

Chapter-18

Night of the scorpion

Worksheet

Q1) Read the stanza given below and answer the questions that follow:

I remember the night my mother
was stung by a scorpion. Ten hours
of steady rain had driven him
to crawl beneath a sack of rice.

- i) Who does "he" refer to?
- ii) Why did he enter the house and where did he hide?
- iii) What do you understand by the term "diabolic"? Why does the poet refer to his tail as diabolic?

Q2) Read the stanza given below and answer the questions that follow:

They clicked their tongues.
With every movement that the scorpion made his poison moved in Mother's blood, they said.

- i) Who are "they" in the above passage?
- ii) How did "they" contribute to the mother's suffering?

Q3) Read the stanza given below and answer the questions that follow:

May the sins of your previous birth
be burned away tonight, they said.
May your suffering decrease
the misfortunes of your next birth, they said.

- i) What good did the villages hope that the poison would do?
- ii) Explain the phrase: "peace of understanding"

Q4) My father, sceptic, rationalist,.... upon the bitten toe and put a match to it. Why is the poet calling the father a "sceptic, rationalist" ? Why did the father pour a little paraffin and put a match to it? Mention reasons if his actions are justified or not.

Q5) Read the stanza given below and answer the questions that follow:

I watched the flame feeding on my mother.

I watched the holy man perform his rites to tame the poison with an incantation.
After twenty hours
it lost its sting.

- i) Who is 'I' here?
- ii) When and how did the mother find relief?
- iii) After how many hours did the bite lose its sting?
- iv) "I watched the holy man perform his rites to tame the poison with an incantation." Explain the line in your own words

Q6) Examine the theme of the poem "Night of the Scorpion".

Q7) Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

"After twenty hours
It lost its sting"

- i) Explain the whole episode of scorpion's sting in your own words?
- ii) Was the mother relieved in the end?

Q8) "The villagers on hearing of this unfortunate event, come to see her, praying to god and giving all kinds of justifications for her suffering. With their prayers and words they try to console the victim."

Did the villagers' prayers make a difference? Comment on this statement in about 100-150 words.

Q9) "The poem opens with the poet's reminiscence of a childhood experience." Share your most memorable experience of your childhood in about 100-150 words.

Q10) "The poem describes mother's selfless love for her children as she despite being stung by a Scorpion and narrowly escaping death is grateful that the scorpion had picked her and spared her children." How far do you agree with mother's selfless love? How close are you to your mother? Describe your relationship with her in about 150-200 words.