

A House is Not a Home – Important Questions

Q. A month later, I was at my house watching them rebuild it. But this time it was different.’ How was it different?

Ans. A month later, the author was at his house. The house was being rebuilt but he wasn't alone. His two friends from school were with him. The fire was responsible for all the wonderful people around him. His life was getting back to normal. Now he focused on feelings of positivity and security.

Q. What happened to his mother when she had run into the burning house?

Ans. She inhaled a lot of smoke and fell unconscious in the burning house. Later the firemen rescued her. She put on an oxygen mask. She soon regained her senses and became alright.

Q. How did Zan's mother save important documents from the burning house?

Ans. As soon as the fire broke out Zan and his mother ran out into the front yard. Zan ran to the neighbours to call the fire department whereas Zan's mother ran inside to get the box full of important documents.

Q. How did the narrator try to save the cat?

Ans. After five hours, when the fire was finally out, it struck to the author that the cat was nowhere to be seen. He started crying and tried to get into the house to bring back his cat. But the firemen didn't allow him so the author requested him to save the cat.

Q. Why does the author break down in tears after the fire?

Ans. After the fire broke out in the author's house, he and his mother ran out into the front yard. There was no trace of his cat. The author thought that it had been killed in the fire and therefore broke down in tears after the fire.

Q. What made the mother risk the fire and rush to the house?

Ans. The mother risked the fire and rushed to the house to secure a small metal box full of important documents, pictures and letters of his father. They were the only things that she had to remember him by.

Q. In what condition did the author go to his school after the fire incident?

Ans. The fire had burnt all the author's belongings. He was deeply embarrassed because he had no uniform, no books and no bag. He felt as if all the security was ripped away and walked around the school dully.

Q. 'Everything felt surreal'? Who spoke the given line? What did the speaker mean by this ?

Ans. The author in the story '*A house is not a home*' spoke the given line. The word surreal means something strange or bizarre. The author had to wear borrowed shoes. He had neither his backpack nor homework. He had to go his new school. He felt like a geek or an outcast because he didn't have any friends in the new school. All this made him feel surreal or strange.

Q. What help did the author get from his schoolmates after the fire accident?

Ans. The schoolmates, after knowing about the author's plight, helped him in every way. They gave him shoes, clothes, sweaters, books, notebooks and many other things. They all invited the author to their houses.

Q. How did the author spend time with his tabby cat?

Ans. In the early morning, when the author would disturb her and get out of bed, she would tag along after him, climb up his robe and crawl into his pocket to fall asleep. Most of the time the red tabby cat used to lay on top of the author's papers, purring loudly and occasionally swatting at his pen for entertainment's sake.

Q. What is the meaning of "My cat was back and so was I"? Had the author gone anywhere? Why does he say that he is also back?

Ans. The fire had destroyed everything. The author was feeling very gloomy after the fire incident especially because his cat was missing after that. Zan felt his cat had died in the incident because there was no news about its whereabouts. The author had lost interest in everything. When a kind woman brought back his cat, he regained interest in life. Therefore, he said, "My cat was back and so was I."

Q. Was the fire both destructive and constructive for the author? How ?

Ans. The fire had destroyed the author's house. It had separated him from his pet, Tabby, for a month. But at the same time, this fire constructed new relationships between the author and his classmates at school. He had felt estranged in his new school. He didn't have friends. But his classmates came forward and tried to help the author overcome fear and trauma that the fire mishap had caused. This cemented a friendship between them. This is how the fire was both destructive and constructive for the author.

Q. Why was the author's mother insistent on the author's going to school the very next day of the fire mishap ?

Ans. I think the author's mother was insistent on the author's going to school the very next day of the fire mishap because life had taught her that it goes on no matter whatever happens. Since life had not stopped even after her husband's death and that she had come to terms with it, she knew that, that too shall pass. She knew that time heals everyone. One should try to continue doing ones work because it is meaningless pondering over the grief. The more one thinks about what is lost, the more difficult it is to come out of the grief. Since life moves on, it is wise to forget about what one cannot get back. The author's mother knew that the author was in trauma. If he didn't go to school, he would visit the rubble, think about his cat and become unhappy. Life is not about mourning the loss but of giving it a fresh renewed start.