

Poetry-8 Fire-Hymn

1. Who wrote the poem "Fire-Hymn"?

Ans- It is Keki N. Daruwalla, who wrote this poem.

2. How did the passer-by get frightened?

Ans- The passer-by got frightened to see the burning dead bodies and other dreadful scenes at the ghat.

3. Where do you think is the ghat located?

Ans- The ghat is located on the bank of the river.

4. In what sense does the fire forget its dead?

Ans- The fire forgets its dead in the scene that it leaves sometimes the dead body half-burnt. It forgets to turn the body into ashes completely.

5. What does the poet see in the morning at the ghat?

Ans- The poet sees the red hot embers still glowing many hours after a dead body has been cremated.

6. When does the sight of burning becomes frightening?

Ans- The sight of burning becomes frightening at night.

7. What is the meaning of the fire forgetting its dead?

Ans- It means that sometimes the fire does not turn the whole dead body into ashes.

8. Who was passing along with the poet by the cremation-ghat?

Ans- It was the father of the poet along with him passing by the cremation-ghat.

9. Which event does the expression 'the burning ghat' refer to?

Ans- The expression 'the burning ghat' refers to that place where dead bodies are cremated after death.

10. Why does he say that the redness of the fire is cruel?

Ans- He says that the redness of the fire is so cruel that it swallows everything.

11. What does the poet see/observe in the morning at the ghat?

Ans- The poet sees/observes pieces of wood and coal, not burning but are still red in the morning at the ghat.

12. Why did he consign his first-born to the flames?

Ans- He consigned his first-born to the flames because the nearest 'Tower of Silence' was a thousand miles away.

13. What did the 'Fire-Hymn' say to him?

Ans- The Fire-Hymn said to him that it had forgiven him. Now it has taken an oath to overlook & pardon him this time for the sin he had committed.

14. Was the poet 'Hindu' by religion?

Ans- No, the poet was not 'Hindu' by religion.

15. What was the religion of the poet?

Ans- The religion of the poet was **Parsi**.

16. Why does the speaker reveal his religious identity?

Ans- The speaker reveals his religious identity by saying that he is a **Parsi** by birth because according to their belief there is always a struggle between the forces of light and dark. So, they dispose of the dead bodies on a structure called '**Tower of Silence**'.

17. The burning ghat erupted phosphorescence: and wandering ghost lights frightened passers-by as moonlight scuttled among the bones.

Ans:- These lines have been taken from "Fire-Hymn" composed by 'Keki N. Daruwalla'. The poet describes a Funeral scene. At the burning ghat, the dead bodies are consigned to flame. The passer-by get frightened by the wandering ghost lights due to the burning of bodies at that burning ghat. What is really disturbing is that at times the body is left half-burned. The reference to 'ghost' indicates that.

18. Once strolling at dawn past river-bank and ghat, we saw embers losing their cruel redness.

Ans:- These lines have been taken from "Fire-Hymn" composed by 'Keki N. Daruwalla'. The poet describes how the dead body is consigned to flame. The ghat is located near a river. Bank sometimes the body is left 'half-burnt'. It emits red light from the embers (piece of burning coal) still glowing. That is horrifying.

19. It never forgot, and twenty years since As I consigned my first-born to the flames:-

Ans:- These lines have been taken from "Fire-Hymn" composed by 'Keki N. Daruwalla'. The poet remembers the incident which took place twenty years ago. It so happened that the first born-baby of the poet was dead. According to the Parsi custom, the speaker consigned the dead body of his son to the flames, as the nearest tower of silence was a thousand miles away. When ever the poet recalls it, his heart is filled up with immense grief.

20. Broken, yet rebellious, I swore this time To save it from the sin of forgiving.

Ans:- These lines have been taken from "Fire-Hymn" composed by 'Keki N. Daruwalla'. The speaker was 'broken' because his first-born child had died. He regarded himself rebellious by taking on oath of saving fire from the sin of forgiveness.

21. The nearest "Tower of Silence" was a thousand miles- The fire-Hymn said to me, "you stand forgiven."

Ans:- These lines have been taken from “Fire-Hymn” composed by ‘Keki N. Daruwalla. The poet remembrance remembers the incident of the death of his first born body. Contrary to the parsi custom of disposal of dead bodies in a structure called tower of silence.’ The poet consigned dead son to the flames as the nearest tower of silence’ was far away. The poet feels that fire has forgiven his sins.

22. We saw embers losing their cruel redness To the grey ash that swallows all, half-cooked limbs.

Ans:- These lines have been taken from “Fire-Hymn” composed by ‘Keki N. Daruwalla. When the poet was a child his father, he took him to a burning ghat. There he saw unburnt dead bodies. The readiness of the fire appeared cruel to the poet sometimes the body is left half-burnt. it emits red lights from the pieces of wood that are not burning but are still red. The scene is horrifying.