

The Vagabond

A. Answer these questions.

1. What does the speaker want from life? What are the four things he feels he can live without?

Ans. The speaker wants life which is carefree and wandering /sleep on the grass and watch the open sky/wants to eat only bread and drink water from the river.

He can live without wealth, love, hope and friend.

2. Pick out the lines from the poem which suggest that the speaker is not concerned about the weather.

Ans. *"Or let autumn fall on me,"*

Not to autumn will I yield,

Not to winter even!"

3. Describe the fields during the cold weather.

Ans. The poet roams in the frosty fields where the cold is so severe/that blood almost freezes/the fingers look blue/and the fields are covered with snow which appears to be as white as meal/the cold temperature also silences the bird on the tree.

4. How does the onset of the autumn season silence the bird on the tree?

When Autumn comes, winter is knocking at the door. The birds have to face lots of hardship due to the extreme weather condition, that is the cold autumn winds. So the birds stop singing and become silent.

5. Is the speaker worried about death? Explain.

Ans. No, the speaker is not worried about death.

He is ready for death which could come sooner or later and if it does not come, he has the roads before him to travel and the sky above him.

6. Pick out expressions from the poem that suggest that the speaker is not concerned about worldly needs.

Ans. *"wealth I seek not, hope nor love,*

Nor a friend to know me."

B. Answer these questions with reference to the context.

1. *Or let autumn fall on me*

Where afield I linger,

Silencing the bird on tree,

Biting the blue finger.

a. Why are the words “autumn” and “fall” used together?

Ans. Autumn is the month where the leaves fall from the tree leaving it bare. / These lines give a sketch of the hardships of the life outdoors. / The poet anticipates the actual pain of being outside in the cold autumn days. / So autumn and fall are used together to implicate an increase in sufferings during extreme conditions.

b. What does the word “biting” signify?

Ans. The cold autumn causes frostbite on poet’s finger. / The biting word is used to explain the severity of the cold weather.

c. Explain “blue finger” to describe the severity of the winter season.

“Blue finger” - according to the context given means that due to the cold emperature, the circulation of the blood becomes scarce which makes the finger appear blue.

2. *White as meal the frosty field-*

Warm the fireside haven-

Not to autumn will I yield,

Not to winter even!

a. Why is the field white in colour?

Ans. The field is white in colour because it is covered with frost.

b. Describe the “frosty field”.

Ans. The frosty field is as white as meal, looking like it has been dusted with flour.

c. Explain the last two lines.

Ans. The last two lines of the extract shows the defiantly stoic of the poet who is unwilling to give up to the extremities of autumn or winter which renders certain degree of sufferings. / He reiterates that he knows he will die sooner or later / but he

only wants to live his life as he wants on the road, with the heaven above and the road below.

C. Think and answer.

1. How would you describe the speaker as a person?

Ans. 1. The speaker is in love with the life style where he has a heaven above and road below him.

He wants fulfilment of his minimal needs for his mere sustenance. As he says,

"Bed in the bush with stars to see,

Bread I dip in the river -."

2. He wants to be in close contact with nature as he says, ***"Give the face of earth around."***

3. He is adventurous as when he refers to the word ***"byway"*** which means side roads, suggests that he enjoys taking path less travelled by others.

4. He is happy to be alone in isolation and he does not desire artificial material possessions of any kind as he says

"Wealth I seek not, hope nor love,

Nor a friend to know me;"

5. The speaker is cheerful and contented, however, he is not naive as he knows that a "blow" will befall on him someday. As he says,

"Let the blow fall soon or late,

Let what will be o'er me."

6. His attitude is defiantly stoic and he is ready to undergo any degree of sufferings for his preferred life style. As he says,

"Not to autumn will I yield,

Not to winter even!"

7. He is an open, free-spirited man as he says,

"There's the life for a man like me,

There's the life for ever."