

## *The Snake and the Mirror*

Page No: 60

Think about the Text

I. Discuss in pairs and answer each question below in a short paragraph (30 – 40 words).

**Q1. “The sound was a familiar one.” What sound did the doctor hear? What did he think it was? How many times did he hear it? (Find the places in the text.) When and why did the sounds stop?**

**Answer**

The doctor lived in a room which was full of rats. He heard the sounds of the rats. There was regular traffic of rats to and from the beam. He heard the sound thrice. The sound stopped suddenly as rats had seen a snake.

**Q2. What two “important” and “earth-shaking” decisions did the doctor take while he was looking into the mirror?**

**Answer**

The doctor took two "important" and "earth-shaking" while he was looking into the mirror First, he decided to shave daily and grow a thin mustache. Second, always to keep an attractive smile on his face.

**Q3. “I looked into the mirror and smiled,” says the doctor. A little later he says, “I forgot my danger and smiled feebly at myself.” What is the doctor’s opinion about himself when:**

**(i) he first smiles, and**

**(ii) he smiles again? In what way do his thoughts change in between, and why?**

**Answer**

(i) When the doctor first smiles, he has an inflated opinion of himself, admiring his looks and profession.

(ii) In the second instance, the doctor smiles at his foolishness and helplessness.

His thoughts change after his encounter with the snake—from being a proud doctor he moves on to accept his stupidity.

## II.

**Q1. this story about a frightening incident is narrated in a humorous way. What makes it humorous? (Think of the contrasts it presents between dreams and reality. Some of them are listed below.**

1. (i) The kind of person the doctor is (money, possessions)
- (ii) The kind of person he wants to be (appearance, ambition)
- 2.(i) The person he wants to marry
- (ii) The person he actually marries
- 3.(i) His thoughts when he looks into the mirror
- (ii) His thoughts when the snake is coiled around his arm

Write short paragraphs on each of these to get your answer.

### **Answer**

1. (i) The doctor is a poor person. He has hardly any money. he lives in an unelectrified house. It is a small rented room with plenty of rats living in it. He has just started his medical practice. So he is not a man of possessions or money.

(ii) The Person wants to be rich, he also would like to have a good appearance. That's why he decides to grow a thin moustache.

2. (i) The doctor wants to marry a woman doctor with good medical practice and a lot of money. She would be fat as not to run after him and catch him.

(ii) He marries a thin reedy woman who has a gift of the sprinter.

3. (i) His thoughts are full of joy and satisfaction. He decides to grow thin

moustache and keep smiling always. He finds his smile attractive  
(ii) He turned to stone. He sat like a stone image in the flesh. However, his mind was very active. He felt the great presence of the creator. He decides to write the words 'O God' outside his little heart.

**Page No: 61**

### **Thinking about Language**

**II.**

#### **Expressions used to show fear**

Can you find the expressions in the story that tell you that the author was frightened? Read the story and complete the following sentences.

1. I was turned

\_\_\_\_\_.

2. I sat there holding

\_\_\_\_\_.

3. In the light of the lamp I sat there like

\_\_\_\_\_.

#### **Answer**

1. I was turned to stone.

2. I sat there holding my breath.

3. In the light of the lamp I sat there like a stone image in the flesh.