

FAHRENHEIT 451 - Ray Bradbury

Study Questions

Part 1: The Hearth and the Salamander

1. What is the significance of Montag seeing his reflection in Clarisse's eyes?
2. Clarisse causes Montag to recall a childhood memory in which a wish was embedded. What was the significance of the memory and the wish?
3. What two observations does Clarisse make about Montag's conversational mannerisms?
4. What things do the McClellans do which cause them to be classified as peculiar?
5. What final question does Clarisse ask Montag on the night of their first encounter? Why is the question important to the plot?
6. When Montag enters his home, he stares at the blank wall, but in memory sees Clarisse. What extended simile describes how he sees her?
7. Find two further similes Montag uses to describe Clarisse. Do the similes serve any purpose other than to characterize Clarisse?
8. Describe the bedroom which Montag enters. Whom does the setting characterize?
9. At this point of realization, what happens to the smile on Montag's face, and what is his answer to Clarisse's question?
10. What event occurs that night which provides Montag with an impression of the state of society? What is that impression?
11. In contrast, what does Montag next hear and long for?
12. What test of love does Clarisse give Montag, and how does he respond to it?
13. Describe Clarisse's personality.
14. What observations does Clarisse make about how Montag differs from other firemen?
15. Describe the mechanical hound.
16. What does "antisocial" mean? What does it mean in the society of *Fahrenheit 451*. To whom is the term applied?
17. What does Clarisse say people talk about? Find some examples of representative conversations throughout the book.
18. During the card game at the fire station, what question does Montag ask? What does it contribute to the plot?
19. What is the significance of the refrain repeated by the woman whose house was burned? What did it mean? What is its effect on Montag?

20. What does Montag think his feelings would be if his wife were to die?
21. What are Montag's comments about the people in the walls?
22. What does Montag think about the old woman and all the books he has destroyed?
23. Summarize Beatty's explanation of how the need for firemen arose.

Part 2: The Sieve and the Sand

24. What is the meaning of the title of Part 2?
25. What is the importance of the dentrifice commercial?
26. Why does Montag go to see Faber?
27. What does Faber tell Montag about books?
28. What are the three things which Faber says are missing from society?
29. Describe the parlor women, their views, their conversational concerns.
30. Why does Montag read "Dover Beach" aloud to the ladies?
31. How do the women react?

Part 3: Burning Bright

32. What is Mildred's main concern as she runs out of the house?
33. What feelings does Montag have about the burning house?
34. While Montag was in flight from the scene of Beatty's murder, what thought occurred to him about Beatty?
35. What is the explanation which Montag and Faber arrive at for how so very much could have happened within one week?
36. What are Montag's impressions of the land across the river?
37. When Montag complained about being unable to remember Mildred, what explanation did Granger give him?
38. What was Granger's philosophy on life, taught to him by his grandfather, and handed on to Montag?
39. Describe the effects of the war as Montag imagined them.
40. What is the promise at the end of the novel?

Discussion Questions

1. When the story opens, what are the forces acting upon Montag?
2. What is Montag's dilemma: a) as the reader sees it? b) as Montag sees it?
3. What other forces help Montag in the recognition of his dilemma?
4. What forces aid Montag in the resolution of his problem or dilemma?

5. How does Montag resolve his dilemma?
 6. How is the theme of the book related to the manner in which the conflict is resolved?
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1. What are the professed and actual purposes of the life-style?
 2. What roles do people play in society?
 3. What rules must be followed?
 4. What assumptions about human character are the basis for the book?
 5. What is the real effect of rules on the people?
 6. Is there any chance of changing the life-style?
 7. Compare the life-style with another life-style.