I Wish I'd Written Joseph Coelho
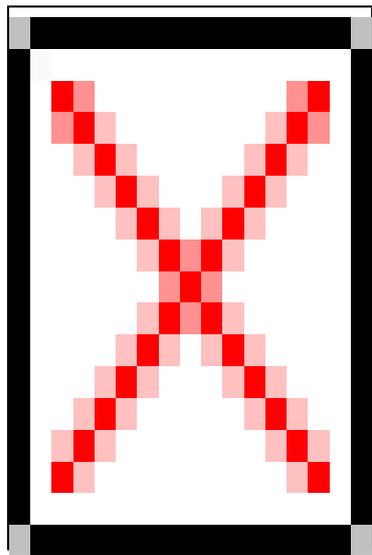
Article Author:

Joseph Coelho [1]

Poetry Special [2]

Article Category:

I Wish I?d Written

Byline:

Joseph Coelho chooses a poem that unsettles and thrills.

The Listeners by Walter De La Mare is such an effortlessly creepy poem and one I return to again and again, it?s as much about what is not said as what is said. The fact that we never get to know who The Listeners are, we only have the assurance that they are present and ?listening?. This poem is a masterclass in scene setting with its ?Moonlit door? and solo bird flying ?up out of the turret?. We, the readers, are immediately transported to a monochrome horror setting where ?phantom listeners? lurk. The regular rhyme lulls us into a dreaded certainty that all is not as it should be, that there is no escape for the poem?s traveller protagonist who is destined to knock on a door due to some bargained compulsion? ?tell them I came, and no one answered.? He calls out seemingly aware of the ghostly beings that hear him and in addressing them leaving us with the feeling that his journey is far from over, that as he rides off and out of the poem, disaster surely awaits him.

This poem has long been a reminder to me of the unsettling power of horror and the thrill that a creepy text can bring.

The Listeners is one of the poems featured on **The Poetry Archive** where it is read by Maurice Riordan [3].

Joseph Coelho?s new books include **Zombierella: Fairy Tales Gone Bad** [4], Walker Books, and **The Girl Who Became a Tree: A Story Told in Poems** [5], Otter-Barry Books.

Page Number:

15

Links:

[1] http://imap.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/joseph-coelho

[2] http://imap.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/poetry-special

[3] https://poetryarchive.org/poem/listeners/

[4] http://imap.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/244/childrens-books/reviews/zombierella-fairy-tales-gone-bad

[5] http://imap.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/244/childrens-books/reviews/the-girl-who-became-a-tree-a-story-told-in-poems