

Q. 3. Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions that follow: (20)

When I returned to the common the sun was setting. The crowd about the pit had increased, and stood out black against the lemon yellow of the sky—a couple of hundred people, perhaps. There were raised voices, and some sort of struggle appeared to be going on about the pit. Strange imaginings passed through my mind. As I drew nearer I heard Stent's voice: "Keep back! Keep back!" A boy came running towards me. "It's morin'," he said to me as he passed; "it's screwin' and screwin' out. I don't like it. I'm goin' home, I am." I went on to the crowd. There were really, I should think, two or three hundred people elbowing and jostling one another, the one or two ladies there being by no means the least active. "He's fallen in the pit!" cried someone. "Keep back!" said several. The crowd swayed a little, and I elbowed my way through. Everyone seemed greatly excited. I heard a

peculiar humming sound from the pit. "I say!" said Ogilvy. "Help keep these idiots back. We don't know what's in the confounded thing, you know!" I saw a young man, a shop assistant in Woking I believe he was, standing on the cylinder and trying to scramble out of the hole again. The crowd had pushed him in. The end of the cylinder was being screwed out from within. Nearly two feet of shining screw projected. Somebody blundered against me, and I narrowly missed being pitched onto the top of the screw. I turned, and as I did so the screw must have come out, for the lid of the cylinder fell upon the gravel with a ringing concussion. I stuck my elbow into the person behind me, and turned my head towards the Thing again. For a moment that circular cavity seemed perfectly black. I had the sunset in my eyes. I think everyone expected to see a man emerge—possibly something a little unlike us terrestrial men, but in all essentials a man. I know I did. But, looking, I presently saw something stirring within the shadow: arevish billow

movements, one above another, and then two luminous disks-like eyes. Then something resembling a little grey snake, about the thickness of a walking stick, coiled up out of the writhing middle, and wriggled in the air towards me-and then another. A sudden chill came over me. There was a loud shriek from a woman behind. I half turned, keeping my eyes fixed upon the cylinder still, from which other tentacles were now projecting, and began pushing my way back from the edge of the pit. I saw astonishment giving place to horror on the faces of the people about me. I heard inarticulate exclamations on all sides. There was a general movement backwards. I saw the shopman struggling still on the edge of the pit. I found myself alone, and saw the people on the other side of the pit running off, Stent among them. I looked again at the cylinder and ungovernable terror gripped me. I stood petrified and staring. A big greyish rounded bulk, the size, perhaps, of a bear, was rising slowly and painfully out of the cylinder. As it bulged up and caught the light, it listened

like wet leather. Two large dark-coloured eyes were regarding me steadfastly. The mass that framed them, the head of the thing, was rounded, and had, one might say, a face. There was a mouth under the eyes, the lipless brim of which quivered and panted, and dropped saliva. The whole creature heaved and pulsed convulsively. A lank tentacular appendage gripped the edge of the cylinder, another swayed in the air. Those who have never seen a living Martian can scarcely imagine the strange horror of its appearance. The peculiar V-shaped mouth with its pointed upper lip, the absence of brow ridges, the absence of a chin beneath the wedge like lower lip, the incessant quivering of this mouth, the Gorgon groups of tentacles, the tumultuous breathing of the lungs in a strange atmosphere, the evident heaviness and painfulness of movement due to the greater gravitational energy of the earth above all, the extraordinary intensity of the immense eyes-were at once vital, intense, inhuman, crippled and monstrous. There was something fungoid in the oily

brown skin, something in the clumsy deliberation of the tedious movements unspeakably nasty. Even at this first encounter, this first glimpse, I was overcome with disgust and dread.

1. What leads us to believe that this passage is from a science fiction story?

The passage is from a science fiction story because it describes the arrival of an alien creature from Mars. The creature is described as being unlike any creature on Earth, with a "peculiar V-shaped mouth" and "Gorgon groups of tentacles." The narrator's reaction to the creature is one of horror and disgust, further suggesting that it is something from another world.

2. How was the crowd behaving?

The crowd was initially excited and curious about the cylinder that had fallen from the sky. However, as the cylinder began to open and something began to emerge from it, the

crowd became increasingly agitated and afraid. They began to push and shove each other, and some women screamed in terror.

3. Why did the mood of the crowd alter?

The mood of the crowd altered because they could see that the creature that was emerging from the cylinder was something strange and dangerous. They had never seen anything like it before, and they were not sure what to expect. This uncertainty led to fear and panic.

4. What was the narrator's initial reaction to the "Thing"?

The narrator's initial reaction to the "Thing" was one of horror and disgust. He was overwhelmed by the creature's appearance, which he described as being "vital, intense, inhuman, crippled and monstrous." He was also repulsed by the creature's skin, which he said was "oily brown" and "fungoid."

5. Why did the writer feel disausted?

The writer felt disgusted by the "Thing" because it was so different from anything he had ever seen before. It was a creature from another world, and its appearance was unfamiliar and unsettling. He was also repulsed by the creature's movements, which he described as being "clumsy deliberation" and "tedious." The creature's skin was also described as being "oily brown" and "fungoid," which further contributed to the writer's disgust.