**AP Poetry Collection**

**Two Poems by Edna St. Vincent Millay**

**Bluebeard (1917)**

**This door you might not open, and you did;   
So enter now, and see for what slight thing   
You are betrayed... Here is no treasure hid,   
No cauldron, no clear crystal mirroring   
The sought-for truth, no heads of women slain   
For greed like yours, no writhings of distress,   
But only what you see... Look yet again—  
An empty room, cobwebbed and comfortless.   
Yet this alone out of my life I kept   
Unto myself, lest any know me quite;   
And you did so profane me when you crept   
Unto the threshold of this room to-night   
That I must never more behold your face.   
This now is yours. I seek another place.**

**Autumn Daybreak (about 1917)**

**Cold wind of autumn, blowing loud  
At dawn, a fortnight overdue,  
Jostling the doors, and tearing through  
My bedroom to rejoin the cloud,  
I know—for I can hear the hiss  
And scrape of leaves along the floor—  
How may boughs, lashed bare by this,  
Will rake the cluttered sky once more.  
Tardy, and somewhat south of east,  
The sun will rise at length, made known  
More by the meagre light increased  
Than by a disk in splendour shown;  
When, having but to turn my head,  
Through the stripped maple I shall see,  
Bleak and remembered, patched with red,  
The hill all summer hid from me.**

[**The Revolution Will Not Be Televised**](http://www.gilscottheron.com/revnottel.mp3) **(1974)**

**By Gil Scott-Heron**

**You will not be able to stay home, brother.**

**You will not be able to plug in, turn on and cop out.**

**You will not be able to lose yourself on skag and skip,**

**Skip out for beer during commercials,**

**Because the revolution will not be televised.**

**The revolution will not be televised.**

**The revolution will not be brought to you by Xerox**

**In 4 parts without commercial interruption.**

**The revolution will not show you pictures of Nixon**

**blowing a bugle and leading a charge by John**

**Mitchell, General Abrams and Spiro Agnew to eat**

**hog maws confiscated from a Harlem sanctuary.**

**The revolution will not be televised.**

**The revolution will not be brought to you by the**

**Schaefer Award Theatre and will not star Natalie**

**Woods and Steve McQueen or Bullwinkle and Julia.**

**The revolution will not give your mouth sex appeal.**

**The revolution will not get rid of the nubs.**

**The revolution will not make you look five pounds**

**thinner, because the revolution will not be televised, Brother.**

**There will be no pictures of you and Willie Mays**

**pushing that shopping cart down the block on the dead run,**

**or trying to slide that color television into a stolen ambulance.**

**NBC will not be able predict the winner at 8:32**

**or report from 29 districts.**

**The revolution will not be televised.**

**There will be no pictures of pigs shooting down**

**brothers on the instant replay.**

**There will be no pictures of pigs shooting down**

**brothers on the instant replay.**

**There will be no pictures of Whitney Young being**

**run out of Harlem on a rail with a brand new process.**

**There will be no slow motion or still life of Roy**

**Wilkens strolling through Watts in a Red, Black and**

**Green liberation jumpsuit that he had been saving**

**For just the proper occasion.**

**Green Acres, The Beverly Hillbillies, and Hooterville**

**Junction will no longer be so damned relevant, and**

**women will not care if Dick finally gets down with**

**Jane on Search for Tomorrow because Black people**

**will be in the street looking for a brighter day.**

**The revolution will not be televised.**

**There will be no highlights on the eleven o'clock**

**news and no pictures of hairy armed women**

**liberationists and Jackie Onassis blowing her nose.**

**The theme song will not be written by Jim Webb,**

**Francis Scott Key, nor sung by Glen Campbell, Tom**

**Jones, Johnny Cash, Englebert Humperdink, or the Rare Earth.**

**The revolution will not be televised.**

**The revolution will not be right back after a message**

**about a white tornado, white lightning, or white people.**

**You will not have to worry about a dove in your**

**bedroom, a tiger in your tank, or the giant in your toilet bowl.**

**The revolution will not go better with Coke.**

**The revolution will not fight the germs that may cause bad breath.**

**The revolution will put you in the driver's seat.**

**The revolution will not be televised, will not be televised,**

**will not be televised, will not be televised.**

**The revolution will be no re-run brothers;**

**The revolution will be live.**

**Fishing (2008)**

**By Quentin Duval  
  
*It's a walleye*, the guy on TV says.  
Last time it was a catfish  
that filled the boat with violet light.  
They let that go.  
But they keep the walleye for lunch.  
I can foresee the filet knife nick  
open the silver muscle  
at the tail, and the clean slide  
down to the gills.  
Then the campfire on the bank,  
smoke, grease muttering in the pan,  
the applause the fish makes  
in the black bottom of the skillet.  
We have ourselves huddled over  
open coals turning fish or meat,  
talking, smoking, drinking  
out of green bottles something  
bottomless and pale. When you leave,  
when you must fall into your night sleep  
on a distant shoreline filled with camp smoke,  
raise your arm, please. Let the others   
know it's the same whatever shore  
we land on in the end.**

**Wailers (1981)**

**by Amiri Baraka**

**For Larry Neal (1937-1981) and Bob Marley (1945-1981)**

**Wailers are we  
We are Wailers. Don't get scared.  
Nothing happening but out and way out.  
Nothing happening but the positive.**

**(Unless you the negative.)**

**Wailers. We wailers. Yeh, Wailers.  
We wail, we wail.  
We could dig Melville on his ship  
confronting the huge white mad beast  
speeding death cross the sea to we.  
But we whalers. We can kill whales.  
We could get on top of a whale  
and wail. Wailers. Undersea defense hot folk  
Blues babies humming when we arrive.**

**Boogie ladies strumming our black violet souls.**

**Rag daddies come from the land of never say die.  
Reggae workers bringing the funk to the people of I. We wailers all right.**

**Hail to you Bob, man! We will ask your question all our lives.**

**Could You Be Loved? I and I understand.**

**We see the world. Eyes and eyes say Yes to transformation. Wailers. Aye, Wailers. Subterranean night color Magis, working inside the soul of the world Wailers. Eyes seeing the world's being.**

**Hey, Bob, Wail on rock on Jah come into us as real vision and action ( Hey, Larry, Wail on, with Lester and the Porkpie, wailing us energy for truth. We Wailers is all.**

**Lie on me if you want to, tell folks it’s yours  
But for real wailing not tale telling, the sensitive know who the  
Wailers be. Be We. Be We. We Wailers. Blue Blowers. The Real  
Rhythm Kings.  
We sing philosophy. Hambone precise findings. Image Masters of  
the syncopated. Wailers & Drummers.  
Wailers & Trumpet stars.  
Wailers & Box cookers.  
Wailers & Sax flyers.  
Wailers & Bass thumpers.  
Wailers and Hey, wail, wail. We Wailers!  
Trombone benders. Magic singers.  
Ellingtonians.  
The only Tranes faster than rocket ships. Shit.  
Cut a rocket in our pocket and put a chord on the wall of the wind.  
Wailers. Can you dig Wailing?  
Call Me Bud Powell. You wanna imitate this?  
Listen. Spree dee deet sprree deee whee spredeee whee deee  
My calling card. The dialectic of silence.  
The Sound approach.  
Life one day will be filled even further with we numbers we song  
But primitive place now, we wailing be kept underground.  
But keep it in mind. Call me something Dukish. Something  
Sassy.  
Call me by my real name. When the world change  
We wailing be in it, help make it, for real time.  
Call Me. I call you. We call We. Say, Hey Wailers. Hey, Wailers. Hey hey hey, Wailers. Wail On!**

**They Feed They Lion (1972)**

**By** [**Philip Levine**](http://www.ibiblio.org/ipa/levine.php)

**Out of burlap sacks, out of bearing butter,   
Out of black bean and wet slate bread,   
Out of the acids of rage, the candor of tar,   
Out of creosote, gasoline, drive shafts, wooden dollies,   
They Lion grow.   
  
Out of the gray hills   
Of industrial barns, out of rain, out of bus ride,   
West Virginia to Kiss My Ass, out of buried aunties,   
Mothers hardening like pounded stumps, out of stumps,   
Out of the bones' need to sharpen and the muscles' to stretch,   
They Lion grow.   
  
Earth is eating trees, fence posts,   
Gutted cars, earth is calling in her little ones,   
"Come home, Come home!" From pig balls,   
From the ferocity of pig driven to holiness,   
From the furred ear and the full jowl come   
The repose of the hung belly, from the purpose   
They Lion grow.   
  
From the sweet glues of the trotters   
Come the sweet kinks of the fist, from the full flower   
Of the hams the thorax of caves,   
From "Bow Down" come "Rise Up,"   
Come they Lion from the reeds of shovels,   
The grained arm that pulls the hands,   
They Lion grow.   
  
From my five arms and all my hands,   
From all my white sins forgiven, they feed,   
From my car passing under the stars,   
They Lion, from my children inherit,   
From the oak turned to a wall, they Lion,   
From they sack and they belly opened   
And all that was hidden burning on the oil-stained earth   
They feed they Lion and he comes.**

**The Colonel**

[**The Colonel**](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/180106#poem)

**WHAT YOU HAVE HEARD is true. I was in his house. His wife carried   
a tray of coffee and sugar. His daughter filed her nails, his son went     
out for the night. There were daily papers, pet dogs, a pistol on the   
cushion beside him. The moon swung bare on its black cord over   
the house. On the television was a cop show. It was in English.   
Broken bottles were embedded in the walls around the house to   
scoop the kneecaps from a man's legs or cut his hands to lace. On   
the windows there were gratings like those in liquor stores. We had   
dinner, rack of lamb, good wine, a gold bell was on the table for   
calling the maid. The maid brought green mangoes, salt, a type of   
bread. I was asked how I enjoyed the country. There was a brief   
commercial in Spanish. His wife took everything away. There was   
some talk then of how difficult it had become to govern. The parrot   
said hello on the terrace. The colonel told it to shut up, and pushed   
himself from the table. My friend said to me with his eyes: say   
nothing. The colonel returned with a sack used to bring groceries   
home. He spilled many human ears on the table. They were like   
dried peach halves. There is no other way to say this. He took one   
of them in his hands, shook it in our faces, dropped it into a water   
glass. It came alive there. I am tired of fooling around he said. As   
for the rights of anyone, tell your people they can go fuck them-   
selves. He swept the ears to the floor with his arm and held the last   
of his wine in the air. Something for your poetry, no? he said. Some   
of the ears on the floor caught this scrap of his voice. Some of the   
ears on the floor were pressed to the ground. WHAT YOU HAVE HEARD is true. I was in his house. His wife carried   
a tray of coffee and sugar. His daughter filed her nails, his son went     
out for the night. There were daily papers, pet dogs, a pistol on the   
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                                                                                     *May 1978***

[**Daddy**](http://www.poetrysoup.com/famous/poem/419/Daddy) **(1962)**

## By Silvia Plath

**You do not do, you do not do**

**Any more, black shoe**

**In which I have lived like a foot**

**For thirty years, poor and white,**

**Barely daring to breathe or Achoo.**

**Daddy, I have had to kill you.**

**You died before I had time---**

**Marble-heavy, a bag full of God,**

**Ghastly statue with one gray toe**

**Big as a Frisco seal**

**And a head in the freakish Atlantic**

**Where it pours bean green over blue**

**In the waters off the beautiful Nauset.**

**I used to pray to recover you.**

**Ach, du.**

**In the German tongue, in the Polish town**

**Scraped flat by the roller**

**Of wars, wars, wars.**

**But the name of the town is common.**

**My Polack friend**

**Says there are a dozen or two.**

**So I never could tell where you**

**Put your foot, your root,**

**I never could talk to you.**

**The tongue stuck in my jaw.**

**It stuck in a barb wire snare.**

**Ich, ich, ich, ich,**

**I could hardly speak.**

**I thought every German was you.**

**And the language obscene**

**An engine, an engine,**

**Chuffing me off like a Jew.**

**A Jew to Dachau, Auschwitz, Belsen.**

**I began to talk like a Jew.**

**I think I may well be a Jew.**

**The snows of the Tyrol, the clear beer of Vienna**

**Are not very pure or true.**

**With my gypsy ancestress and my weird luck**

**And my Taroc pack and my Taroc pack**

**I may be a bit of a Jew.**

**I have always been sacred of you,**

**With your Luftwaffe, your gobbledygoo.**

**And your neat mustache**

**And your Aryan eye, bright blue.**

**Panzer-man, panzer-man, O You----**

**Not God but a swastika**

**So black no sky could squeak through.**

**Every woman adores a Fascist,**

**The boot in the face, the brute**

**Brute heart of a brute like you.**

**You stand at the blackboard, daddy,**

**In the picture I have of you,**

**A cleft in your chin instead of your foot**

**But no less a devil for that, no not**

**Any less the black man who**

**Bit my pretty red heart in two.**

**I was ten when they buried you.**

**At twenty I tried to die**

**And get back, back, back to you.**

**I thought even the bones would do.**

**But they pulled me out of the sack,**

**And they stuck me together with glue.**

**And then I knew what to do.**

**I made a model of you,**

**A man in black with a Meinkampf look**

**And a love of the rack and the screw.**

**And I said I do, I do.**

**So daddy, I'm finally through.**

**The black telephone's off at the root,**

**The voices just can't worm through.**

**If I've killed one man, I've killed two---**

**The vampire who said he was you**

**And drank my blood for a year,**

**Seven years, if you want to know.**

**Daddy, you can lie back now.**

**There's a stake in your fat black heart**

**And the villagers never liked you.**

**They are dancing and stamping on you.**

**They always knew it was you.**

**Daddy, daddy, you bastard, I'm through.**