



INDIAN SCHOOL DRASAIT

Grade XII-English

My Mother at Sixty-six (Kamala Das)

Answer the following questions in 30 to 40 words each:

1. How does the poet describe her mother in the poem?
The poet describes her mother as an old woman who has become pale, weak and worn out. She often dozes and remains unconscious about herself like a dead body.
2. Why does the poet look outside? What activities does the poet see outside the car window?
The poet feels very sad thinking that her mother is nearing death. This painful thought makes her worried and anxious. So in order to divert her attention from her mother, she looks outside. The poet sees young trees running past them. She also sees little children coming out of their homes in a merry mood. She sees life and vitality in the outside world.
3. Why are the young trees described as 'sprinting' ?
The young trees are described as sprinting as the movement of the racing car makes the trees appear as if they are running along.
4. Why is the mother compared to the late winter's moon?
The mother is compared to the late winter's moon because like the moon of winter season, the poet's mother also looks pale, dull and grayish.
5. What childhood fears do you think, the poet is referring to in the poem?
The poet feels uneasy and unprotected with the thought of losing her mother. She does not expect to see her mother again on her return. Therefore, she shows a childish unwillingness to leave her mother.
6. Why has the poet brought in the image of the merry children 'spilling out of their homes' ?
The poet has used the image of merry children spilling out of their homes to bring a contrast between the old age and childhood. Her mother's pale, colourless face stands for old and fading age. Merry children symbolize the spring of life, vigour and happiness. They also symbolize spontaneity of life in contrast to the passive and inactive life of her aged mother.
7. The poet compares her mother to many things. Pick out two similes which reinforce this comparison.
The two similes are: "Her face ashen like that of a corpse"
"I looked again at her wan, pale as a late winter's moon"
8. What do the parting words of the poet and her smile signify?
The poet's parting words, 'see you soon, Amma' are expressive of the dilemma and confusion in her mind. They not only hide her anxiety and fear about her mother's rather frail health but reflect also a faint hope that the old woman would survive long enough for the two to meet again.