**Study Guide for “There Will Come Soft Rains”**

**I. VOCABULARY**: Be able to define the following words and understand them when they appear in the story or class discussion.

**Silhouette:** A drawing consisting of the outline of something, especially a human profile, filled in with a solid color

**Paranoia**: mental disorder that causes people to feel unreasonable distrust and suspicion.

**Quiver:** To shake with a slight, rapid, tremulous movement

**Regiment:** A military unit of ground troops consisting of at least two battalions, usually commanded by a colonel

**Incinerator:** One that incinerates, especially an apparatus, such as a furnace, for burning waste

**Capillaries:** One of the minute blood vessels that connect arterioles and venules. These blood vessels form an intricate network throughout the body for the interchange of various substances, such as oxygen and carbon dioxide, between blood and tissue cells.

**Oblivious:** Unaware

**Sublime:** majestic; grand

**Psychopathic:** insane

**Cavorting:** leaping about; frolicking

**Tremulous:** trembling

**Whims:** a sudden, passing, and often fanciful idea; impulsive or irrational thought

**Solvent:** something that can dissolve something else.

**Bough:** A tree branch, especially a large or main branch.

**Warrens:** small, crowded spaces; little holes in the ground where rabbits live.

**II. LITERARY TERMS**: Be able to define each term and apply each term to the story.

**Simile:** Comparison using like or as

**Example:** The regiments of mice hummed out as softly as blown gray leaves in an                   electrical wind**.**

**Personification:** A figurative use of language which attributes human qualities to ideas                              or things.

**Example:** The breakfast stove gave a hissing sigh…

**Setting:** Time and Place

**What is the setting of the story?** August 2026 in Allendale, California in the last                                                           house standing.

**Symbolism:** One thing represents something else.

**Example:** The silhouettes (five spots of paint) symbolize the deceased family and the                death of humanity.

**Irony:** The opposite of what is expected.

**Example:** We destroy nature to build fancy house, then recreate nature in the nursery walls.

**Protagonist:** The main character.

**Who or what is the protagonist of this story?** The House

**Imagery:** Mental image

Example: At night the ruined city gave off a radioactive glow which could be seen for                miles.

**Suspense:** A feeling of curiosity or uncertainty about the outcome of events in a literary                    work. An author creates suspense to maintain the attention of his or her                    reader. Often used in conjunction with dramatic irony and foreshadowing.

**Theme:**A central message or insight revealed throughout a literary work. A                   generalization about life that is communicated through the work of literature.

**What is the theme of the story?** Bradbury believes that technology is a very wondrous-yet also very dangerous-thing. Perhaps the author is trying to show that the technology that will supposedly make our lives better will also be our downfall. Another theme is that nature will survive and thrive without mankind.

**III. QUESTIONS**: Answer the following questions.

**1.** **What unusual qualities and appliances does the house have?** The house is a smart house: fully automated, robot mice, “TV” walls in the nursery.

**2. What were the five spots of paint of?** The outline of the family members.

**3. What happened to the people?** They were killed in a nuclear blast.

**4. What are some things the house has protecting itself from?** Intruders,                      foxes,sparrows, the dog.

**5. Why is the dog very thin and covered in sores?** There is no one to feed him, and                      he has radiation poisoning.

**6. What happens to the dog’s remains?** The mice cleaned up the remains.

**7. What can you infer the family usually does at 2:35?** Play cards, eat sandwiches,                      and drink martinis.

**8. What did the children usually do at 4:30?** In the nursery, watched films on the                      glass walls (The Children’s Hour).

**9. What is the name of the family that lived in the house?** McClellan

**10. What are some things the house does to try to save itself?** Doors spring shut,                      water rats spray water.

**11. What was the last voice to die saying?** “Today is August 5, 2026.”