

Suicide

By W. E. Henley

Staring corpselike at the ceiling,
See his harsh, unrazored features,
Ghastly brown against the pillow,
And his throat—so strangely bandaged!

Lack of work and lack of victuals,
A debauch of smuggled whisky,
And his children in the workhouse
Made the world so black a riddle

That he plunged for a solution;
And, although his knife was edgeless,
He was sinking fast towards one,
When they came, and found, and saved him.

Stupid now with shame and sorrow,
In the night I hear him sobbing.
But sometimes he talks a little.
He has told me all his troubles.

In his broad face, tanned and bloodless,
White and wild his eyeballs glisten;
And his smile, occult and tragic,
Yet so slavish, makes you shudder.