Vikram’s English Academy

Question Bank: Aachchi

1. **Where would the ‘battalion’ gather every holiday? How different would Aachchi treat the narrator and Uncle D’s children?**

Ans: The battalion of cousins would gather at Aachchi’s old mansion every holiday. Aachchi would strut around warning the narrator against some mischief while petted Uncle D’s children. They would be showered with words of praise and endearment while the narrator would sulk, unnoticed in silent envy.

1. **Describe Aachchi’s way of living after Seeya. How did she react when Seeya died?**

Ans: Aachchi lived alone in her big mansion at the top of the hill after Seeya’s death. When Seeya died after a long illness, aachchi wailed but the narrator wasn’t sure whether she was really sad. Her eyes were dry though she wailed loudly.

1. **What did the cousins do on Avurudhu and what did she give them? Who got more money from her and why?**

Ans: On Avurudhu cousins the narrator and his cousins would go there to pay their respects to her and she would give some pocket money. They would look forward to receiving money from her. The narrator’s siblings always got more money than the narrator because they were older.

1. What made the narrator feel that Aachchi liked Uncle D’s children more than him?

Ans: When the narrator played hide-and-seek with Uncle D’s children, Aachchi would always give away his most secret hiding place or that is what the narrator felt so. Aachchi liked Uncle D’s children and the narrator was a jealous child. He was sure that Aachchi liked Uncle D’s children more than she liked the narrator and his siblings.

1. What dress did Aachchi usually wear?

Ans: Aachchi would usually wear an enormous floral dressing gown with gigantic sunflowers on it.

1. What would happen when Aachchi slept soundly?

Ans: When Aachchi would sleep soundly the narrator would venture on a sweet hunt. Her loud snores would tell him that she was well into her long afternoon nap and it would be the right time to find the containers. Finding the containers was difficult but he always tried.

1. What happened when the narrator and his siblings would visit her?

Ans: When the narrator, his siblings; his two sisters and his brother along with his mother visited her, she usually asked how they were doing in school. The narrator and his siblings would fidget uncomfortably and mumble replies only waiting for the sweets.

1. What would Aachchi bring from the kitchen? How many would she give? When would the narrator get an extra?

Ans: Aachchi would sail away to the kitchen to bring sweets, ginger biscuits and hot ginger tea. The ginger biscuits were always rationed and she only gave them two at a time. On the days when Aachchi thought that the narrator behaved really well she would give three biscuits and even ruffled his hair like Amma did. Sometimes, after one of Uncle G’s rare visits from Australia, she would give them Australian chocolates.

1. What did the narrator overhear one day?

Ans: The narrator overheard Aachchi telling Amma that the narrator did not how to behave around visitors and that he was loud and boisterous.

1. What happened on a particular New Year day?

Ans: One year after the narrator paid respects, he refused to touch her feet like he was supposed to. He thought they were dirty. Aachchi was hurt. Though she said it was alright but her voice was unsteady.

1. What happened one Sunday? Who came and what new did he bring?

Ans: One Sunday, Uncle D, Amma’s youngest brother came to their home. He entered with a worried look on his face and he didn’t even knock. He just walked into the house and straight into the kitchen. Uncle D told Amma that Aachchi was ill. She had been to the garden for her usual walk. But on returning, she developed a severe chill and a high raging fever.

1. What did Amma do as soon as Uncle D broke the news to her?

Ans: Amma turned the stove off and she told her children that they had to go right away to see Amma. They immediately got ready and headed to that familiar old mansion.

1. What did the narrator think while walking up the hill?

Ans: The narrator thought how the cousins would gather there around her on Sundays and how she would give them treats at teatime.

1. Why would Amma stop at the bakery? Did she stop this time? Justify.

Ans: Amma would stop at the bakery where she would buy kimbula banis. This time Amma didn’t stop. She understood the urgency of the situation and hence rushed ahead to the mansion.

1. What was seen when they reached the mansion?

Ans: When they reached the mansion, they saw there were quite a few people there already. They went straight into Aachchi’s bedroom. She was lying on her bed, her face lined with pain.

1. What did the narrator observe as he sat quietly at her bedside?

Ans: The narrator saw a framed photograph of Aachchi taken during her youth on the wall above the bed. The woman in the sepia picture with her slim figure and dark hair did not look like the Aachchi he had known. The woman in the picture smiled and that made her look unrecognizable. The narrator also saw his Amma in the picture. Amma looked just like Aachchi in the photograph.

1. What did the narrator feel after looking at the grey hair? Whom did he think next?

Ans: The narrator wondered how it must be like to live in that big old mansion all alone. He thought about Rocky, the dog who was her constant companion.

1. Describe Rocky.

Ans: Rocky was Aachchi’s constant companion. He would bark at anybody who tried to pet him. He only allowed Aachchi to pet his head. Aachchi always kept dog-biscuits in a special container for him. Whenever Rocky did a trick, Aachchi always gave him a biscuit and Rocky would wag his tail.

1. What did the narrator gradually realize about Aachchi?

Ans: The narrator gradually realized that though Aachchi appears to be a strong lady who never smiles, she has gone through a lot of struggles and turbulences. She lost her husband and then her dear pet dog. That probably made her bitter and she would never smile. Perhaps years ago she was kinder and more loving and that life had changed her.

1. Which thoughts the narrator had regarding Aachchi?

Ans: The narrator wondered how it was be living all alone in the big mansion. He felt sorry for her as she lay and he thought how it must have been to find it difficult to breathe.

1. What did the narrator suddenly remember?

Ans: The narrator suddenly remembered how once Aachchi had affectionately ruffled his hair when he had got all A’s at the year-end examination.

1. What did the narrator hope for? What was he going to do? Why?

Ans: Amma told everyone that Aachchi was going to be well soon. The narrator hoped the same as he was looking forward for the New Year when he would surely be ready to touch her feet. His love, respect for Aachchi had increased to a large extent.