


The background is a light gray gradient. It is decorated with several realistic water droplets of various sizes, some clustered in the top left and others in the bottom right. A faint, large circular pattern, resembling a ripple or a snowflake, is centered in the upper half of the image.

THIS WINTER COMING

KAREN PRESS



ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND HER POEM

- KAREN PRESS WAS BORN IN CAPE TOWN IN 1956
 - PRESS WORKED AS AN ENGLISH AND MATHEMATICS TEACHER BEFORE BECOMING A FULL-TIME WRITER.
 - 'THIS WINTER COMING' WAS PUBLISHED IN 1986 DURING THE APARTHEID ERA.
 - THE POEM APPEARS TO ADDRESS THE FEARING OF THE COMING OF WINTER BUT IT IS AN EXTENDED METAPHOR FOR CURRENT AND COMING OF VIOLENCE IN THE COUNTRY.
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WALKING IN THE THICK RAIN
OF THIS WINTER WE HAVE ONLY JUST ENTERED,
WHO IS NOT FRIGHTENED?

THE SEA IS SWOLLEN, CHURNING IN BROKEN WAVES
AROUND THE ROCKS, THE SAND IS SINKING AWAY
THE SEAGULLS WILL NOT LAND
UNDER THIS SKY, THIS SHROUD FALLING
WHO IS NOT FRIGHTENED?

IN EVERY PART OF THE CITY, SAD WOMEN CLIMBING ONTO BUSES, DOGS
BARKING IN THE STREET, AND CHILDREN

IN EVERY DOORWAY CRYING, THE WORLD IS SO HUNGRY, MADAM'S
HOUSE IS CLEAN

AND THE WOMEN RETURN WITH SLOW STEPS
TO CHILDREN, THE STREET, THE SKY TOLLING LIKE A BLACK BELL;
THESE WOMEN ARE TIDES OF SADNESS

THEY WILL DROWN THE WORLD,
WHO IS NOT FRIGHTENED?

ON EVERY CORNER MEN STANDING
OLD STUMPS IN THE RAIN, TOMBSTONES
ENGRAVED WITH OPEN EYES
WATCHING THE BRIGHT CARS FULL OF SATIATED FACES
PASS THEM, PASS THEM, PASS THEM,
WHO IS NOT FRIGHTENED?

INTO THE RAIN THE CHILDREN ARE RUNNING
THIN AS THE BAREST TWIGS THEY KINDLE A FIRE
TO FIGHT THE WINTER, THEIR BARE BODIES
A RAGING FIRE OF DEAD CHILDREN
AND THE SKY COLLAPSING UNDER CENTURIES OF RAIN
THE WIND LIKE A MOUNTAIN CRYING,
WHO IS NOT FRIGHTENED OF THIS WINTER
COMING UPON US NOW?



STANZA ONE

WALKING IN THE THICK RAIN

OF THIS WINTER WE HAVE ONLY JUST
ENTERED,

WHO IS NOT FRIGHTENED?

- HEAVY/TEXTURED RAIN – LIKE A BLANKET
 - IT IS ONLY THE BEGINNING - THE WORST IS STILL COMING.
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STANZA TWO

THE SEA IS SWOLLEN, **CHURNING** IN **BROKEN**
WAVES

AROUND THE ROCKS, THE SAND IS **SINKING**
AWAY

THE SEAGULLS WILL NOT LAND

UNDER THIS SKY, THIS **SHROUD** **FALLING**

WHO IS NOT FRIGHTENED?

THE SPEAKER USES **DESTRUCTIVE** AND **HOSTILE**
WORDS SUCH AS “CHURNING”, “BROKEN”,
“SINKING”, “SHROUD” AND “FALLING” TO
PROVIDE VIVID IMAGERY OF THE WEATHER.

SHROUD REFERS TO COVERING SOMEONE
WHO IS DEAD. THIS COULD POSSIBLY BE THE
RAIN?

STANZA THREE

IN EVERY PART OF THE CITY, SAD WOMEN CLIMBING ONTO BUSES,
DOGS BARKING IN THE STREET, AND THE CHILDREN
IN EVERY DOORWAY CRYING,

THE WORLD IS SO HUNGRY, MADAM'S HOUSE IS CLEAN

AND THE WOMEN RETURN WITH SLOW STEPS

TO THE CHILDREN, THE STREET, THE SKY TOLLING LIKE A BLACK
BELL;

THESE WOMEN ARE A TIDE OF SADNESS

THEY WILL DROWN THE WORLD,

WHO IS NOT FRIGHTENED?

THE HARDSHIP OF THE PEOPLE IS EVIDENT. A
CLEAR DIVIDE BETWEEN RICH AND POOR -
PARTICULARLY IN LINE 12 "THE WORLD IS SO
HUNGRY" AND ON THE OTHER HAND WE SEE
"MADAM'S HOUSE IS CLEAN".

SIMILE. BLACK IS A SYMBOL OF MOURNING. LIKE
A FUNERAL BELL.

"TIDE OF SADNESS" – METAPHOR, COMPARING
THE SADNESS OF THE WOMEN TO A TIDE OF
WAVES.

STANZA FOUR

ON EVERY CORNER MEN STANDING
OLD STUMPS IN THE RAIN, TOMBSTONES
ENGRAVED WITH OPEN EYES
WATCHING THE BRIGHT CARS FULL OF SATIATED
FACES
PASS THEM, PASS THEM, PASS THEM,
WHO IS NOT FRIGHTENED?

- THESE MEN COULD BE LOOKING FOR FOOD OR FOR JOBS ON THESE CORNERS.
- METAPHOR – COMPARING OLD MEN TO TOMBSTONES.
- DEPICTS JUST HOW OBLIVIOUS PEOPLE ARE TO THE TROUBLES/WORRIES OF OTHER.

STANZA FIVE

INTO THE RAIN THE CHILDREN ARE RUNNING
THIN AS THE BAREST TWIGS THEY KINDLE A FIRE
TO FIGHT THE WINTER, THEIR BARE BODIES
A RAGING FIRE OF DEAD CHILDREN
AND THE SKY COLLAPSING UNDER CENTURIES OF RAIN
THE WIND LIKE A MOUNTAIN CRYING, WHO IS NOT
FRIGHTENED OF THIS WINTER
COMING UPON US NOW?

- THE DEPTH OF SUFFERING IS PORTRAYED THROUGHOUT THIS STANZA.
- SIMILE – COMPARING CHILDREN'S LIMBS TO TWIGS.
- CHILDREN DON'T HAVE THAT CARE-FREE SPIRIT. THEIR CHILDHOOD SEEMS 'DEAD' DUE TO THEIR CIRCUMSTANCES.
- PERSONIFICATION



WHO IS NOT FRIGHTENED?

ALTHOUGH EACH STANZA DEALS WITH A DIFFERENT DESCRIPTION, THE REFRAIN AT THE END OF EACH STANZA BRINGS THE ENTIRE POEM TOGETHER AND PLACES EMPHASIS ON THE FACT THAT **EVERYONE** IS AFRAID.