

Essential Questions: What **Puritan** ideas and ideals are conveyed through the use of **plain style imagery** in this poem? Be prepared to *summarize* the poem and *compare* Bradstreet’s use of imagery with Edwards’ “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.”

Here Follow Some Verses upon the Burning of Our House, July 10, 1666

Anne Bradstreet

IDENTIFY

Circle the **inversions** you find in lines 1–4.

CLARIFY

What is the speaker doing in lines 11–12?

INTERPRET

In lines 16–17, why does the speaker say that the fire was “just?”

In silent night when rest I took
For sorrow near I did not look
I wakened was with thund’ring noise
And piteous shrieks of dreadful voice.
5 That fearful sound of “Fire!” and “Fire!”
Let no man know is my desire.
I, starting up, the light did spy,
And to my God my heart did cry
To strengthen me in my distress
10 And not to leave me succorless.¹
Then, coming out, beheld a space
The flame consume my dwelling place.
And when I could no longer look,
I blest His name that gave and took,²
15 That laid my goods now in the dust.
Yea, so it was, and so ’twas just.
It was His own, it was not mine,
Far be it that I should repine;
He might of all justly bereft
20 But yet sufficient for us left.
When by the ruins oft I past
My sorrowing eyes aside did cast,
And here and there the places spy
Where oft I sat and long did lie:

1. **succorless** (suk’ər·lis) *adj.*: without aid or assistance; helpless.

2. **that gave and took**: allusion to Job 1:21, “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.”

25 Here stood that trunk, and there that chest,
There lay that store I counted best.
My pleasant things in ashes lie,
And them behold no more shall I.
Under thy roof no guest shall sit,
30 Nor at thy table eat a bit.
No pleasant tale shall e'er be told,
Nor things recounted done of old.
No candle e'er shall shine in thee,
Nor bridegroom's voice e'er heard shall be.
35 In silence ever shall thou lie,
Adieu, Adieu, all's vanity.
Then straight I 'gin my heart to chide,
And did thy wealth on earth abide?
Didst fix thy hope on mold'ring dust?
40 The arm of flesh didst make thy trust?
Raise up thy thoughts above the sky
That dunghill mists away may fly.

45 Thou hast an house on high erect,
Framed by that mighty Architect,
With glory richly furnished,
Stands permanent though this be fled.
It's purchased and paid for too
By Him who hath enough to do.
A price so vast as is unknown
50 Yet by His gift is made thine own;
There's wealth enough, I need no more,
Farewell, my pelf,³ farewell my store.
The world no longer let me love,
My hope and treasure lies above.

3. **pelf:** wealth or worldly goods (sometimes used as a term of contempt).

INTERPRET

What is the "house on high erect" described in lines 43–46?

INTERPRET

In line 44, who is the "mighty Architect"?

FLUENCY

Practice reading the boxed passage aloud. As you read the first time, notice the **rhymes** and strong **meter**. On your next readings, try to vary the rate of your reading to avoid sounding sing-song.

INTERPRET

Bradstreet's **plain style** helps to convey a complex message. In your own words, what is this message?

IDENTIFY

The poem is rhymed in couplets. Circle any end rhymes that do not rhyme exactly. (*Review Skill*)