

that the snake had also become dazed like him in the light of the torch.

He went out and locked the door from outside to save his life.

#### A. Answer these questions:

1. How was the station a lonely place?

Ans - <sup>The</sup> station was a lonely place as in the station, there were only two working trains, one in morning and one in afternoon. It was also fenced with a barbed wire and huge grasslands surrounded the station.

2. How did Shankar get a partial answer to his question about the barbed-wire fence around the station? What was the next part of the answer?

Ans - ~~While~~ After Shankar had his dinner, he lit the lamp in the station office and started writing his diary. As he sat on his chair outside ~~at~~ his window, a huge lion looked up through the window with its muzzle against the glass. Shankar was really shocked.

Now he knew what was the use of barbed-fence around the station, but partially. The next part of the answer included the encounter of the Black Mamba which happened after some days.

3. 'To escape from a black Mamba is like being born again...' Why did the speaker say this? How do you think it felt for him 'to be born again'?

Ans: ~~Speaker~~ The speaker said this because it is really hard to escape from the Africa's meanest and most ~~fearsome~~<sup>as fearsome</sup> Snake, Black Mamba. Escaping from a black mamba is like getting a whole new life and thus it has been said that 'To escape from black mamba is like ~~get~~ being born again.' As Shankar got to live again, he was really happy and blessed because he managed to ~~be safe~~ escape from the mouth of death.

4. According to the speaker, what was more admirable about Shankar's character?

Ans: According to the speaker, Shankar was really intelligent. From his boyhood, he had ~~or~~ never lost his head in danger & always could

~~exercise complete~~ control over his nerves in the gravest of situations. Hence Shankar character is really admirable.

5. What happened when the clock struck three?  
Ans - When the clock struck three, Shankar's hand shook and moved a little which made the snake move but, when Shankar noticed that the snake didn't strike. This made Shankar realize that the snake was also temporarily dazed like him. Shankar took this chance and escaped from the room.

B. Read these lines from the text and answer the questions.

1. "How terrible. How could I have forgotten?"

a. Who said this to whom?  
Ans - Shankar's predecessor to Shankar.

b. What had the speaker forgotten? Why did he think it was 'terrible'?

Ans - The speaker forgot to take down water from the train. It was terrible because the train which came was the last one &

now they probably don't have any water to drink which means they have to sleep in thirst. There was a well which had water but it was not drinkable as the water was bitter and alkaline and only meant for washing.

c. How did the listener feel about this?

Ans - Shankar was really confused with the situation. He wondered why is there ~~that~~ a station where there are no human beings and water. He was really puzzled but still very interested.

2. How long had he to keep holding the torch?

a. Why was the speaker holding the torch? What would happen if he moved the torch?

Ans - The speaker was holding the torch because he heard some faint noises and wanted to discover who was causing them. If he moved the torch then it would lead the Black Mamba to strike at Shankar which is not something Shankar wanted.

b. What was speaker's frame of mind at the time?

Ans- The speaker's frame of mind at the time was scared and tired. He was scared encountering the snake but tired as he was holding the torch for a long time and thought that it would be better if he let the snake bite his hands as that will release his numb hands which were in pain.

4. ... the world vanished and was transferred into those two small, luminous spheres.

a. What were the 'luminous spheres'? What literary device has been used here?

Ans- The 'luminous spheres' are the glowing eyes of the black mamba in the dark. Its literary device is metaphor.

b. What effect did the 'luminous spheres' have on the speaker?

Ans- The 'luminous spheres' made the poet forget everything. He forgot about the furniture in the room, the continent of Africa,

his railway job, the rail track from Mombasa to Kisumu, his country, his parents as he saw that thick black body which was standing upright like a rigid whip.

c. Think and Answer

1. Shankar had mixed feelings about the station and its surrounding. Support your answer by the lines from the text.

Ans - Shankar was really puzzled about the place. When he first arrived at the station he was quite excited about the job but was really shocked by seeing the situation. There was no water and everywhere there were ~~the~~ grasslands. The station was also lonely and only had two working trains. He was also warned not to go outside alone at night. Therefore, he had many mixed feelings about the place.

2. He never lost his head when in grave danger. Show how this is true with respect to how Shankar dealt with the mamba.

Ans - This shows that Shankar is really intelligent.

He knew what he was doing while tackling the black mamba. He was really calm during the situation when he encountered the black mamba. That's why it is said that he never lost his head in the grave danger.

### \* Using words

A. What do these adjectives from the text describe? Write sentences of your own using the adjectives.

Adjective      What it desc.

1. Lethal

Venom

new sentence

The thief was carrying a lethal weapon in his hand.

2. Desolate

grasslands

The desolate palace was

rumoured as a haunted palace.

3. Godforsaken room

The godforsaken library didn't give happy vibes.

Adjective

What it describes

New sentence

4. Fearsome snake

The fearsome monster had the best role in the movie.

5. Luminous eyes

Our eyes were drawn towards the luminous stars in the sky.

6. boundless savannah I admire her boundless energy.

7. Mysterious Treasure The movie's plot was revolving around the mysterious box.

B. Underline the similes in these lines. Circle the words they describe.

1. Total darkness. As empty as death and as dark as the universe after a cataclysm.

2. The snake's eyes burned like two round points of light.