

talk
to
me!

LET'S TALK EMPOWERMENT. LET'S TALK ENGLISH

Beehive

3: Rain on the Roof

by

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1. Summary

The poet is lying in bed, blissfully listening to the pitter patter of the rain, as it falls on the shingles of his cottage. The rhythm of the rain makes him day dream and unlocks his memories. He remembers his youth, when his mother would lovingly tuck him and his brothers/sisters into bed every night.

Do you want to listen to a recitation of the poem? The whole poem? The original poem had 3 more stanzas. Also a few words have been changed from the original poem. This recitation is set to an Indian raga, so it is very nice to listen to.

Click on the link below to listen:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xS0y0SLXX0U>

2. Stanza By Stanza Explanation

When the **humid shadows hover**
Over all the **starry spheres**
And the **melancholy** darkness
Gently weeps in rainy tears,
What a **bliss** to press the pillow
Of a **cottage-chamber bed**
And lie listening to the **patter**
Of the soft rain overhead!

The poet talks about an evening when rain clouds cover the stars. There is a sense of sadness in the darkness. When it rains it seems as if nature is crying. The poet is happy that he can lie in bed, pressed to his pillow. He listens blissfully to the rhythm of the gentle rain falling on the roof of his cottage.

Every **tinkle** on the **shingle**
Has an echo in the heart;
And a thousand **dreamy fancies**
Into busy being start,
And a thousand **recollections**
Weave their air- threads into woof,
As I listen to the patter
Of the rain upon the roof.

The poet says that the sound of each raindrop echoes in his heart. As he listens to the tinkling of the rain, he starts daydreaming. He imagines thousands of fantastic pictures and fantasies, and thousands of memories come back into his busy mind.

Now in memory comes my mother,
As she used in years **agone**,
To regard the **darling dreamers**
Ere she left them till the dawn:
O! I feel her **fond** look on me
As I **list** to this **refrain**
Which is played upon the shingles
By the patter of the rain.

As he continues to listen to the repeating sound of the patter of the rain, the poet remembers his mother. He remembers the time, many years ago, when his mother used to look lovingly at him and his brothers/sisters before leaving them to sleep and dream at night.

3. Vocabulary

1. **Humid shadows** - rain bearing clouds that cover the stars.
2. **Hover** - remain in one place in the air
I can see many bees **hovering** over the flowers in the garden.
3. **Starry spheres** - starry skies (poetic usage)
4. **Melancholy** - sad, depressed
She has been very **melancholy** ever since her mother died.
5. **Bliss** - happiness, joy
I am in **bliss** when I listen to good music.

6. **Cottage-chamber** - room in a cottage or small house
My friend has decorated her **cottage-chamber** very beautifully.
7. **Patter** - light, quick, tapping sound
When my little sister wakes up, I hear the sound of her feet going pitter **patter** on the ground.
8. **Tinkle** - short ring sound
My ringtone has a nice **tinkle**.
9. **Shingles** - wooden tiles on a roof
The **shingles** on my roof are old and need to be changed.
10. **Dreamy fancies** – day dreams (poetic usage)
11. **Recollections** - memories
I have very beautiful **recollections** of my holidays with my grandparents.
12. **Weave their air threads into woof** - weave fragile memories together (poetic usage)
13. **Woof** - in weaving, the warp — the threads that run lengthwise — and the **woof** — the threads that run across — make up the fabric.
14. **Agone** - poetic term for 'ago'
15. **Darling dreamers** - here refers to the poet and his brothers/sisters who are loved by their mother. The mother leaves them every night to sleep and dream (**poetic usage**)
16. **Ere** - poetic term for 'before'
17. **Fond** - loving
I have **fond** memories of playing with my naughty brother when we were young.
18. **List** - poetic term for listen
19. **Refrain** - repeated part of a song or poem, here refers to the repeated sound of the rain.(1) also, to stop oneself from doing something (2)
The song has such a powerful **refrain**, I keep humming it all the time. (1)
Kindly **refrain** from using your cell phones during the movie. (2)

4. Questions

I.

1. What do the following phrases mean to you? Discuss in class.
 - (i) humid shadows
 - (ii) starry spheres
 - (iii) what a bliss
 - (iv) a thousand dreamy fancies into busy being start
 - (v) a thousand recollections weave their air-threads into woof
2. What does the poet like to do when it rains?
3. What is the single major memory that comes to the poet? Who are the “darling dreamers” he refers to?
4. Is the poet now a child? Is his mother still alive?

II.

1. When you were a young child, did your mother tuck you in, as the poet’s did?
2. Do you like rain? What do you do when it rains steadily or heavily as described in the poem?
3. Does everybody have a cosy bed to lie in when it rains? Look around you and describe how different kinds of people or animals spend time, seek shelter etc. during rain.

5. Literary Devices

1. Rhyme scheme of the poem: abcdbdefe

When the humid shadows hover	a
Over all the starry spheres	b
And the melancholy darkness	c
Gently weeps in rainy tears,	b
What a bliss to press the pillow	d
Of a cottage-chamber bed	e
And lie listening to the patter	f
Of the soft rain overhead!	e

2. **Alliteration:** The repetition of a consonant sound in two or more consecutive words.

'**h**umid **h**over' - 'h' sound is repeated
'**s**tarry **s**pheres' - 's' sound is repeated.
'**p**ress **p**illow' - 'p' sound is repeated.
'**l**ie **l**istening' - 'l' sound is repeated.