

Departamento de Filologías Inglesa y Alemana

## Louise Glück, 2020 Nobel Prize in Literature

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## Louise Glück Nobel Prize in LiteraturePoetry

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. strategies — The strategies of the strategies of

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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.