



#### THINK AS YOU READ

Q1. From where did the peddler get the idea of the world being a rattrap?

Ans: The peddler had been thinking of his rattraps when suddenly he was struck by the idea that the whole world was nothing but a big rattrap. It existed only to set baits for people. It offered riches and joys, shelter and food, heat and clothing in the same manner as the rattrap offered cheese and pork. As soon as someone let himself be tempted to touch the bait, it closed in on him, and then everything came to an end.

Q2. Why was he amused by this idea?

Ans: His own life was sad and monotonous. He walked laboriously from place to place. The world had never been kind to him. So, during his gloomy ploddings, this idea became his favourite pastime. He was amused how people let themselves be caught in the dangerous snare and how others were still circling around the bait.

Q3. Did the peddler expect the kind of hospitality that he received from the crofter?

Ans: The crofter served him porridge for supper and tobacco for his pipe. He also played a game of cards with him till bed time. This hospitality was unexpected as people usually made sour faces when the peddler asked for shelter.

Q4. Why was the crofter so talkative and friendly with the peddler?

Ans: The crofter's circumstances and temperament made him so talkative and friendly with the peddler. Since he had no wife or child, he was happy to get someone to talk to in his loneliness. Secondly, he was quite generous with his confidences.

Q5. Why did he show the thirty kronor to the peddler?

Ans: The crofter had told the peddler that by supplying his cow's milk to the creamery, he had received thirty kronor in payment. The peddler seemed to doubt it. So, in order to assure his guest of the truth he showed the thirty kronor to the peddler.

Q6. Did the peddler respect the confidence reposed in him by the crofter?

Ans: No, the peddler did not respect the confidence reposed in him by the crofter. At the very first opportunity that he got, he smashed the window pane, took out the money and hung the leather pouch back in its place. Then he went away.

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Q1. What made the peddler think that he had indeed fallen into a rattrap?

Ans: The peddler realised that he must not walk on the public highway with the stolen money in his pocket. He went into the woods. He kept walking without coming to the end of the wood. Then he realised that he had fallen in the rattrap. He had let himself befooled by a bait and had been caught in.

Q2. Why did the ironmaster speak kindly to the peddler and invite him home?

Ans: The ironmaster walked closely up to the peddler. In the uncertain reflection from the furnace, he mistook the man as his old regimental comrade, Captain Von Stahle. He addressed the stranger as Nils Olof, spoke very kindly and invited him home.

Q3. Why did the peddler decline the invitation?

Ans: The peddler knew that the ironmaster had mistaken him for his old regimental comrade. Secondly, he had stolen money—thirty kronor—on him. Going to the ironmaster's residence would be like entering the lion's den. So, he declined the invitation.

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Q1. What made the peddler accept Edla Willmansson's invitation?

Ans: Miss Edla Willmansson looked at the peddler quite compassionately. She noticed that the man was afraid. She assured him that he would be allowed to leave just as freely as he came. She requested him to stay with them over Christmas Eve. Her friendly manner made the peddler feel confidence in her and accept her invitation.

Q2. What doubts did Edla have about the peddler?

Ans: As Edla lifted the peddler's hat, he jumped up abruptly and seemed to be quite frightened. Even her kind looks, disclosure of her name and purpose of visit failed to calm him. From his fear, she thought that either he had stolen something or he had escaped from jail.

Q3. When did the ironmaster realise his mistake?

Ans: Next morning, the stranger was cleaned and well-dressed. The valet had bathed him, cut his hair and shaved him. He was led to the dining room for breakfast. The ironmaster saw him in broad daylight. It was impossible to mistake him for an old acquaintance now. Then the ironmaster realised his mistake and threatened to call the Sheriff.

Q4. How did the peddler defend himself against not having revealed his true identity?

Ans: The peddler explained that he had not tried to pretend as his acquaintance. He was not at fault. All along he had maintained that he was a poor trader. He had pleaded and begged to be allowed to stay in the forge. No harm had been done by his stay. He was willing to put on his rags again and go away.

Q5. Why did Edla still entertain the peddler even after she knew the truth about him?

Ans: Edla did not think it proper on their part to chase away a human being whom they had asked to come to their house and had promised him Christmas cheer. She understood the reality of the peddler's life and wanted him to enjoy a day of peace with them. Hence, she still entertained the peddler even after knowing the truth about him.

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