

**ARABY – James Joyce**

1 NORTH RICHMOND STREET being blind, was a quiet street except at the hour when the Christian Brothers' School set the boys free. An **uninhabited** house of two storeys stood at the blind end, detached from its neighbours in a square ground. The other houses of the street, conscious of decent lives within them, gazed at one another with **brown imperturbable** faces.

2 The former tenant of our house, a priest, had died in the back drawing-room. Air, **musty** from having been long enclosed, hung in all the rooms, and the waste room behind the kitchen was littered with old useless papers. Among these I found a few paper-covered books, the pages of which were curled and damp: *The Abbot*, by Walter Scott, *The Devout Communicant* and *The Memoirs of Vidocq*. I liked the last best because its leaves were yellow. The wild garden behind the house contained a central apple-tree and a few **straggling** bushes under one of which I found the late tenant's rusty bicycle-pump. He had been a very **charitable** priest; in his will he had left all his money to institutions and the furniture of his house to his sister.

3 When the short days of winter came dusk fell before we had well eaten our dinners. When we met in the street the houses had grown **sombre**. The space of sky above us was the colour of ever-changing violet and towards it the lamps of the street lifted their **feeble** lanterns. The cold air stung us and we played till our bodies glowed. Our shouts echoed in the silent street. The career of our play brought us through the dark muddy lanes behind the houses where we ran the gauntlet of the rough tribes from the cottages, to the back doors of the dark dripping gardens where odours arose from the ashpits, to the dark odorous stables where a coachman smoothed and combed the horse or shook music from the buckled harness. When we returned to the street light from the kitchen windows had filled the areas. If my uncle was seen turning the corner we hid in the shadow until we had seen him safely housed. Or if Mangan's sister came out on the doorstep to call her brother in to his tea we watched her from our shadow peer up and down the street. We waited to see whether she would remain or go in and, if she remained, we left our shadow and walked up to Mangan's steps resignedly. She was waiting for us, her figure defined by the light from the half-opened door. Her brother always teased her before he obeyed and I stood by the railings looking at her. Her dress swung as she moved her body and the soft rope of her hair tossed from side to side.

4 Every morning I lay on the floor in the front parlour watching her door. The blind was pulled down to within an inch of the sash so that I could not be seen. When she came out on the doorstep my heart leaped. I ran to the hall, seized my books and followed her. I kept her brown figure always in my eye and, when we came near the point at which our ways **diverged**, I quickened my pace and passed her. This happened morning after morning. I had never spoken to her, except for a few casual words, and yet her name was like a summons to all my foolish blood.

5 Her image **accompanied** me even in places the most **hostile** to romance. On Saturday evenings when my aunt went marketing I had to go to carry some of the parcels. We walked through the flaring streets, **jostled** by drunken men and bargaining women, amid the curses of labourers, the **shrill litanies of shop-boys** who stood on guard by the barrels of pigs' cheeks, the nasal chanting of street-singers, who sang a come-all-you about O'Donovan Rossa, or a ballad about the troubles

in our native land. These noises **converged** in a single sensation of life for me: I imagined that I bore my chalice safely through a throng of foes. Her name sprang to my lips at moments in strange prayers and praises which I myself did not understand. My eyes were often full of tears (I could not tell why) and at times a flood from my heart seemed to pour itself out into my bosom. I thought little of the future. I did not know whether I would ever speak to her or not or, if I spoke to her, how I could tell her of my confused adoration. But my body was like a harp and her words and gestures were like fingers running upon the wires.

6 One evening I went into the back drawing-room in which the priest had died. It was a dark rainy evening and there was no sound in the house. Through one of the broken panes I heard the rain **impinge** upon the earth, the fine **incessant** needles of water playing in the sodden beds. Some distant lamp or lighted window gleamed below me. I was thankful that I could see so little. All my senses seemed to desire to veil themselves and, feeling that I was about to slip from them, I pressed the palms of my hands together until they trembled, murmuring: "O love! O love!" many times.

### Comprehension and Writer's Craft Questions

1. In the first paragraph identify the personification. (2)
2. In paragraph 2, to whom does the bicycle pump belong to? Answer fully. (2)
3. From paragraph 3, identify 6 adjectives. Write them down with the noun they describe. (3)
4. From paragraph 3, identify 5 instances of impactful imagery. Must include at least 2 auditory imagery. (5)
5. From the 4<sup>th</sup> para find a personification. (1)
6. *I ran to the hall, seized my books and followed her.* Comment on the sentence structure. What is the effect created? (2)
7. Identify a metaphor and a simile from paragraph 5. (2)
8. From Paragraph 6, What is the metaphor used to describe the rain? What is the effect created? (3)

### Vocabulary

Write down the words in bold and explain their meanings in your own words.

**Writing Skills.**

*Observe how the writer describes:*

1. The Girl.
2. The protagonist's reactions and feelings towards the girl.
3. The setting.

What is the mood created?

What words or phrases does the writer use to create such an effect?