

**1.**How was the mother bitten by the scorpion?

**ans:** The poet and his family lived in a village. There was continuous rain for ten hours. The heavy rain forced the scorpion to take shelter under a sack of rice. It stung the mother and went out into the rain.

**2.**How did the villagers come to the aid (help) of the mother ?

**ans.** The villagers came to know that the mother was stung by a scorpion. They rushed to the house like a swarms of flies. The figure of speech used is simile. They they came with the lanterns and candles to search for the scorpion. It threw giant scorpion shadows on the wall.

**3.** Response of the villagers towards the mother's suffering?

**ans.** The peasants of the village are superstitious. They believed that the sins committed the previous birth will be purified because of the suffering. They believe that with every movement the scorpion made the poison mold in the mothers blood. They also say that the mother's intense pain and suffering caused by the scorpion could decrease the misfortunes in her next birth. According to them the mother's flesh and spirit are purified from desire because of this intense suffering. To her since in her previous birth they said that her present suffering could burn away the sins of the next birth they buzzed the name of God hundred times to keep the scorpion still.

**4:** character of the villagers

**ans:** The villagers are illiterate and superstitious. But they are selfish and cordial to their neighbours. When the mother was stung by the scorpion, they came with candles and lanterns to search the house for the scorpion. The poet compares them to 'swarms of flies'. They sat with the mother with peace of understanding on their face. They comforted the mother with their simple faith in God. They are affectionate. With their superstitious beliefs they tried to console the mother.

**5:** what is a Diabolik about the tail of the scorpion?

**Ans :** The sting of the scorpion's tail caused much pain to the poet's mother. So he calls its diabolic or devilish.

**6:** Who wrote the poem 'night of the scorpion'?

**Ans:** Nizzim Ezekiel

**7:** Who was stung by the scorpion?

**Ans:** The boy's mother

**8: why did the scorpion enter the house?**

**Ans : The scorpion entered the house to escape from 10 hours of continuous rain**

**9: Who came like swarms of flies?**

**Ans: The villagers came like swarms of flies. The figure of speech is simile. The group of peasants are compared to swarms of flies.**

**10. Who poured paraffin on the bitten toe?**

**Ans: The father**

**11. Who tried to cure the mother with rituals and incantation?**

**Ans: The holy man**

**12: how did the pain affect the mother?**

**Ans: The mother was twisting and turning on a mat with the villagers around her. She suffered for 20 hours.**

## Night of the scorpion Notes.

### Character of father/Response of father

The poem 'Night of the scorpion' recounts an incident that occurred on a miserable rainy night. Ten hours of heavy rain force the scorpion to crawl beneath a sack of rice. Unfortunately it stung the poet's mother with its diabolic tail and risked the rain again. The villagers came to console the mother. The mother was twisting, turning and groaning on a mat with unbearable pain. The poet's father, a sceptic and rationalist used his knowledge of science to help the mother. He tried 'every curse and blessing'. He applied powder, mixture, herb and hybrid. As a last resort he poured a little paraffin upon the bitten toe and put a match to it. There is a contrast between the world of irrationality represented by the villagers and the world of rationalism represented by the father. His father was frantic so he resorted to using paraffin on the mother's toe, setting it alight and it is not a very scientific response. The father is not superstitious like the villagers.

## Night of the Scorpion

### Character of Mother

Nissim Ezekiel's *Night of the Scorpion* is a strong yet simple statement on the power of self-effacing love. Full to the brim with Indianness, it captures the Indian village life with all its superstitious simplicity. The poem opens with the poet's reminiscence of a childhood experience, the night his mother was stung by a scorpion. Ten hours of steady rain had driven the scorpion to hiding beneath a sack of rice. After inflicting unbearable pain upon the mother with a flash of its diabolic tail, the scorpion went out to the rain again.

The peasant-folk of the village came like swarms of flies and expressed their sympathy. With lighted candles and lanterns they began to search for the scorpion, but in vain. They tried to console the mother. They sat with her on the floor with piece of understanding in their face. The father and a holy man also played their part to help the mother. The mother twisted and groaned with unbearable pain.

After twenty hours the poison lost its sting. The ironic twist comes in the end of the poem. The mother who suffered in silence only says "Thank God, the scorpion picked on me and spared my children." Her simple speech is in contrast to the gabbling neighbours. She did not show any bitterness about her ordeal. She is just grateful that the scorpion had not hurt her children. It shows the selflessness and love of the mother. The poem deals with the all conquering power of love. The dignified response of the mother is both humbling and inspirational. The words of the mother is both emotional and heart touching. She is concerned about the safety and health of her children. The concern of the villagers and the poet's father seem rather superficial when pitted against the heartfelt feelings of his mother. Ezekiel here conveys an underlying message of motherhood. Everybody was worried about the safety of the mother but she was concerned only about her children.

