.
The sound about to be said in the two prayers
For sleep in a safe land and the love who dies 10

Will be the same grief flying. Whom shall they calm?
Shall the child sleep unharmed or the man be crying?
The conversation of prayers about to be said
Turns on the quick and the dead, and the man on the stairs
Tonight shall find no dying but alive and warm 15

In the fire of his care his love in the high room.
And the child not caring to whom he climbs his prayer
Shall drown in a grief as deep as his made grave,
And mark the dark eyed wave, through the eyes of sleep,
Dragging him up the stairs to one who lies dead. 20

Poems by Anne Sexton

Wanting to Die

Since you ask, most days I cannot remember.
I walk in my clothing, unmarked by that voyage.
Then the almost unnameable lust returns.

Even then I have nothing against life.
I know well the grass blades you mention, 5
the furniture you have placed under the sun.

But suicides have a special language.
Like carpenters they want to know which tools.
They never ask why build.

Twice I have so simply declared myself, 10
have possessed the enemy, eaten the enemy,
have taken on his craft, his magic.

In this way, heavy and thoughtful,
warmer than oil or water,
I have rested, drooling at the mouth-hole. 15

I did not think of my body at needle point.
Even the cornea and the leftover urine were gone.
Suicides have already betrayed the body.

Still-born, they don't always die,
but dazzled, they can't forget a drug so sweet 20
that even children would look on and smile.

To thrust all that life under your tongue!--
that, all by itself, becomes a passion.
Death's a sad Bone; bruised, you'd say,
and yet she waits for me, year after year, 25
to so delicately undo an old wound,
to empty my breath from its bad prison.

Balanced there, suicides sometimes meet,
raging at the fruit, a pumped-up moon,
leaving the bread they mistook for a kiss, 30

leaving the page of the book carelessly open,
something unsaid, the phone off the hook
and the love, whatever it was, an infection.

Sylvia's Death

for Sylvia Plath

O Sylvia, Sylvia,
with a dead box of stones and spoons,
with two children, two meteors
wandering loose in a tiny playroom,
with your mouth into the sheet, 5
into the roofbeam, into the dumb prayer,
(Sylvia, Sylvia
where did you go
after you wrote me
from Devonshire 10
about raising potatoes
and keeping bees?)
what did you stand by,
just how did you lie down into?
Thief — 15
how did you crawl into,
crawl down alone
into the death I wanted so badly and for so long,
the death we said we both outgrew,
the one we wore on our skinny breasts, 20
the one we talked of so often each time
we downed three extra dry martinis in Boston,
the death that talked of analysts and cures,
the death that talked like brides with plots,
the death we drank to, 25
the motives and the quiet deed?
(In Boston
the dying
ride in cabs,
yes death again, 30
that ride home
with our boy.)
O Sylvia, I remember the sleepy drummer
who beat on our eyes with an old story,
how we wanted to let him come 35
like a sadist or a New York fairy
to do his job,
a necessity, a window in a wall or a crib,
and since that time he waited
under our heart, our cupboard, 40
and I see now that we store him up
year after year, old suicides
and I know at the news of your death
a terrible taste for it, like salt,

(And me, me too.	45
And now, Sylvia, you again with death again, that ride home with our boy.)	50
And I say only with my arms stretched out into that stone place, what is your death but an old belonging, a mole that fell out of one of your poems?	55
(O friend, while the moon's bad, and the king's gone, and the queen's at her wit's end the bar fly ought to sing!)	60
O tiny mother, you too!	
O funny duchess!	65
O blonde thing!	

The Death King

I hired a carpenter
to build my coffin
and last night I lay in it,
braced by a pillow,
sniffing the wood, 5
letting the old king
breathe on me,
thinking of my poor murdered body,
murdered by time,
waiting to turn stiff as a field marshal, 10
letting the silence dishonor me,
remembering that I'll never cough again.

Death will be the end of fear
and the fear of dying,
fear like a dog stuffed in my mouth, 15
fear like dung stuffed up my nose,
fear where water turns into steel,
fear as my breast flies into the Disposal,
fear as flies tremble in my ear,
fear as the sun ignites in my lap, 20
fear as night can't be shut off,
and the dawn, my habitual dawn,
is locked up forever.

Fear and a coffin to lie in
like a dead potato. 25
Even then I will dance in my dire clothes,
a crematory flight,
blinding my hair and my fingers,
wounding God with his blue face,
his tyranny, his absolute kingdom, 30
with my aphrodisiac.

Biography of Dylan Thomas

Dylan Marlais Thomas was born in the Welsh seaport of Swansea, Camarthenshire, Wales on October 27, 1914. Thomas could not speak Welsh but he adopted the rhythms of the language and he started to write poetry while he was still at school. When he was twelve, his poem was published in the *Western Mail*.

Thomas was known as a precocious poet. His first book of poetry, *Eighteen Poems*, was published in 1934 when Thomas was not yet twenty years old. His second and third books of poetry were *Twenty-Five Poems* (1936) and *The Map of Love* (1939), and the poems of his first three books were collected in *The World I Breathe* (1939). Thomas' poetic output was not large; he wrote only six poems in the last six years of his life. His poems are marked by vivid metaphors, the use of Christian and Freudian imagery, and the celebration of the mystical power of growth and death. Thomas said, "My poetry is the record of my individual struggle from darkness toward some measure of light To be stripped of darkness is to be clean, to strip of darkness is to make clean."

Thomas mentioned that the reason for him to become a poet was that he had fallen in love with words. His sense of richness and variety and flexibility of the English language shines through all of his works. The most prominent theme of all his poems is the celebration of the divine purpose in all human and natural process. The cycle of birth and flowering and death is found in Thomas' poems. He died on November 1953 shortly after his 39th birthday.

Source(s):

"Dylan Thomas" and "Dylan Thomas Biography."

Biography of Anne Sexton

Anne Sexton was born in Newton, Massachusetts, on November 9, 1928 under the name of Anne Gray Harvey. She attended Garland Junior College for one year and married Alfred Muller Sexton II at the age of nineteen. She was a glamorous woman--her early career before writing poetry included a brief stint as a model--and she had many fans, both inside and outside academia. Many people thought of her as a celebrity first and a poet second.

She wrote about subjects that were previously unexplored in poetry, such as abortion, menstruation, and the allure of suicide. She made the experience of being a woman a central issue in her poetry, and though she endured criticism for bringing controversial subjects into her work, her skill as a poet transcended the controversy over her subject matter. "Though she received little formal training in poetics, claiming to learn meter by watching I. A. Richards on television, her poetry has notable formal sophistication" (*Encyclopedia of World Biography on Anne Sexton*). In 1967 Sexton received the Pulitzer Prize for Live or Die (1966) and also received the Shelley Memorial Prize. Her best work is probably found in All My Pretty Ones (1962), which bears an epigraph from Shakespeare's Macbeth.

In 1954 she was diagnosed with postpartum depression, suffered her first mental breakdown, and she was admitted to Westwood Lodge, a neuropsychiatric hospital. Sexton suffered another breakdown and was hospitalized again after giving birth to her second daughter. She committed suicide on October 4, 1974.

Source(s):

"Anne Sexton" and "Encyclopedia of World Biography on Anne Sexton"