

The Listeners

Walter De La Mare (1912) *Listen to a reading of this adaptation* [here](#)

"Is there anybody there?" said the Traveller,
Knocking on the moonlit door;
And his horse in the silence ate the grass
Of the forest's floor;
And a bird flew up out of the turret,
Above the Traveller's head:

And he knocked upon the door again a second time;
"Is there anybody there?" he said.
But no one answered the Traveller;
No head from the window sill
Leaned over and looked into his grey eyes,
Where he stood perplexed and still.

But only phantom listeners
That lived in the lone house then
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight
To that voice from the world of men:

And he felt in his heart their strangeness,
Their stillness answering his cry,
While his horse moved across the dark turf,
Beneath the starred and leafy sky;

He knocked on the door even
Louder, and lifted his head:--
"Tell them I came, and no one answered,
That I kept my word," he said.

No sound came from the listeners,
Though every word he spake
But they heard his foot upon the stirrup,
And the sound of iron on stone,
When the plunging hoofs were gone.



The Listeners by Anne E.G. Nydam

Quick Check: True or False

1. The traveller arrives at night.
2. He knocks on the door once.
3. Nobody answers the door.
4. The traveller sees ghosts.
5. He hears sounds inside the house

This version of The Listeners has been shortened and slightly simplified for English language learners. Read the original poem here of The Listeners [here](#). Anne E.G Nydam's block prints & books can be found at <https://nydamprints.com/>