

Chapter 3. Hunger

Passage 1

Question 1.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

The market was really crowded. The shops were full of items waiting to be sold. Though things were expensive, people were buying them anyway. There was unemployment, but people were eating and drinking. With thoughts such as these crossing his mind, Rizwan stood at a shop selling cold drinks, looking for someone who worked for a living but was not a shop owner. At the instant his eyes fell on man carrying a load on his head and walking in his direction. Rizwan quickly went up to him and, without any greeting placing a hand on his shoulder, enquired, "Your name?"

"Kasim," caught unawares, the middle – aged man stopped.

What was the scene at the market?

Answer:

The market was crowded with people and shops. The shops were full of items waiting to be sold. Although things were expensive, people were buying them anyway. They were buying, eating, drinking.

Question 2.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

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"Kasim," caught unawares, the middle – aged man stopped.

What was Rizwan look for? Who was he?

Answer:

Rizwan was looking for someone who worked for a living but was not a shop owner. Rizwan was a journalist.

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"Kasim," caught unawares, the middle – aged man stopped.

Who did Rizwan catch hold of in the market?

Answer:

Rizwan caught hold of a middle-aged man walking in his direction carrying a load on his head.

Question 4.

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"Kasim," caught unawares, the middle – aged man stopped.

Who was Kasim?

Answer:

Kasim was a rag seller by profession. From his appearance, he didn't look like a shop owner, and was thus a perfect candidate for Rizwan's interview.

Question 5.

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quickly went up to him and, without any greeting placing a hand on his shoulder, enquired, "Your name?"

"Kasim," caught unawares, the middle – aged man stopped.

"There was unemployment but people were eating and drinking." What picture does this line paint of the society?

Answer:

The story is set in 1979 when the Shah of Iran was defeated by the Khomeini government. Although the Khomeini government had promised several good things to the people of Iran, there were innumerable people still unemployed after the new government came to power. The rich grew richer while the poor became poorer.

Passage 2

Question 1.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"Do you know the government is helping poor farmers?"

"No, but who are you? A tout or?"

"Journalist. Chacha, are you afraid of me?"

"No, but one never knows in this place."

"Would you like to do farming?"

"No."

"But why?"

"This is my profession."

"Ask your father?"

"He's too old."

"Ask your brother, we will arrange for the land."

"I don't have a brother."

"What does your father do?"

"Starve."

What was Kasim's reaction to Rizwan's interrogation?

Answer:

Kasim was skeptical about Rizwan. He was not very comfortable when Rizwan was asking him questions. He thought that Rizwan was a tout.

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"I don't have a brother."
"What does your father do?"
"Starve."

Why was Kasim not ready to farm?

Answer:

Kasim didn't want to farm because he did not have a land of his own and he was already in the profession of selling old clothes. By selling old clothes, he thought was earning enough to manage a life.

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"What does your father do?"
"Starve."

What impression of Rizwan do you form after reading the extract? What is the reality about him?

Answer:

After reading the extract, one feels that Rizwan is a successful journalist who is interrogating poor people like Kasim to expose their condition and bring about a social change. However, Rizwan is as desperate as Kasim in trying to earn a decent livelihood. The new government has filled the lives of poor people with uncertainty and this is very clear from Rizwan's and Kasim's condition.

Question 4.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

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"I don't have a brother."

"What does your father do?"

"Starve."

What is the importance of the last two lines of the extract?

Answer:

The last two lines of the extract describe how pathetic the situation was in Iran during that time. People were suffering during the reign of the Shah and even after the Khomeini government took over, nothing changed. The rich continued to live a lavish life while the poor ones like Kasim and his family continued to suffer. Kasim's father lived a life full of want and starvation. Their life was filled with poverty and longing.

Passage 3

Question 1.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"Did you or he know that we have a store – house of petrol – we call it black gold."

"No."

"Who was the shah?"

"I don't know."

"Was the common man happy in his reign?"

"How would I know anything about this shah?"

"Was your father happy?"

"No."

"Yes, he used to talk of his father and how he died of hunger or cold."

"Anything else?"

His father had told my father that his father used to work in somebody's house. Died of high fever."

"What did he do?"

"Physical labour".

Whom does Rizwan refer to as the Shah?

Answer:

Rizwan refers to the former Shah of Iran who ruled the country before the Khomeini government came into power.

Question 2.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

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"What did he do?"

"Physical labour".

Kasim said that he didn't know who the Shah was. What does this indicate about him?

Answer:

Being the citizen of a country, it is very natural that one ought to know who rules the nation. However, Kasim denied to have known the Shah or the new ruler. This indicates either that he was oblivious of the government and its battles, or that he was intentionally avoiding as he didn't trust Rizwan.

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fever."

"What did he do?"

"Physical labour".

What kind of a life did Kasim's father and the father's father lead?

Answer:

Both Kasim's father and his grandfather led a difficult life. They were physical labourers and lived in pathetic conditions. Kasim's great grandfather died of deprivation either of hunger or cold. In addition, Kasim's grandfather, according to his father, used to work in somebody's house where he died of high fever. Thus, Kasim and his older generations had always lived a miserable life full of starvation and ill health.

Question 4.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

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"Who was the shah?"

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"Yes, he used to talk of his father and how he died of hunger or cold."

"Anything else?"

His father had told my father that his father used to work in somebody's house. Died of high fever."

"What did he do?"

"Physical labour".

Was Kasim looking ahead to change his lifestyle?

Answer:

Kasim was not even remotely familiar with the idea of living a better life. He too was living in adverse conditions like his father did. In addition, when Rizwan asked him about his son, he said that he was waiting for the boy to get a little older so that he too could join his profession. He didn't hope that his son would receive education and do better in life.

Passage 4

Question 1.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"Well, you could live a more comfortable life."

"We work so hard, yet..."

"Try to understand what I am saying! Our new government has sent us to help you, to talk to you and to understand your problems, so as to give you a better life."

"I don't want it."

"But why?"

"We were asked a lot of questions last time too and then after the procession nobody remembered anything."

"It won't happen this time."

"We slept hungry that night."

"Why?"

"Because all day we were shouting slogans instead of working."

"Really!"

"Now it's time for my work. Salaam!"

"Wait it's time for my work. Salaam!"

"Wait a minute, Chacha!"

"No sir! There must be some labourers near the ditch right now wanting to buy some warm clothes."

How did Kasim react to Rizwan assuring him a comfortable life?

Answer:

To Kasim, a comfortable life was nothing but a myth. He did not believe that it was possible to live a better life in his country.

Question 2.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"Well, you could live a more comfortable life."

"We work so hard, yet..."

"Try to understand what I am saying! Our new government has sent us to help you, to talk to you and to understand your problems, so as to give you a better life."

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"Now it's time for my work. Salaam!"

"Wait it's time for my work. Salaam!"

"Wait a minute, Chacha!"

"No sir! There must be some labourers near the ditch right now wanting to buy some warm clothes."

Why did Kasim not believe that the new government was out there to help people like him?

Answer:

Kasim told Rizwan that the last time they were promised a good life, he slept hungry that night after shouting slogans for the new government. The new government had promised a good life, but after it came into power, the poor people were forgotten completely and life was as usual miserable for people like Kasim.

Question 3.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"Well, you could live a more comfortable life."

"We work so hard, yet..."

"Try to understand what I am saying! Our new government has sent us to help you, to talk to you and to understand your problems, so as to give you a better life."

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"Wait it's time for my work. Salaam!"

"Wait a minute, Chacha!"

"No sir! There must be some labourers near the ditch right now wanting to buy some warm clothes."

Where was Kasim heading towards?

Answer:

Kasim used to sell old clothes. He was heading towards a ditch where there were workers. He hoped to find someone who would be in need of some warm clothes. This would give him an opportunity to earn some money.

Question 4.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"Well, you could live a more comfortable life."

"We work so hard, yet..."

"Try to understand what I am saying! Our new government has sent us to help you, to talk to you and to understand your problems, so as to give you a better life."

"I don't want it."

"But why?"

"We were asked a lot of questions last time too and then after the procession nobody remembered anything."

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"Now it's time for my work. Salaam!"

"Wait it's time for my work. Salaam!"

"Wait a minute, Chacha!"

"No sir! There must be some labourers near the ditch right now wanting to buy some warm clothes."

What address did Kasim give Rizwan so that they could meet the next day?

Answer:

Although Kasim had a home in the village, he did not have a place to stay in the city. Sometimes he slept under a bridge while sometimes he found a place outside a shop. Therefore, he was unable to give any address to Rizwan for their next meeting.

Passage 5

Question 1.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

Only today he had found a job for himself through an acquaintance in the Kihaan newspaper. He had been work on the condition that first he would contribute a few articles, and then he shall be considered for the job. He had been told to submit interviews with five people along with their names and addresses. It was difficult enough to identify these people in this crowded market, To make them talk was an ordeal.

The evening was turning dark. Rizwan was thinking of the unending problems back home. His mother was ill, his father had died almost two years ago and his two younger brothers had to drop out of school. It seemed now it was time to starve.

Why was Rizwan worried as the day came to an end?

Answer:

It was the first day of Rizwan's work where he had been asked to submit a few articles first so that he could get a permanent job. Unfortunately, it had been a tough day as he had barely been successful at extracting information from Kasim. He was worried about his job.

Question 2.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

Only today he had found a job for himself through an acquaintance in the Kihaan newspaper. He had been work on the condition that first he would contribute a few articles, and then he shall be considered for the job. He had been told to submit interviews with five people along with their names and addresses. It was difficult enough to identify these people in this crowded market, To make them talk was an ordeal.

The evening was turning dark. Rizwan was thinking of the unending problems back home. His mother was ill, his father had died almost two years ago and his two younger brothers had to drop out of school. It seemed now it was time to starve.

Was Rizwan's condition better than Kasim's?

Answer:

Rizwan's condition was as pitiful as that of Kasim. Both were victims of the ongoing political drama in Iran. Although Rizwan had got a job in a newspaper, he would be made permanent only if he submitted a few articles first.

Question 3.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

Only today he had found a job for himself through an acquaintance in the Kihaan newspaper. He had been work on the condition that first he would contribute a few articles, and then he shall be considered for the job. He had been told to submit interviews with five people along with their names and addresses. It was difficult enough to identify these people in this crowded market, To make them talk was an ordeal.

The evening was turning dark. Rizwan was thinking of the unending problems back home. His mother was ill, his father had died almost two years ago and his two younger brothers had to drop out of school. It seemed now it was time to starve.

Why was it difficult for Rizwan to submit articles to the newspaper?

Answer:

It was very difficult to find people in the crowded market and assume that they would be ready to give an interview. There was a great deal of political unrest in the country at that point of time and people were skeptical of anyone who tried to seek information from them. Given these circumstances, Rizwan found it very difficult to complete his task.

Question 4.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

Only today he had found a job for himself through an acquaintance in the Kihaan newspaper. He had been work on the condition that first he would contribute a few articles, and then he shall be considered for the job. He had been told to submit interviews with five people along with their names and addresses. It was difficult enough to identify these people in this crowded market, To make them talk was an ordeal.

The evening was turning dark. Rizwan was thinking of the unending problems back home. His mother was ill, his father had died almost two years ago and his two younger brothers had to drop out of school. It seemed now it was time to starve.

How was the condition of Rizwan's family?

Answer:

Rizwan's family was not in a good condition. His mother was ill and his father had passed away two years ago. Financial adversities had forced his brothers to drop out of school.

Passage 6

Question 1.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

He thought for a minute and then wrote his own name and address on Kasim's interview and drew a deep breath. When he came out he had the satisfaction of knowing that he would be coming for work for the next day, but the problem of finding another name and address for tomorrow was already beginning to worry him. He shook his head as though telling himself – who knows what all may happen tomorrow. If he is still alive, surely he would find a way. His stomach was gnawing with hunger pangs. He was exhausted and famished, and now he simply wanted to reach home as quickly as possible.

What satisfaction did Rizwan have as he came out of the newspaper office?

Answer:

Rizwan had the satisfaction of going to work the next day as he came out of the office after submitting his article.

Question 2.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

He thought for a minute and then wrote his own name and address on Kasim's interview and drew a deep breath. When he came out he had the satisfaction of knowing that he would be coming for work for the next day, but the problem of finding another name and address for tomorrow was already beginning to worry him. He shook his head as though telling himself – who knows what all may happen tomorrow. If he is still alive, surely he would find a way. His stomach was gnawing with hunger pangs. He was exhausted and famished, and now he simply wanted to reach home as quickly as possible.

Whose name did Rizwan write on the article? Why?

Answer:

Rizwan wrote his name on the article. As Kasim did not give his address, his article would be rejected and he would lose his job. Therefore, he filled in his details instead.

Question 3.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

He thought for a minute and then wrote his own name and address on Kasim's interview and drew a deep breath. When he came out he had the satisfaction of knowing that he would be coming for work for the next day, but the problem of finding another name and address for tomorrow was already beginning to worry him. He shook his head as though telling himself – who knows what all may happen tomorrow. If he is still alive, surely he would find a way. His stomach was gnawing with hunger pangs. He was exhausted and famished, and now he simply wanted to reach home as quickly as possible.

What thoughts did Rizwan have about tomorrow?

Answer:

Rizwan was worried about the uncertainty that continued to loom over his life even the following day. He had no clue as to how he would find another person for an interview the next day and how he would be able to keep his job.

Question 4.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

He thought for a minute and then wrote his own name and address on Kasim's interview and drew a deep breath. When he came out he had the satisfaction of knowing that he would be coming for work for the next day, but the problem of finding another name and address for tomorrow was already beginning to worry him. He shook his head as though telling himself – who knows what all may happen tomorrow. If he is still alive, surely he would find a way. His stomach was gnawing with hunger pangs. He was exhausted and famished, and now he simply wanted to reach home as quickly as possible.

Describe Rizwan's character.

Answer:

Rizwan was one among the millions of Irani people who were reeling under uncertainty in Iran. The new government had brought no hope, as the poor continued to be poor. Rizwan is a poverty stricken educated man in search of a way to sustain his family of a widowed mother and two school dropout brothers. Although there isn't much difference between him and Kasim, it is clear that he makes a desperate attempt to rise above his misery. Unlike Kasim, he does not resign himself to fate. Instead, he struggles to face each day as it comes. He tries hard to persuade Kasim for an interview and it is commendable of him to not lose his cool after many unsuccessful attempts to make Kasim speak up. He continues to pursue Kasim and tries to understand his situation. Although he too is starving and miserable after a thankless day, he wants to head home to eat something and get ready for the next day. He thinks life may change for good if he lives to see the next day. Rizwan's character teaches us the qualities of faith, patience, and endurance in the worst of times.