

RAIN!
(a nearly-wordless picture book)
by Linda Ashman

Note: Text is in *italics*.

Endpapers: A city scene with rain clouds overhead.

2-3

Title Page, with background of a city neighborhood. See face of an older man looking out the window of an apartment building on left side (page 2). A young boy looks out window in building on the right side (page 3). It's clear they live a few blocks away from each other.

4

Closer view of old man sticking his hand out the window, making a sour face.

Old man: "*Rain!*"

5

Closer view of the boy, standing on his balcony. He's looking upward (maybe with tongue out to taste rain), hands outstretched, clearly excited about the weather.

Boy: "*Rain!*"

6

Inside man's darkish apartment. Panels show him getting ready to go out, putting on a dreary rainwear ensemble, grabbing his worn umbrella, and grumbling about all of it.

Puts on boots: "*Nasty galoshes.*"

Puts on coat: "*Blasted overcoat.*"

Reaches for his hat—a plaid cap, perhaps with a rim. He's balding except for some wild tufts:

"There goes my hair . . ."

7

Inside the boy's cheery apartment. Panels show him getting ready to go out, putting on a frog-themed rainwear ensemble: frog boots, slicker, frog hat and umbrella. He's clearly enjoying the process. Mom is present, though in the background.

Mom: *"Is it raining cats and dogs?"*

Boy: *"It's raining frogs and pollywogs!"*

He jumps around in his boots. *"Hippity hop."*

8

The old man comes out of his apartment building.

Door man: *"Good morning, sir."*

Old man: *"Hmmfff."*

He opens his umbrella. A gust of wind inverts it, and he steps in a puddle: *"Dang puddle."*

9

The boy bounds out of his apartment building, his mother behind him.

Door man: *"Good morning, young man."*

The boy splashes happily in a puddle by the door: *"Ribbit!"*

10-11

In a series of panels, we follow the old man as he walks along a city street, radiating grumpiness. It's drizzling lightly—some people have umbrellas but many don't. He stops to buy a paper at a newsstand. The pleasant salesman looks gloomy after the encounter. Passersby are lively until they pass him, then seem to wilt. Children cry. Dogs tuck their tails. Birds avoid him. The flowers in window boxes and hanging from streetlamps droop as he passes. We can even see the impact in big store windows—the display designer and mannequins look less perky and/or dolls and stuffed animals in a toy store look sad after he passes. The old man, hunched under his umbrella, is oblivious to the impact of his dark mood.

12-13

In a similar series of panels, we follow the boy as he hops and skips down the street. Despite the rain, people smile as he passes, dogs wag their tails, flowers perk up, birds flutter overhead. He waves to street vendors and/or shopkeepers, who wave/smile back. It's clear his mother is close by, but she's not a main focus.

14-15

We see their destination: a café/bakery. It's raining harder now. The man and boy are approaching it from opposite sides. The man is closer and clearly will arrive there first. The contrast between the man's impact and the boy's is visible in their wake on either side of the café.

16

The old man is at the counter inside the café.

Man: "*Coffee.*"

He takes off his coat, leans his umbrella against the table, puts his hat on a chair, sits down with his coffee, and hides behind his soggy newspaper. He is unaware that his hat has fallen to the floor.

17

The boy and his mother arrive at the counter (mother might be lifting him to order).

Boy: "*Cocoa and cookies, please.*"

The boy happily hops to the table, holding a bag of cookies. His mother follows with cups of cocoa, brimming with marshmallows. They take off their rain gear and sit.

18-19

This spread shows a larger view of the café. We now see that the boy and the old man are sitting back to back to each other at adjacent tables. There's a pall over the scene on page 18 where the man sits grumpily, compared to the lively scene on page 19, where the boy and his mother chat animatedly.

20-21

The man and boy prepare to leave at the same time, and accidentally bump each other while putting on their coats. They turn and face each other, the two force fields battling it out—one gloomy, one cheerful. The boy looks up at the old man, smiles tentatively, and offers a cookie.

Boy, shyly: “*Ribbit?*”

The man frowns, then turns, grabs his umbrella, and shuffles out.

22-23

The boy, sad, watches the man leave. He puts the bag of cookies in his jacket pocket and slumps into a chair, head down. Clearly, the man’s dreariness has won out. The boy fidgets a little, then sees something out of the corner of his eye. It’s the old man’s hat, still lying on the floor.

24-25

The boy grabs the man’s hat, and his own, and races out the door. He runs down the street after the old man, eventually catches up and tugs on his overcoat. The rain has stopped, and the man is using his umbrella as a walking stick.

26-27

The man, scowling, looks down at the boy, who is holding both hats behind his back.

Old man: “*You?*”

The boy looks apprehensive. Then he puts the man’s hat on his head and makes a grouchy face. The old man looks mildly amused. The boy grins, hands over the hat, and puts his own hat on.

28-29

The man takes his hat, but shakes his head “No.” He points to the boy’s hat. The boy, puzzled, points to his own hat questioningly, shrugs, then hands it over. The man puts on the frog hat. He looks ridiculous. The boy laughs. The man, with a hint of a smile, returns the boy’s hat, and puts his own on his head.

The boy takes the bag of cookies out of his coat pocket and offers them to the man again. The man raises an eyebrow, takes one, smiles, and bows slightly in thanks.

30-31

The man, enjoying his cookie, and the boy (again with his mother) walk in opposite directions toward home. In contrast to the earlier scenes, the old man—like the boy—now leaves people smiling in his wake. The sun is peeking through the clouds.

32

The old man arrives at his apartment building with the same doorman outside. The sun is more clearly coming out now.

Doorman: *“Welcome back, sir.”*

The man, half-smiling, jumps in the same puddle he stepped in earlier, making a big splash.

Old man: *“Ribbit!”*