

Chapter 10

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1. What was Vijay Singh's weakness? Which awkward situation did it push him into?

Ans: Vijay Singh's weakness was that he was fond of boasting. One day he boasted that he was not afraid of ghosts and wished to meet a stout ghost to teach him a lesson. However, when he was asked to walk through the Haunted Desert alone at night to meet ghosts as they roamed there freely, he was scared.

2. Was the old woman's gift to Vijay Singh eccentric? Why?

Ans: Yes, the old woman's gift to Vijay Singh was eccentric because he was walking towards the haunted desert to meet ghosts and she put a small packet into his hands which contained nothing but a lump of salt and an egg.

3. Why did Vijay Singh ask the ghost disguised as Natwar to come closer?

Ans: Vijay Singh trying to sound brave called out to the ghost who was disguised as Natwar and asked him where he was. He told him to come closer as he could not see where he was as it was dark. He wanted him to come there and show him the way. Like all good wrestlers he also wanted to assess the strength of his enemy.

4. What made the ghost speechless? Why?

Ans: Vijay Singh made the ghost speechless by peering into his face and calling him a plain lying ghost. People usually started back in horror when they saw the ghost and some fainted. But here was an unfeeling creature who was not afraid of him and only insulted him and said that he was tired of wrestling with men and wanted to fight a ghost.

5. Why did Vijay Singh say “Appearances can be deceptive”?

Ans: Vijay Singh said that appearances can be deceptive because the ghost claimed to be Natwar, though actually he was a rascal of a ghost-a plain lying ghost. Vijay too was pretending to be a brave and fearless wrestler and told the ghost that if he doubted his strength, he would give him a demonstration of it.

1. How did Vijay Singh use the egg? How did he use the lump of salt?

Ans: Vijay Singh used the egg to fool the ghost by first giving him a piece of rock to squeeze which the ghost was unable to do. Then he snatched the rock from the ghost and replaced it with the egg and squeezed it with both his hands and the yellow yolk oozed from around his fingers and the crackling of the egg shell created the illusion of the stone being crushed. Without the ghost noticing he cleaned his hands with sand and disposed of the shell. Then he picked another piece of rock and gave it to the ghost and asked him to squeeze it and said it would crumble as it contained salt. The ghost protested that it was only a stone and tried to crush it but did not succeed. Vijay replaced the stone with the lump of salt and casually crumbled it and let the stone drop to the ground thus making the ghost doubt his own powers. He was now mesmerized with the 'pahalwan'.

2. Why did Vijay Singh conclude that the ghost would not be a worthy opponent to him? Was he fair in his judgement?

Ans: Vijay Singh concluded that the ghost would not be a worthy opponent to him because the ghost had started to doubt his ghostly powers. He then told the ghost that there was no point wrestling with a weakling, and the ghost accepted his defeat very easily. No, he was not fair in his judgement of the ghost because he had overpowered him through wrong means. Vijay had fooled him into believing that he was a weakling who could not squeeze fluid or salt out of a rock while he was a pahalwan with extraordinary strength.

3. Why did Vijay Singh ask the ghost to accompany him to town next day?

Ans: Vijay Singh asked the ghost to accompany him to town the next day as his prisoner as he wanted to display him as the trophy of his victory to his people.

4. What made the ghost believe Vijay Singh was dead?

Ans: Before the break of dawn, the ghost approached the bed with a stout club, he hit the club on what he thought was Vijay Singh's head. Not hearing any groan, the ghost smiled believing that Vijay Singh was dead.

5. Vijay Singh complained of insects in the cave. What was he referring to, and why?

Ans: Vijay Singh complained of insects in the cave. He was referring to the ghost who had actually come to kill him at night with a stout club and had clubbed him seven times.

6. Was it really a ghost who Vijay Singh be fooled? Who do you think it was?

Ans: No I don't think it was a ghost who Vijay Singh be fooled. I think it was a robber who lived in the cave and who pretended to be a ghost and looted and killed travelers on the road through the Haunted Desert. He had collected a lot of wealth which he had stored in his cave in where he lived a luxurious life.