

CLASS – XI
LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION-15-05-2017
SUBJECT-ENGLISH
ASSIGNMENT -4

NOTES & QUESTIONS OF CHAPTER THE LOST SPRING

SOMETIMES I FIND A RUPEE IN THE GARBAGE

Saheb - the rag-picker

Saheb is a rag-picker who scrounges the garbage deposits to sustain his living. He and his family, refugees from Bangladesh, have come to the big city looking for gold (basic necessities of life) He is unable to study due to the lack of schools in his neighbourhood. The narrator jokingly makes a false promise to open a school for him but is later left embarrassed when he keeps approaching her enquiring about the school.

Saheb's full name, Saheb-e-Alam meaning lord of the universe, is ironical because he, along with others like him, is outright downtrodden. The author wonders if staying barefoot is just a tradition among the poor or only an excuse to explain away a perpetual state of poverty.

Recollecting the story of a priests son

The author recalls a story about a man from Udipi who, as a young son of a priest, used to pray for a pair of shoes. After thirty years, when the author visits the place, she finds that the situation has slightly improved because the son of the present priest now wears shoes and goes to school. However, the author points at the thought of the still barefooted rag pickers of her neighbourhood.

The heaven for rag-pickers Seemapuri

Seemapuri in Delhi, is home to 10,000 rag-pickers, mostly Bangladeshi refugees who came here in 1971. These people live in mud structures with roofs made of tin and tarpaulin. The ration cards, which allow them to buy grains, and the garbage, are their means of survival. They believe that their transit shacks are a better place than their native villages that provide no food. Once in a while the children manage to find coins and rupee notes in the garbage heaps. The author notices how such occasional findings help the children to cling on to hope and life.

Discrepancy between Saheb's desire and reality

Saheb reveals his desire of playing tennis to the author. Even though he has managed to find a discarded pair of tennis shoes, the author knows, the game itself is out of his reach.

Contrary to his heartfelt desire, Saheb eventually ends up picking up a job in a tea stall where he is paid 800 rupees and all his meals. One morning, he meets the author on his way to a milk booth carrying a canister to fetch milk for his master, and the author observes how, in the process of earning a few hundred rupees, Saheb has lost his freedom and carefree look.

I WANT TO DRIVE A CAR

Mukesh and his family

Mukesh belongs to a family of bangle makers in Firozabad. Most of the families in the place are unaware of the illegality of their action in engaging children in such a hazardous industry. Even though children in such families take up the family profession, Mukesh wants to be a motor mechanic and drive a car.

Mukesh takes the author to his house which is one among many of the dilapidated houses of bangle makers, constructed in stinking lanes. Mukesh's father has been unable to change the condition of the house and the family, in spite of working very hard. The family now consisted of the father, the grandmother, the elder brother and his wife, and Mukesh.

Mechanical life of a bangle maker

According to Mukesh's grandmother, once born into the caste of bangle-makers, they have no way out but to surrender to their destiny. The grandmother recalls how her husband finally turned blind after working for years in the glass-blowing industry.

The lives of the people of Firozabad are centred on bangle-making. All their lives they work with colourful bangles only to go blind in their later years.

The author observes a young girl, Savita and ponders over the life of women in that region. Before marriage they make bangles, possibly without ever realizing its sanctity, and after marriage wear them. The only boon some of these people have is a roof over their heads; but, they are not able to manage a proper full time meal.

The unfavourable social system

Even after years of slogging, there has hardly been any change in the scenario of Firozabad. People seem to have stopped dreaming. The injustice of the social and legal system is the proverbial last straw for this already desolate section of people. The young men are bogged down by the police, the deceptive middlemen and their own destinies, leaving them no choice but to give in to the imposed way of life.

The prospect of Mukesh attempting to break this cycle seems to the author like a ray of hope: a small step, but a start nevertheless.

QUESTION

PART-1

Q1. What does the title 'Lost Spring' convey?

Q2. What does Anees Jung want to reveal in her story 'Lost Spring'?

Q3. What is Saheb looking for in the garbage dumps? Where is he and where has he come from?

Q4. What makes the authoress embarrassed at having made a promise that was not meant?

Q5. Does the rag picking mean the same thing for parents and children? Give reasons for your answer.

Q4. Why was not Saheb happy on getting a job?

Q5. What could be some of the reasons for the migration of people from villages to cities?

PART-2

Q1. What was Mukesh's dream?

Q2. Why don't the bangle makers of Firozabad organize themselves?

Q3. How is Mukesh's attitude to his situation different from that of his family?

Q4. Why does the author say that the bangle-makers are caught in a vicious web?

Q5. How, in your opinion, can Mukesh realise his dream?

Q6. What forces conspire to keep the workers in the bangle industry of Firozabad in poverty?

Q7. Mention the hazards of working in the glass bangles industry. / Describe the difficulties the bangle makers of Firozabad have to face in their lives.