

ENGLISH

CHAPTER 3: RAIN ON THE ROOF



RAIN ON THE ROOF

~Summary~

-by Coates Kinney

Stanza- 1

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!

Explanation: In this stanza, the poet says that stars of the sky are not visible, being covered by clouds. He says that the darkness is making him sad and reflective and the rain also seems to mirror his emotions as it looks like tears falling softly from human eyes. The only thing that can bring joy to the poet is to curl up with a pillow in the bed of a rural cottage. Though the rooms of the cottage may be small and ill-equipped, the sound of raindrops can enable him to recover from his sad and gloomy mood.

Stanza- 2

Every tinkle on the shingles
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.

Explanation: In this stanza, the poet describes how the raindrops make a tinkling sound as they fall on the shingles of the roof. Each sound made by the rain is repeated the next instant by the beating of his heart. What he has only been imagining till now starts appearing before his eyes. As he is listening to the soft and continuous falling of the raindrops on his roof, all his memories come back to him, but they are not discrete and separated from each other. Instead, these memories have formed a patchwork by becoming entwined with one another. The memories are large in numbers and have formed a cluster in his mind.

Stanza- 3

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.

Explanation: In this stanza, the poet describes the first memory that he can actually identify among the patchwork of his memories. He remembers that during his childhood, his mother used to look at him and his siblings as they were sleeping and having pleasant dreams. His mother would make a point to look at them every night, for she knew she would not see them again till the next morning. His mother would bend down and watch over him in particular. These memories are evoked as he listens to the repetitive rhythm of the raindrops as they are falling on his roof.

Conclusion of Rain on the Roof

In this poem, whenever the poet hears the pattering sound on his rooftop he remembers sweet memories of his childhood especially one that relates to his mother.

NCERT SOLUTIONS
Questions (Page No. 42)
(Thinking about the Poem)

I. Question 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

Answer:

- i. humid shadows: humid shadows refer to the dark clouds that cover the sky and bring rain
- ii. starry spheres: it refers to the sky that is usually full of stars
- iii. what a bliss: bliss means happiness. Here the poet says that it is such a happy moment when one listens to the patter of the rain overhead.
- iv. a thousand dreamy fancies into busy being start: It refers to the several thoughts and fantasies that surround the poet when he listens to the patter of the rain.
- v. a thousand recollections weave their air-threads into woof- it means that poet feels as if his old memories are being woven in front of him.

Question 2. What does the poet like to do when it rains?

Answer: The poet likes to press his head into the pillow of his cottage chamber bed and listen to the patter of the soft rain overhead.

Question 3. What is the single major memory that comes to the poet? Who are the “darling dreamers” he refers to?

Answer: The single major memory that comes to the poet is of his mother and her fond look on the poet.

Darling dreamers that the poet refers to are the poet and his siblings who were sent to sleep by the poet’s mother every day.

Question 4. Is the poet now a child? Is his mother still alive?

Answer: No, the poet is now a grown up man. His mother is not alive anymore.

II. Question 1. When you were a young child, did your mother tuck you in, as the poet's did?

Answer: Yes, when I was a young child, my mother tucked me in. She would sing me lullabies and send me to sleep.

Question 2. Do you like rain? What do you do when it rains steadily or heavily as described in the poem?

Answer: Yes, I like when it rains. When it rains heavily, I like to listen to the patter of the rain on the overhead and to look at the drops falling on the leaves of the plants.

Question 3. Does everybody have a cozy 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.

Answer: No, not everyone is fortunate enough to have a cozy bed to lie in when it rains. Poor people who do not have a shelter to protect themselves from the rain. They wander here and there to find a place where they can stand under the tin roofs or trees. People who were out of their homes try to rush back towards their homes as soon as possible. Animals try to find places to save themselves from getting wet during rain.