

# Mourning Poem for the Queen of Sunday

By Robert Hayden

Lord's lost Him His mockingbird,  
His fancy warbler;  
Satan sweet-talked her,  
four bullets hushed her.  
Who would have thought  
she'd end that way?

Four bullets hushed her. And the world a-clang with evil.  
Who's going to make old hardened sinner men tremble now  
and the righteous rock?  
Oh who and oh who will sing Jesus down  
to help with struggling and doing without and being colored  
all through blue Monday?  
Till way next Sunday?

All those angels  
in their cretonne clouds and finery  
the true believer saw  
when she rared back her head and sang,  
all those angels are surely weeping.  
Who would have thought  
she'd end that way?

Four holes in her heart. The gold works wrecked.  
But she looks so natural in her big bronze coffin  
among the Broken Hearts and Gates-Ajar,  
it's as if any moment she'd lift her head  
from its pillow of chill gardenias  
and turn this quiet into shouting Sunday  
and make folks forget what she did on Monday.

Oh, Satan sweet-talked her,  
and four bullets hushed her.  
Lord's lost Him His diva,  
His fancy warbler's gone.  
Who would have thought,  
who would have thought she'd end that way?

Robert Hayden, "Mourning Poem for the Queen of Sunday" from *The Collected Poems of Robert Hayden*, edited by Frederick Glaysher. Copyright © 1966 by Robert Hayden.

Reprinted by permission of Liveright Publishing Corporation

Source: *Collected Poems* (Liveright Publishing Corporation, 1985)