

Sad February

The Unthanks

Cold February and all is not well*
There's few will sleep easy this night
Down on the dockside, grim silent men standing
Under the pale yellow light
There's scarcely a murmur and laughter there's none
Of whispering there's barely a sound
For their thoughts are away, down there in the bay
Where it's said that the Lairdsfield is down

Bleak February a cruel bitter wind
Stirs up the black grimy foam
Out there on the sea is no place to be
Far better by the fireside and warm
But not for the sailor the soft easy chair
He's out there earning his bread
But tonight there are ten who'll work never again
Counted among the drowned dead

Dark February a few flakes of snow
Drift over bowed heads on the stray
By the breakwater side and along by the Gare
They wait for the first streaks of day
And over the sand-dunes and over the bar
See a few feet of keel nothing more
Held fast in the sand with all of her hands
Barely two miles from the shore

Sad February and all is not well
There's few will sleep easy this night
Down at the dockside, grim silent men standing
Under the pale yellow light
For down there at Teesmouth
The Lairdsfield is drowned
And with her every man of her crew
Ten men who'll not see the springtime again
Nor yet see the cold winter through