



# UNIVERSIDAD DE GRANADA

Departamento de  
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## **Louise Glück, 2020 Nobel Prize in Literature**

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### **Louise Glück Nobel Prize in Literature Poetry**

The poet Louise Glück has become the first American woman to win the Nobel prize for literature in 27 years, cited for “her unmistakable poetic voice that with austere beauty makes individual existence universal”. Glück is the 16th woman to win the Nobel, and the first American woman since Toni Morrison took the prize in 1993.



The chair of the Nobel prize committee, Anders Olsson hailed Glück’s “candid and uncompromising” voice, which is “full of humour and biting wit”. Her 12 collections of poetry, including her most recent *Faithful and Virtuous Night*, the Pulitzer-winning *The Wild Iris*, and the “masterly” *Averno*, are “characterised by a striving for clarity”, he added, comparing her to Emily Dickinson with her “severity and unwillingness to accept simple tenets of faith”.

“In her poems, the self listens for what is left of its dreams and delusions, and nobody can be harder than she in confronting the illusions of the self,” Olsson said. “But even if Glück would never deny the significance of the autobiographical background, she is not to be regarded as a confessional poet.”

## *The Red Poppy*

Louise Glück, 1943

The great thing  
is not having  
a mind. Feelings:  
oh, I have those; they  
govern me. I have  
a lord in heaven  
called the sun, and open  
for him, showing him  
the fire of my own heart, fire  
like his presence.  
What could such glory be  
if not a heart? Oh my brothers and sisters  
were you like me once, long ago,  
before you were human? Did you  
permit yourselves  
to open once, who would never  
open again? Because in truth  
I am speaking now  
the way you do. I speak  
because I am shattered.

## The Wild Iris

by Louise Gluck

At the end of my suffering  
there was a door.

Hear me out: that which you call death  
I remember.

Overhead, noises, branches of the pine shifting  
Then nothing. The weak sun  
flickered over the dry surface.

It is terrible to survive  
as consciousness  
buried in the dark earth

Then it was over: that which you fear, being a soul and unable to speak, ending abruptly, the stiff earth bending a little. And what I took to be birds darting in low shrubs.

You who do not remember  
passage from the other world  
I tell you I could speak again: whatever  
returns from oblivion returns  
to find a voice:

from the center of my life came  
a great fountain, deep blue  
shadows on azure seawater.

| L.  | 1. | 2. | 3. | B.  |
|---|----|----|----|---|
| The land is dry.                                      |    |    |    | He saw a man carrying a gun and fire a field                    |
| The earth is cracked.                                 |    |    |    | bullet.   |
| The earth is cracked because it has to have a change. |    |    |    | The man was very dry, so field                                  |
| The heat is so great he has to cool himself.          |    |    |    | and the man was very dry, so field                              |
| I made my bed for the night, because I was so tired.  |    |    |    | Afterward there was no change.                                  |
| The sound of the wind, because it was so noisy.       |    |    |    | There's nothing to do, except to wait.                          |
| On a path through the desert, because I was lost.     |    |    |    | Where is the field, where can we see?                           |
| The path looks like a road, because it was rough.     |    |    |    | And the man would say:  |
| He was lost, because he was lost.                     |    |    |    | So he knew he had a new chance,                                 |
| The path was rough, because it was rocky.             |    |    |    | He had a new chance, to be the leader, to                       |
| It is breaking between the rocks.                     |    |    |    | be the leader of his people.                                    |
| He was lost, because he was lost.                     |    |    |    | He is being a leader of his life.                               |
| He was lost, because he was lost.                     |    |    |    | He is being a leader of his life.                               |
| He was lost, because he was lost.                     |    |    |    | Afterward, he was lost in the place,                            |
| He was lost, because he was lost.                     |    |    |    | but he was not lost in the place.                               |
| He was lost, because he was lost.                     |    |    |    | You think he could live here?                                   |
| He was lost, because he was lost.                     |    |    |    | It is a different place, but he is not lost.                    |
| He was lost, because he was lost.                     |    |    |    | He is not lost in the place, he is not lost in the field.       |
| He was lost, because he was lost.                     |    |    |    | He is not lost in the field, he is not lost in the right place. |
| He was lost, because he was lost.                     |    |    |    | The field searched, there was no change.                        |
| He was lost, because he was lost.                     |    |    |    | There was no change, because there was no change                |
| He was lost, because he was lost.                     |    |    |    | to speak.   |

You exist as the stars exist,  
participating in their stillness, their immensity.

Then you're in the world again  
At night, on a cold hill,  
taking the telescope apart.

You realize afterward  
not that the image is false,  
but the relation is false.

You see again how far away  
each thing is from every other thing.