

Chapter 5: Footprints without Feet

Read and Find Out

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Question: 1

How did the invisible man first become visible?

Answer:

The invisible man (Griffin) first became visible after he slipped into a big London store for keeping warm and overslept there while wearing some clothes taken from the store. The clothes made him visible to the shop assistants when the shop opened in the morning. To escape from them, he had to shed all his clothes to become invisible again.

Question: 2

Why was he wandering the streets?

Answer:

Though he was a brilliant scientist, he was a lawless person. His landlord disliked him and wanted to evict Griffin. In revenge, he set fire to the house. To escape, he removed his clothes, becoming invisible. Thus he became homeless and was wandering the streets of London.

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Question: 3

Why does Mrs Hall find the scientist eccentric?

Answer:

Mrs Hall found the scientist eccentric because of his strange appearance and also, when she tried to be friendly with him, he rebuffed her by saying that he had come there for solitude and did not wish to be disturbed in his work.

Question: 4

What curious episode occurs in the study?

Answer:

Very early one morning, a clergyman and his wife were awakened by noises coming from their study. Then they heard the sound of coins being taken from the desk there. However, when they entered the study, they did not find anybody there, which was curious.

Question: 5

What other extraordinary things happen at the inn?

Answer:

At the inn, Mrs Hall and her husband went into the scientist's room on finding its door open. However, he was not seen in the room, but Mrs Hall heard a sniff and the hat on the bedpost leapt up and dashed into her face. Then the bedroom chair sprang into the air and pushed them both out of the room. This made Mrs Hall think that her furniture was haunted.

Think About It

Question: 1

"Griffin was rather a lawless person." Comment.

Answer:

Griffin was not bothered if he had harmed anybody in the fulfilment of what he wanted. He set his landlord's house on fire because the landlord tried to make him leave. Then his robberies at shops and later in the village indicate that he was a lawless person. When he encountered the landlady of the inn, he threw a chair at her and her husband. Lawless persons like Griffin never think about the safety and well-being of others. They are only concerned about themselves.

Question: 2

How would you assess Griffin as a scientist?

Answer:

Griffin is a brilliant scientist, as he discovers how to make himself invisible. But he seems to enjoy the feeling of power which he gets out of his invisibility. The power to hurt anybody without getting noticed can give sadistic pleasure to some people. A true scientist should make discoveries for the larger benefit of society, not just for his own benefit.

Talk About It

Question: 1

Would you like to become invisible? What advantages and disadvantages do you foresee, if you did?

Answer:

It can be an exciting idea for most people. Like two facets of a coin, invisibility can have many advantages and disadvantages. For a child, invisibility may mean a licence for all kinds of pranks without getting caught. Like a Hindi movie, invisibility can help you beat all the villains black and blue and get rid of them. Once you become invisible, nobody would notice you. Within no time, the sadness of isolation will take over the excitement of being invisible. You will have no friend. You will tend to behave like the eccentric scientist in this story.

Question: 2

Are there forces around us that are invisible, for example, magnetism? Are there aspects of matter that are 'invisible' or not visible to the naked eye? What would the world be like if you could see such forces or such aspects of matter? '

Answer:

Magnetic forces and electrostatic forces are examples of invisible forces. The atoms and molecules in a matter are so small that they are not visible to the naked eye. Similarly, heat energy is invisible. Similarly, sound is invisible to us. While the idea of seeing invisible things can be very exciting, their visibility would create too many problems. For example, if we are able to see all the sound around us, that would be too irritating for us.

Question: 3

What makes glass or water transparent (what is the scientific explanation for this)? Do you think it would be scientifically possible for a man to become invisible, or transparent? (Keep in mind that writers of science fiction have often turned out to be prophetic in their imagination)

Answer:

The fact that light can pass through glass or water makes them transparent. When light falls on an object, the reflected light from that object makes it visible to us. If some device can be made which can prevent reflection of light from the human body then the human body can be made invisible.