

The audience was clapping and cheering as Rambashi announced the next song. When the Melody Boys were singing and swaying to Save The Last Mango For Me, Lila wandered back to Lalchand, who was deep in talk with the three other Firework-Makers. They all stood up politely and asked her to join them.

‘I was just congratulating yer pa on that mighty fine display, said Colonel Sparkington. ‘And half the credit goes to you, Miss. That trick with the little bitty boats that all went out at once - that’s a lulu. How d’you work that stunt?’ So Lila told them about the delayed action fuses, because there are no secrets among true artists. And Dr Puffenflasch told them the art of pink fire, and Signor Scorcini told them how he made the octopus’s legs wave, and they all talked for hours and liked one another enormously.

And very late, when they were extremely tired and when even Rambashi’s Melody Boys had run out of songs to sing, Lila and Lalchand found themselves alone in the great garden, on the grass under the warm stars; and Lalchand cleared his throat and looked embarrassed. ‘Lila, my dear, he said, ‘I’ve an apology to make!

‘Whatever for?’

‘Well, you see, I should have trusted you. I brought you up as a Firework-Maker’s daughter;

I should have expected you to want to be a Firework-Maker yourself. After all, you have the Three Gifts!’

‘Oh yes! The Three Gifts! Razvani asked if I had them, and I didn’t know - but then he said I must have brought them after all. And what with rushing back to the city and preparing the display, and worrying about whether we’d manage to save your life, I forgot all about them. And I still don’t know what they are!’

‘Well, my dear, did you see the ghosts?’ said Lalchand.

‘Yes, I did. They didn’t bring the Gifts, and they failed...But what are the Three Gifts?’

“They are what all Firework-Makers must have.

They are all equally important, and two of them are no good without the third. The first one is talent, and you have that, my dear. The second has many names: courage, determination, will-power... It’s

what made you carry on climbing the mountain when everything seemed hopeless!

Lila was silent for a moment, and then said, 'What is the third?'

'It's simply luck, he said. 'It's what gave you good friends like Chulak and Hamlet, and brought them to you in time. Those are the Three Gifts, and you took them and offered them to Razvani as a Firework-Maker should. And he gave you the Royal Sulphur in exchange! 'But he didn't!'

'Yes, he did.'

'He said it was illusion!'

'In the eyes of Razvani, no doubt it is. But human beings call it wisdom. You can only gain that suffering and risk - by taking the journey to Mount Merapi. It's what the journey is for. Each of our friends the other Firework-Makers has made his own journey in a similar way, and so has Rambashi.

So you see, you didn't come home empty-handed, Lila. You did bring back the Royal Sulphur' Lila thought of Hamlet and Frangipani, now happily engaged. She thought of Chulak, restored to his job, and Chang and Lotus Blossom, restored to each other.

She thought of Rambashi and the Melody Boys, happily snoring in the Hotel Inter-continental, dreaming of the triumphant show-business career that lay ahead of them. She thought of the other Firework-Makers and how they'd welcomed her as one of them.

And then she realized what she had learned.

She suddenly saw that Dr Puffenflasch loved his pink fire, and Signor Scorcini loved his octopus, and Colonel Sparkington loved his funny moon-people. To make good fireworks you had to love them, every little sparkler or Crackle-Dragon. That was it! You had to put love into your fireworks as well as all the skill you had.

(And Dr Puffenflasch's pink fire really was very pretty. If they combined some of it with a little glimmer-juice, and some of that doubling-back powder they'd never found a use for, they might be able to→

She laughed, and turned to Lalchand.

'Now I see!' she said. And so it was that Lila became a Firework-Maker.

Retrieval

1. What are the Three Gifts?
2. According to the text, what made Lila carry on climbing the mountain?
3. Give the names of the two friends who were brought to Lila in time.
4. Write true or false for next to each statement.
Chulak was restored to his job.
Chang and Lotus Blossom were restored to each other.
Hamlet and Frangipani were dreaming of a show-business career.
5. Number these events in the order they happened in the text, from 1 to 4.
Lila thought about the other Firework-Makers welcoming her.
Lila turned to Lalchand.
Lila became a Firework-Maker.
Lila realised that love was needed to make good fireworks.
6. What did Lila understand she had to put into her fireworks, as well as skill?

Vocabulary

7. Find and copy one word from the text that means a natural ability or skill.
8. The second Gift has many names. Find and copy one word that means the ability to keep trying, even when something is difficult.
9. Razvani called the Royal Sulphur "illusion", but human beings called it "wisdom". In this text, what does "illusion" suggest about what Razvani thought the Royal Sulphur was? Choose one.
Something real and useful
Something that only seemed to be real
Something that made fireworks colourful

- 10.** In the sentence “Chulak, restored to his job”, what does “restored” mean?
- 11.** The Melody Boys were dreaming of the “triumphant show-business career that lay ahead of them”. What does “triumphant” mean here?
- 12.** What does the phrase “you didn’t come home empty-handed” mean in this passage?

Explaining

- 1.** Find and copy the phrase that shows the Firework-Makers were willing to share their ideas with Lila.
- 2.** Why does the author include examples of Dr Puffenflasch’s, Signor Scorcini’s and Colonel Sparkington’s fireworks?
- 3.** The author lists the people and things Lila thinks about before she understands what she has learned. How does this list help to show the change in Lila’s thinking?
- 4.** The author ends with Lila saying, ‘Now I see!’ and then becoming a Firework-Maker. Explain how these choices show that Lila has reached an important understanding.

Inference

- 5.** Lalchand ‘cleared his throat and looked embarrassed’ before apologising. What does this suggest about how he was feeling?
- 6.** What can you infer about Lila from the way she carried on climbing the mountain when everything seemed hopeless?
- 7.** Lalchand says that Razvani calls the Royal Sulphur ‘illusion’, but human beings call it ‘wisdom’. What can you infer that Lila gained from her journey?

8. Why does Lila laugh when she suddenly understands what she has learned?

Answers

Retrieval

1. The Three Gifts are talent, courage, determination or will-power, and luck.

2. Determination, also called courage or will-power, made Lila carry on climbing the mountain.

3. The two friends were Chulak and Hamlet.

4.

Chulak was restored to his job: **True**

Chang and Lotus Blossom were restored to each other: **True**

Hamlet and Frangipani were dreaming of a show-business career:

False

5.

Lila thought about the other Firework-Makers welcoming her.

Lila turned to Lalchand.

Lila became a Firework-Maker.

Lila realised that love was needed to make good fireworks.

6. Lila understood that she had to put love into her fireworks, as well as all the skill she had.

Vocabulary

7. Talent

8. Determination

9. Something that only seemed to be real

10. "Restored" means returned to his job, after he had lost it.

11. “Triumphant” means successful or victorious. The Melody Boys were expecting a very successful show-business career.

12. The phrase means that Lila did not return without gaining anything. She brought back the Royal Sulphur and also gained wisdom from her journey.

Explaining

1. “there are no secrets among true artists.”

2. The examples show the different skills and special creations of the Firework-Makers. They help the reader understand that each artist loves and cares about their own fireworks.

3. The list reminds Lila of the people who have been helped, reunited or welcomed because of her journey. This leads her to understand that her experiences and relationships have given her wisdom and helped her become a Firework-Maker.

4. These choices show that Lila has finally understood what makes a good Firework-Maker. She realises that fireworks need love as well as skill, and she is then ready to become a Firework-Maker herself.

Inference

5. He is probably nervous, ashamed or sorry because he knows he did not trust Lila properly and must admit that he was wrong.

6. Lila is courageous and determined. Lalchand explains that her courage and will-power made her continue climbing when everything seemed hopeless.

7. Lila gained wisdom from the suffering, danger and risks of her journey. She also gained a deeper understanding of herself, her friends and what it means to be a Firework-Maker.

8. Lila laughs because she is pleased and excited that she has worked out the meaning of the Three Gifts and the Royal Sulphur. She has also realised that good fireworks need love as well as skill, and she can now imagine combining different materials to create new fireworks.