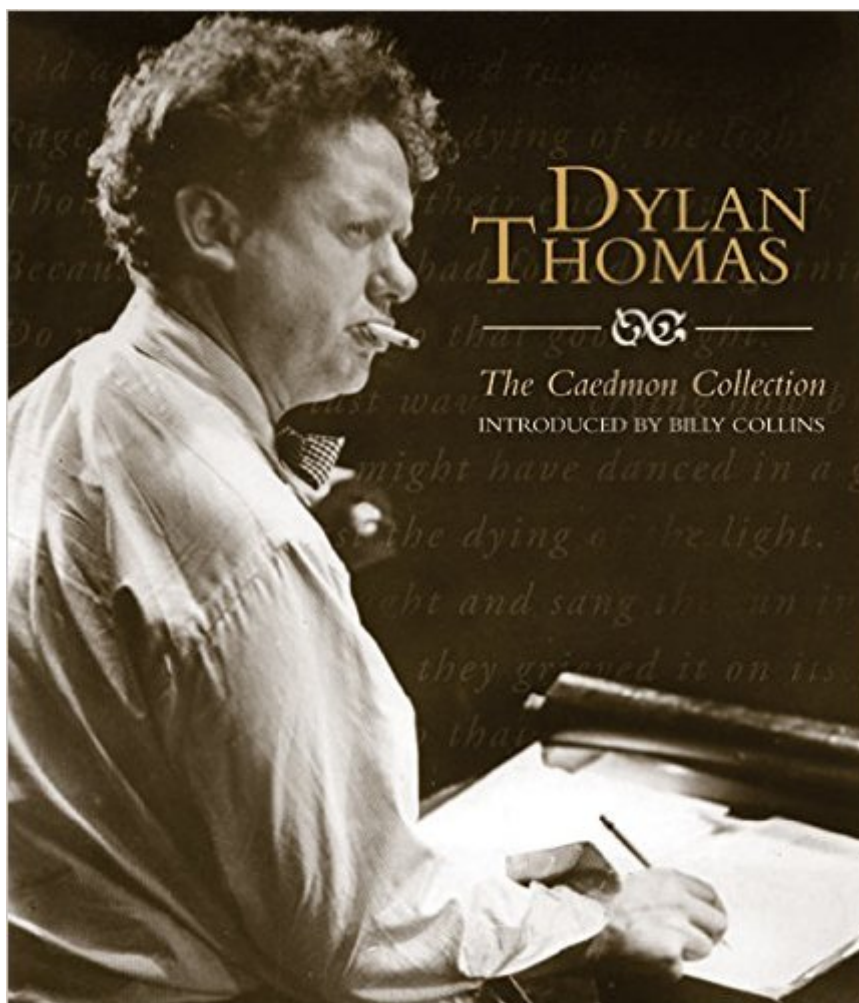


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Dylan Thomas: The Caedmon Collection



Synopsis

Beginning in February 1952, Dylan Thomas made a series of memorable and historic recordings for a new record label called Caedmon. In fact, Dylan Thomas was the first to record for this new label, started by two "young women, Marianne Roney and Barbara Cohen. Little did they know that in addition to capturing a part of history they also launched an industry of spoken word recording. This collection not only contains the incredible Caedmon recording sessions, but also recordings from the BBC, CBC, and other archival material Caedmon originally published in the 1950s and 1960s. Highlights include: "A Child's Christmas in Wales" and "Five Poems"; "Do Not Go Gentle Into that Good Night", his prose: Adventures in the Skin Trade and Quite Early One Morning, and his final work "Under Milk Wood, a play. With stunning original album cover art, and an introduction read by former poet laureate Billy Collins, this unique collection includes not only Dylan Thomas reading his finest works, but also rare recordings of Thomas reading his favorite writers, including W.H. Auden and William Shakespeare.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (32 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

The reviewer who called this a bad value is completely wrong. This set includes the COMPLETE Caedmon recordings of Thomas' incredible voice. Though a few of these original LP's were fairly common (Child's Christmas in Wales), many of the LPs were rare. People were bidding \$50-\$100 and up for some of these single LPs only recently. Here you have MANY CDs for the price of one! It would be nice to have an extensive book with this set, but you can always buy Dylan's books separately. The set includes mini-LP cover sleeves for all of Thomas' original LP covers (though thin

paper sleeves), another nice touch. Don't let this one get away. When it is out-of-print, it will probably go for \$200-\$300 and up!

I enjoy sitting and listening to Dylan Thomas read to me; such a rich and wonderful voice. And contrary to what another reviewer has written, *Under Milkwood* is complete. While the liner notes do say 'From' *Under Milkwood*, the play is complete.

...as are Thomas's other works. Thomas was a skilled and lyrical writer and captures much of the musicality of Welsh speaking people in his works. While he is interesting to read it can be a trial for those not familiar with Welsh culture, particularly now as the Welsh culture he speaks of is pretty much dead and gone. His musical poetic skills are brought beautifully to life when he reads to you and this is the only way to "do" *Under Milk Wood*, written as a play for radio but essentially an elongated poem of early 20th century Welsh life as Thomas himself knew it. Contrary to some beliefs expressed in reviewing this item, the play is complete, all the complex and strange villagers are present as are their stories. What Thomas does best is to guide your imagination into his world and this set allows you to experience his work in the best way read by the man himself.

Excellent cd series. Thomas' pipe-organ voice resonates on every track. His wit and humor pushes the envelope for its time. Bobby sockers, the hang-over of those early Cold War years, post war America full of booms and busts and Levittowns. Picture too a staid America, the 1950s campus life just before "the Cool" hit, before the Folk revival scene, pre Beats. Now enter the mop-headed Welsh bard replete with his double entendre openings to audiences. Audiences who are mostly undergrads and academics. Thomas has them laughing in all the right places ... its poetry without a laugh track or safety net. The readings are good, the explanations sometimes meandering but always enjoyable and highly listenable. Recommend this to any school teachers, lovers of poetry, Britophiles, students... with a willingness to sit back, listen and have a master of the craft weave vistas of Welsh seaside villages, lush countrysides, closed gray coal pits, lecherous and harmless characters and everywhere there are forests to see for the trees.

When you open the box pictured, you get three folders of CDs 1-4, 5-8, and 9-11 respectively. The pictures on the CD folders are the "album covers" reproduced from the records. There is a little pamphlet with info about recording Dylan Thomas written by Marianne Roney, one of the founders of Caedmon. Each CD opens with a spoken intro by Billy Collins. There is a great mish-mash of

selections here. That might be my only criticism, the organization. It's hard to discern the order just from looking at it...why not put an entire album on the same CD, rather than breaking it up? For example, they put some poems from "Dylan Thomas Reading Over Sir John's Hill and Other Poems" on CD 1 and others on CD 2, and I'm curious why. Still, the collection is great--I'm not sure if it is supposed to be complete or not (I don't see anything on it that claims that), but there is a good plenty here to keep a person listening for a long while at any rate. His voice is wonderful and it's easy to understand why they recorded so much of him.

I was originally looking for poet's readings of his famous Under Milkwood play when I bumped into this gem. It has everything a D.Thomas fan might want. While the sound quality is at times rather poor, this is by far the fullest collection which I highly recommend to anyone who enjoys poetry.

Like other great poets, Dylan Thomas has offered the world a body of work rooted in the living world, but he is different from the others in that he is more imaginative and reads in the greatest voice I have ever heard. This item also is as complete as anyone could hope for. I think almost any normally sensitive human would be thrilled to hear the Dylan Thomas voice, even if their interests deviate far from those of poetry buffs. What a bargain!

No other poet I know of -reads his own poetry as well as does Dylan Thomas. There is the rich melliflousness and the booming strength- there is the mystery of the sounded word made musical. There is too the dramatic play and fun of a large childlike soul, suddenly sad and then in an instant mockingly critical. Poetry is the deepest expression of feeling in words. In this sense Thomas is an especially poet, whose poems can be felt not only when read in silence, but most especially when sounded by his own majestic and magnificent voice.

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