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Anna Akhmatova (1889-1966) is among the most moving and revered voices in Russian literature. A poet of passion and conscience, she was persecuted after the Revolution and under Stalin, but chose to remain in Russia and bear witness. Her works capture a rich emotional world - poems such as "A Ride" and "By the Seashore" reflect a complex attitude to love or explore the duality of her own nature, while others, such as "Courage" and "In 1940", evoke the horrors of war. And in her two great poem cycles, "Requiem" and "Poem without a Hero", she creates a heart-rending depiction of a mother waiting outside a prison for news of her son and a magical layering of the old, joyous St Petersburg upon a tormented Leningrad.

Anna Akhmatova (1889_1966), the literary pseudonym of Anna Andreevna Gorenko, became famous after the publication of her second book of poems, *Beads*

D. M. Thomas is the author of the novel *The White Hotel*. He has translated works by Akhmatova and Pushkin.