

EDWARD THOMAS

*'Home: Fair was the morning'*  
*(1/2)*

*Fair was the morning, fair our tempers, and  
We had seen nothing fairer than that land,  
Though strange, and the untrodden snow that made  
Wild of the tame, casting out all that was  
Not wild and rustic and old; and we were glad.*

*Fair, too, was afternoon, and first to pass  
Were we that league of snow, next the north wind.*

*There was nothing to return for, except need,  
And yet we sang nor ever stopped for speed,  
As we did often with the start behind.  
Faster still strode we when we came in sight  
Of the cold roofs where we must spend the night.*

*Happy we had not been there, nor could be.  
Though we had tasted sleep and food and fellowship  
Together long.*

*“How quick” to someone’s lip  
The words came, “will the beaten horse run home.”*

EDWARD THOMAS

*'Home: Fair was the morning'*  
*(2/2)*

The word "home" raised a smile in us all three,  
And one repeated it, smiling just so  
That all knew what he meant and none would say.  
Between three counties far apart that lay  
We were divided and looked strangely each  
At the other, and we knew we were not friends  
But fellows in a union that ends  
With the necessity for it, as it ought.

Never a word was spoken, not a thought  
Was thought, of what the look meant with the word  
"Home" as we walked and watched the sunset blurred.  
And then to me the word, only the word,  
"Homesick," as it were playfully occurred:  
No more. If I should ever more admit  
Than the mere word I could not endure it  
For a day longer: this captivity  
Must somehow come to an end, else I should be  
Another man, as often now I seem,  
Or this life be only an evil dream.

KOFI AWOONOR

*The Sea Eats the Land at Home*  
*(1/2)*

*At home the sea is in the town,  
Running in and out of the cooking places,  
Collecting the firewood from the hearths  
And sending it back at night;  
The sea eats the land at home.  
It came one day at the dead of night,  
Destroying the cement walls,  
And carried away the fowls,  
The cooking-pots and the ladles,  
The sea eats the land at home;  
It is a sad thing to hear the wails,  
And the mourning shouts of the women,  
Calling on all the gods they worship,  
To protect them from the angry sea.*

KOFI AWOONOR

*The Sea Eats the Land at Home*  
*(2/2)*

*Aku stood outside where her cooking-pot stood,  
With her two children shivering from the cold,  
Her hands on her breasts,  
Weeping mournfully.  
Her ancestors have neglected her,  
Her gods have deserted her,  
It was a cold Sunday morning,  
The storm was raging,  
Goats and fowls were struggling in the water,  
The angry water of the cruel sea;  
The lap-lapping of the bark water at the shore,  
And above the sobs and the deep and low moans,  
Was the eternal hum of the living sea.  
It has taken away their belongings  
Adena has lost the trinkets which  
Were her dowry and her joy,  
In the sea that eats the land at home,  
Eats the whole land at home.*

# OCEAN VUONG

## *Home Wrecker*

*And this is how we danced: with our mothers'  
white dresses spilling from our feet, late August  
turning our hands dark red. And this is how we loved:  
a fifth of vodka and an afternoon in the attic, your fingers  
sweeping through my hair—my hair a wildfire.*

*We covered our ears and your father's tantrum turned  
into heartbeats. When our lips touched the day closed  
into a coffin. In the museum of the heart  
there are two headless people building a burning house.*

*There was always the shotgun above the fireplace.  
Always another hour to kill—only to beg some god  
to give it back. If not the attic, the car. If not the car,  
the dream. If not the boy, his clothes. If not alive,  
put down the phone. Because the year is a distance  
we've traveled in circles. Which is to say: this is how  
we danced: alone in sleeping bodies. Which is to say:  
This is how we loved: a knife on the tongue turning  
into a tongue.*

# SYLVIA PLATH

## *Morning Song*

Love set you going like a fat gold watch.  
The midwife slapped your footsoles, and your bald cry  
Took its place among the elements.

Our voices echo, magnifying your arrival. New statue.  
In a drafty museum, your nakedness  
Shadows our safety. We stand round blankly as walls.

I'm no more your mother  
Than the cloud that distills a mirror to reflect its own slow  
Effacement at the wind's hand.

All night your moth-breath  
Flickers among the flat pink roses. I wake to listen:  
A far sea moves in my ear.

One cry, and I stumble from bed, cow-heavy and floral  
In my Victorian nightgown.

Your mouth opens clean as a cat's. The window square

Whitens and swallows its dull stars. And now you try  
Your handful of notes;  
The clear vowels rise like balloons.