

A mysterious story poem



Read this poem aloud.

The Listeners

"Is there anybody there?" said the Traveller,
Knocking on the midnight door;
And his horse in the silence clamped the grasses
Of the forest's ferny floor;
And a bird flew up out of the thicket,
Above the Traveller's head
And he smote upon the door again a second time:
"Is there anybody there?" he said.
But no one descended to the Traveller;
No head from the leaf-tinged eaves
Laned over and looked into his grey eyes,
Where he stood perplexed and still.
But only a host of phantom listers
That dwell in the hollow haunts
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight
To that voice from the world of men
Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on the dark eaves,
That gasped down to the empty hall,
Hearkening to an air stirred and shaken
By the lonely Traveller's call.

And he felt in his heart their strangeness,
Their stillness answering his cry,
While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,
"Nearer the starved and leafy sky."
For he suddenly smote on the door, even
Louder, and lifted his head -
"Tell them I came, and no one answered,
That I kept my word," he said.
Never the least stir made the listers,
Through every word he spoke
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house
From the one man left awake:
As, they heard his foot upon the steps,
And the sound of men on stone,
And how the silence rangal with backward,
When the plunging hoofs were gone.

Water de la Mare



This poem seems to be part of a longer mystery story. Why is it mysterious?

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