The Young Poet

We look down upon a beach, from the side. We see the water's edge on the right, and we see a city behind the beach, on the left. The beach is empty, except for one figure, depicted in profile, who the painting's title tells us is our young poet. He is sitting down, holding a big umbrella over his head with one hand, for it's raining, and holding up a book with the other. He is facing the water.

The time of day is unclear. It is dark, but that could just be the weather. It's light enough to be daytime. The pale gray sky is easily illuminated, by what could be the sun shining from somewhere off page, by all the city lights, the cars on the road between the city and the beach that have their headlights on, the array of faint lights in the generic towers behind the beach, all the lightning (a great long cartoonish lightning bolt, fat, yellow, and zig-zagged like the Gatorade logo, strikes a lightning rod atop a tower in the distance surrealistically. Behind it, more natural looking bolts abound, thin little purple and white illuminated waves vibrating through the sky like a string Earth's puppeteer is rattling), and all the bright stars that stand out in the sky and suggest that perhaps it's nighttime, after all. (Because stars come out at night, only at night, and always have, dear friend). But at the same time, it's light enough for the boy to read. So that must mean it's still daytime.

But the average passing viewer is not so concerned with the time of day. What seems to matter in the painting, what concerns you, is what this boy is doing out here on this beach, in the rain. Reading, sure. But why?

Why here? Why now?

The young poet is here facing the sea, the viewer like yourself who has paused to face the painting muses, because he likes to look at the water. It's

pleasant for him. (If true, this is another strike against our theory that it's nighttime. At night, the sea goes black, and there's not much to look at). Or he likes the smell of the saltwater, or the sound of the crashing waves, or the feel of the sand beneath him, but whatever it is, whatever the reason, he likes the beach, like a normal human being. And like a normal human being, he's come to the beach to read, as so many do, so many who would tell you, if asked, that the beach is the *best* place to read. So to the young poet, what's a little rain, if you've got a big umbrella?

It's a rhetorical question; it should be the end of this nonsense, but I'll answer it anyway, just for you. It's everything. A little rain is everything. That's why he's here now, and that's why nobody else is out here with him.