

# THE LITTLE GIRL

## KEZIA'S FEARS ABOUT HER FATHER

Kezia's father was a figure of fear for her. She avoided him. Before going to work, he would come to her. He would give her a casual kiss. But when he went, Kezia would feel a great relief.

## HOW KEZIA COMES BEFORE FATHER IN THE EVENING

In the evening Kezia's father came home. Kezia would hear his loud voice calling for tea. Kezia's mother would ask Kezia to be a good girl to take off father's shoes. When she would take off his shoes, he would ask if she had been a good girl that day. But she was terrified of him. She would stutter due to fear. She, in fact, would try to speak. But she would hesitate due to fear. For Kezia, her father was like a giant.

## WHAT HAPPENED ON A SUNDAY AFTERNOON

On a Sunday afternoon grandmother asked Kezia to have a nice talk with father and mother. But Kezia always found mother reading and father snoring. So she waited for father. She continued staring at father. She waited till he awoke. When he actually awoke, he asked her not to stare. She looked like an owl.

## KEZIA MAKES A BIRTHDAY GIFT FOR FATHER

One day Kezia's grandmother told her that her father's birthday was next week. She suggested to Kezia to make him a pin-cushion of yellow silk. So Kezia made a pin-cushion for father. She needed something to stuff the pin-cushion. So she gathered a few sheets of fine paper and put them into it. These sheets belonged to her father. They had an important speech which he was to deliver.

## A HUE AND CRY IN THE HOUSE

That night there was a hue and cry in the house. Father's great speech for the Port Authority had been lost. Rooms were searched. Servants were

questioned. Father, went to Kezia's room. He asked her about them. Kezia didn't tell a lie. She told him that she had torn those papers.

### **FATHER SUMMONS KEZIA AND BEATS HER**

Father asked Kezia to come to the drawing-room. He was very angry. He was pacing to and fro. Kezia was greatly frightened. He asked Kezia if she had done that. She whispered. Father asked mother to go to Kezia's room and fetch those torn papers. Meanwhile he asked Kezia to hold out her hands. He beat her on her hands. He did so to teach her not to touch anything that didn't belong to her.

### **KEZIA'S REACTION**

Kezia heard this. She replied that what she did was for his birthday. Kezia was beaten on her hands. Hours later, her grandmother had wrapped Kezia in a shawl. She clung to her when she was being rocked in the rocking chair. She sobbed, "What did God make fathers for?"

### **THE MACDONALDS, KEZIA'S NEIGHBOURS**

The Macdonalds lived next door to Kezia's house. They had five children. Father played with the children. Kezia thought that there were different fathers.

### **KEZIA'S MOTHER AND GRANDMOTHER AT HOSPITAL**

One day Kezia's mother fell ill. She had to be hospitalized. Kezia's grandmother was with her Kezia was all alone with Alice, the cook. Kezia asked Alice what would happen if she had a nightmare. But Alice asked her to sleep. She also asked her not to scream and not to wake up her poor father.

### **KEZIA'S NIGHTMARE**

But Kezia had a nightmare. She saw a butcher with a knife and a rope. He came near Kezia but she couldn't move. She screamed and woke up father. Father came to her bed. He asked her what was the matter. After hearing her, he took Kezia with him.

## KEZIA'S CHANGED OPINION ABOUT FATHER

Kezia's father lay down beside her. Kezia crept close to him. He asked Kezia to rub her feet against his legs to get them warm. Kezia felt a funny thing. She thought that father was harder than grandmother. But it was a nice hardness. Everyday he had to work harder. He got too tired to be a Mr. Macdonald. And she had torn up his writing! She stirred. Father asked what was the matter. Kezia told him that her head was on his heart. She told him that he had a big heart. It was beating.

### NCERT SOLUTIONS

Thinking about the text  
(Page 38)

I. Given below are some emotions that Kezia felt. Match the emotions in Column A with the items in Column B.

A	B
1. fear or terror 2. glad sense of relief 3. a'funny' feeling, perhaps of understanding	(i) father comes into her room to give her a goodbye kiss (ii) noise of the carriage grows fainter (iii) father comes home (iv) speaking to father (v) going to bed when alone at home (vi) father comforts her and falls asleep (vii) father stretched out on the sofa, snoring

Answers:

1. — (iii)
2. — (ii)
3. — (vi)

**II. Answer the following questions in one or two sentences:**

**Question 1.**

**Why was Kezia afraid of her father?**

**Answer:**

Kezia was afraid of her father because he used to talk to her harshly. He was in a habit of finding out her mistakes.

**Question 2.**

**Who were the people in Kezia's family?**

**Answer:**

Kezia's family had her grandmother, mother and father.

**Question 3.**

**What was Kezia's father's routine?**

1. before going to his office?
2. after coming back from his office?
3. on Sundays?

**Answer:**

1. He used to kiss Kezia casually before going to his office.
2. He would ask for the newspaper and tea after coming back from his office.
3. On Sundays, he would take rest. He would enjoy sound sleep on the sofa.

**Question 4.**

**In what ways did Kezia's grandmother encourage her to get to know her father better?**

**Answer:**

Kezia's grandmother sent her to her father's room to have a nice talk with him. Besides, she asked her to make a gift of a pin-cushion on her father's birthday.

**III. Discuss these questions in class with your teacher and then write down your answers in two or three paragraphs each.**

**Question 1.**

**Kezia's efforts to please her father resulted in displeasing him very much. How did this happen?**

**Answer:**

Kezia used to be afraid of her father because her father talked to her harshly. One day her grandmother told her to make a pin-cushion to gift him on his birthday which was approaching. Kezia took it as an opportunity to please him. So, she stitched cotton cloth three sides and looked for the things that could be stuffed into the stitched cloth. Soon she found out many sheets of paper. Actually they contained her father's speech for the Port Authority. She tore them into pieces and stuffed her case.

One day when her father looked for the papers, he did not find them. After some time, he came to know that Kezia had torn them into pieces to make a pin-cushion. He got infuriated and beat her with a ruler. Thus, her efforts to please her father resulted in displeasing him very much.

### **Question 2.**

**Kezia decides that there are "different kinds of fathers". What kind of father was Mr Macdonald, and how was he different from Kezia's father?**

**Answer:**

In Kezia's opinion, her father was very harsh. He did not talk to her affectionately but rather he used to speak to her stringently. So she avoided him. She did not want to be in front of him because she was afraid of him. Moreover, her father never spent time with her.

Macdonald family lived next door to her house. One evening she saw him playing tag with his children. A baby was on his shoulders and two little girls were hanging on to his coat pockets. They were laughing. Also, she saw some boys turn the hose on Macdonald and he tried to catch them laughing all the time. She found them feel friendly with their father. So, she wished if her father were like them.

### **Question 3.**

**How does Kezia begin to see her father as a human being who needs her sympathy?**

**Answer:**

One night Kezia had a nightmare which made her too terrified. She was crying out of fear. When she woke up, she found her father beside her bed with a candle in his hand. He asked her what the matter was. When he came to know about her nightmare, he blew out the candle, bent down and caught up the child in his arms. He carried her to the big bedroom. He laid her on the bed and pulled the covers up around her. Apart from this, he lay down beside her.

After some time, still half asleep, she crept close to him, snuggled her head under his arm and held tightly to his shirt. Now she felt comfortable.

Her father told her to rub her feet against his legs and get them warm.

Now, Kezia realised that her father was not as harsh as she thought. She realised that her father had to work all day long and got so tired that he could not play with her. She realised that her father wanted her to understand his compulsion. At bottom, he was a very good person.

## **EXTRA QUESTIONS**

### **Short Answer Type**

Question 1.

Why was Kezia scared of her father?

Answer:

Kezia's father was a busy man and had little time for the little girl. Being a very disciplined man, he was strict with Kezia as well and she would at times get harsh words of scolding and physical punishment from him. He never displayed any soft feelings for his little daughter nor did he play with her like Mr Macdonald. All he did was giving her a perfunctory kiss rather than a loving one. Moreover, he was a large man, and his size, too, terrified the little girl. So scared was Kezia of him that she felt relieved when he was gone from home.

Question 2.

Who were the people in Kezia's family?

Answer:

There were four people in Kezia's family – her father who was very strict, her mother who was stern and aloof, her soft-hearted and loving grandmother and little Kezia herself.

Question 3.

What was Kezia's father's routine before going to office and after coming back in the evening?

Answer:

Before going to office, Kezia's father would come to her room, give her a perfunctory kiss and leave for work. He would return in the evening and in a loud voice ask for his tea, the papers and his slippers to be brought into the drawing-room. He would wait for Kezia to help him take off his shoes and exchange a few words with Kezia.

Question 4.

What was Kezia's routine when Father returned from office?

Answer:

When Father returned home from office, mother would tell Kezia to come downstairs and take off her father's shoes. She would also be told to take the shoes outside. Father would ask her a couple of questions and she would stutter out her replies. He would order her to put his teacup back on the table and then she would make good her escape from his presence.

Question 5.

What was Father's and Kezia's morning routine?

Answer:

Before going to his office, Kezia's father would come to Kezia's room and give her a perfunctory kiss. She would respond with "Goodbye, Father". Since she was afraid of him, she always felt relieved after his departure.

Question 6.

Why did Kezia go slowly towards the drawing-room when mother asked her to come downstairs?

Answer:

Kezia was afraid of her dominating father. He always scolded her for one thing or the other and did not display any soft feelings or affection for his little daughter. So frightened was she of him that she went very slowly towards the drawing-room when she was asked to come downstairs to take off his shoes.

Question 7.

Why was Father often irritated with Kezia?

Answer:

Kezia was very scared of her father. She stuttered when he spoke to her. Also, the terrified expression on her face irritated him. In his presence she wore an expression of wretchedness. He felt that with such an expression, she seemed as if she were on the verge of suicide.

Question 8.

What was unusual about Kezia' stuttering?

Answer:

Kezia was able to speak without stuttering to everyone in the household but her father. In her father's formidable presence she could barely speak and she stuttered as she attempted to speak to him.

Question 9.

Why did Kezia stutter while speaking to Father?

Answer:

Kezia's father's had a loud and domineering personality and he frequently frequent rebuked her for her behaviour and appearance. His constant criticism and scolding shook her self-confidence. Moreover, his large size frightened

her. Though Kezia tried her best to please him, she found herself tongue-tied while talking to him. This made her stutter in his presence.

Question 10.

Why did Kezia feel that her father was like a giant?

Answer:

Kezia felt that her father was like a giant because he had very big hands and neck. His mouth seemed big especially when he yawned. He had a loud voice and would often call out orders. In addition, his stern and cold behaviour made the little girl think of him as a giant.

Question 11.

Why did Kezia avoid her father?

Answer:

Kezia avoided her father because she was afraid of him. She saw him as a harsh, emotionless person who never spoke to his daughter affectionately. He reprimanded Kezia for making mistakes. Kezia stammered in front of her father since he was a very huge and giant-like figure lacking in the warmth of a father.

Question 12.

In what ways did Kezia's grandmother encourage her to get to know her parents better?

Answer:

Kezia's grandmother wanted that the little girl to bond with her parents. Therefore, every Sunday afternoon she would encourage Kezia to go downstairs to the drawing-room, have a nice conversation with them, and get to know them better. She also suggested Kezia make a pin-cushion out of a beautiful piece of yellow silk as a gift for her father's birthday.

Question 13.

What was Kezia's father's routine on Sundays?

Answer:

On Sundays, Kezia's father did not go for work. He would relax in the afternoon. He would stretch out on the sofa in their drawing-room, put handkerchief on his face, feet on the best cushion and sleep snoring soundly. All this while, her mother would be absorbed in reading.

Question 14.

On Sunday afternoons Grandmother sent Kezia down to the drawing-room? What happened when she went there?

Answer:

When on a Sunday afternoon the little girl went to the drawing-room, she always found Mother reading and Father stretched out on the sofa, his handkerchief on his face, his feet on one of the best cushions, sleeping soundly and snoring. Kezia would sit on a stool and gravely watch her father until he woke up and stretched to ask the time. Then, he would look at her and tell her not to stare at him as it made her look like a brown owl.

Question 15.

What did Grandmother ask Kezia to make and why?

Answer:

Grandmother wanted Kezia to bond with her father and to bring them both close to each other. She tried various ways to achieve this end. Once, she asked Kezia to make a pin-cushion out of a beautiful piece of yellow silk as a birthday present for Father. She wanted the little girl to present this pin-cushion as a surprise gift and make her father happy.

Question 16.

In what ways did Kezia's grandmother encourage her to get to know her father better?

Answer:

Kezia's grandmother was a mature and understanding woman who realised her granddaughter was afraid of her father. To improve matters better between them she encouraged her to get to know her father better by sending

her to the drawing room to talk to her parents on Sundays. She also suggested Kezia to make a pin-cushion out of a beautiful piece of yellow silk as a gift for her father's birthday.

Question 17.

What did Kezia make as a birthday gift for her father? How did she prepare it?

Answer:

Kezia made a pin-cushion as a birthday gift for her father out of the beautiful piece of yellow silk that her Grandmother had given her. She laboriously stitched its three sides with a double cotton and stuffed it with papers that she took from the bed-table in her mother's room. Finally, she sewed up the fourth side and the gift was ready.

Question 18.

That night there was a hue and cry in the house. What night was that? Why was there an uproar?

Answer:

The night Kezia finished making the pin-cushion for her father, there was an uproar in the house. Father could not find his great speech for the Port Authority. Rooms were searched; servants questioned. Finally Mother came into Kezia's room and, on questioning her, found out Kezia had mistakenly torn the papers and stuffed them in the pin-cushion that was to be a surprise gift for her father on his birthday. The hue and cry at night was for those missing papers.

Question 19.

"Father's great speech for the Port Authority Iliad been lost." What had happened to father's speech?

Answer:

Father's speech had been torn to pieces by the little girl, Kezia. She was making a pin-cushion as a gift for her father, to give him on his birthday. As she was

not able to find anything to stuff the cushion with, she tore the speech and stuffed it into her cushion.

Question 20.

Who dragged Kezia down to the dining-room at night? Why?

Answer:

Kezia's father was extremely angry as he had been looking for his important Port Authority speech and he could not find the papers. Her mother dragged her down to the dining-room at night and took her to her father when she came to know that Kezia had tom the papers that had his great speech for the Port Authority.

Question 21.

Why did Father come to Kezia's room with a ruler? What do you learn about him from the incident?

Answer:

Father was a strict disciplinarian who believed in the use of physical punishment to correct children. He came to Kezia's room with a ruler because he wanted to punish her and teach her not to touch what did not belong to her. This also shows that he was a firm, unforgiving person.

Question 22.

Kezia's efforts to please her father resulted in displeasing him very much. How did this happen?

Answer:

On grandmother's suggestion, Kezia would go to the drawing-room to have a "nice talk with Father and Mother" and sit on a stool waiting for him to wake up and talk to her. He would wake up and look at her staring apprehensively at him. He would be irritated by her scared look and call her a brown owl. On another occasion, on her grandmother's suggestion, she decided to make a pin-cushion as a birthday gift for her father hoping that it would please him.

But instead he was furious because she had inadvertently torn the papers of his Port Authority speech and used them as a stuffing in the pin-cushion.

Question 23.

Do you think Kezia was wrong in tearing her father's papers? What does it show about her character?

Answer:

Kezia tore up certain papers she found on the bed-side table in her mother's bedroom. Unfortunately, the papers were an important speech her father had written for the Port Authority. Undoubtedly, Kezia was wrong in having taken his papers without his permission and in tearing them up, even though she had done so with the best of intentions. The incident only shows that she was too innocent and immature to know the wrong she was doing. All she wanted was to please her father with a birthday gift.

Question 24.

Why was Kezia punished by her Father? Was he right in doing so?

Answer:

Kezia wanted to give her father a birthday present she had made for him herself. She decided to make a pin-cushion for him. She stitched it out of piece of yellow silk and stuffed it with some papers that were his speech for the Port Authority. Her father punished her for taking something that did not belong to her without permission. He was not right in punishing her as he did. He should have understood her feelings and explained to her the error of her ways.

Question 25.

How did Father punish Kezia? What was the impact of the punishment?

Answer:

Father punished Kezia by hitting her hard on her little, pink palms with a ruler. The impact of this punishment was so strong the Kezia could never forget it. Next time when she saw him, she at once hid her hands behind her back and her cheeks flushed with fear.

Question 26.

How and why did Grandmother comfort Kezia after her father hit her with a ruler?

Answer:

Hours after Kezia's father hit her with a ruler, her grandmother wrapped the little girl in a shawl and rocked her in the rocking-chair, with the child clinging to her soft body. She gave her a clean hanky to blow her nose and tried to put her to sleep comforting her with loving words.

Question 27.

Kezia asks her grandmother, "What did God make fathers for?" What does she mean by this?

Answer:

Kezia questioned why God made fathers because she was very hurt and traumatised by her father's behaviour and the punishment he meted out to her. She felt that he had been too harsh and unforgiving with her.

Question 28.

Grandmother tells Kezia, "I tried to explain to Father but he was too upset to listen tonight." Why does she say that?

Answer:

Kezia's grandmother wanted Kezia to bond with her parents and always tried to bridge the gap between her and her parents, especially her father. She told Kezia that her father was too upset that night to listen to her because she did not want the little girl to nurture any grudge against her father.

Question 29.

Do you think that Kezia's father didn't love her?

Answer:

I think Kezia's father loved his daughter. Underneath his frightening and strict exterior, beat a father's loving heart. If at he appeared too strict or lacking in

understanding or compassion, it was probably because he was too tired or engrossed in his work, or wanted his daughter to be well-brought up.

Question 30.

Who were Kezia's neighbours? What did she observe about them?

Answer:

The Macdonalds were Kezia's neighbours. She saw that Mr Macdonald played with his children. He laughed when they turned the hose on him and ran about the flower-beds with his young son, Mao, on his shoulders and his two little daughters hanging on to his coat pockets.

Question 31.

Who was Mr. Macdonald?

Answer:

Mr MacDonald was Kezia's neighbour. He loved his five children and played 'tag' with them. The father with the baby, Mao, on his shoulders, would run round and round the flower-beds, shaking with laughter, the two little girls hanging on to his coat pockets. Once Kezia saw the boys turn the hose on him—and he tried to catch them laughing all the time.

Question 32.

Kezia felt that Mr Macdonald was a better father as compared to her own father. Why?

Answer:

Kezia observed that Mr Macdonald was a good-humoured cheerful fellow who enjoyed the company of his children and played with them, laughing even when they drenched him with the hose. Contrary to this, her own father was a strict disciplinarian and quite aloof. He did not express any affection or show any leniency towards Kezia, despite her young age.

Question 33.

Why did Kezia like Mr Macdonald?

Answer:

The Macdonalds who lived next door were an exuberant, playful family. Looking through the vegetable garden-wall, Kezia saw the five Macdonald children playing with their father, turning a hose at him and the father tickling the children. When compared with her frightening father who never played with her, Kezia saw the extent of love between father and his children. This made her like Mr MacDonald.

Question 34.

Why was Kezia left alone in the house with the cook Alice?

Answer:

One day Kezia's mother had suddenly taken ill and had to be hospitalized. Grannie, too, went along to look after her in the hospital. Kezia was left at home with Alice, their cook till her father returned from work.

Question 35.

Why was Kezia afraid to sleep alone?

Answer:

That night, when Alice was putting Kezia to bed, the little girl suddenly felt afraid as she had to sleep alone. She was scared of the dark and often had nightmares at night. Normally, whenever she had a nightmare, Grandmother would take her into her bed but tonight she was not there at home.

Question 36.

What kind of dreams did Kezia usually have?

Answer:

Usually, Kezia had horrible nightmares. In her nightmares, she saw a butcher with a knife and a rope coming closer and closer to her with a dreadful smile while she stood still, unable to move, overpowered by fear.

Question 37.

How did Father comfort the little girl, Kezia, when she got scared in her sleep?

Answer:

When Kezia cried out in her sleep in fear, her father came to her room, lifted her in his arms, took her to his bed and made her sleep close to him. He allowed her to warm her feet against his legs. She felt secure and protected as she snuggled up to him.

Question 38.

When and how did Kezia's feelings for her father undergo a change?

Answer:

Kezia's feelings of fear for her father underwent a change when her father came to her rescue when she had a nightmare. He gently carried her to his room, carefully tucked her up and slept beside her. Kezia felt reassured and safe and snuggled up to him. That is when she realised that her father was not a hard-hearted giant but a large-hearted loving father who got extremely tired by the end of the day.

Question 39.

What kind of a person was Kezia's father?

Answer:

Kezia's father was a hardworking man, but he was short tempered. He was a strict disciplinarian too. It was only when Kezia's mother was hospitalized, that she realized that her father loved her but didn't have the art of expressing his love.

### **Long Answer Type**

Question 1.

Write a short note on the relationship between Kezia and her father

Answer:

Initially, the relationship between Kezia and her father was formal and restrained. As a strict disciplinarian and the head of the family Father asserted his authority over everyone, including his little girl. Every morning, before

going to office, he perfunctorily kissed her and she as formally said, "Goodbye, Father."

She was made to take off his shoes and put them outside when he returned from office in the evening. He often scolded her for her sad looks and for stuttering. He even punished her when she unknowingly tore his important papers. He did not give her even one chance to explain herself and failed to see her loving intention behind the mistake. As a result, Kezia feared her father and stayed out of his way.

However, their relationship underwent a drastic change towards the end of the story. Father displayed his love and concern for his daughter when he and Kezia were alone and she was scared by her nightmare. He carried her in his arms to his room, tucked her comfortably in his bed, lay down close to her and provided to her the assurance and security that children seek from parents. This protective, caring and considerate side of her father helped her understand him. She realised that he had a big heart which was full of love for her.

Question 2.

Do you think the Kezia deserved the beating she got for her mistake? What light does this incident throw on her father's character?

Answer:

Kezia earned her father's wrath for tearing his speech for the Port Authority to stuff a pin-cushion she was making for him as a birthday present. When Father discovered that Kezia was the culprit, he punished her by beating her little pink palms with a ruler to teach her not to touch what did not belong to her.

I think it was too harsh a punishment for an innocent mistake of a fond daughter who was making a gift for her father. Undoubtedly, the papers were extremely important for him and their loss must have caused him a lot of inconvenience but he should have heard out Kezia's explanation, and understood and appreciated Kezia's intentions. A firm but gentle reprimand would have sufficed to teach the sensitive Kezia not to touch things that did not belong to her. This incident shows that Father was a very insensitive and

harsh man who demanded a very high standard of discipline from his daughter and did not tolerate any disobedience.

Question 3.

Briefly comment on Kezia's relationship with her grandmother?

Answer:

The little girl is extremely close to her loving and sympathetic grandmother. Failing to get any expression of affection from her parents, especially her father, Kezia turns to her grandmother for the emotional support and comfort that she needs. She turns to her to fulfill her need for love and protection.

Grandmother too showers love upon the little girl. She keeps trying to help the girl build her bridges with her parents. She advises Kezia to talk to her parents when they would be more relaxed as they sat in the drawing-room on a Sunday afternoon. Again, she suggests to Kezia suggests that she should make a pin-cushion for her father as a present for his birthday. When Father beats Kezia, it is grandmother who tries first to reason with her son and then consoles and comforts Kezia by covering her with her shawl and allowing the child to cling to her soft body.

We also learn that, at night, when Kezia is scared by the dark or by her nightmares, it is for her grandmother that the little girl calls out, and it is grandmother who takes her into her own bed. Hence, her love and support make Kezia look upto her for everything.

Question 4.

What impression do you form of Kezia's mother?

Answer:

Kezia's mother is very unapproachable, aloof figure, quite unlike a loving mother a young girl desires and needs. Perhaps her ill-health and her strict and domineering husbands demands leave her with very little room to pay the desired attention to her daughter. Her relationship with her daughter is distant. She treats the little girl in accordance with her husband's expectations. She orders her to take off her father's shoes and put them outside as this

would indicate obedience. On Sunday afternoons, she spends her time engrossed in her reading, rather than talking to her daughter.

When Kezia innocently tears her father's papers, she drags her downstairs to face Father's wrath. She does not try to reason with Father when he reprimands and beats the little girl. She neither defends nor protects her in any way. She does not even go to assuage her traumatised daughter's physical and emotional hurt. Little wonder then that Kezia turns to her grandmother to fulfill her need for motherly care and affection.

Question 5.

Kezia decides that there are "different kinds of fathers." Comment on Kezia's remark in the light of her relationship with her father and that of the Macdonald children with their father?

Answer:

Kezia's father was a busy man. He was so lost in his business that he had no time for his family. Being a very strict disciplinarian, he was strict with Kezia as well. He did not display any soft feelings for his little daughter through word or deed. All he did was give her a perfunctory kiss rather than a loving one as he left for work each morning. His presence at home frightened Kezia and she was relieved when he was gone. Kezia was unable to speak without stuttering in her father's presence. Yet, despite all this, Kezia's father had a loving heart as Kezia discovered when she had her nightmare and she was alone with him.

At once, Father came and took her to his room, made her lie with him and comforted her. He asked her to rub her feet against his legs for warmth. This showed the little girl her father truly loved her and it brought her close to her father. Mr Macdonald, Kezia's next door neighbour, had five children and Kezia would often see them playing in their garden. One day, when Kezia looked through the gap in the fence she saw the Macdonalds playing 'tag'.

It was evening, and Mr Macdonald had just returned from work but unlike her father, he looked happy to be playing with his children. He had baby Mao on his shoulders, and the two girls were hanging on to his coat pockets. The party ran around the flower beds, shaking with laughter. Mr. Macdonald's sons turned the hose on him and he tried to catch them laughing all the time.

This happy scene made Kezia conclude that there were different sorts of fathers. Mr Macdonald was so different from her own father. He was not at all strict, was always happy and thoroughly enjoyed the company of his children. In contrast, her own father was often in an angry mood and remained much too busy in his work. She dreaded him and avoided his company as much as she could. Whenever she was with him, she would stammer and look silly, like “a brown owl”. His strict discipline and his domineering nature made Kezia wonder what God made fathers for.

Question 6.

How does Kezia begin to see her father as a human being who needs her sympathy?

Answer:

Kezia was scared of her father as he looked like a giant. Every morning he came to her room and gave her a perfunctory kiss before leaving for work, but even that contact with him left her feeling uneasy. She was relieved when her father left home for work. Kezia’s father often mocked or rebuked her and once he even beat her for tearing some of his important papers. So great was her fear of him that she stuttered while answering him.

However, a nightmare one night made Kezia discover the tender, caring and loving side of her father. One night when she was alone at home with her father, and she cried out in fear, he came at once to her room, lifted her in his arms and took her to his room. He comforted her and tucked her up nicely and slept next to her. He asked her to rub her feet against his legs for warmth. This incident brought her close to her father.

She felt sorry for him as he had to work so hard that he had no time to play with her. She even realized that her father loved her but didn’t have the art of expressing it. Thus, her attitude towards her father changed and became more understanding and sympathetic.

Question 7.

Why did Kezia’s father punish her? Was he right in doing so?

Answer:

Kezia wanted to give a present to her father for his birthday. She decided to make a pin-cushion for him. She took a beautiful piece of yellow silk and stitched it on three sides. Now, she needed something to fill it. She went into her parents' room. There, she found some sheets of fine paper lying on the table. She tore them up into pieces and used them to stuff them into pin cushion. Then she sewed up its fourth side.

What she didn't know was that the papers were her father's important speech for the Port Authority. When her father came to know about Kezia's misdeed, he became very angry. He took a ruler and beat her. He was not right in punishing her. He should have realized that she was innocent. Her intention was good. He should have explained to her the error of taking someone's things without permission and warned her gently but firmly.

Question 8.

What were the circumstances that forced Kezia to change her opinion about her father?

Answer:

When Kezia's mother was hospitalized, her grandmother went to stay with her. Kezia was alone at home with her father. As Alice, the cook, put Kezia to bed at night, the child was terrified of the dark and of being alone. She was afraid of the nightmares which she usually saw. On other occasions she was comforted by her grandmother, but tonight Grannie wasn't there.

That night, Kezia again had the horrible dream and she woke up shivering and crying for her grandma. However, her father stood beside her bed with a candle in his hand. He gently took her in his arms and carried her to his room. He tucked her nicely in his bed and made her sleep close to him. She felt secure with him near her. That was when she realized that her father was busy with work and had no time to play with her. She even realized that her father loved her but didn't have the art of expressing it. Thus, her attitude towards her father changed.

Question 9.

Kezia's efforts to please her father resulted in displeasing him. Elaborate.

Answer:

Kezia was very scared of her father and stuttered while answering his casual queries because she was trying so hard to say the words properly. This annoyed him and he rebuked her for looking wretched and on the brink of suicide. When she was sent to talk to him on Sunday afternoons, she always found her mother absorbed in reading and father sleeping on the sofa in their drawing-room. She would sit on a stool and wait for him to wake up.

He would then mockingly call her "a brown owl." Once she unknowingly destroyed some of his important papers while stuffing a pin-cushion which she wanted to present to him on his birthday. This made him very angry and he beat her up badly. Therefore, Kezia's efforts to please her father often resulted in displeasing him very much.

### **Reference to Context**

Read the extracts given below and answer the questions that follow.

Question 1.

To the little girl he was a figure to be feared and avoided. Every morning before going to work he came into her room and gave her a casual kiss, to which she responded with "Goodbye, Father And oh, there was a glad sense of relief when she heard the noise of the carriage growing fainter and fainter down the long road!

(a) Who does 'he' refer to in this extract?

Answer:

He refers to the father of the little girl, Kezia.

(b) What kind of a person was Kezia's father?

Answer:

He was a strict disciplinarian with a harsh exterior.

(c) What were the feelings of the little girl towards him?

Answer:

The little girl was afraid of him and tried to avoid him.

(d) How did she feel when her father left for office?

Answer:

She heaved a sigh of relief after he left for his office.

Question 2.

To the little girl he was a figure to be feared and avoided. Every morning before going to work he came into her room and gave her a casual kiss, to which she responded with "Goodbye, Father". And oh, there was a glad sense of relief when she heard the noise of the carriage growing fainter and fainter down the long road!

(a) Who is the little girl?

Answer:

The little girl is Kezia.

(b) Who were the people in Kezia's family?

Answer:

Kezia's family consisted of her father, mother, grandmother and herself.

(c) What did 'he' do before going to work every morning?

Answer:

Before going to work every morning, he came to Kezia's room and casually kissed her.

(d) What does this gesture show about him?

Answer:

This gesture shows that he loved her girl but was not very expressive in his affection.

Question 3.

She never stuttered with other people – had quite given it up – but only with Father, because then she was trying so hard to say the words properly.

(a) Who is 'she' in this extract?

Answer:

'She' is Kezia, the little girl who was afraid of her father.

(b) What had she "quite given up"?

Answer:

She had quite given up the occasional stuttering in front of other people.

(c) How did 'she' speak in the presence of her father?

Answer:

In the presence of her father, Kezia stuttered while speaking and displayed lack of confidence.

(d) Why did 'she' stutter in her father's presence?

Answer:

Kezia was afraid of her father and hesitated to speak to him, also whenever she had to speak to him, she would stutter because then she was trying so hard to say the words properly.

Question 4.

"What's the matter? What are you looking so wretched about? Mother, I wish you taught this child not to appear on the brink of suicide ... Here, Kezia, carry my teacup back to the table carefully." He was so big – his hands and his neck, especially his mouth when he yawned. Thinking about him alone was like thinking about a giant.

(a) Who is the speaker in these lines?

Answer:

The speaker is Kezia's father.

(b) Where are they at the moment? What time is it?

Answer:

They are in the drawing room. It is evening and Father has just returned from work.

(c) How does Kezia look in her father's presence? Why?

Answer:

Kezia looks miserable and gloomy in his presence because she is scared of him.

(d) Why was she scared of her father?

Answer:

She was scared of him because he was a large, loud man and he often reprimanded her.

Question 5.

Slowly the girl would slip down the stairs, more slowly still across the hall, and push open the drawing – room door.

(a) What time of the day is it?

Answer:

It is evening and Father is back from work.

(b) Where is the little girl going?

Answer:

The little girl is going to the drawing room, where her father is sitting.

(c) Why is she going there?

Answer:

She is going there to help him take off his shoes.

(d) Why does she go slowly?

Answer:

She goes slowly because she is afraid of her father and is reluctant to go in his presence.

Question 6.

He was so big – his hands and his neck, especially his mouth when he yawned. Thinking about him alone was like thinking about a giant.

(a) Who is 'he' in the above extract?

Answer:

In this extract, 'he' refers to the father of Kezia, who was a very strict disciplinarian.

(b) Why does the speaker find him so big?

Answer:

The speaker is his little daughter, Kezia, who is very scared of him. Hence she finds a really big and giant-like with big hands, neck and mouth.

(c) Why does the speaker think of him as a giant?

Answer:

The speaker, Kezia, thought of him as a giant because to a small girl like her, his big body structure was as frightening as that of a giant of children's stories.

(d) When did his mouth especially appear big?

Answer:

His mouth especially appeared big when he opened it wide while yawning.

Question 7.

On Sunday afternoons Grandmother sent her down to the drawing-room to have a “nice talk with Father and Mother”. But the little girl always found Mother reading and Father stretched out on the sofa, his handkerchief on his face, his feet on one of the best cushions, sleeping soundly and snoring.

(a) Where did Grandmother send ‘her’? Why?

Answer:

Grandmother would send her to the drawing room to talk to her parents.

(b) What would ‘her’ parents be doing?

Answer:

Her mother would be reading and her father would be sleeping.

(c) What do you learn about Mother from this passage?

Answer:

Mother is unconcerned and not very loving as she would ignore Kezia and continue to read.

(d) What would Father say to the little girl when he got up?

Answer:

When he got up Father would ask why Kezia was looking at him like a brown owl.

Question 8.

One day, when she was kept indoors with a cold, her grandmother told her that father’s birthday was next week, and suggested she should make him a pin-cushion for a gift out of a beautiful piece of yellow silk.

(a) Who had a cold? What was the result of the cold?

Answer:

Kezia had a cold and so she could not go out, but had to stay indoors.

(b) What was the occasion next week?

Answer:

It was Kezia's father's birthday next week.

(c) What did her grandmother want her to do?

Answer:

Grandmother wanted Kezia to make a gift for her father, a pin-cushion.

(d) What did Kezia use for stuffing the pin-cushion?

Answer:

Kezia used some papers she found on a bed-table in her parents' bedroom for stuffing the pin-cushion. Unfortunately, the papers were an important speech written by her father.

Question 9.

"Mother, go up to her room and fetch down the damned thing – see that the child's put to bed this instant."

(a) Who speaks these lines and to whom?

Answer:

Kezia's father speaks these lines to his mother.

(b) What is the mood of the speaker in these lines?

Answer:

The speaker, Kezia's father, is very angry while speaking.

(c) What does the speaker refer to as the 'damned thing'?

Answer:

The 'damned thing' referred to by the speaker, Kezia's father, is the pin-cushion Kezia had made for him.

(d) Who is the 'child' here? Why does the speaker wish the child to be put to bed immediately?

Answer:

The 'child' here is Kezia. Her father, the speaker, wishes her to be put to bed immediately because he is furious at the damage caused by her. He wants to punish her for tearing up his papers.

Question 10.

"Sit up," he ordered, "and hold out your hands. You must be taught once and for all not to touch what does not belong to you."

(a) Who is the speaker? Who is he talking to?

Answer:

Kezia's father is talking to Kezia.

(b) Where are they at the moment?

Answer:

They are in Kezia's bedroom where she had been sent for tearing up her father's papers.

(c) Why does the speaker want the listener to hold out her hands?

Answer:

Kezia's father wanted her to hold out her hands so that he could punish her by hitting her on the palms

(d) What do you learn about the speaker from these lines?

Answer:

He is a strict disciplinarian and is punishing his little daughter for tearing up his important papers. He is also unforgiving.

Question 11.

"But it was for your b-b-birthday."

Down came the ruler on her little, pink palms.

(a) Who speaks these words? To whom?

Answer:

Kezia speaks these words to her father.

(b) Where are they at the moment?

Answer:

They are in Kezia's bedroom at the moment.

(c) Why does she speak these words?

Answer:

She speaks these words to try and explain to her father why she had cut up the papers.

(d) Who brought down 'the ruler on her little, pink palms'? Why?

Answer:

Kezia's father brought down the ruler on her palms to punish her for touching his papers without permission.

Question 12.

"Here's a clean hanky, darling. Blow your nose. Go to sleep, pet; you'll forget all about it in the morning. I tried to explain to Father but he was too upset to listen tonight."

(a) Why does the speaker offer the listener a clean hanky?

Answer:

Grandmother, the speaker, offers a clean hanky because Kezia had been crying after she was punished by her father for tearing up his important papers. She needed a clean hanky to blow her running nose.

(b) What did the speaker want the listener to forget?

Answer:

Grandmother, the speaker, wanted Kezia, the listener to forget about the beating that she had got from her Father.

(c) Why did she want the listener to forget it?

Answer:

She wanted her to forget it because the punishment was not given to hurt but to make her understand that things belonging to others must not be touched.

(d) What do you think had the speaker tried to explain to Father?

Answer:

Grandmother, the speaker, tried to explain to Father that Kezia had not destroyed the papers intentionally and that she had been trying to complete his surprise birthday gift.

Question 13.

But the child never forgot. Next time she saw him, she quickly put both hands behind her back and a red colour flew into her cheeks.

(a) What did the child never forget?

Answer:

The child, Kezia, never forgot how her father had punished her and hit her.

(b) Why did she put her hands behind her back?

Answer:

Father had hit her on her palms with a ruler. She remembered the pain, and was afraid of being punished again.

(c) What had she done to get punished by her father?

Answer:

She had tom up his important speech in order to stuff the pin-cushion she was making as a surprise gift for him.

(d) What did she wish her father to be?

Answer:

She wished for her father to be more like Mr Macdonald

Question 14.

Looking through a gap in the fence the little girl saw them playing 'tag' in the evening. The father with the baby, Mao, on his shoulders, two little girls hanging on to his coat pockets ran round and round the flower-beds, shaking with laughter. Once she saw the boys turn the hose on him-and he tried to catch them laughing all the time.

(a) Who is 'them'?

Answer:

'Them' refers to Kezia's neighbours, Mr Macdonald and his five children.

(b) What is the little girl doing at the moment?

Answer:

The little girl is looking at her neighbours, the Macdonald's through a gap in the fence. The family are playing together.

(c) How is the relationship of the children with their father different from the little girl's with hers?

Answer:

Unlike Kezia, the Macdonald children were not at all afraid of their father. In fact they were all playing and laughing together.

(d) What did she wish as she saw the family?

Answer:

As she the children laughing and playing with their father, the little girl wished for her father to be like Mr Macdonald.

Question 15.

“What’ll I do if I have a nightmare?” she asked. “I often have nightmares and then Grannie takes me into her bed—I can’t stay in the dark- gets ‘whispery’...”

(a) Who is the speaker in these lines? Who is being addressed?

Answer:

In these lines, the speaker is Kezia, the little girl and she is addressing Alice, the cook.

(b) What happens when the speaker has nightmares?

Answer:

When Kezia has nightmares, she is comforted by her grandmother who takes the little girl into her bed

(c) Where was Grannie right now?

Answer:

Kezia’s Grannie was at the hospital with Kezia’s mother who is unwell.

(d) Who was beside her bed when she woke shivering that night?

Answer:

Kezia’s father came to her when she had her nightmare and cried out in her sleep. He took her to his bed with him.

Question 16.

Oh, a butcher – a knife – I want Grannie.” He blew out the candle, bent down and caught up the child in his arms, carrying her along the passage to the big bedroom. A newspaper was on the bed – a half-smoked cigar was near his reading-lamp. He put away the paper, threw the cigar into the fireplace, then carefully tucked up the child. He lay down beside her.

(a) Who wanted Granny? Why?

Answer:

Kezia wanted Granny because whenever she had a nightmare Granny would soothe her and take her into her bed with her.

(b) Who blew out the candle? Why?

Answer:

Father blew out the candle because he wanted to carry Kezia to his room.

(c) Where was the butcher?

Answer:

The butcher was in Kezia's nightmare.

(d) What does her father's behaviour in the passage show?

Answer:

He was a loving and caring father.

Question 17.

Then the dark did not matter; she lay still.

(a) When did the dark not matter? Why?

Answer:

The dark did not matter because Kezia's father had brought her to his bed. She felt safe now.

(b) Why had she been afraid in the dark?

Answer:

She was afraid of the dark because of her nightmare.

(c) What nightmare did she have?

Answer:

Kezia dreamt of a butcher with a knife and a rope, who came nearer and nearer, smiling a dreadful smile, while she could not move, could only stand still, crying out in fear.

(d) What did her father do? What does her father's behaviour show?

Answer:

Her father got her to his bed and tucked her in nicely next to himself. This shows he was a loving, caring father.

Question 18.

He was harder than Grandmother, but it was a nice hardness. And every day he had to work and was too tired to be a Mr Macdonald... She had torn up all his beautiful writing ... She stirred suddenly and sighed.

(a) Who was harder than Grandmother?

Answer:

Kezia's father was harder than her grandmother.

(b) Explain "harder than Grandmother".

Answer:

Her father was more strict and firm than her grandmother was.

(c) Who was Mr Macdonald? Why could "he" not be like him?

Answer:

Mr Macdonald was Kezia's neighbour. He had five children and Kezia had seen him laughing and playing with his children. "He" could not be like Mr Macdonald as he was a hard working man and was too tired to play with her.

(d) Why did she sigh?

Answer:

She sighed in understanding and happiness. She had understood her father and his love for her. She was no longer afraid of him.

Question 19.

"Oh," said the little girl, "my head's on your heart. I can hear it going. What a big heart you've got, Father dear."

(a) Where is the little girl at this time? Why?

Answer:

The little girl is in bed with her father. He had picked her up and got her here after she had cried out because of her nightmare.

(b) Where has she put her head? Why?

Answer:

Kezia has put her head on the big heart of her father. She has done so because she is free from her fears and is happy to discover the tender and loving side of her otherwise strict father.

(c) What can the little girl hear?

Answer:

Kezia can hear the heartbeat of her father. She has realised that her father loves her.

(d) How does the little girl feel at this time?

Answer:

Kezia is no longer afraid of her father. In fact, she feels happy and safe at this time.