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Class-XII

English

Flamingo

Chapter-4

The Rattrap



Selma Lagerlof

Part - 6

Neha Rajvanshi

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COMPREHENSION

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Question 1. From where did the peddler get the idea of the world being a rattrap?

Answer. The peddler had been thinking of his rattraps when suddenly he was struck by the idea that the whole world was nothing but a big rattrap. It existed only to set baits for people.

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Question 2. Why was he amused by this idea?

Answer. He was amused by the idea because his own life was sad and monotonous. He walked laboriously from place to place. The world had never been kind to him. So, during his gloomy ploddings, this idea became his favourite pastime.

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Question 3. Did the peddler expect the kind of hospitality that he received from the crofter?

Answer. No, the peddler never expected the kind of hospitality that he received from the crofter, because usually people made sour faces when he asked for shelter but the crofter welcomed him with respect and happiness.

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Question 4. Why was the crofter so talkative and friendly with the peddler?

Answer. The crofter had no wife or child. He lived alone in the cottage, so he was very happy to have someone to talk to in his loneliness. Thats why he was so talkative and friendly with the paddler.

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Question 5. Why did he show the thirty kronor to the peddler?

Answer. The crofter had told the peddler that by supplying his cow's milk to the creamery, he had received thirty kronor in payment. The peddler seemed to doubt it. So, in order to assure his guest, he showed the thirty kronor to the peddler.

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Question 6. Did the peddler respect the confidence reposed in him by the crofter?

Answer. No, the peddler did not respect the confidence reposed in him by the crofter. At the very first opportunity that he got, he smashed the window pane, took out the money and went away.

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Question 7. What made the peddler think that he had indeed fallen into a rattrap ?

Answer. The peddler realised that he must not walk on the public highway with the stolen money in his pocket. He went into the woods. He kept walking without coming to the end of the wood. Then he realised that he had fallen in the rattrap. He had let himself befooled by a bait and had been caught in.

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Question 8. Why did the ironmaster speak kindly to the peddler and invite him home?

Answer. The ironmaster walked closely up to the peddler, in the reflection from the furnace, he mistook the man as his old regimental comrade. He addressed the stranger as Nils Olof, spoke very kindly and invited him home.

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Question 9. Why did the peddler decline the invitation?

Answer. The peddler knew that the ironmaster had mistaken him for his old regimental comrade. Secondly, he had stolen money-thirty kronor. Going to the ironmaster's residence would be like entering the lion's den. So, he declined the invitation.

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Question 10. What made the peddler accept Edla Willmansson's invitation?

Answer. Miss Edla Willmansson looked at the peddler quite compassionately. She assured him that he would be allowed to leave just as freely as he came. She requested him to stay with them over Christmas Eve.

Her friendly manner made the peddler feel confidence in her and accept her invitation.

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Question 11. What doubts did Edla have about the peddler?

Answer. As Edla lifted the peddler's hat, he jumped up abruptly and seemed to be quite frightened. She very kindly told her name and purpose of visit but failed to calm him. From his fear, she thought that either he had stolen something or he had escaped from jail.

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Question 12. When did the ironmaster realised his mistake?

Answer. The valet had bathed the stranger, cut his hair and shaved him. So next morning he was cleaned and well-dressed. The ironmaster saw him in broad daylight. it was impossible to mistake him for an old acquaintance now. Then the ironmaster realised his mistake.

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Question 13. How did the peddler defend himself against not having revealed his true identity?

Answer. The peddler explained that he had not tried to pretend as his acquaintance. He was not at fault. All along he had mentioned that he was a poor trader. He had pleaded and begged to be allowed to stay in the forge.



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Question 14. Why did Edla still entertain the peddler even after she knew the truth about him?

Answer. Edla did not think it proper on their part to chase away a human being whom they had asked to come to their house and had promised him Christmas cheer. She understood the reality of the peddler's life and wanted him to enjoy a day of peace with them.

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Question 15. Why was Edla happy to see the gift left by the peddler?

Answer. Edla was happy to see the gift left by the paddler because her kind and humble behaviour changed a thief into a good man. He even returned the money of the old man. This made her glad that he did not break her trust.

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Question 16. Why did the peddler sign himself as Captain von Stahle?

Answer. The ironmaster invited the peddler to his house mistaking him for Captain von Stahle. He was welcomed there and looked after as captain even after the reality became known. The peddler got a chance to raise himself from dishonest ways by acting as an honourable Captain.

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Question 17. How does the peddler interpret the acts of kindness and hospitality shown by the crofter, the ironmaster and his daughter?

Answer. The peddler interprets the acts of kindness and hospitality shown by the crofter, the ironmaster and his daughter differently. He cheats the crofter and steals his money.

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He wants to get a couple of kronors from the ironmaster. He is touched by the kindness, care and intervention of Edla on his behalf.

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Question 18. What are the instances in the story that show that he character of the ironmaster is different from that of his daughter in many ways?

Answer. The ironmaster is impulsive, whereas his daughter is cool, logical, kind and thoughtful. In uncertain light he (iron master) mistakes the stranger as his old regiment comrade. He invites him home and takes care of his feeding, clothing etc.

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When he sees him in broad day light he calls the man dishonest, demands an explanation and is ready to call in the sheriff.

His daughter is more observant. She notices the fear of the stranger and thinks that either he is a thief or a run away prisoner. Inspite of that she is gentle, kind and friendly to him. She treats him nicely even after knowing the mistake in identity.

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Question 19. What made the peddler finally change his ways?

Answer. Edla Wilmansson treated the tramp in a friendly manner. She was nice and kind to her. She interceded on his behalf when her father was about to turn him out. She still entertained the peddler even after knowing the truth about him. She offered him the suit as Christmas present and invited him to spend the

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next Christmas with them. Her love and understanding aroused the essential goodness in the peddler and finally he changed his ways.

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Question 20. How does the metaphor of the rattrap serve to highlight the human predicament?

Answer. The world entices a person through the various good things of life such as riches and joy, shelter and food, heat and clothing. These were just like the baits in the rattrap. Once someone is tempted by the bait, the world closed on him.

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The peddler was tempted by thirty kronor of the crofter. It makes him hide himself. He walks through the wood. He is afraid to go to the Manor house. He gets peace only after returning the bait (money).