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## Dylan's Fault

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### Robin Becker

My students refuse to write  
about the darkness in their lives.  
*We want to be happy,* one chimes in.  
Even the smart girl is with them this time.  
*Show us joy,* she taunts.

And now I can't think  
of a single joyful poem I'd like  
to assign them, to prove I'm not  
a depressing geek and know  
how to have a good time. Instead,

I ask them to turn to page 58, I can't help  
myself, they asked for it. *Fern Hill*.  
The smart girl volunteers to read aloud  
and does so in the flat voice of the smart-bored.  
It's a trap, someone shouts from the back,

*The descriptive detail is just a ploy  
to lead us on. One boy rises to fire, pointing  
a long finger at me. The class quiets,  
Dylan Thomas was just like all of you poets!  
He knew all along he was going to die!*

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