

Thinking about the Poem (Page 100, 101)

1 (i) Find, in the first stanza, three things that cannot happen in a treeless forest.

(ii) What picture do these words create in your mind: "... sun bury its feet in shadow..."? What could the poet mean by the sun's 'feet'?

Ans. (1) The three things that cannot happen in a treeless forest, as mentioned in first stanza are

(a) No birds can sit on trees.

(b) No insect can hide in trees.

(c) Sunlight cannot be covered under the shadow of the trees.

(ii) The picture that these words create in our minds is that if there are no trees, the rays of the sun fall directly to the ground. If there is a forest with trees, then the sun rays are covered by the shadow of the trees.

The sun's 'feet' refers to the rays of the sun or sunlight that fall on the Earth.

2 (i) Where are the trees in the poem? What do their roots, their leaves and their twigs do?

(ii) What does the poet compare their branches to?

Ans. (i) In the poem, the trees are in the poet's house.

The roots of the trees work all night to release themselves from the cracks in the veranda floor. The leaves try very hard to move towards the window glass and put a lot of pressure on it so that it breaks and they free themselves. The small twigs (branches) have become very hard due to applying a lot of pressure to free themselves.

(ii) The poet compares the branches to newly discharged patients from a clinic. The larger branches of the trees become cramped (bent) because of being inside the walls and under the roof as they cannot move. When they get free, they move hurriedly outside due to which they fall on each other.

While doing so, they look half-shocked like the patients, who wait for a long time to get out from a clinic.

3 (i) How does the poet describe the moon: (a) at the beginning of the third stanza and (b) at its end? What causes this change?

(ii) What happens to the house when the trees move out of it?

(iii) Why do you think the poet does not mention "the departure of the forest from the house" in her letters?

Could it be that we are often silent about important embarrass us? Think about this again when you happenings that are so unexpected that they

answer the next set of questions.

Ans. (i) (a) At the beginning of the third stanza, the poet says that the whole moon is shining in the open

sky.

(b) At the end of the the poem, the poet describes that the moon breaks into pieces like a broken mirror and seems like a crown on the top of the tallest oak tree.

The cause of this change is that as the trees move outside, their branches cover some parts of the moon due to which it can be seen only in parts. This is why it seems that the moon has broken into pieces.

(ii) When the trees moves out of the house, the glass on the windows will break. In addition, the house will go completely silent as the smell of the leaves and lichens which was coming from the rooms like a voice will no longer be smelt or heard.

(iii) The poet does not mentions about 'the departure of the forest from the house' in her letters probably because she is both puzzled (shocked) and embarrassed at the sudden happening. She did not expect the forest to move out of the house one day.

Or The poet does not mentions about 'the departure of the forest from the house' in her letters because it is a part of human nature to remain quite or ignore important matters of life. Even after knowing the importance of trees, human beings cut it for decorative purposes.

The unexpected movement led the poet to the realisation of the natural habitat of trees, i.e. forests. Thus, she is embarrassed and does not mention the departure in her letters.

4 Does the poem present a conflict between man and nature? Compare it with 'A Tiger in the Zoo'. Is the poet suggesting that plants and trees, used for 'interior decoration' in cities while forests are fcut down, are 'imprisoned' and need to 'break

Ans.

out'?

Yes, the poem 'The Trees' presents a conflict between man and nature. According to the poem, man is responsible for the degradation of nature. He uses nature for his own benefit without thinking of its consequences.

Not only trees, but man is also endangering animals. The poem 'A Tiger in a Zoo' by Leslie Norris also presents a conflict between man and nature. In this poem, a tiger who should have been living free is caged.

Both plants and animals have come under the mercy of man who has no value for them. Man has not only enslaved animals but also imprisoned the trees and plants within the walls of his house. He cuts forests and uses trees as ornaments/ decoration for his house. As a result, the trees revolt.

The poem 'The Trees' thus presents the need of trees to break out of the enclosed spaces and live in their natural habitats i.e. forests.