
Deadly Sins

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12-14 Age Group Runner Up

Each poem in this series describes a deadly sin without saying its name. Can you identify each one?
Pride, Envy, Gluttony, Wrath, Sloth, Greed, and Lust

1.

I heard once that confidence feels like arrogance,
if you're not used to it.
I don't ever remember having that problem.
My name is deadly, no doubt.
But I'm here for a reason- I always knew that.
I'm here for many reasons, actually.
It's not my fault people take it too far.
That they take what I am and warp it.
And yet they still use my name-
as if they blame it on me.
Everything people are, everything they have done- it would be useless without me.
I make up everything- I drive people to greatness.
And pain.
It's not my fault people use me wrongly.
It's not my fault.

2.

You look quite lovely tonight.
I'd like to take you home, (my empty home).
And we can have some fun.
I have another lover, but they don't have to know.
They love me,
but no doubt it's their mistake.
If you'd just give me a chance,
I'm sure I could change.
I just need a little persuasion.
I think you've got the skills-
for tonight at least.
I'll say I love you, and I do. It just doesn't hurt me to leave you.

Oh no, don't cry.
You're not looking so fine.

3.

I wish I could love
and live like the heart that beats in front of me,
and have and know the things it beats through the blood.
I want, what your heart knows, how your mind grows.
I want the things your hands grasp and your eyes swallow- I wish I had what beats through you.
I want, I wish, I kill things with a grip I didn't know was too tight.
And I wish to grip what your heart beats, your hands keep, what your eyes seek.
I say it need it, and I know it not to be true,
I need nothing that beats through you veins, or hands, or heart, or eye.
But I want it.

4.

Take a break,
a breath
My mouth is full,
I'm choking.
I can't see the cup overflowing,
I don't know when to stop.
My hands are full,
full of things my mouth doesn't want,
doesn't need.
Take a break,
some things are better left half empty.
I can't see my plate spilling,
My abdomen is full,
full of things I never use,
Never need.

5.

I wish I could tell you what I really want,
but even I don't know.
So I want everything, just in case. It'll be enough,
someday.
Someday.
It kills me a little, every gain. It causes me pain to get things and suffer through the thoughts that it's still

Not enough.
Still not keeping me happy- people, things, food, places.
Loves, laughs.
They leave an echo, a wound that I fill with plaster and broken things.
Always needing more, always another hole to fill.
It'll be enough, I know it.
One day.

6.
My throat burns,
And words fly from my mouth,
striking like knives,
bloodying their unwilling targets.
With fear and fire,
they are branded, in hearts and minds.
My hands shake, my lungs quake,
and I can't control the fury they contain.
It flows out, it doesn't relieve me,
it never stops.
It doesn't flow, it grows, grows,
so much larger than me. I'm a vessel,
a vessel far too small.
My breath sings as I breath,
breath in the things I can't control.

7.
My body is heavy,
a weight I continue to drag.
My eyes hang low,
Chandeliers swinging from every eyelash.
Every limb, every finger,
an effort to lift.
I want to live,
down on the ground where it's warm.
And I can rest,
in the sun, where a cat would.
Breath steady, rhythmic.
My body, a weight,
that the floor will hold.