



Q6. How did Bama's brother explain the elder's behaviour to her? What was her immediate reaction?

Ans: Bama's elder brother, Annan, told her that the big man was not being funny when he carried the package by the string for his landlord. The upper caste people believed that others must not touch them. If they did so, they (people belonging to upper caste) would be polluted. That was why he did not touch the contents but held the packet by its string. Bama didn't want to laugh any more now. She felt terribly sad. She could not understand how the vadai, first wrapped in a banana leaf and then parcelled in a paper, would become disgusting if one of them held that package in his hands. She felt so provoked and angry that she wanted to touch those vadais herself straightaway. She wondered why they had to fetch and carry for these people. She was infuriated that an important elder of theirs went meekly to the shops to fetch snacks and then handed them over reverently, bowing and shrinking to the fellow who sat there and stuffed them in his mouth. She felt that they too were human beings. Their people should not do petty jobs for the miserly rich upper castes. They should work in their fields, take home their wages and leave it at that.

Q7. What indignities did the caste system heap on the lower castes? How could they end the discrimination? How did Bama react to her brother's advice?

Ans: According to Annan, the caste system was highly discriminatory. It put the lower castes in a very disadvantageous position. They were never given any honour, dignity or respect. They were deprived of all that. The only way to end this social discrimination was self-improvement. They should study hard and make progress. Then they could throw away all those indignities. He advised Bama to study with care and learn all that she could. If she was always ahead in her lessons, people would come to her of their own accord and attach themselves to her. The words "work hard and learn" became the guiding principles of Bama's life. She studied hard with all her breath and being. She was almost in a frenzy. She stood first in her class and, because of that, many people became her friends. This was the beginning of her illustrious career.

Q8. What oppression and discrimination did Zitkala-Sa and Bama experience during their childhood? How did they respond to their respective situations?

Ans: Zitkala-Sa was a victim of social and cultural oppression by the victors who had overpowered them by their sheer strength. They were prejudiced towards Native American culture and women. They adopted force and oppression to compel the natives to shed their age-old traditions and customs. The cutting of the long hair of Zitkala-Sa is a symbol of their oppression. She opposed this prejudice and oppression by rebelling against it. She protested with all her strength.

Bama was a victim of caste system. She had seen, felt and experienced the evils of untouchability when she was studying in the third standard. She felt humiliated by what it was. She struggled hard against this social discrimination. She studied hard and topped in her class. Many students became her friends.

Thus, both Zitkala-Sa and Bama fought the existing circumstances with courage and determination and ended the prejudice, discrimination and oppression.

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