

## **Town of Spring Again (tiffany)**

I sat in front of my computer and googled Chinese philosophers and such for an hour and I could not find the speaker of the quote that begins this poem. So hopefully the person is not integral for the meaning behind the poem and the town. The actual quote coupled with the title of the poem/town alludes to the ideas of order and repetition. The idea that spring is coming “once again” and that it “is always like what it used to be” denotes a kind of regularity. And yet the rest of the poem seems to possess an anxious quality. Rain hissing down on windows is not a calm image; it’s a pretty threatening one, the opposite of spring. True, there are “spring showers”, but the word “hissing” obliterates any possibility of this. “Longings from a great distance” suggests dissatisfaction, a wish for more. I get a picture of people waiting by a window for sunshine to peak through rain clouds, maybe waiting for the spring that will inevitably come, but these people long for it like it might not come one year.

### *Amendments*

#### Town of Spring Once Again (monte)

I actually read this to be more like people sitting in front of a window watching this dreadful rain that has set in and is now ‘hissing down the windows,’ but they are not waiting for spring to come, but this rain is the result of spring; they are perhaps waiting for it to end. I read this because I think the title insinuates that spring has already arrived, and the last line is past tense, saying that though spring was anticipated for a long time, it has finally reached us, and now we are wanting it to go away.

#### Town of Spring Again (tom)

I get the regularity observation from the first line. Though I suggest the when followed by an attribution of the quote to some “old Chinese man” I detect a hint of cynicism in the tone. As if to say yeah spring may always come but how is it always the same. I think the rain may also be pointing in that direction as if the sprig or stage of life were somehow different than expected. Overall I get a sort of dreariness from this poem.

#### Town of Spring Once Again (abby)

Just an interesting note, Chinese New Year occurs in the spring, so I am sure that the central message is the newness/repetition of life cycles, just as Tiffany pointed out. Also she noted that we don’t get the typical spring feelings of freshness and happiness—but we do have the rain, which is like an eraser making the slate clean again for the new year—it’s not so much a harsh image as it is a renewal image. That the Chinese man is OLD is also notable, because to old people, nothing is new, just repeated.

#### Town of Spring Again (Allison)

For this poem, I would have liked some reference to the introduction of "Towns," even though it may have had nothing to do with the poem itself. It just seemed like too big of a coincidence to me that she mentions Lao Tzu, who is kind of the father of Taoism. I don't know much about Taoism or what it could have to do with spring though, and it might be nothing. I did read that "Spring and Autumn Annals" are a very bare outline of

natural disasters (like a hissing rain storm for instance) that occurred during a 300 year period in China. So if we replace the word Spring with History, the first line reads, "History is always like what it used to be." If that is the case, it seems like Carson is just saying "History repeats itself," but in a much less obvious sort of way. Again could be reading WAY too much into the poem, but it was a different way of reading the poem, so I thought I might mention it.

Town of Spring Once Again (casey)

Without knowing any specific reference that the quote it's making its difficult to draw additional non-poetic meaning from it. I thought that the poem was less focused on longing for rain's departure but some other long off fulfillment. Longings I thought also may be a description of the raindrops streaking down glass.

Town of Spring Once Again: (courtney)

Good job searching for the quote, looking into the arrival of spring, and noticing the implied sense of order in the poem. However, the sound of rain hissing on a window is not necessarily a threatening sound. It can be soothing. Even when read, the "ss" sound in hissing is soft and soothing to the ear. Whether it is meant to be a soft sounding word or convey the sound of raindrops hissing, the line in question is not necessarily out of place in the rest of the poem, with the other soft sounds and calming imagery that was picked up on.

Town of Spring Once Again (martin)

One thing I found missing in this analysis, or at least not prominent enough, is the obvious reference to the saying "Well, things are definitely not what they used to be." This is a common and kind of despairing saying. The quote beginning the poem claims that spring is something that actually IS what it used to be. However, Carson wouldn't want us to think she herself agrees with this uplifting proverb. She immediately lists the speaker to the quote, someone who is different than her. "Hiss" is an ugly verb to use, that was a good word to pick out for the analysis. It's like something a snake would do. "Hiss" is deceitful, so the poem goes so far as to call the happiness of spring as deceitful. The last two lines state spring can make us remember the people from past springs, even long ago. Things may not be how they used to be in spring.

Town of Spring Again. (marina)

I think most things are indeed addressed in the analysis, so I am going to go out on a limb and just suggest that the word spring has a double meaning too... like a spring that we all know and love for always returning to the same state after being stretched... so "spring is always like what it used to be" kind of fits that meaning too. The rain hissing is also a tad strange, because in order for water to hiss it needs to land on something hot.

I agree with the sense of regularity and expecting spring to be the same again, and I think it's kind of weird how Carson seems to kind of make up the saying that the Chinese man might be uttering.

Town of Spring Again Amendment: (matt)

I think this a pretty fair analysis of the poem; I certainly see the themes you discuss, order, harshness, dissatisfaction. However, I think it might also be useful to reexamine the

opening quote: "Spring is always like what it used to be." I think it is interesting that while the old man could be seen as saying that spring is always the same, the line could also be read as an analogy. What is "it"? Is "it" spring, or is "it" like something that "used be" which "Spring is always like?" I keep reading the line in that second manner. The Chinese man is an old man, so perhaps he is saying 'Spring is always like what youth used to be.' In that case, the rain could be either old age or it could be Spring itself taunting him with memories of youth. The "Longings from a great distance" could be his longing for youth, reaching the young speaker. It's something to think about, anyway.

Town of Spring Once Again (mike)

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Town of Spring Once Again (craig)

I agree with Tiffany that this poem does carry a sense of regularity and repetition in its title and opening line, but there is a shift after that line. The fact that "and old Chinese man" said the line about repetition suggests that it is a proverb and cannot be taken literally, so the rest of the poem cannot be taken literally. I think that one thing you may have missed is that this familiarity seems to be worn out. That is, it seems exasperated with the monotony of reincarnation since everything, including the best of things (like spring) grows old and only serves to remind a Buddhist (suggested by 'old Chinese man') of their present, undesirable form in this cycle of lives. On one level, this "longing from a great distance" may be the desire to break free from the confines of cyclical existence. The problem, then, for these people might not be that they don't think spring will come, but they are sad that it must as it simply means monotony.