

10th Standard - English

The Frog and the Nightingale Summary

Frog in Bingle Bog

Once upon a time a frog croaked in Bingle Bog every night. His voice was very loud and unpleasant. He croaked in a loud noise continuously throughout the night. So other creatures living there hated it. Insults, brick-bats and complaints, too, could not make the frog stop his croaking. So they had no choice but to listen to him every night.

A Nightingale comes there and sings

One night in the cold moonlight, a nightingale came there. She perched on the sumac tree and began to sing melodiously. All the creatures in the Bog cheered and clapped her song. Ducks swam to listen to her. Toads, herons, teals and tiddlers also reached there to listen to her song. When she ended singing, they clapped because the song was really very sweet. They called her song 'divine'. This made the nightingale sing till morning.

Frog meets her

Next night, the frog went to the nightingale and haughtily introduced himself as the owner of the tree. He also said that he had long been known for his splendid baritone. He also said that he wrote songs also for Bog Trumpet. The nightingale asked how the frog liked her song. He called it not bad but too long. He added that the technique of the song was fine. But it lacked a certain force.

Nightingale praises him

The nightingale felt flattered that such a great critic of art had discussed her art of singing. The frog, however, added that she needed some training. Without that (his proper training) she would merely remain a beginner. She called him Mozart (a great musician) in disguise and offered herself to be 'trained' by him.

Training starts

Fired by art and adulation the nightingale sang so sweetly that animals from miles flocked there. Soon she became famous. Animals from long distances came to listen to the nightingale's magical sound. The frog cleverly charged the fee for admission and earned a lot from her song. His 'training' was to make the nightingale sing non-stop and to kill her without giving any clue.

Frog makes the nightingale sing more and more

The next morning it began to rain. The frog asked the nightingale to sing in the name of 'training'. But she said that she could not sing in such a weather. However, the frog flattered her like a sly creature and she sang for six hours. At last her voice became hoarse and began shaking. At night, her throat revived. When she sang, many birds and animals crowded again to hear her sing.

Nightingale's audience

Among the birds were many titled ones. Owl of Sandwich, Duck of Kent, Mallarad and Milady Trent, Martin Cardinal Mephisto and the Coot of Monte Cristo came to listen to her. Ladies wearing tiaras also came. They twittered in the interval. The frog was both happy and bitter.

Effect of continuous song on the nightingale

The frog continued 'training' the nightingale by asking to practise longer. Day after day, the nightingale grew more weak and pale due to exertion. This had a bad effect on her voice. The birds and animals did not find any sweetness in her song now. They stopped coming there to listen to her song.

Rebuke by the frog

The frog got angry and asked the nightingale to puff her lungs to follow the fashion of the stage. He also said that she still owed him sixty shillings. The nightingale puffed her lungs. Being terrified she tried to sing. But she burst her vein and died due to that.

How frog escapes the charge of killing the nightingale

The frog called her stupid and said that she was prone to influence and was herself responsible for her own death. He told that he had tried to teach her. But she was a stupid creature. She was nervous and tense also. He also added that she should have known that the song must be one's own like that of his. He was, again, the undisputed king of Bingle Bog. He 'sang' confidently in Bingle Bog.