

Chapter – 8

Martha

Walter de la Mare

About the poet/poem

- Walter de la Mare (1873-1956) was a modern poet.
- He was quite different from the poets of his age.
- In his poems he creates an atmosphere of mystery, where experience is a dream like reality.

Main idea(s)

- The poet remembers about the magical effects that storytelling of Martha had on him in his childhood
- He remembers how peaceful their hearts would become while listening to her stories.

Presentation/Style

- The poet while expressing his ideas creates an atmosphere of mystery.
- It also presents a vivid picture of Martha as a storyteller and the effect she had over her audience.

Main points

- Martha was a beautiful girl who used to tell stories to the children in the hazel glen.
- She had clear grey eyes and slim hands.
- When Martha told stories the children were relaxed and comfortable as they stared at her.
- The meaning of the words of the story were made clear by the sound of her voice.
- Her narrow chin and a small lovely head had a serious expression.
- Her stories were about gnomes (tiny men who guard treasure in stories) and fairies.
- Martha's way of storytelling had a magical effect that captured the heart and mind of the listeners.
- The listener did not know where they were.
- They got transported to the land of wonder.

Conclusion

- In the poem, the poet remembers his childhood when he used to listen to stories by Martha. He felt happy and tranquil. Martha's beauty, her sweet manners and her storytelling had soothing and magical effect on him.

Question

1. What is the nature of the poem?
2. Describe Martha's physical features.
3. Do you think that Martha and the children enjoyed the stories?