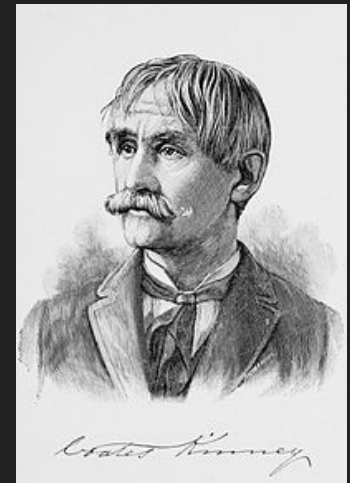


RAIN ON THE ROOF

by COATES KINNEY

ABOUT THE POET

Coates Kinney was a lawyer, politician, journalist and poet from the United States.



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

- In this stanza, the poet describes a rainy night. He says that all the stars of the sky have become invisible because they have been covered by clouds. Darkness usually has a negative connotation, and the poet makes no exception to this rule. 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. At this point, the only thing that can bring joy to the poet is to curl up with a pillow in the bed of a country cottage. Though the rooms of the cottage may be small and ill-equipped, the sound of raindrops can only transport him there for him to recover from his melancholic mood.
- Rhyme scheme of the poem: abcbdefe

Stanza 1

- 1.Alliteration: The repetition of a consonant sound in two or more consecutive words.
- 'Humid Hover' - 'h' sound is repeating.
- 'starry spheres' - 's' should is repeating.
- 'press pillow' - 'p' sound is repeating.
- 'lie listening' - 'l' sound is repeating.
- Onomatopoeia: The use of sound words to create a dramatic effect and auditory imagery.
- 'Patter' is the use of sound word. It is the sound made by the rain drops falling on the roof top.
- Personification: Treating a non – living thing as a living being.
- darkness has been personified when he says that it is sad.
- Transferred Epithet: The use of an adjective with a noun when it refers to another noun.
- In 'melancholy darkness', the darkness is not melancholy, but it refers to the sad people.

*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 bright hues into woof,
As I listen to the patter
Of the rain upon the roof.*

- In this stanza, the poet describes how the raindrops make the loudest sound as they fall on the shingles of the roof. Each sound that is made by the rain in this way is repeated in the next instant by the beating of his heart. The things he has only been imagining now start to appear before his very eyes. As he is listening to the soft and continuous falling of the raindrops on his roof, all his memories are coming back to him, but they are not discrete and separated from each other. Instead all of his memories seem to have formed a patchwork by becoming entwined with one another.

Stanza 2

- 1. Alliteration: The repetition of a consonant sound in two or more consecutive words.
- 'busy being' - 'b' sound is repeating
- 'their thread' - 'th' sound is repeating
- 'rain roof' - 'r' sound is repeating
- Onomatopoeia: The use of sound words to create a dramatic effect and auditory imagery.
- 'tinkle', 'patter' – sounds made by the raindrops
- Personification: Treating a non – living thing as a living being.
- recollection is personified when he says that they weave dreams.
- Transferred Epithet: The use of an adjective with a noun when it refers to another noun.
- 'dreamy fancies' – it does not mean that the fancies are dreamy but refers to the people who have dreams.

◦

Now in fancy comes my mother,
As she used to, years ago,
To survey her darling dreamers,
Ere she left them till the dawn;
Oh! I see her bending o'er me,
As I list to this refrain
Which is played upon the shingles
By the patter of the rain.

- Here, the poet introduces his mother. He says that he is dreaming of his mother. As he had told in the previous stanza that rain brings memories of the past – it is the memory of his mother who is no longer alive. In the past, she used to love him a lot, she used to consider him a darling and she would let him sleep till day break and have sweet dreams. The poet can still feel that his mother is looking at him as he listens to the song made by the rain drops falling on the roof top of his room. The sound of the rain makes him correlate his past with his present. That is why the poet is moved by the sound of the rain drops on the shingles of his room. Whenever he hears this sound it brings back memories of the past and he is reminded of his mother.

Stanza 3

- Alliteration: The repetition of a consonant sound in two or more consecutive words.
- 'memory my mother' - 'm' sound is repeating
- 'Darling dreamers' - 'd' sound is repeating
- Onomatopoeia: The use of sound words to create a dramatic effect and auditory imagery.
- 'patter' – sound of raindrops falling on the shingles of the roof.