

1) Attempt a short paragraph on the use of contrasts in the story to bring out humour.

The Snake and the Mirror Humour

The story presents a contrast between dreams and reality. This contrast has been depicted in a humorous manner. The young doctor has just started his practice and, so, his earnings are meagre. He lives in a small rented room, which is not electrified and is full of rats. He has only sixty rupees in his bag, he has few clothes, and a solitary black coat. However, his dreams and ambitions are in contrast to this.

He admires beauty and he believes in making himself handsome. He lays great emphasis on the fact that he is unmarried and is a doctor. He decides to shave daily and grow a thin moustache to look more handsome. He describes this decision as an 'important' one. Later, he also makes an 'earth-shaking decision' to always keep smiling in order to look more handsome. This contrast between the kind of person he is and the kind of person he wants to be makes the story humorous.

He has thought about the kind of person he wants to marry. He wants to marry a woman doctor who has plenty of money and a good medical practice because he did not have any of those. He wants a fat wife so that whenever he runs away making a mistake his wife is not able to catch him. However, the woman he marries is a thin and slender person who can run like a sprinter. This contrast between the kind of wife he wanted and the kind of wife he ends up marrying adds to the humour of the story.

Ironically, the snake too is as narcissistic as the doctor. It coils itself around the petrified doctor's arm, and spreads its hood, just inches from the doctor's face, when it suddenly turns its head and sees its reflection in the mirror. It unwinds itself from the doctor's arm and slowly slithers across his lap, onto the table towards the mirror to enjoy its reflection at closer quarters. The fact that the snake also wishes to admire itself in the mirror, like the narrator, and leaves the narrator alone also creates humour.

9. How did the doctor react when the snake landed on him?

പാമ്പ് ഡോക്ടറുടെ ശരീരത്തിൽ വിണപ്പോൾ അദ്ദേഹം എങ്ങനെ പ്രതികരിച്ചു?

He didn't jump, tremble or cry out. He was turned to a stone.

10. Why did the doctor sit in the chair 'like a stone image in the flesh'?

എന്തുകൊണ്ടാണ് ജീവനുള്ള ഒരു കൽപ്രതിമ കണക്കെ ഡോക്ടർ കസേരയിൽ ഇരുന്നുപോയത്?

He was terribly frightened. So he sat there like a stone image in the flesh.

11. In the story the snake is compared to three objects. What are they?

കഥയിൽ പാമ്പിനെ മൂന്നു വസ്തുക്കളുമായി താരതമ്യം ചെയ്തിരിക്കുന്നു. ഏതൊക്കെയാണ് അവ?

- a. a rubber tube
- b. a thick leaden rod
- c. a rod made of molten fire

12. Why did he feel that he was a stupid doctor?

താൻ വിഡ്ഢിയായ ഒരു ഡോക്ടറാണെന്ന് അദ്ദേഹത്തിനു തോന്നാൻ കാരണമെന്തായിരുന്നു?

The snake could bite him at any moment. Though he was a doctor he had no medicine in stock for snake bite. So he thought that he was a poor, stupid doctor.