

Chapter 5

Footprints without feet

Read and Find Out Pg-26

Q.1 How did the invisible man first become visible?

Ans.: The invisible man was a scientist, named Griffin. He swallowed certain rare drugs which made him invisible. It was mid-winter when he did the experiment so it was impossible to do without clothes. He slipped into a London store for shelter. When the store closed, he opened some of the boxes and unwrapped them. He adorned himself with shoes, an overcoat and a wide brimmed hat and became a fully dressed and visible person.

Q.2 Why was he wandering the streets?

Ans.: Though Griffin was a brilliant scientist, he was a lawless person. His landlord disliked him and wanted to throw him out so he set fire to his house. To avoid getting caught, he removed his clothes and started wandering on the streets sans clothes and money.

Read and Find Out Pg-28

Q.1 Why does Mrs Hall find the scientist eccentric?

Ans.: Griffin booked two rooms at a local inn in the village of Iping. Mrs. Hall, the landlord's wife tried to be friendly but she found him eccentric when he told her that he had come to Iping for peace and didn't want anyone to disturb him.

Q.2 What curious episode occurs in the study?

Ans.: One morning the clergyman and his wife were awakened by some noises. When they went downstairs they heard money being taken out from the clergyman's desk. Stealthily, the clergyman grasped a poker in his hand and opened the door of the study. The episode took a round turn when they found nobody in the study. Even though there was no one inside, the desk was found open and the money kept in the desk was missing.

Q.3 What other extraordinary things happen at the inn?

Ans.: Apart from the incident of the money being stolen from the clergyman's desk, some other bizarre incidents took place as well. The door of Griffin's room was always closed. On finding it open, one day, Mr and Mrs Hall entered with the purpose of investigation. Griffin was nowhere to be seen but his clothes and the bandage he usually wrapped around his face was found in the room. Suddenly, Mrs. Hall heard a sniff near her ear and just then the hat on the bedpost dashed into her face. Soon, the chair acted as if alive and hit her on her legs and the couple was thrown out of the room. It then seemed to shut and lock the door.

Think About it

Q.1 "Griffin was rather a lawless person." Comment.

Ans.: Though, Griffin was a brilliant scientist, it can be inferred from multiple instances in the story that he was a lawless person. Initially, he set his landlord's house on fire because the landlord wanted to throw him out of the house. He entered a store stealthily and unwrapped the boxes and adorned himself with the clothes and ate the food taken from a grocery store.

He then entered a theatrical company to disguise himself more. He robbed the shopkeeper after taking bandages, whiskers, glasses, a hat and many other things. Griffin stole the clergyman's housekeeping money in Iping as well. All these instances support the inference that Griffin was a lawless man.

Q.2 How would you assess Griffin as a scientist?

Ans.: It is the proof of Griffin's intelligence that he discovered certain rare drugs which made his body as transparent as a sheet of glass yet as solid as it as well. However, he misused his invention for living his life thereafter. He should have used it for the welfare of the society. He swallowed the drugs and used the effects initially to take revenge from his landlord who wanted to throw him out. He later robbed many people including the shopkeeper, the clergyman, the store and the theatrical company.

Thus, Griffin was a brilliant but immoral scientist.

Talk about it

Q.1 Would you like to become invisible? What advantages and disadvantages do you foresee, if you did?

Ans.: Yes, I would like to become invisible but only if I could get back to normal. It would be a unique and adventurous experience. I would be able to free people caught in the vicious circle of crime, help the police catch criminals and help the deprived sections of the society. I would not like to convert myself into an invisible creature forever as it would deprive me of all the benefits of being a human and my family and friends.

If I take a firm stand as a citizen, I am sure I will be able to do all the things even when visible. It is just about how determined a person is.

Q.2 Are there forces around us that are invisible, for example, magnetism? Are there aspects of matter that are 'invisible' or not visible to the naked eye? What would the world be like if you could see such forces or such aspects of matter?

Ans.: Yes, there are forces like magnetism. Magnetism is also known as the gravitational force. We know it very well that it is the gravitational force that binds us to the earth but we cannot see the gravitational force. Likewise, there are many things, which cannot be seen with naked eyes but they are always around us and can only be felt.

If we could see such powers, it would be very difficult to reason out things and it would lead to a lot of confusion.

Whether accepted or not, supernatural forces can be felt at times but if they became visible it will be utter chaos.

Q.3 What makes glass or water transparent (what is the scientific explanation for this)? Do you think it would be scientifically possible for a man to become invisible, or transparent? (Keep in mind that writers of science fiction have often turned out to be prophetic in their imagination!)

Ans.: Electrons in water or glass allow light to pass through them which makes the glass or water transparent.

It is not yet possible for science to make a man invisible. Man has been portrayed as invisible in many movies and novels which is an outcome of our imagination and the desire to achieve such goals in the future.

Science has progressed at a rapid pace and if serious efforts are put in, I don't think the day is far when the man would be able to go invisible.