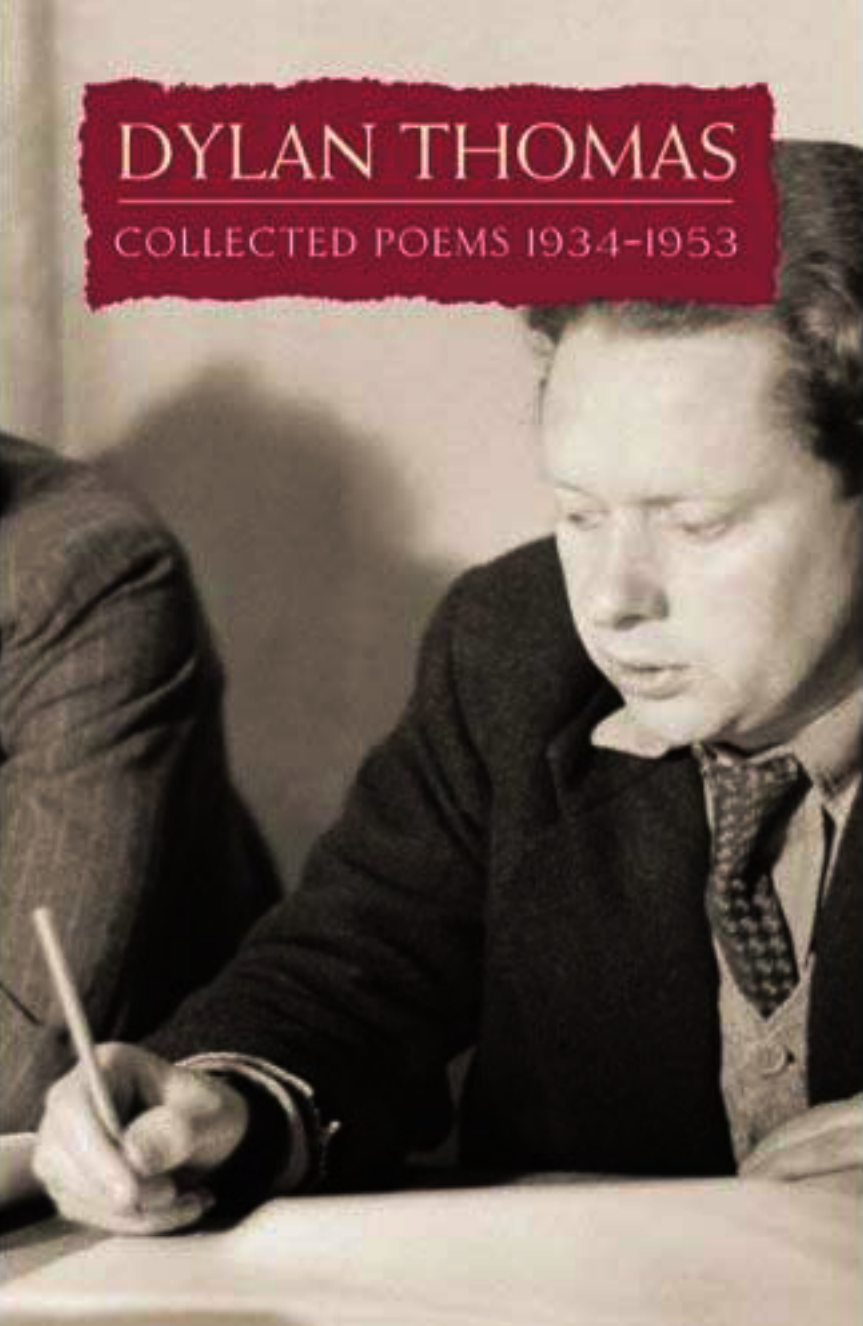


DYLAN THOMAS

COLLECTED POEMS 1934-1953



COLLECTED POEMS

By Dylan Thomas

COLLECTED POEMS, 1934-1952

DEATHS AND ENTRANCES

Poems

PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A
YOUNG DOG

Fictional autobiography

UNDER MILK WOOD

A play for voices

THE DOCTOR AND THE DEVILS

A film scenario

QUITE EARLY ONE MORNING

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A PROSPECT OF THE SEA

Stories and prose writings

LETTERS TO VERNON WATKINS

DYLAN THOMAS: A BIBLIOGRAPHY

By John A. Rolph



DYLAN THOMAS (1914-1953)
From the painting by Augustus John

DYLAN THOMAS

Collected Poems

1934—1952

LONDON

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TO
CAITLIN

Note

THE prologue in verse, written for this collected edition of my poems, is intended as an address to my readers, the strangers.

This book contains most of the poems I have written, and all, up to the present year, that I wish to preserve. Some of them I have revised a little, but if I went on revising everything that I now do not like in this book I should be so busy that I would have no time to try to write new poems.

I read somewhere of a shepherd who, when asked why he made, from within fairy rings, ritual observances to the moon to protect his flocks, replied: 'I'd be a damn' fool if I didn't!' These poems, with all their crudities, doubts, and confusions, are written for the love of Man and in praise of God, and I'd be a damn' fool if they weren't.

November 1952.

Author's Prologue

This day winding down now
At God speeded summer's end
In the torrent salmon sun,
In my seashaken house
On a breakneck of rocks 5
Tangled with chirrup and fruit,
Froth, flute, fin and quill
At a wood's dancing hoof,
By scummed, starfish sands
With their fishwife cross 10
Gulls, pipers, cockles, and sails,
Out there, crow black, men
Tackled with clouds, who kneel
To the sunset nets,
Geese nearly in heaven, boys 15
Stabbing, and herons, and shells
That speak seven seas,
Eternal waters away
From the cities of nine
Days' night whose towers will catch 20
In the religious wind
Like stalks of tall, dry straw,
At poor peace I sing
To you strangers (though song
Is a burning and crested act, 25
The fire of birds in

The world's turning wood,
For my sawn, splay sounds),
Out of these seathumbed leaves
That will fly and fall 30
Like leaves of trees and as soon
Crumble and undie
Into the dogdayed night.
Seaward the salmon, sucked sun slips,
And the dumb swans drub blue 35
My dabbed bay's dusk, as I hack
This rumpus of shapes
For you to know
How I, a spinning man,
Glory also this star, bird 40
Roared, sea born, man torn, blood blest.
Hark: I trumpet the place,
From fish to jumping hill! Look:
I build my bellowing ark
To the best of my love 45
As the flood begins,
Out of the fountainhead
Of fear, rage red, manalive,
Molten and mountainous to stream
Over the wound asleep 50
Sheep white hollow farms

To Wales in my arms.
 Hoo, there, in castle keep, 50
 You king singsong owls, who moonbeam
 The flickering runs and dive
 The dingle furred deer dead!
 Huloo, on plumbed bryns,
 O my ruffled ring dove 45
 In the hooting, nearly dark
 With Welsh and reverent rook,
 Coo rooing the woods' praise,
 Who moons her blue notes from her nest
 Down to the curlew herd! 40
 Ho, hullaballoing clan
 Agape, with woe
 In your beaks, on the gabbing capes!
 Heigh, on horseback hill, jack
 Whisking hare! who 35
 Hears, there, this fox light, my flood ship's
 Clangour as I hew and smite
 (A clash of anvils for my
 Hubbub and fiddle, this tune
 On a tongued puffball) 30
 But animals thick as thieves
 On God's rough tumbling grounds
 (Hail to His beasthood!).
 Beasts who sleep good and thin,
 Hist, in hogsback woods! The haystacked 25
 Hollow farms in a throng
 Of waters cluck and cling,
 And barnroofs cockcrow war!
 O kingdom of neighbours, finned
 Felled and quilled, flash to my patch 20

Work ark and the moonshine
 Drinking Noah of the bay,
 With pelt, and scale, and fleece:
 Only the drowned deep bells
 Of sheep and churches noise 15
 Poor peace as the sun sets
 And dark shoals every holy field.
 We will ride out alone, and then,
 Under the stars of Wales,
 Cry, Multitudes of arks! Across 10
 The water lidded lands,
 Manned with their loves they'll move,
 Like wooden islands, hill to hill.
 Huloo, my prowed dove with a flute!
 Ahoy, old, sea-legged fox, 5
 Tom tit and Dai mouse!
 My ark sings in the sun
 At God speeded summer's end
 And the flood flowers now.