

## **THE RATTRAP**

**Q1. How did the peddler earn his livelihood?**

**Answer.** The Rattrap peddler earned his livelihood in a very odd way. He made ratttraps by the materials that he begged from stores and big farms. But the business was not flourishing/profitable. Sometimes he was forced to do begging and pity thievery to survive (to keep his body and soul together) in this harsh world where there was nobody to welcome this poor soul.

**Q2. What entertaining thought crossed his mind one day?**

**Or**

**“The world is a big rat trap.” How?**

**Answer.** While wandering in the streets one day, the peddler was hit by an idea and he compared the whole world with a big ratttrap. He thought that the world is also a bit rat trap that offers riches, joys, shelter, food, heat and clothing for a poor man just like a ratttrap offers cheese and pork rinds/pieces for a poor rat to get attracted and be caught. As soon as a man or rat tries to touch the bait, the trap closes on him everything comes to an end.

**Q3. How did the crofter treat the peddler and why?**

**Or**

**How was the crofter’s hospitality a pleasant surprise for the peddler?**

**Answer.** Wherever the peddler went for help, he met bitter faces and was turned out by the people. But the old Crofter was unlike them. He was an old man without wife and children. He craved/wished for human company to share himself. That’s why he was so excited and generous towards the peddler. He welcomed him in his house and showed him a great hospitality. He offered him porridge and tobacco and played cards with him before bedtime.

**Q4. How did the peddler abuse the trust that crofter had reposed in him?**

**Or**

**did the peddler respect the confidence reposed in him by the crofter?**

**Answer.** The Crofter showed a great confidence in the ratttrap peddler. He took/thought him as an honest and trust worthy man and showed him the thirty Kronor. But the peddler broke his trust when he stole all his saving. The evil inside him forced him to touch the bait and be caught in the world of material possession.

**Q5. Why did the blacksmith treat the peddler's arrival as a routine affair? What shows so?**

**Answer.** The forge was located in the deep jungle. Poor wanderers and baggers frequently visited the place for heat and shelter. Moreover, the weather outside was really very bad with heavy rain and sharp north wind hitting the tiled roof. So, when the rattrap peddler came to the forge, the blacksmith did not show any surprise as it was a routine affair/thing for him.

**Q6. Why did the peddler pretend to be an old acquaintance?**

**Answer.** The ironmaster thought/took the rattrap peddler as Nils ollof, the old friend of the regiment who was going through a hard time. He invited him home to be his Christmas guest. The peddler realized that the rich man had mistaken him but he did not want to undeceive him as it was a great opportunity to win his sympathy and get some more Kronor.

**Q7. Why did the peddler decline the ironmaster's invitation?**

**Answer.** The rattrap peddler was a great opportunist. He agreed to be Nils Ollof, the old friend of the ironmaster. But refused to accept his invitation to visit his home and be the Christmas guest. In fact, he knew that he had stolen thirty Kronor of the old crofter and the police was behind him. had he accepted, (if he accepted the invitation) it would be like throwing himself into lion's den.

**Q8. What made the peddler accept Edla's invitation?**

**Answer.** Edla was a pretty and modest girl. She showed a great deal of confidence and compassion for the rattrap peddler. She spoke to him in a friendly manner and won his confidence. She assured him that he could leave at his will after spending the Christmas Eve with them. Finally, the peddler agreed to visit the house and be their Christmas guest.

**Q9. Why did Edla insist on entertaining the peddler even after he was exposed?**

**Answer.** The next day when the ironmaster saw his guest/peddler in day light, he realized that he had made a serious mistake when he had seen him in the reflection of the furnace. He got annoyed and asked the peddler to leave the house at once. But Edla interceded (came for his rescue) him saying that they had invited the man to be their

Christmas guest. Moreover, the girl had made all the arrangements to give him Christmas cheers. She could not drop the idea of entertaining the man.

**Q10. What had the peddler left behind as a Christmas gift for Edla Willmanson? Why?**

**Answer.** The peddler had left a parcel containing a small rattrap and a letter inside. In the letter, the peddler accepted his guilt that he had stolen the money and requested Edla to return the money to the old crofter, the rightful owner. He also showed his gratitude for the compassionate behavior and hospitality that helped him realize his mistake.

**Q11. Why did the peddler sign himself as Captain Van Stahle?**

**Answer.** The rattrap peddler departed from there leaving a gift and a letter for Edla. In the letter he accepted that Edla had brought a great transformation by her hospitality and compassion that she had shown for him. She had helped him to rise as a real captain. That's why he signed himself as Captain Van Stahle.

**Q12. What is the central idea or the message of the story 'The Rattrap?'**

**Answer.** 'The Rat Trap' is a philosophical story of an old disheartened beggar and thief who let himself be caught in the world of material possession. At the same time, the story gives a significant message that we can change the heart of people by giving them an opportunity to change.

We know that it is the circumstances and not the choice that push a man into the world of crime. In fact, a person needs support and guidance to sublimate himself and live a normal life. The peddler led a pathetic life without family and home. He trudged / walked around selling rat trap. Sometime he had to do begging and even pity thievery to keep his body and soul together. Wherever he went for help, he met with bitter faces. He lost his essential goodness and developed an antipathy for the world. He did not respect the confidence of the old crofter and robbed him with all his saving. Later, he tried to deceive the ironmaster.

But Edla advocated/interceded the man when he was exposed before the ironmaster. She showed her sincere consideration and a great hospitality for the man to ensure Christmas Cheers for the man. It helped the man to realize his inner goodness. Finally, the man returned the stolen money and left the house for good.

**Q13. "man is a social animal. He can survive but not live in isolation." Do you agree? Give a fully reasoned answer with illustration from the text.**

**Or**

**The reader's sympathy is with the rattrap peddler do you agree?**

**Answer.**

It is true that man is social animal who can survive but not live in utter isolation. A man needs a society, family and friends to share his sorrows and his happiness. If he does not get these things, he becomes antipathetic and lawless a person just like the rattrap peddler.

The man never got sympathy and kindness from the society. Wherever he turned/went for help, he was met with bitter faces. He compared the whole world with a big rattrap that offers riches and other luxuries as a bait to tempt a man and be caught in the material possession of the world. Gradually he developed an antipathy for the people around. He did not even respect the confidence of the old crofter who gave him shelter and food. He robbed him with all his savings. Later, he tried to deceive the ironmaster. But I believe he was a criminal not by choice but by circumstances. His loneliness and ill-treatment of the world made him a criminal.

But Edla advocated/interceded the man when he was exposed before the ironmaster. She showed a sincere consideration and a great hospitality for the man to ensure that he spent the best Christmas of his life. It helped the man to realize his inner goodness. Finally, the man returned the stolen money and left the house for good.

**Q14.**

Justify the title of the story 'The Rattrap'.

**Answer.**

'The Rattrap' is an appropriate title to the story. The bagger and the rattrap is the central theme of the story. The whole story revolves round a poor disheartened beggar and his realization of truth. Wandering along the roads, the vagabond compares the world with a big rattrap – just like a rattrap, the world also offers riches, clothes and food as bait for a poor man to get tempted and be caught in the material possession of the world. with the help of the metaphor, the author teaches us a significant lesson that all the worldly thing are nothing but mere attractions to eyes. They may satisfy the needs of our outer being but not our soul. The Rattrap also shows the materialist futility of the world where we have very little space for honesty, sympathy and mutual understanding. The poor tramp took the path of crime as he was also the victim of the same.

But the sympathy and generous behavior of Edla transforms the man and he decides to sublimate / Correct himself. Finally, he departs from there and leaves behind a little Rattrap with a letter and the stolen money inside as a gift for the pretty girl. In this letter he pleads guilty and shows his obligation towards Edla and the ironmaster

who helped a rat to free himself free himself from this illusive/ deceptive attraction of the world.

## **Passages**

**Q1. Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follows:**

But the stranger said no, and no, and again no, and the ironmaster saw that he must give in.

“it looks as though Captain von Stahle preferred to stay with you tonight, Stjemstron”, he said to the master blacksmith and turned on his heel.

- i. Why did the stranger decline the invitation?
  - a. For he was scared of being identified as a thief
  - b. For he had to leave urgently
  - c. For he was not feeling well
  - d. Because he did not like the ironmaster
- ii. Why does the ironmaster invite the stranger home?
  - a. The ironmaster was very generous
  - b. He mistook the stranger to be Captain from his regiment
  - c. the stranger was injured
  - d. the ironmaster was feeling very depressed and lonely.
- iii. Who is Stjemstrom?
  - a. The master Blacksmith
  - b. The Peddler
  - c. A retired army officer
  - d. The master goldsmith
- iv. Who is the stranger?
  - a. The master blacksmith
  - b. Captain Von Stahle

- c. The sheriff
- d. The peddler

**Q2. Read the stanza given below and answer the questions that follows:**

Those who prepare green wars,  
wars with gas, wars with fire,  
victory with no survivors,  
would put on clean clothes  
and walk about with their brothers  
in the shade, doing nothing

- i. Name the poem and the poet.
- ii. What does the phrase, 'Green war' and 'War with Gas' denote?
  - a. A campaign for tree plantation
  - b. Pollution in environment.
  - c. Improvement in environment
  - d. Deforestation and air pollution.
- iii. What does the poet mean when he says, 'Victory with no survivors'?
  - a. the man will celebrate this victory
  - b. There will be no human to save the world.
  - c. It will be a victory of scientific knowledge but there will be no man to celebrate victory.
  - d. None of these.
- iv. What does the poet mean by clean cloth:
  - a. We will wear clean cloth
  - b. We will drop all our bad ideas and will have clear heart.
  - c. Both 'a' and 'b'
  - d. None of these.
- v. Name the poetic device used in the second line of the poem.