

This weekend's poem and story are both taken from popular songs. Today's poem is made up of the words (or lyrics (pronounced 'lir - ics')) of the BOB DYLAN (pronounced 'Dill - en') song, A HARD RAIN'S A-GONNA FALL. The lyrics were written in 1962, and the song was released in 1963 on Bob Dylan's second album THE FREEWHEELIN' BOB DYLAN. Bob Dylan was born with the name ROBERT ZIMMERMAN, but he changed his last name to 'Dylan' because he admired the Welsh poet DYLAN THOMAS so much. (You might remember that the Welsh actor RICHARD BURTON also admired Dylan Thomas so much, he was buried with a book of Dylan Thomas' poems in his hands.) 'A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall' was one of Dylan's most poetic songs, and when Dylan was awarded the 2016 NOBEL PRIZE FOR LITERATURE for writing such brilliant songs, Dylan's friend PATTI SMITH performed the song 'A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall' at the ceremony awarding the Nobel Prize to Bob Dylan. (You'll see that the song is quite long and involves a lot of words, and Patti Smith foolishly refused to have a copy of the song in front of her when she sang it - and then she forgot the words in front of everyone! It was really embarrassing - you can look it up on YouTube if you want.) Here's the song/poem:



A HARD RAIN'S A-GONNA FALL

Oh, where have you been, my blue-eyed son?
 Oh, where have you been, my darling you one?
 I've stumbled on the side of twelve misty mountains
 I've walked and I've crawled on six crooked highways
 I've stepped in the middle of seven sad forests
 I've been out in front of a dozen dead oceans
 I've been ten thousand miles in the mouth of a graveyard
 And it's a hard, and it's a hard, it's a hard, and it's a hard
 And it's a hard rain's a-gonna fall

Oh, what did you see, my blue-eyed son?
 Oh, what did you see, my darling young one?
 I saw a newborn baby with wild wolves all around it
 I saw a highway of diamonds with nobody on it
 I saw a black branch with blood that kept drippin'
 I saw a room full of men with their hammers a-bleedin'
 I saw a white ladder all covered with water,
 I saw ten thousand talkers whose tongues were all broken
 I saw guns and sharp swords in the hands of young children
 And it's a hard, and it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard
 And it's a hard rain's a-gonna fall

And what did you hear, my blue-eyed son?
And what did you hear, my darling young one?
I heard the sound of a thunder, it roared out a warnin'
Heard the roar of a wave that could drown the whole world
Heard one hundred drummers whose hands were a-blazin'
Heard ten thousand whisperin' and nobody listenin'
Heard one person starve, I heard many people laughin'
Heard the song of a poet who died in the gutter
Heard the song of a clown who cried in the alley
And it's a hard, and it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard
And it's a hard rain's a-gonna fall

Oh, who did you meet, my blue-eyed son?
Who did you meet, my darling young one?
I met a young child beside a dead pony
I met a white man who walked a black dog
I met a young woman whose body was burning
I met a young girl, she gave me a rainbow
I met one man who was wounded in love
I met another man who was wounded with hatred
And it's a hard, and it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard
And it's a hard rain's a-gonna fall

Oh, what'll you do now, my blue-eyed son?
Oh, what'll you do now, my darling you one?
I'm a-goin' back out 'fore the rain starts a-fallin'
I'll walk to the depths of the deepest black forest
Where the people are many and their hands are all empty
Where the pellets of poison are flooding their waters
Where the home in the valley meets the damp dirty prison
Where the executioner's face is always well hidden
Where hunger is ugly, where souls are forgotten
Where black is the color, where none is the number
And I'll tell it and think it and speak it and breathe it
And reflect it from the mountain so all souls can see it
Then I'll stand on the ocean until I start sinkin'
But I'll know my song well before I start singin'
And it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard
It's a hard rain a-gonna fall

If you want to hear the song version of 'It's a Hard Rain A-Gonna Fall', check out this version of the song, sung by Leon Russell rather than Bob Dylan:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y4sMSSm0x2A>

It's rare for someone else's version of a song to be better than the original, but this is one of those times it is better. If you want to see Bob Dylan singing a song, and one of the earliest music videos ever made, check out this:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MGxjIBEZvx0>

The man with the big beard in the background of that video is an American poet called ALLEN GINSBERG, who hung out with Bob Dylan in the 1960s. I might give you one of his poems to read at some point.