

Texts presented in Class 8

Thomas Hood: *The Bridge of Sighs*

ONE more Unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements;
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully;
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanly;
Not of the stains of her,
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
Rash and undutiful:
Past all dishonour,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
One of Eve's family—
Wipe those poor lips of hers
Oozing so clammy.

Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses;

Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home?

Who was her father?
Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
Had she a brother?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other?

Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun!
O, it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
Feelings had changed:
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence;
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood, with amazement,
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver;
But not the dark arch,
Or the black flowing river:
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
Swift to be hurl'd—
Anywhere, anywhere
Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly—
No matter how coldly
 The rough river ran—
Over the brink of it,
Picture it—think of it,
 Dissolute Man!
Lave in it, drink of it,
 Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly,
 Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly,
 Young, and so fair!

Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly,
 Decently, kindly,
Smooth and compose them;
And her eyes, close them,
 Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring
 Thro' muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
 Fix'd on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurr'd by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
 Into her rest.—
Cross her hands humbly
As if praying dumbly,
 Over her breast!

Owning her weakness,
 Her evil behaviour,
And leaving, with meekness,
 Her sins to her Saviour!

Thomas Hardy: *The Ruined Maid*

"O 'Melia, my dear, this does everything crown!
Who could have supposed I should meet you in Town?
And whence such fair garments, such prosperi-ty?" —
"O didn't you know I'd been ruined?" said she.

— "You left us in tatters, without shoes or socks,
Tired of digging potatoes, and spudding up docks;
And now you've gay bracelets and bright feathers three!" —
"Yes: that's how we dress when we're ruined," said she.

— "At home in the barton you said thee' and thou,'
And thik oon,' and theäs oon,' and t'other'; but now
Your talking quite fits 'ee for high compa-ny!" —
"Some polish is gained with one's ruin," said she.

— "Your hands were like paws then, your face blue and bleak
But now I'm bewitched by your delicate cheek,
And your little gloves fit as on any la-dy!" —
"We never do work when we're ruined," said she.

— "You used to call home-life a hag-ridden dream,
And you'd sigh, and you'd sock; but at present you seem
To know not of megrims or melancho-ly!" —
"True. One's pretty lively when ruined," said she.

— "I wish I had feathers, a fine sweeping gown,
And a delicate face, and could strut about Town!" —
*"My dear — a raw country girl, such as you be,
Cannot quite expect that. You ain't ruined," said she.*

Cecil Frances Alexander: Hymn, "Do no sinful action"

1
Do no sinful action,
speak no angry word;
ye belong to Jesus,
children of the Lord.

2

Christ is kind and gentle,
Christ is pure and true;
and his little children
must be holy too.

3

There's a wicked spirit
watching round you still,
and he tries to tempt you
to all harm and ill.

4

But ye must not hear him,
though 'tis hard for you
to resist the evil,
and the good to do.

5

For ye promised truly,
in your infant days,
to renounce him wholly,
and forsake his ways.

6

Ye are new-born Christians
ye must learn to fight
with the bad within you,
and to do the right.

7

Christ is your own Master,
he is good and true,
and his little children
must be holy too.