

"There Will Come Soft Rains"

Ray Bradbury

A. Vocab – Define the following:

a. silhouette

b. paranoia

c. regiment

d. incinerator

e. capillaries

f. oblivious

g. sublime

h. psychopathic

B. Pre-Reading – Poetry as Inspiration**"There Will Come Soft Rains"**

There will come soft rains and the smell of the ground,
And swallows circling with their shimmering sound;

And frogs in the pools singing at night,
And wild plum trees in tremulous white;

Robins will wear their feathery fire,
Whistling their whims on a low fence-wire;

And not one will know of the war, not one
Will care at last when it is done.

Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree,
If mankind perished utterly;

And Spring herself, when she woke at dawn
Would scarcely know that we were gone.

Sara Teasdale



There Will Come Soft Rains is a 12-line poem by Sara Teasdale in her collection *Flame and Shadow*, published in 1920. The subject of the poem imagines nature reclaiming the earth after humanity has been wiped out by a war (line 7). The poem has six stanzas, each made up of a rhyming couplet.

Sara Teasdale was born on August 8, 1884. She had poor health for most of her life, and it was only at age 14 that she was well enough to begin school. In 1933, she committed suicide.

Which war did she have in mind when she wrote the poem?

C. Comprehension Questions – Answer the following in the space below in full sentences. **(11)**

1. What unusual qualities and appliances does the house have? /2
2. What were the five spots of paint of? /2
3. What can you infer has happened to the family members of the house? /1
4. What did the children usually do at 4:30? /1
5. What is the name of the family that lived in the house? /1
6. How did the house catch on fire? What did it do to try and save itself? /2

D. Further Thinking Question:

7. What warning is Bradbury trying to deliver in his story? How do you know this? /2

E. **Literary Terms:** Be able to define each term (in point form) and explain and give an example of the importance of each technique in the story. We will be doing this as a class, in groups.

1. **simile:** a comparison to indicate similarities between two things; using the words 'like' or 'as'.
Example from the story: "The house shuddered, oak bone on bone, its bared skeleton cringing from the heat, its wire, its nerves revealed as if a surgeon had torn the skin off to let the red veins and capillaries quiver in the scalded air."

Significance: Creates a persona of the house as a human being – in fact it seems more alive than any of its missing human occupants. The image also conveys the harsh and brutal effects of a fiery bomb blast on living tissue so we think about what happened to the occupants. Death awaits – the tone darkens and the imagery focusses on physical senses so the reader cringes at the mental picture.

2. **Personification:**

3. **Setting:**

4. **symbolism:**

5. **repetition:**

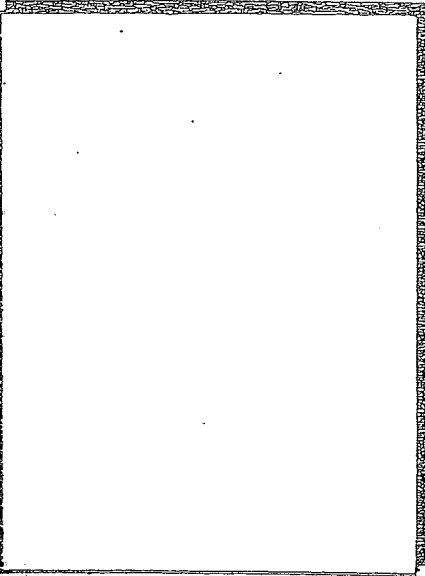
6. **theme:**

Name: _____

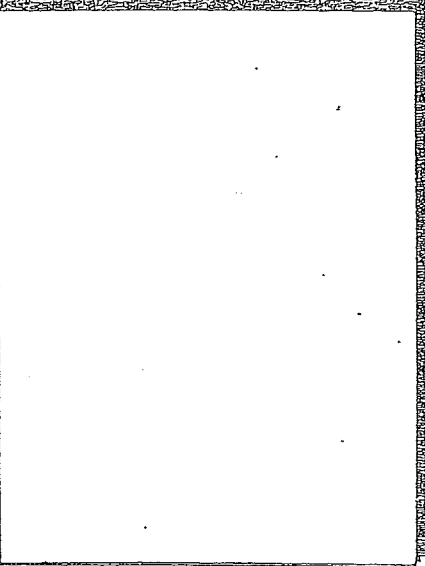
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Story/Selection/Article: _____

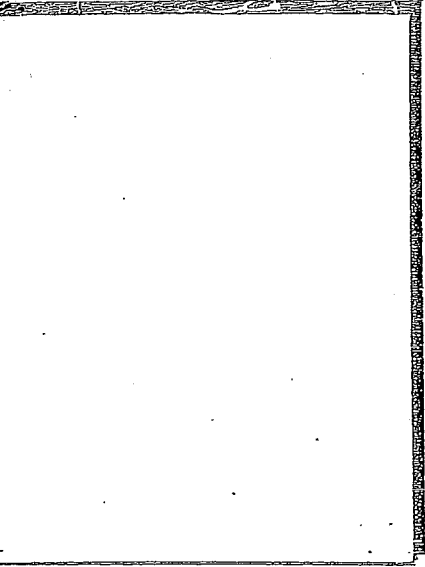
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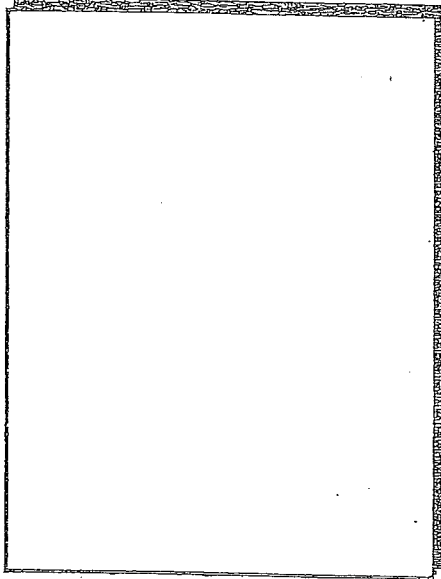


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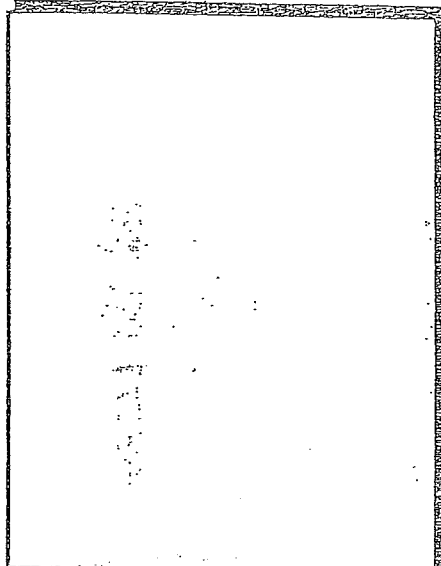
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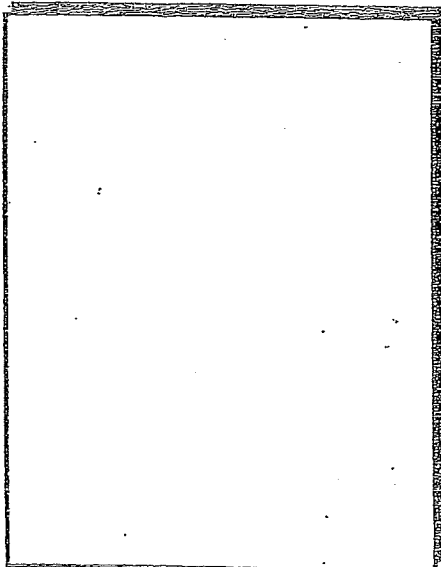
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