




Rain on the Roof



When the sky is covered with dark clouds and it starts raining, have you ever listened to the patter of soft rain on the roof? What thoughts flashed through your mind as you heard this melody of nature? Read the poem to find out what the poet dreamed of while listening to the rain.

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!

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.

Now in memory comes my mother,
As she used in years ago,
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.

COATES KINNEY



GLOSSARY

tinkle: short, light ringing sounds

shingles: rectangular wooden tiles used on roofs

woof: weft, i.e. the threads woven across the loom

ere: old poetic word for 'before'

refrain: a repeated part of a song or a poem; here, the sound of the rain

list: old poetic word for 'listen'



Thinking about the Poem

- 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.

*All that I am or ever hope to be, I owe to my
angel Mother.*

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

