NCERT Solutions for Class 12 English Flamingo Chapter 4

Question 1.
From where did the peddler get the idea of the world being a rattrap?
Answer:
The poor rattrap peddler struggled for his existence. He could not make both ends meet so he had to resort to both begging and petty thievery. Despite this, his condition was deplorable. Thinking of his miserable plight and his job, as he plodded on, he was struck by the idea that the whole world was nothing but a big rattrap. It baited people in the form of riches and joys, shelter and food, heat and clothing, just as the rattrap offered cheese and pork. Similarly, the moment one was tempted by the material joys, the world closed in on him and trapped him.

Question 2.
Why was he amused by this idea?
Answer:
The world had never been kind to him, so it gave him great joy to think ill of it. It became a treasured pastime for him to think of people he knew who had let themselves be caught in the dangerous trap, and of others who were still moving around the bait, ready to be trapped.

Question 3.
Did the peddler expect the kind of hospitality that he received from the crofter?
Answer:
When the peddler reached the little grey cottage by the roadside, he knocked on the door to ask for shelter for the night. He was surprised because, instead of the sour faces which ordinarily met him, this time he was welcomed by the owner, an old man.

Question 4.
Why was the crofter so talkative and friendly with the peddler?
Answer:
The crofter was an old man without wife or child. He was happy to get someone to talk to, in his loneliness. So, he welcomed the peddler. The old man was just as generous with his confidences as with his porridge and tobacco.

Question 5.
Why did he show the thirty kronor to the peddler?
Answer:
The old man was confiding and trusting. He told the peddler that he was no longer able to work as a day labour, and was supported by what he earned by selling his cow's milk. The old man showed him the thirty kronor that he had received as payment from the creamery, to convince the peddler.

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Question 6.
Did the peddler respect the confidence reposed in him by the crofter?
Answer:
No, the peddler did not respect the confidence reposed in him by the crofter because later, he went up to the window, smashed a pane and got hold of the pouch with the thirty kronor. He took the money and thrust it into his own pocket and went away.

Question 7.
What made the peddler think that he had indeed fallen into a rattrap?
Answer:
At first, the peddler was pleased with the money in his pocket; but he later got lost in the forest. All at once, he recalled his thoughts about the world being a rattrap. He felt that his end was near and that he had been fooled by a bait of thirty kronor.

Question 8.
Why did the ironmaster speak kindly to the peddler and invite him home?
Answer:
The owner of Ramsjo iron mill came into the forge on one of his night rounds of inspection and saw the peddler. The ironmaster walked close up to him, looked him over very carefully and mistook him for his friend, Nils Olof, and invited him home.

Question 9.
Why did the peddler decline the invitation?
Answer:
The peddler did not reveal his identity because he thought that the ironmaster might give him a couple of kronor. But, to go along up to the manor house and be received as his friend scared the peddler. He had stolen the thirty kronor from the old man and he felt that going up to the manor house would make him vulnerable. He merely wanted to sleep in the forge and then quietly sneak away.

Question 10.
What made the peddler accept Edla Willmansson's invitation?
Answer:
When Edla Willmansson invited him, she looked at him compassionately. She also assured him that he would be allowed to leave just as freely as he came. She requested him to stay with them over Christmas Eve. She said this in such a friendly manner that the rattrap peddler felt reassured. Hence, he accepted Edla Willmansson's invitation.

Question 11.
What doubts did Edla have about the peddler?
Answer:
When Edla Willmansson looked compassionately at the peddler, she noticed that the man was afraid. She at once knew that he had either stolen something or else had escaped from jail.

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Question 12.
When did the ironmaster realise his mistake?
Answer:
When the ironmaster saw the stranger the day after, clean and well dressed, he realized his mistake. The valet had bathed him, cut his hair and shaved him. He was wearing clothes that belonged to the ironmaster. The ironmaster frowned as he realized that in the dimly-lit furnace, he had made a mistake. As the stranger stood there in daylight, it was impossible to mistake him for an old acquaintance.

Question 13.
What did the peddler say in his defence when it was clear that he was not the person the ironmaster had thought he was?
Answer:
When the ironmaster realized his mistake, the stranger made no attempt to hide or pretend. He said that it was not his fault as he had never pretended to be anything but a poor trader. He had pleaded and begged to be allowed to stay in the forge. He offered to put on his rags and go away.

Question 14.
Why did Edla still entertain the peddler even after she knew the truth about him?
Answer:
Edla entertained the peddler even after she knew the truth about him. She said that the whole year long the peddler roamed about without anyone welcoming him. He was forever afraid of being arrested and cross-examined. So, she felt compassion for the homeless tramp and wanted him to enjoy a day of peace with them. She also said that it was their mistake and they ought not to chase away a human being whom they had invited home and had promised Christmas cheer.

Question 15.
Why was Edla happy to see the gift left by the peddler?
Answer:
Edla gave a little cry of joy on seeing the gift, a small rattrap with three wrinkled ten kronor notes. Her deed of kindness had helped the poor peddler atone for his sin. He did not want her to be embarrassed in the Christmas season because of a thief. He said that the rattrap was a Christmas present from a rat who would have been caught in the world's rattrap, had he not received kindness and honour from her. Ella felt satisfied at having helped someone rise above his faults.

Question 16.
Why did the peddler sign himself as Captain von Stahle?
Answer:
The peddler signed himself as Captain von Stahle because Edla had treated him as if he were a captain. He took away from the incident, the transient honour of having being treated like a captain. It inspired him to do good, and let go of his thieving ways.

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