



The Darkling Thrush

By **Thomas Hardy**

FSc-Part I | English

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Text- Stanza I

I leant upon a coppice gate
When *Frost* was spectre-grey,
And *Winter's* dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
Had sought their household fires.





Text- Stanza II



The land's sharp features seemed to be
The Century's corpse outleant,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervourless as I.



Text- Stanza III



At once a voice arose among
The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-hearted evensong
Of joy illimited;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.



Text- Stanza IV

So little cause for carolings
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
His happy good-night air
Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
And I was unaware.



Class Activity

1. Find all the **literary devices** in the poem (all stanzas) and **underline** them.
2. What is the mood or atmosphere created in the opening of the poem?
3. How does Hardy describe the setting and season in the first stanza?
4. What does the phrase “The Century’s corpse outleant” symbolize?
5. How does the poet’s mood reflect the condition of nature?
6. What images or words show that the scene is lifeless and gloomy?



Questions

1. How does the poet describe the winter season?
2. Do you find the poem gloomy? Why or why not?
3. How is the song of the thrush described in the poem?
4. Which old-fashioned (archaic) words are used in the poem?
5. What is the symbolic significance of the thrush in the poem?

Questions

1. Which are the examples of imagery used in *The Darkling Thrush*?
2. How does the speaker feel about the season at the beginning of the poem?
3. How does the thrush's song change the mood of the poem?
4. Discuss the tone of the poem.
5. How does the poet use language to depict the bird's strength in the third stanza?



Home Task



- Write a short **Summary** of the poem in your own words