

Dover Beach Summary

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1st Stanza Summary (Lines 1-14) - Nature's Scene and the Rise of Sadness: In the first stanza, the poet describes a peaceful and beautiful night. The sea is calm, the tide is full, and the moonlight is spread across the coasts of England and France. The waves of the sea sparkle under the moonlight. Through this tranquil scene, the poet hears a harsh sound—the waves crash onto the shore's pebbles and then draw back again. This creates a mournful tone. He says this motion of the waves contains an eternal note of sadness. It is not just a scene of nature, but a reflection of the poet's deep sorrow.

2nd Stanza Summary (Lines 15-20) - Sophocles and Human Suffering: In this stanza, the poet says that the ancient Greek playwright Sophocles had once heard the same kind of sound while sitting beside the Aegean Sea. That sound had reminded him of the rise and fall of human misery, just like the tides. Now, the poet, sitting at the shore of Dover, hears the same sound and is reminded of the eternal suffering of humanity. This shows that although ages change, sorrow remains the same.

3rd Stanza Summary (Lines 21-28) - The Pain of Lost Faith (Sea of Faith): In this part, the poet speaks of the "Sea of Faith" that once surrounded the world like a bright, shining girdle. But now that sea is retreating, and only its melancholic, long, withdrawing roar is heard. The poet wants to express that in the modern age, religious and spiritual faith is disappearing, and mankind is becoming lonely, insecure, and lost.

4th Stanza Summary (Lines 29-37) - A Call for Love and Harsh Reality of the World: In this final stanza, the poet urges his beloved, **"Ah, love, let us be true to one another!"** Although the world appears beautiful, dreamy, and new from the outside, in reality, it holds no joy, no love, no light, no certainty, no peace, or relief from pain. He says they must speak to each other with honesty and truth. They are like people standing on a dark plain where confusion and conflict prevail, and ignorant armies fight blindly in the night. This depicts a terrifying and uncertain world. Here, the only reliable thing is mutual love and sincerity.