

Glimpses of India

A Baker From Goa

Question 1: What are the elders in Goa nostalgic about?

Solution: Elders in Goa are nostalgic about good old Portuguese days, about the Portuguese, and their famous loaves of bread. Goa was a Portuguese colony. After independence Goa became part of India. Goa has distinct effect of Portuguese and Anglo Indian culture. Christianity is one of the main religions in Goa. Elders usually fondly remember old days because once people grow old they accumulate rich experiences of their past. It is a normal human psychology that past always looks better than present.

Question 2: Is bread-making still popular in Goa? How do you know?

Answer: From the story it is clear that bread-making is still popular in Goa. The author has described about the existence of time-old furnaces and their still burning fire. The Goan society is still having moulders, bread mixers and bakers.

Question 3: What is the baker called?

Answer: Baker is called a Pader in Goa.

Question 4: When would the baker come every day? Why did the children run to meet him?

Answer: The baker usually comes in the morning everyday. The children are fond of his musical sales pitch. Moreover, they are unable to wait to savour the bread rings.

Question 5: Match the following. What is a must as marriage gifts? – cakes and bolinhas

Answer: sweet bread called bol.

for a party or a feast? – sweet bread called bol

Answer: bread

for a daughter's engagement? – bread

Answer: sandwiches

for Christmas? – sandwiches

Answer: cakes and bolinhas

Question 6: What did the bakers wear: (i) in the Portuguese days? (ii) when the author was young?

Answer: (i) In the Portuguese days bakers used to wear a knee length single piece frock known as kabai.

(ii) When the author was young bakers used to wear a shirt and a knee length pant.

Question 7: Who invites the comment — “he is dressed like a pader”? Why?

Answer: Even today if someone wears a pant with length a little bit down from knees he invites the comment, “he is dressed like a pader”, because bakers used to wear such dresses in Goa.

Question 8: Where were the monthly accounts of the baker recorded?

Answer: Bakers used to record the monthly account on some walls with pencil. We still find this practice followed by panwallahs in many towns and villages in India. The panwallah write monthly dues account on their shops walls.

Question 9: What does a ‘jackfruit -like appearance’ mean?

Answer: A baker’s profession was apparently a profitable profession. This was evident from plump appearance of the baker as if he was well fed. A plump person can give a jackfruit like appearance.

Question 10: Which of these statements are correct?

The pader was an important person in the village in old times.

Answer: Correct

Paders still exist in Goan villages.

Answer: Correct

The paders went away with the Portuguese.

Answer: Incorrect

The paders continue to wear a single-piece long frock.

Answer: Incorrect

Bread and cakes were an integral part of Goan life in the old days.

Answer: Correct

Traditional bread-baking is still a very profitable business.

Answer: Correct

Paders and their families starve in the present times.

Answer: Incorrect

Question 11: Is bread an important part of Goan life? How do you know this?

Answer: Some of the facts which show the importance of bread in Goan life are as follows. Sandwiches must be prepared on the occasion of a daughter's engagement. Cakes and bolinhas are must for Christmas and other festivals.

Question 12: Tick the right answer. What is the tone of the author when he says the following?

The thud and the jingle of the traditional baker's bamboo can still be heard in some places. (nostalgic, hopeful, sad)

Answer: Sad

Maybe the father is not alive but the son still carries on the family profession. (nostalgic, hopeful, sad)

Answer: Hopeful

I still recall the typical fragrance of those loaves. (nostalgic, hopeful, naughty)

Answer: Nostalgic

The tiger never brushed his teeth. Hot tea could wash and clean up everything so nicely, after all. (naughty, angry, funny)

Answer: Funny

Cakes and bolinhas are a must for Christmas as well as other festivals. (sad, hopeful, matter-of-fact)

Answer: Matter of fact

The baker and his family never starved. They always looked happy and prosperous. (matter-of-fact, hopeful, sad)

Answer: Sad

Coorg

Question 1: Where is Coorg?

Answer: Coorg is situated in Karnataka. It is midway from Mysore to Mangalore.

Question 2: What is the story about the Kodavu people's descent?

Answer: It is believed that Kodavu people are of Arabic origin. It is said that some of Alexander's army men moved to south and settled there. Their costume, martial practices and marriage rituals also point to the fact that they are from Arabic origin.

Question 3: What are some of the things you now know about

the people of Coorg?

Answer: The people of Coorg are a proud martial race. Their women are beautiful. Martial race means those who have well developed fighting skills. They have a great tradition of hospitality. They would often recount stories of valour of their menfolks.

the main crop of Coorg?

Answer: The description of abundance of coffee plantations indicates that the coffee is the main crop of Coorg.

the sports it offers to tourists?

Answer: The sporting activities in Coorg are of high energy variety. They are river rafting, canoeing, rock climbing, rappelling and mountain biking.

the animals you are likely to see in Coorg?

Answer: Macaques, Malabar squirrels, langurs and slender loris are widely found in Coorg. Apart from them elephants are also present. its distance from Bangalore, and how to get there?

Answer: Coorg is 252 kms from Bangalore. From Mysore it is 146 Kms and there is good train connectivity between Mysore and Coorg. From Bangalore bus services are available. From the rest of India anybody can reach Bangalore airport by flight and proceed towards Coorg. (ref: <http://www.karnataka.com/tourism/coorg>)

Question 4: Here are six sentences with some words in italics. Find phrases from the text that have the same meaning. (Look in the paragraphs indicated)

During monsoons it rains so heavily *that tourists do not visit* Coorg. (para 2)

Answer: During the monsoons, it pours enough to *keep many visitors away*.

Some people say that Alexander's army moved south along the coast and settled there. (para 3)

Answer: *As one story goes*, a part of Alexander's army moved south along the coast and settled here when return became impractical. The Coorg people *are always ready to tell stories* of their sons' and fathers' valour. (para 4)

Answer: Coorgi homes have a tradition of hospitality, and they are *more than willing* to recount numerous tales of valour related to their sons and fathers.

Even people who normally lead *an easy and slow life get smitten* by the high-energy adventure sports of Coorg. (para 6)

Answer: *The most laidback individuals* become converts to the life of high-energy adventure with river rafting.

The theory of the Arab *origin is supported by* the long coat with embroidered waist-belt they wear. (para 3)

Answer: The theory of Arab *origin draws support from* the long, black coat with an embroidered waist-belt worn by the Kodavus.

Macaques, Malabar squirrels *observe you carefully* from the tree canopy.

Answer: Macaques, Malabar squirrels, langurs and slender loris *keep a watchful eye* from the tree canopy.

The Trees

The trees inside are moving out into the forest,
the forest that was empty all these days
where no bird could sit
no insect hide
no sun bury its feet in shadow
the forest that was empty all these nights
will be full of trees by morning.

All night the roots work
to disengage themselves from the cracks
in the veranda floor.

Most of us put beautiful plants inside our homes for decoration. As you know trees are also living beings. The poet has tried to describe their emotions in artificial forests. The gardens we make inside our drawing rooms are like artificial forests. This is same as putting an animal in a cage. No matter how much facility that animal is given, it will never be able to enjoy the freedom of the jungle.

The trees are kept somewhere else during the night, where they try to escape through the cracks of the veranda floor. Every morning they are moved to the artificial forest. The forest where no bird can sit, no insect can hide and where the sun can not hide behind a tree. It is like putting an animal away from its natural surroundings.

The leaves strain toward the glass
small twigs stiff with exertion
long-cramped boughs shuffling under the roof
like newly discharged patients
half-dazed, moving
to the clinic doors.

The leaves are trying to push through the glass window pane as if trying to escape the captivity. The branches are feeling cramped under the roof. This reminds the poet of a patient who is being discharged from the clinic and is moving with tired gaze and steps towards the clinic door.

I sit inside, doors open to the veranda
writing long letters
in which I scarcely mention the departure
of the forest from the house.

The night is fresh, the whole moon shines
in a sky still open
the smell of leaves and lichen
still reaches like a voice into the rooms.

Outside the captivity the night is full of freshness and the moon is shining. The smell of leaves and lichen is reaching those inside the captivity like a voice coming from far away. If you ever happen to travel

through the jungles of Chhattisgarh or Jharkhand You may recall the musty smell of the flora. This distinct smell can't be replicated in the drawing room gardens.

My head is full of whispers
which tomorrow will be silent.

Listen. The glass is breaking.

The trees are stumbling forward
into the night. Winds rush to meet them.

The moon is broken like a mirror,
its pieces flash now in the crown
of the tallest oak.

This is like a dream come true for those trees in captivity. The glass pane has broken and the trees are escaping. Now the moon is shining on top of the oak tree. It seems that the moon has broken like a mirror and its pieces have fallen all over the head of the oak tree to give it a crown of shining silver.

The Trees Summary

The poet talks about trees symbolically. They refer to women who have been healed and are ready to move out of their houses to fulfil their primary purpose - to renew the forest of mankind. As women have remained indoors, the forest has become empty, the birds and insects rendered shelterless. The Sun's rays do not have the tree trunks and leaves to fall upon and thus, reach the earth. She says that the forest will be full of trees the next morning. The roots of the trees are working hard to separate from the floor of the veranda where they have remained fixed. The leaves and branches are moving towards the glass windows. They are desperate to move out just like a newly discharged patient who has not recovered completely, moves to the exit door of the hospital in a hurry. The poet is sitting in her house with the doors of the veranda open. She is writing letters but does not mention this movement of the trees. It is night time, the sky is clear and a bright moon is visible. She can smell the leaves and lichen which seem to be calling out desperately. She hears the glass of the window pane breaking. The trees are moving out and the fast blowing wind embraces them. As the trees have reached the forest, the tall and strong oak tree overshadows the moon and it seems that the moon has been broken into several pieces.

The Trees Poem and Explanation



The trees inside are moving out into the forest,
the forest that was empty all these days
where no bird could sit
no insect hide
no sun bury its feet in shadow
the forest that was empty all these nights
will be full of trees by morning.

The poet says that the trees are moving out of the confines of the houses, into the open forest. This is unrealistic as trees are immovable and hence, we realize that the poem has a symbolic meaning. We interpret that trees refer to females who have healed themselves and are ready to move out of their homes, into the forests to fulfil their primary purpose of filling the world with mankind. Further she adds that the forest has been empty for the past many days and so, no birds can be seen as they do not have any trees to sit on, on insects can be seen as they do not have any shelter and the Sunlight cannot form any shadows. The forest of humanity has remained empty for many days but will soon be full and bright.

Literary Devices:

Personification: Sun bury its feet. Sun has been personified.

Enjambment: Continuation of a sentence to the next line (the forest that was..... trees by morning).

Anaphora: 2 lines begin with 'no'

imagery: "The trees inside are moving out into the forest" - shows kinesthetic imagery

All night the roots work
to disengage themselves from the cracks
in the veranda floor.
The leaves strain toward the glass

small twigs stiff with exertion
long-cramped boughs shuffling under the roof
like newly discharged patients
half-dazed, moving
to the clinic doors.

Disengage: remove
Strain: pressure
Twigs: small stem
Exertion: effort
Cramped: restricted
Boughs: branch
Shuffling: mixing
Discharged: send out
Dazed: stun

The poet explains the struggle done by the plants to reach the forest. She says that the roots worked for the whole night to separate themselves from the veranda floor. The leaves tried hard to reach the window of glass so that they could go outside. Even the small stems of the trees put much of their effort in order to set themselves free. The big branches were also trying a lot to go out from the roof of the room. We can say that women are desperate for a change and their effort is compared to that made by a patient who has been released from the hospital and he tries to move out in a hurry although he is confused. Maybe because they are half conscious and are under the influence of some medication, they are unsteady but in a hurry to leave the clinic.

Literary Devices:

Enjambment: continuation of sentence to the next line (the leaves strain.....
Half dazed)

Simile: trees compared to patients (like newly discharged patients)

personification: twigs and boughs have been personified.



I sit inside, doors open to the veranda
writing long letters
in which I scarcely mention the departure
of the forest from the house.

The night is fresh, the whole moon shines
in a sky still open
the smell of leaves and lichen
still reaches like a voice into the rooms

Scarcely: barely

Departure: leaving

Lichen: crusty patches of bushes of fungus and algae on tree trunks, having a distinct smell

The poet says that she is sitting in her veranda, writing long letters. She does not mention about the trees leaving her house in her letters. She says that the night is very clear. She can see the complete moon which is shining. The smell of leaves and lichens is like a voice which is yelling and expressing a desire for freedom from the confines of the house.

Literary Devices:

Alliteration: 'long letters' forest from' 'sky still' 'leaves and lichen'

Enjambment: continuation of sentence to the next line (doors open....the house)

Imagery: the poet has tried to create a scene in which she is observing all the things happening (the night is fresh.....into the rooms)



My head is full of whispers
which tomorrow will be silent

Listen. The glass is breaking.

The trees are stumbling forward
into the night. Winds rush to meet them.

The moon is broken like a mirror,
its pieces flash now in the crown
of the tallest oak.

Whispers: murmur

Stumbling: trip over

Flash: glare, shine

Oak: A large, strong tree generally used for making furniture

Her head is full of the slow sounds made by the trees which are desperate to move out. These sounds will not be heard the next day. The poet asks the reader to listen carefully as a change is about to take place. She hears the glass window breaking and the trees stumble out into the night. The wind is blowing outside. It meets the trees. The moon is like a mirror and it appears to have been broken into pieces as the shadow of the oak tree divides the moon into many fragments.

Literary devices:

Simile: The moon is compared to a mirror (Moon is broken like a mirror)

The Trees Class 10 Poem Question and Answers

Q1-(1) Find, in the first stanza, three things that cannot happen in a treeless forest?

Ans: The three things mentioned in the first stanza that cannot happen in a treeless forest are:

- i. Birds sitting on the tree branches.
- ii. The hiding of insects in the branches of trees
- iii. The sun burying its feet in the shadow of the trees in the forest.

(2) What picture do these words create in your mind: "... sun bury its feet in shadow..."? What could the poet mean by the sun's 'feet'?

Ans: The sun's feet are the rays of sun that reach the earth after falling on the leaves of the trees and finally, reach the earth's surface.

Q2- (1) Where are the trees in the poem? What do their roots, their leaves, and their twigs do?

Ans: The trees are in the poet's house. The roots are working hard to remove themselves from the cracks of veranda. The leaves are making an effort to reach towards the glass in order to come out and the twigs are making attempts to set themselves free and reach the forest.

(2) What does the poet compare their branches to?

Ans: The poet uses the word long cramped for the branches. She says that the branches are trying hard to come out of the roof. She then compares them with newly discharged patients who are trying to move out in their half consciousness.

Q3- (1) How does the poet describe the moon: (a) at the beginning of the third stanza, and (b) at its end? What causes this change?

Ans: The poet describes the moon as a full moon in the beginning of the third stanza but at the end of the stanza, she describes it to be broken into pieces. The change in the moon is because of the trees. The trees that earlier were in the poet's house have now reached the forest. Their long branches have cast a shadow on the full moon and now it appears to be broken into pieces like a mirror.

(2) What happens to the house when the trees move out of it?

Ans: The house becomes silent as the fragrance of the leaves and lichens which was like a voice urging for a change can no longer be smelt.

(3) Why do you think the poet does not mention "the departure of the forest from the house" in her letters? (Could it be that we are often silent about important happenings that are so unexpected that they embarrass us? Think about this again when you answer the next set of questions.) ?

Ans: The poet did not mention the departure of the forest from her house because it is a part of human nature to ignore the important matters of their life. We all know that trees are so important for our survival on earth. But still human beings are cutting them for making profits without even thinking of the aftermath.

Q4- Now that you have read the poem in detail, we can begin to ask what the poem might mean. Here are two suggestions. Can you think of others?

- Does the poem present a conflict between man and nature? Compare it with A Tiger in the zoo. Is the poet suggesting that plants and trees, used for 'interior

decoration' in cities while forests are cut down, are 'imprisoned' and need to 'break out'?

Ans: Yes, the poem presents a conflict between man and nature. Man is causing deforestation by cutting down the trees for his own use. On the other hand, he decorates his house with the trees. We are damaging our environment without even thinking about the end results. By clearing up the forests, we are endangering ourselves. So is with the animals too. We are ruining their natural habitat and killing them for our fun or food but on the other hand, we are keeping them in the cages on the pretext of safeguarding them by making sanctuaries and zoos. So, it is true that we are in a direct conflict with nature and making the other living beings prisoners, be it the trees or animals.

- On the other hand, Adrienne Rich has been known to use trees as a metaphor for human beings; this is a recurrent image in her poetry. What new meanings emerge from the poem if you take its trees to be symbolic of this particular meaning?

Ans: If trees are to be taken as a symbol for human beings, then the poem will define the efforts of humans to free themselves from the clutches of the desire to achieve everything. All the human beings are under a constant pressure of being at the top in every field. Either they are forced by their own desire of doing so or there is a constant peer pressure on them. So, the human beings will set themselves free from this race and try to live a happy and peaceful life.