



LITERATURE

STD-VI

SUBJECT : ENGLISH
CHAPTER NUMBER: 3
PERIOD NUMBER : 1
CHAPTER NAME :NIGHT OF THE SCORPION
BY NISSIM EZEKIEL

CHANGING YOUR TOMORROW

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EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- Recitation of the poem
- Being acquainted with poem and poet's biography
- Understanding the idea
- Appreciate the language of the poem
- Developing LSRW Skills

Slide 2

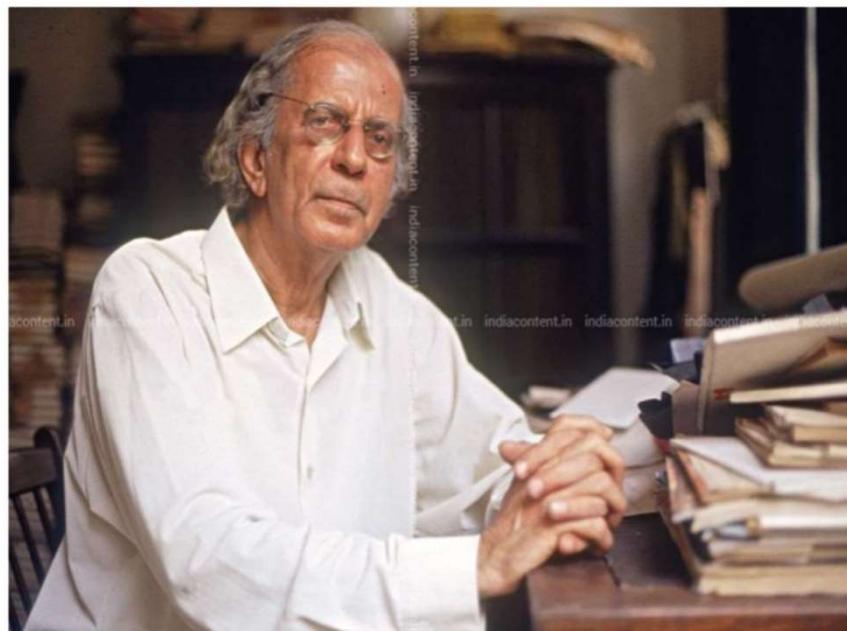
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Assigned to you

-Swoyan Satyendu

, 17-06-2020

INTRODUCTION TO THE POET



Nissim Ezekiel (1924 - 2004) was born in India to an Indian Jewish family. He studied in Bombay and London. He wrote eight collections of poetry and won the Akademi Award for a volume called 'Latter Day Psalms'. He was also a renowned playwright, art critic, lecturer and editor.

The Night of the Scorpion is a eight stanza poem, each stanza of which contains between three and eighteen lines. This is one of Ezekiel's first poems, it was first anthologized in Collected Poems (1952-1988)

Slide 3

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What is Night of the Scorpion about?

The poem is about the night when a woman (the poet's mother) in a poor village in India is stung by a scorpion. Concerned neighbours pour into her hut to offer advice and help. All sorts of cures are tried by the neighbours, her husband and the local holy man, but time proves to be the best healer- *After twenty hours / it lost its sting.'*

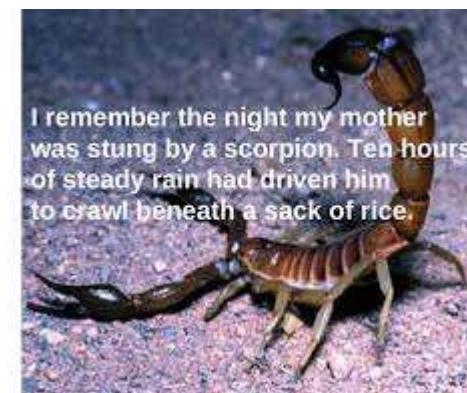
After her ordeal, the mother is merely thankful that the scorpion stung her and not the children.

The poem exposes the superstitions that dominate the minds of Indians and also the motherhood of a lady who just only of her children even in the worst condition. The poem has no rhyme scheme. It has eight stanzas with a different number of lines in each.

EXPLANATION OF THE 1ST STANZA

Stanza 1

- The poet says that he remembers well that night when her mother was stung by a scorpion.
- The poet is of the view that the heavy rain which lasted for 10 hours made the scorpion crawl beneath a sack of rice.
- The last phrase shows the poet's sympathy towards the scorpion.



I remember the night my mother
was stung by a scorpion. Ten hours
of steady rain had driven him
to crawl beneath a sack of rice.

EXPLANATION OF THE 2nd STANZA

- The poet says that after biting his mother with its diabolic (monstrous tail), the scorpion went back to rain outside again.
- The poet here shows sympathy as well as anger towards the scorpion.
- He is angry when he talks about its biting and sympathetic when he talks about its going to rain again.



EXPLANATION OF THE 3rd STANZA

- Hearing about the incident, the villagers rush to the poet's home.
- However, he is not happy with them and calls them *swarms of flies* who buzz *the name of God a hundred times to paralyse the Evil One*.



EXPLANATION OF THE 4th STANZA

- The poet then explains how the villagers searched for the scorpion.
- According to him, the villagers began searching for the scorpion and their shadows themselves seemed to be like a giant scorpion on the mud-baked walls.
- The villagers begin searching for the scorpion because they believe that the poison spreads across the body with the movement of scorpion so if the latter is stopped and paralyzed, the poison effect can also be controlled.
- This is a superstition and Nissim knows that well. Therefore, he hates the coming of villagers to his home.
- The stanza also depicts the Indianess that prevails in countryside.

VOCABULARY

Sting: If an insect, plant, or animal stings, it produces a small but painful injury, usually with a poison, by brushing against the skin or making a very small hole in the skin

Steady: happening in a smooth, gradual, and regular way

Crawl: to move along on hands and knees or with your body stretched out along a surface

Beneath: under someone or something

Sack: a large bag made of strong cloth, paper, or plastic, used to store large amounts of something

Diabolic: having the qualities of devil or wicked

Paralyse: to stop an activity

Diminished: to lessen; reduce

Groaning: a mournful sound conveying pain or grief

Rationalist: a person who believes in reason and knowledge than opinion and belief

Incantation: the chanting of words claim to have magical power

Peasants: a member of a low social class of farm workers and owners of small farms

Swarm of flies: A swarm of bees or other insects is a large group of them flying together.

Home Assignment: Get Going A, Page 65, one page handwriting

Activity: Recitation of the Poem



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