



Comprehension Check (Page 77)

1. Why does Indrani Debi dislike Duttada's "hobnobbing" with Dibya?
2. She is complaining and smiling. Why is she smiling?
3. (i) What was Duttada's secret ambition?
(ii) What did he do to achieve it?
4. What is the difference between a planet and a comet, as given in the story?
5. Why was Duttada hopeful that he would discover a new comet soon?
6. Why does Duttada say _____ "I almost wish I had not discovered this comet".
7. Why is his wife unhappy about the discovery?

Answers:

1. "Dibya" was the name given by Indrani Debi. It was a telescope. Duttada was always busy during night with Dibya. He never cared for his wife or about himself. So his wife disliked it as her rival.
2. She complains that Dibya has cast a spell on her husband. But she could not help smiling at his childlike behaviour. He did not bother to close the door and he forgot to put on his sweater.
3. (i) Duttada's secret ambition was to buy a good telescope and to have enough of spare time to watch the stars.
(ii) He waited for his retirement. After retirement he got sufficient funds. Then he bought a telescope and he started gazing at the stars without caring for his wife and life.
4. A planet has a fixed orbit. A comet comes from the distant corners of the solar system. It keeps on changing.
5. Duttada was hopeful of discovering a new comet because he knew that professional astronomers did not consider them significant and ignored them.
6. The discovery of the new comet brought Duttada publicity which he did not like. He had to attend many receptions and functions. So he wished he hadn't discovered that new comet.
7. The discovery of the new comet made Duttada's wife unhappy. She was superstitious. She thought that the discovery would bring calamities on the family as well as on the earth.

Comprehension Check (Page 80)

1. How did Sir John get hold of James' original manuscript?
2. What is the important point the paper makes?
3. Why does Sir John say that James' paper should not be published?
4. What do the two men finally decide to do?

Answers:

1. Sir John got hold of James' original manuscript from Mr. Taylor who wanted to get his opinion before sending it to a professional referee.

2. The paper makes the important point that Duttada's comet would collide with the earth.
3. Sir John opposes the publication of James' paper because his prediction would cause widespread panic in the world.
4. The two men finally agree to organise a secret conference of international experts to plan how to avert the calamity.

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