

Once it was the colour of saying

by Dylan Thomas

Once it was the colour of saying
Soaked my table the uglier side of a hill
With a capsized field where a school sat still
And a black and white patch of girls grew playing:
The gentle seashores of saying I must undo
That all the charmingly drowned arise to cockcrow and kill.
When I whistled with mitching boys through a reservoir park
Where at night we stoned the cold and cuckoo
Lovers in the dirt of their leafy beds,
The shade of their trees was a word of many shades
And a lamp of lightning for the poor in the dark;
Now my saying shall be my undoing,
And every stone I wind off like a reel.

The rhetorical and aesthetic sound, shape and colour of words, as opposed to what they actually 'mean'.

'In the Poetic, sight can be converted into sound and texture and even scent; single words can assume physical shape, contour, fibre; groups of words may take on meanings not implied by their grammatical relations; they may be conveyed in texture and rhythm.

This is jouissance, which carries with it the notion of fluidity, diffusion, duration..'

Peter Redgrove on Rimbaud, 1991

