

SUMMARY

"Sita" is the final ballad published in The Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan. It narrates the popular story of Rama and Sita dealing with her second exile. This poem is an example of nostalgia, where Toru Dutt reflects on her childhood days when she along with her sister and brother would listen to the sad story of Sita. The scene is the hermitage of Valmiki where Sita is living, after her exile. The place is densely covered with gigantic creepers, flowers, and trees. It is difficult for the sunlight to enter the quiet place where white swans glide on a placid lake rotating their wings. Peacocks dance and deer run amidst yellow grain that can be seen from a distance. Blue smoke rises from the sacred altars near the dwelling of Valmiki, the poet-anchorite. In such serene surroundings, the fair lady is weeping, overcome by the misery of living away from her home. Sita represents a picture of loveliness, devotion, chastity, nobility, and of a woman who is ever tolerant and patient. As the mother narrates the sad story of Sita, the three children are so moved that they also start crying. The poet is then brought back to her present state where she is all alone as her brother and sister are no longer alive. Although the tale is melancholic, she remembers the happy time when all three sat together under the protection of their mother and listened to bedtime stories. The poet becomes nostalgic and longs for those days to come back so that she can re-live those moments of happiness spent with her family members.

Answer the following questions in one or two words.

1. What is the poem Sita about? (2019)

Ans: The poem is about Sita, who was abandoned by her husband and sought shelter in the hermitage of Valmiki.

Q.2: How many children listen to the Story?

Ans: Three children listen to the story.

Q.3: Who dwells in peace in the forest? (2018)

Ans: The poet's anchorite dwells in the forest.

Q.4: What is the colour of the swans which are seen gliding in the lake?

Ans: the colour of the swans which are seen gliding in the lake is white.

Q.5: Who is the narrator of the story?

Ans: The narrator of the story is the mother of the three children, who are listening to their story.

Answer the following questions in a few words.

Q.1: What prevents sunlight from entering the place?

Ans: The forest is dense and full of thick vegetation, which prevents sun beams from penetrating the canopy of leaves entering the place.

Q.2: Name the birds and animals mentioned in the poem. (2017)

Ans: The birds and animals mentioned in the poem are a swan, peacocks, and deer.

Q.3: Where are the children sitting?

Ans: The children are sitting on the floor.

Q.4: Whose heads are bowed in sorrow?

Ans: The heads of the three children are bowed in sorrow as they listen to the story of Sita and her sorrows.

Q.5: What does the poet remember when she listens to the story of Sita?

Ans: When the poet listens to the story, she is reminded of her brother Abju and Aru who passed away at a very young age.

Answer the following questions briefly in your own words

Q.1: Why are the children weeping?

Ans: The children are weeping being told a bedtime story by their mother. The story is that of Sita in exile after being abandoned by her husband, Sita is unhappy and is weeping. The children are moved by their sorrow and they too start weeping.

Q.2: Describe the hermitage where Sita is living.

Ans: The hermitage where Sita lives is a beautiful one, in the lap of nature. There are blooming flowers and trees. There is a lake with clear water. The place is filled with birds and animals which include gliding swans, springing peacocks, and racing deer. There are some fields with grain cultivated in them and altars with blue smoke rising from them. The atmosphere in the hermitage is one of peace and serenity.

Q.3: What does the poet long for?

Ans: The poet longs for the days of her childhood when she had the companionship of her brother and sister. She is alone now and has lost both her siblings. Her brother Abju died at fourteen and her sister Aru died at twenty-three. She misses the old days when they were together. She yearns for her siblings for the time when they were young and gathered by their mother's sight listening to bedtime stories.

Give suitable answers to the following

Q.1: How does the poem reflect the poet's deep love of nature?

Ans: The poet's deep love of nature can be felt, as she realizes that it is in the lap of nature alone that Sita's disturbed heart will find peace. All that is beautiful, embrace the secluded place

where the hermitage is situated. Toru Dutt can almost hear nature speak, feel the vibration of nature's listless, solemn beauty, that tries to console Sita in her grief. The swan gliding in the lake water tells her that life has to go on. The majestic peacock reminds her that King Janak's daughter must hold on to her pride, and the herd of deer is a conscious reminder of her innocence. Nature around the hermitage with flowers, leaves, and creepers is a promise of sustenance in her despair. This is Toru Dutt's quiet message through her picture of nature. Nature never betrays men, the heart that loves her.

Q.2 Write a critical summary of the poem "Sita"

Ans: The poem Sita by Toru Dutta is a marvelous rendering in words not only the sad story of Sita, from the Ramayana, but also the effect of such a story on the minds of a successive generation, Toru distinctly recalls, how her mother had made their growing up years and evenings, meaningful, by singing in her sweet voice and telling them the story that still affects the sense and the sensibility of the hearers.

In the twenty-two-lined poem, Toru Dutta goes back in time, taking her readers with her inside a room at eventide, three little children listening to their mother's song. The song is not just the rendering sage of events. It presents the virgin forest that surrounds Valmiki's hermitage. The vegetation, and birds. If the sunlight cannot penetrate through the leafy trees, reason too cannot penetrate the cause of Lord Rama's stubborn decision to cast off Sita, his pure, loving, and dutiful wife. Housed away from human habitation she is left to herself. The swans that guide on the lake, and the deer that move about have essentially the traits of Sita; and so does the peacock. With the twins in her womb, she is the epitome of a mother, who will bear anything for the sake of her unborn children. Time past and time present (in the poem) and time future are woven together in a beautiful ecstatic rendering of passion and feelings.

Sita Extra Questions Answers Class 12

Q.1: What is the base of the poem Sita?

Ans: The base of the poem "Sita" is taken from the epic 'Ramayana' by Saint Valmiki. A pregnant Sita is abandoned by her husband and takes refuge in the hermitage of Valmiki. In the poem, the poet narrates the story of Sita in the hermitage to her children

Q.2: Who are the listeners of Sita?

Ans: The three children are the listeners of Sita.

Q.3: Who was telling them the story of Sita? (2016)

OR

Who was recounting the tale of Sita in Toru Dutt's poet poem?

Ans: The mother of the three children is recounting the tale of Sita in Toren Dutt's poem.

Q.4: What does the storyteller tell?

Ans: The storyteller narrates the story of Sita in the dense forest in the hermitage.

Q.5: "Three pairs of young eyes" "What eyes are referred to here?"

Ans: "Three pairs of young eyes" the eyes referred to here are those of three children listening to the story being told by their mother.

Q.6: Why were they weeping?

Ans: They were weeping as they were moved by Sita's tears and her sufferings.

Q.7: What were the peacocks doing in the forest?

Ans: The peacocks were singing in the forest.

Q.8: Who are the companions of Sita there in the forest?

Ans: In the poem, Sita is depicted as alone and without companions.

Q.9: Where was Sita residing?

Ans: Sita was residing in the hermitage of Saint Valmiki.

Q.10: What does the poet long for?

Ans: The poet longs for her childhood days and the companionship of her brother and sister who are dead.

Q.11: Who is the post anchorite referred to in the poem?

Ans: The post anchorite in the poem Sita is Valmiki

Q.12: From where does the blue smoke rise in Sita? (2018).

Ans: The blue smoke rises from the altars in the Valmiki hermitage.

Q.13: What mythic past does Dutt try to conjure in her poem?

Ans: The mythic past that Dutt tries to conjure in her poem is the age of the old story of Sita in her second exile, after being abandoned by her husband.

Q.14: Do the children see a dense forest?

Ans: The children are in a darkened room to a bed story narrated by their mother.

They do not see a forest but her storytelling is so good that they can visualise a dense forest.

Q.15: What do children gaze at in the darkened room?

Ans: The children are listening to a bedtime story narrated by their mother. She does it so well that it makes them come alive. She describes a dense dark forest and the children can visualise it and then gaze at the forest in the darkened room.

Q.16: "The fair lady does not weep in vain". Why is it so?

Ans: The beautiful lady described here is Sita, who has been abandoned by her husband. She takes refuge in Valmiki's hermitage. She is very unhappy and weeping. She is not weeping for the sake of it but there is a good reason for her tears.

Q.17: What song does the mother Sing? Describe the affect on the children.

Ans: The mother sings a song from Indian mythology and takes refuge in the hermitage of Valmiki. Sita was very sad, and wet under the burden of her troubles. The young children were so moved by Sita's grief that they too started weeping and their heads bowed in sorrow. Even though the story ends, her thoughts remain with them.

Q.18: How does Toru Dutt relate the past and the present in her poem? (2019)

Ans: The poem begins with three happy children anticipating a story as it progresses, we see the children with their heads bowed in sorrow. Toru and her siblings were happy in their childhood and now she is alone and misses them. The story of Sita is an old one in Indian mythology and handed down from generation to generation. The children hear this story from their mothers. The poet becomes nostalgic towards the end and misses her siblings and her childhood days spent together. In these subtle ways, the poet relates the past and the present in her poem.

Q.19: Describe the dwelling of the poet's anchorite. (2016)

Ans: The dwelling of the poet's anchorite is a beautiful one amid nature. There are gigantic blooming flowers and a placid lake with clear waters. The place is filled with birds and animals that include gliding swans, springing peacocks, and racing deer. There are some fields with grain cultivated on them and altars with blue smoke rising from them. The atmosphere in the place is one of serenity, where a poet can retreat to spend time in peace and tranquility.

Q.20: Describe the scene of the forest as seen by the children. (2018)

Ans: The children are listening to their mother narrating a bedtime tale. Her narration makes them come alive and they can visualise the scene as she speaks to them. They see a dark dense forest. It is dark and dense as there is a lot of vegetation with tall trees growing, the branches of which do not allow the sun's rays to penetrate. However, in the center of the forest, a certain space has been cleared. Here flowers bloom on creepers embracing tall trees. There is a lake with crystal clear water. The place is filled with birds and animals which include gliding swans, springing peacocks, and racing deer. There are some fields cultivated on it and alters with blue smoke rising from it.

Q.21: What do the children gaze on with wide open?

Ans: The children are listening to a bedtime story narrated by their mother. She does it so well that makes the story come alive. She describes a dense dark forest and the children can visualise it and gaze at the forest with wide-open eyes. They see a dark dense forest with tall trees growing, the branches of which do not allow the sun's rays to penetrate. However, in the center of the forest, a certain space has been cleared. Here, flowers bloom on trippers twinning around tall trees. There is a lake with crystal clear water. The forest is filled with birds and animals which include gliding swans, springing peacocks, and racing deer. There are some fields with grain cultivated on them and altars with blue smoke rising from them.

Sita by Toru Dutt

THREE happy children in a darkened room!
What do they gaze on with wide-open eyes?
A dense, dense forest, where no sunbeam pries,
And in its centre a cleared spot. --There bloom
Gigantic flowers on creepers that embrace
Tall trees; there, in a quiet lucid lake
The white swans glide; there, "whirring from the brake,"
The peacock springs; there, herds of wild deer race;
There, patches gleam with yellow waving grain;
There, blue smoke from strange altars rises light,
There, dwells in peace, the poet-anchorite.
But who is this fair lady? Not in vain
She weeps,--for lo! at every tear she sheds
Tears from three pairs of young eyes fall amain,
And bowed in sorrow are the three young heads.
It is an old, old story, and the lay
Which has evoked sad Sîta from the past
Is by a mother sung.... 'Tis hushed at last
And melts the picture from their sight away,
Yet shall they dream of it until the day!
When shall those children by their mother's side
Gather, ah me! as erst at eventide?

1. altar: raised place on which offerings are made to God
2. amain: violently
3. dense: not easily seen through
4. eventide: evening
5. evoked: call up; bring out
6. fair lady: (here) Sita
7. gaze: stare; look fixedly
8. gigantic: huge; giant
9. hushed: make or become silent or quiet
10. lay: legend; narrative poem; ballad
11. lucid: clear; transparent
12. poet-anchorite: one who lives in seclusion
13. pries: intrude; interfere
14. sunbeam: sunlight
15. whirring: spin; rotate.