

The City of Sleep

By Rudyard Kipling

Over the edge of the purple down,
Where the single lamplight gleams,
Know ye the road to the Merciful Town
That is hard by the Sea of Dreams –
Where the poor may lay their wrongs away,
And the sick may forget to weep?
But we – pity us! Oh, pity us!
We wakeful; ah, pity us! –
We must go back with Policeman Day –
Back from the City of Sleep!

Weary they turn from the scroll and crown,
Fetter and prayer and plough –
They that go up to the Merciful Town,
For her gates are closing now.
It is their right in the Baths of Night
Body and soul to steep,
But we – pity us! ah, pity us!
We wakeful; oh, pity us! –
We must go back with Policeman Day –
Back from the City of Sleep!

Over the edge of the purple down,
Ere the tender dreams begin,
Look – we may look – at the Merciful Town,
But we may not enter in!
Outcasts all, from her guarded wall
Back to our watch we creep:
We – pity us! ah, pity us!
We wakeful; ah, pity us! –
We that go back with Policeman Day –
Back from the City of Sleep!