

Young

After Anne Sexton

A thousand pilot lights ago
when I'm a teenager half-gone to flab
in a low ranch house crammed
with ribboned handicrafts in January
I go pulling all the false candy canes
from the stale mulch out front
clown-sun blinking whitely over me
my bedroom window an ear
painted shut to keep the calliope of dreams
from sounding. Nearby, the Douglas Fir
thickens over older strings of lights, the chipped
blue bulbs & the gold, each wrapped in peeling floss
& held by keloid blisters to the scruff
of an unloved trunk. Probably a million tiny
ice crystals drift on their rainbow way
while the feverish branches chafe & flake
& I, in my runny custard body
with its buried corkscrew of hate
tell the tree my story-songs
and think God can really hear
above the cold & the snapping plastic canes
boots, belly, my dreams, what's wrong.

Weak Sister: An element that undermines the entire system.
Weak sister can either refer to a single individual or a
specialized group considered to be the weak link in an integrat-
ed process.

Usually referring to an undependable member of a group environment, the weak sister can also be a malfunctioning part of a team-oriented task. For example, the slowest member in an assembly line or a slow marketing team, which hinders the overall performance of operations, is referred to as the weak sister.