

**B.A .Second**  
**The Return of the Native By Thomas Hardy : Important Short**  
**Questions Part IV**

**31. Explain the phrase 'Cretan Labyrinth' – Explain the context in which it appears.**

Minos, the legendary king of Crete, ordered the construction of an elaborate Labyrinth in which he kept the Minotaur, a monster which was half bull and half man. Each year seven young men and seven young women imprisoned in the labyrinth for the Minotaur to kill.

This appears in the context of the dreams dreamt by Eustacia about Clym which were very exciting and was certainly never dreamed by a girl in Eustacia's situation before. The dreams of Eustacia had as many ramifications as the Cretan Labyrinth.

**32. 'But providence is nothing if not coquettish' – When and why did Hardy say this?**

Hardy told this when Eustacia resolved to look for the man from Paris i.e. Clym, no more Eustacia was so much fascinated in her dreams that it led her to seek for Clym everyday. Unfortunately she could not see Clym even after her fifth visit to the heath. She retired with heart sickness with a sense of shame at her weakness. But when she left all hope, the chance came almost unexpectedly. Hence Hardy passes the remark that Providence is coquettish meaning that it never acts directly or in an expected way.

**33. 'Of mummers and mumming Eustacia had the greatest contempt' – why did Eustacia take part in mumming in spite of her contempt? How did she include herself in the group?**

The mummers were insisted by Mrs. Teobright to perform a play at her house. With the hope of getting an opportunity to meet the men from Paris, i.e., Clym, whose thoughts and dreams were penetrating in her heart like summer sun, Eustacia made up her mind to take part in the mumming in spite of her contempt.

By persuading Charley, with the promise of letting him hold her hand for a quarter of an hour, Eustacia included herself in the group.

**34. Which play was performed by the rustics and on what occasion? Which part did Eustacia play in it?**

The play performed by the rustics was Saint George. It was performed on the occasion of Christmas. Mrs. Teobright had asked the rustics to perform the play at her house as it was the first Christmas that her son Clym had been home after a long time.

Eustacia played the part of the Turkish knight in it, which was the part supposed to be played by Charley.

**35. What did Eustacia first offer Charley to exchange of allowing her to play his role? What was Charley's proposal? Did Eustacia accept it?**

In exchange of allowing her to play his role, Eustacia first offered 'half a crown' and next 'five shillings' to Charley.

Charley refused all these offers by proposing to hold her hand for half an hour and kiss her hand according to his wish.

Eustacia accepted the proposal of Charley but reduced the time to a quarter of an hour.

**36. 'The party of the mummers had to wait for a long time out side Mrs. Teobright's house' – What was the reason of it?**

Music and dancing were briskly flourishing within, Mrs. Teobright's house on the tune called 'Nancy's Fancy'. This was the reason that the party of the mummers had to wait for a long time outside Mrs. Teobright's house. There was no passage inside the door and the door could not be opened until the dance stopped.

**37. "Hardy remarks that people who began by beholding him i.e. Clym ended by persuing him" – why?**

Clym was a handsome man. On studing his face, it could be derived than an inner strenousness was preying upon an outer symmetry, and they rated his look as singular. Although he tried to look cheerful but the depression within him could not be defended by it. The very outlook of him suggested isolation. For this reason Hardy remarks that people who began by beholding him ended by persuing him.

**38. When and why does Hardy say that the mummers rise up 'Like the ghosts of Napoleon's soldiers in the 'Midnight Review'?**

According to May, 'Midnight Review' is a poem by J. C. Von Zedlity in which Napoleon's dead soldiers are evoked from their graves by a spectral drummer. In the play, the mummers had to fall down on the stage to show themselves to be dead. But when the other mummers sang the chant at the end of the play, all the men who were acting or playing the role of the dead man, rose to their feet in a silent and awful manner. According to Hardy, this seemed like 'the ghosts of Napoleon's soldiers in the 'Midnight Review'.

**39. Why did Eustacia refuse to take food in the house of Mrs. Teobright? What did she finally take and why?**

Eustacia performed the role of Turkish knight concealing her identity in the apparel of the Turkish Knight. Her face was covered with the ribbons and in order to eat her food she will have to uncover her face, revealing her real identity. For this reason, Eustacia refused to take food when other mummers were eating.

She finally, took some elder wine as she could drink easily enough beneath her disguise under the ribbons of her.

**40. When and why does Hardy use the analogy of the disguised 'Queen of love' appeared before Aeneas?**

In the first book of Virgil's Aeneid, Venus, Aeneas's mother appears to him on the African coast near Carthage in the guise of a young maiden. He does not recognize her until

the instant before she vanishes, when from her hair, ambrosial, the perfume of Gods went past upon the wind.

This analogy has been used by Hardy in granting intensity and dignity to Eustacia in her mummer's costume. Eustacia refuses all the foods. She only accepts the drink and without uncovering her face she drinks the whole glass. At this Clym suspects her to be a woman disguised in the Turkish.

The custom of the country: It refers to the custom of lighting bonfire on the 5th November. The Catholic conspirator Guy Fawke's name is linked with this celebration. In 1605 the famous gunpowder plot was Fawke's attempt to blow up the parliament and to kill the king. However Hardy thinks that Anglo-Saxon pagans would light bonfire beginning of winter.

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