

**ENGLISH LITERATURE (HORNBILL)**  
**CHAPTER 03: THE VOICE OF THE RAIN (POEM)**  
~ By: Walt Whitman  
(Summary)

**OVERALL SUMMARY**

Poem starts with the poet asking a rain softly falling on the earth, 'Who are you?' and in revert, strangely metaphorically, the voice of the rain replied back that she is the poem of earth. The rain told the poet that she is everlasting and cannot be touched as it was born out of the land and deep sea. It changes its shape in the form of clouds, vapours etc. yet it remains the same.

Further rain explained that it then comes down to wash the dry/thirsty tiny particles and dust layers of the world. It also helps the seeds which lie hidden and unborn under the layer of earth to take a new life. It falls back on the surface of the earth to provide water to the drought-prone areas and to beautify and purify the earth (its birthplace). It provides life to the seeds hidden inside the earth and helps them grow.



The rain doesn't care if anyone bothers about her deeds or not, it showers regularly day and night and completes its entire journey cycle. The poet also compared the rain with a song indicating that it originates from its birthplace, travels across to fulfill the requirements of the earth without bothering about the others' perceptions about her and comes back to the earth, its original position.

**STANZA-WISE SUMMARY**

*And who art thou? said I to the soft-falling shower,  
Which, strange to tell, gave me an answer, as here translated:  
I am the Poem of Earth, said the voice of the rain  
Eternal I rise impalpable out of the land and the  
bottomless sea,*

<b>Who art thou</b>	Who are you
<b>Eternal</b>	never-ending
<b>Impalpable</b>	which cannot be described

In the above lines, the poet asked the soft-falling shower 'Who are you?' to which the rain replied in a strange to state manner. The rain said that it was the Poem of the Earth and it rose continuously from the land and bottomless ocean in the form of vapours.

*Upward to heaven, whence, vaguely form'd, altogether changed, and yet the same,  
I descend to lave the droughts, atomies, dust-layers of the globe,  
And all that in them without me were seeds only, latent, unborn;*

<b>Whence</b>	where
<b>Vaguely</b>	not clearly
<b>Descend</b>	come down
<b>Lave</b>	wash; bathe

**Topic:** Voice of the Rain (Poem)  
**Subject:** English Literature (Hornbill)  
**Class:** XI

*Atomies*    *small particles*  
*Latent*    *hidden/buried*

The rain tells the poet that it rises upwards towards the sky in the form of vapour where it changes its form (condenses into water droplets). It also says that although its form gets changed, it still remains the same. The rain comes down to wash the drought and provide water. It also washes away the dust and small particles from the earth's surface. And the seeds inside the earth grow into a plant because of the water provided by the rain. It gives life to the seeds.

*And forever, by day and night, I give back life to my own origin,  
And make pure and beautify it;  
(For song, issuing from its birth-place, after fulfilment, wandering  
Reck'd or unreck'd, duly with love returns.)*

**Reck'd or unreck'd**    *it means whether cared for or not cared for. It doesn't affect the rain nor the poet if someone listened to the rain or not*

The rain says that by day and night it provides life, care, enrichment, and water to the place from where it originated. The rain keeps enhancing the beauty and purity of the earth by preparing a life-cycle for itself again.

(The Rain is like a song that originates from its birth-place, just like the heart of the singer, and travels to fulfill the earth's needs. It finally comes back to the place from where it originated. Whether it is ruined or not, it returns to the original position, with a lot of love to its birth-place).

## POETIC DEVICES

<b>Personification</b>	the poet used a non-living thing as a living thing in the poet	<i>I am the Poem of Earth, said the voice of the rain</i>
<b>Metaphor</b>	an indirect comparison between the qualities of different things	<i>I am the Poem of Earth - rain is being compared to a poem</i>
<b>Hyperbole</b>	exaggerated statements	<i>Bottomless sea</i>
<b>Imagery</b>	visual description of something	<i>Soft-falling shower</i>