

The Snake and The Mirror – Important Questions

Q. What was the doctor thinking while he was seated before the mirror?

Ans. The doctor thought of various medicines he had and if any medicine was good enough to save him if the snake did bite him. He also realized that God had punished him for being so proud and arrogant.

Q. What were the two important decisions taken by the doctor while looking at the mirror?

Ans. The important decision made by the doctor was that he would shave daily and grow a thin moustache, to look more handsome. The earth-shaking decision made by the doctor was that he would always keep that attractive smile on his face.

Q. What type of woman did the doctor in the story *The Snake and the Mirror*, want to get married to? Why?

Ans. The doctor wanted to get married to a woman who was fat. The reason he gave was that if he, the doctor husband, ever made any mistake and tried to run away, she would not be able to catch him and stop him from escaping.

Q. Why did the author of *The Snake and the Mirror* fantasize a fat woman as his wife?

Ans. The author of *The Snake and the Mirror* fantasizes a fat woman as his wife since she would never be able to catch the doctor on his mistakes. She would not be able to run after him and he would be saved from all kinds of punishments. Thus, the author fantasizes a fat woman as his wife.

Q. How did the doctor show the presence of mind when he encountered the snake?

Ans. The doctor showed great presence of mind on seeing the snake. He neither jumped nor cried out. He sat on the chair holding his breath. His body was still but his mind remained very active.

Q. What did the doctor do on seeing the snake?

Ans. The doctor saw the snake's reflection in the mirror. He, then, went to have a closer look. He got up from the chair and ran away from the house.

Q. What made the doctor utter 'Death lurked four inches away'?

Ans. The doctor was under the grip of the snake and sat motionless as a statue. His body was inactive but mind was completely active. He knew very well that the snake would bite him at the slightest movement. This is what made him utter these words.

Q. Why did the snake leave the doctor's arm?

Ans. The snake left the doctor's arm because it saw its reflection in the mirror and was fascinated by it and so wanted to enjoy its own reflection by having a closer look.

Q. Has the author given a suitable ending to the story 'The Snake and the Mirror'?

Ans. Yes, I think the author has given a suitable ending to the story 'The Snake and the Mirror' for two reasons. Firstly, he gives a soft twist by bringing the character of the thief into the story. Secondly, it infuses the ending with humour and gives a happy ending to the story. The thief's stealing everything else other than the author's vest not only infuses laughter but also mellows down the seriousness of the incident. The author also says that he didn't see the snake again and that it was taken by a beauty again makes the ending humorous. Had the ending been serious, it wouldn't have matched the light attitude of the author that prevailed from the beginning.

Q. Why did the doctor run away from his house?

OR

Why did the doctor run to his friend's house?

Ans. From writer's arm, the snake slithered into his lap, crept onto the table and then moved towards the mirror. The writer revived, got up from the chair and leapt into the yard and ran to his friend's house to save his life.

Q. Describe the room where the doctor stayed?

Ans. The doctor stayed in a room which had no ceiling. It had a tiled roof with long supporting gables that rested on the beam over the wall. It was an outer room with one wall facing the open yard. Rats ran continuously to and fro on the beam.

Q. How did the snake change the writer's opinion about himself?

Ans. The writer was proud of being a doctor. Coming face-to-face with the snake made him humble. He thought he was only a poor and stupid doctor, who should not be proud of his profession.

Q. What are the similarities between the doctor and the snake?

Ans. The doctor and the snake had striking similarities. Both were victims of self-adoration. This is clearly visible in the two decisions of the doctor- to shave daily and to grow a moustache and also to wear an attractive smile on his face to look handsome, while the snake enjoyed looking at his reflection at closer quarters. It moved from the doctor's arm and later crept onto the table and moved towards the mirror. It seemed that the snake wanted to have a closer look.

Q. Describe in detail the doctor's feelings when he saw the snake coiled around his arm?

Ans. The doctor was so engrossed in his day dreaming that he did not realize that a snake had wriggled over the back of the chair and landed on his shoulders and coiled round his left arm with its hood spread out. The doctor sat there without moving an inch. He was afraid lest the snake might strike. He thought of various medicines he had and if any one of them was good enough to save him if the snake struck him. He realized the presence of God and felt that it was a punishment for being proud and arrogant.

Q. When and why did the doctor smile feebly at himself?

Ans. The doctor smiled feebly when the snake was slowly crushing his arm, He smiled at his foolishness of not having any medicine with him.

Q. Justify the title of the story *The Snake and the Mirror*.

Ans. The story revolves round the narrator, the snake and the mirror. The narrator hears some familiar sounds – a dull thud and a snake lands on his shoulder. The doctor is terrified and sits there like a stone. He suddenly feels the presence of the creator of the world and the presence of death four inches away. He forgets danger and smiles feebly. The snake looks into the mirror, moves towards it as it wants to enjoy a close reflection in the mirror. Thus, the title is justified as the story revolves around the snake and the mirror.

Q. What would you have done if you had been the doctor in the dark room with the cobra on your shoulder ?

Ans. If I had been the doctor in the room, I would have perhaps failed to maintain my calm like the way the doctor did. I wouldn't have perhaps restrained myself from screaming which is the most natural response when we see something utterly scary. But the doctor managed to remain silent. Though the doctor was under extreme pain as the snake had coiled itself around his hand, he still remained quiet. If I had been in his position, I would have possibly tried to shake off the snake and this would have proved fatal. Animals, in most of the cases, don't react if we remain still and silent. I would have lost my senses and fainted. Surprisingly, the doctor had funny imagination and thoughts about what the snake thought looking at the mirror.