# Audio file – “Dover Beach”

[34-Track-34.mp3](https://neagov-my.sharepoint.com/personal/travisd_arts_gov/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/34-Track-34.mp3)

Dana Gioia

And now, Angela Lansbury recites a poem by Matthew Arnold.

Angela Lansbury

“Dover Beach”

The sea is calm tonight.

The tide is full, the moon lies fair

Upon the straits; on the French coast the light

Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,

Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.

Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!

Only, from the long line of spray

Where the ebb meets the moon-blanched sand,

Listen! you hear the grating roar

Of pebbles which the waves suck back, and fling,

At their return, up the high strand,

Begin, and cease, and then begin again,

With tremulous cadence slow, and bring

The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago

Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought

Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow

Of human misery; we

Find also in the sound a thought,

Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith

Was once, too, at the full, and round earth’s shore

Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.

But now I only hear

Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,

Retreating, to the breath

Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear

And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true

To one another! for the world, which seems

To lie before us like a land of dreams,

So various, so beautiful, so new,

Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,

Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;

And we are here as on a darkling plain

Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,

Where ignorant armies clash by night.

TRANSCRIPT NOTE: This version of “Dover Beach” is a different version than what is currently on the Poetry Foundation’s site. If reciting this poem for Poetry Out Loud, please refer to <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43588/dover-beach>.