

W.H. Auden
Funeral Blues
Stanza 3 & 4

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The poet appears to be suffering the loss of someone close. He calls for a public lament, demanding that nothing may get in the way of his mourning. In another sense, however, there appears to be a certain amount of humour in this poem. Is the poet, then, being sincere or is he making gentle fun of funerals in general?

1. He was my North, my South, my East and West,
My working week and my Sunday rest,
My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song;
I thought that love would last forever: I was wrong.
 - What is an oxymoron? (2)
 - Have oxymorons been used in this verse? If so, explain their purpose. (4)
 - The poet says, "I thought that love would last forever: I was wrong". Why is he wrong? (3)

2. The stars are not wanted now; put out every one,
Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun,
Pour away the ocean and sweep up the woods;
For nothing now can ever come to any good.
 - What is the significance of the stars being "put out every one"? (4)
 - Comment on the nature images in this final verse. (4)
 - What is an hyperbole? (2)
 - In what way has hyperbole been used in this verse? (4)

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