

FAHRENHEIT 451

PART ONE: THE HEARTH AND THE SALAMANDER

Pages 11 – 75 (Answers)

1. What isn't ever washed off completely?

Kerosene – the smell, and also the associated job. Reminiscent of the idea of never being able to wash one's sins/guilt away. How old is Montag? 30 years old

2. True or False - Clarisse McClellan watches TV just as much as Mildred. Explain your answer.

False – Page 16 – “I rarely watch the parlour walls...”

3. What two parts of Mildred had to be cleaned?

Her blood and her stomach

4. True or False - Montag was curious about the laughter and talking that went on inside Clarisse's house. Explain your answer.

True – Page 24 – he calls their noise a “hypnotic web”, and is tempted to knock on their door, “I just want to listen”

5. True or False - Last night's ordeal (the operation from the handymen) left Mildred feeling terrific the next morning. Explain your answer.

True – She was very hungry

6. What is Montag's annual income?

\$6000 – he says that the TV wall cost \$2000, one third of his yearly salary

7. Where did Clarisse rub the Dandelion to determine if Montag were in love?

Under his chin

8. Who said, "No one has time any more for anyone else"?

Clarisse

9. The Mechanical Hound is a robot with an olfactory system that can be set for the smell of any man or animal. Tracking his prey like a real hound, the robot inevitably catches his victim and injects massive, fatal jolts of morphine or procaine. Why did the Hound threateningly extend its silver needle toward Guy Montag?

Someone (the Hound has to be programmed) suspects that his loyalties are changing. It is almost as if someone wants to warn Montag what could happen if he continues to question himself and his life.

10. How did Montag's laugh sound today?

Page 36 – "Much nicer than it did"

11. Why is Clarisse considered abnormal?

Because she likes to think. She likes to look at the world around her – she is interested in nature as well as in people. She says she has no friends, but this is obviously because she is so different from her peers, who, she tells us, are interested in far more violent pastimes than she. She is very unusual to the people of her world

12. Who is taken to the asylum?

The man whose library was burned at the beginning of the novel

13. Why do the firemen do their work at night?

Page 46 – “Is it because the fire is prettier by night? More spectacle, a better show?”

14. Where did Montag stash his latest book?

Under the pillow

15. Explain the symbolic wall between Montag and Mildred.

The symbolic wall is the three walls of the TV in the living room. Mildred is always watching the walls, they are more important to her than her husband. Guy says that whenever he comes in Mildred is there, preoccupied by them. Because of this, there is a metaphorical wall between the couple. The TV screens separate them as effectively as a literal wall would.

16. With regard to Clarisse, how does Mildred typify the broken relationship between herself and Montag?

When Clarisse dies, Mildred forgets to tell Montag until four days afterwards. The fact that she doesn't realise how shocked he would be by this news, and so neglects to tell him, shows how vast the gulf between the couple has become.

17. True or False - Mildred had removed Montag's hidden book, which was formerly underneath the pillow. Explain your answer.

False – her hand finds it as she tries to plump up Montag's pillows while Beatty is there

18. Who said, "That's water under the bridge"? Explain what he/she meant.

Mildred says this in relation to the woman who burned herself along with her books. This is typical of her, she thinks very little and so if something has happened, she dismisses it as no longer important rather than have to give the matter any true thought.

19. When Captain Beatty arrived at the Montag household, why did Mildred run to the parlor?

Because he tells her to "shut the Family up"; in other words turn down the TV screens. Mildred is frightened of him, not only because he is Montag's boss, but because, although she doesn't admit it to herself, she realises how powerful Beatty is, and is frightened of him.

20. According to Beatty's account of the history of society, what four reading items did the [old] public let survive?

Dictionaries, for reference; Comic books, for entertainment; Sex magazines/confessionals, for titillation; and Trade Journals, out of necessity.

21. Contemporary society cannot afford to allow whom to get upset and stirred?

The minorities – Page 64

22. What is the "itch" of which Beatty speaks?

The curiosity of what is in the books that the firemen burn

23. What is the "scratch"?

Reading one of the books

24. True or False - After reading a dozen pages, Montag realized that the Captain was right, namely, that books confuse people, and if you just have fun, you'll be happy. Explain your answer.

False – While he obviously doesn't understand what he has read so far, he determines to start over. This shows that he will continue to read until he has come to some understanding of the books that it is his job to destroy.

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PART TWO: THE SIEVE AND THE SAND

PAGES 79 – 118 (Answers)

1. When was the last liberal arts college shut down?

Forty years ago

2. True or False - Professor Faber thought Montag's call was some sort of trap. Explain your answer.

True - Books are illegal, yet Montag's – a fireman's – first question is about the amount of bibles left in the country. Faber doesn't know about Montag's changing attitudes; he only knows that Montag is a fireman – someone who destroys books. Naturally he would think it was a trap

3. Why did Faber's fear dissipate when Montag was standing outside his door?

He sees the book that Montag has with him and realises that Montag must be genuine in his confusion

4. What did Montag want from Faber?

Page 90 - He wants someone to listen to him. He has realised how little interaction he has with the people at work or with his wife, and now he wants more. He also wants Faber to teach him to understand the books that he has stolen

5. True or False - Faber reminded Montag that people who are having fun are reluctant to become rebels. Explain your answer.

True – Page 95 – Faber says that, in the main, people stopped reading of their own accord – not because of any government intervention. People are so busy having fun – with the

entertainment provided by the TV walls, by the fact that there seems to be very little control (lots of suicides, car accidents, Clarisse complains of her peers breaking windows, beating each other etc) – that they do not want change. By banning books, they have effectively stopped people thinking to the extent that they don't realise that they are self-destructive

6. How did Montag finally get Faber to consider really helping him?

He stated ripping up the copy of the Bible which he had brought to Faber's house

7. True or False - The Queen Bee analogy underscored Faber's cowardice. Explain your answer.

True – Faber compares himself to the Queen Bee, safe at home, while the drone bee, Montag, goes out to do the work. Montag faces the danger to do the work that Faber is too frightened to

8. What two items were exchanged before Montag left the professor's house?

Montag gives Faber the Bible, and Faber gives Montag one of the 'Seashell' earpieces

9. What is the volcano's mouth?

The door to the parlour. The metaphor of the volcano is an interesting one. Bradbury seems to be implying that the most dangerous place in this nightmarish world is the room with the TV screens. This is where humanity had descended to and been virtually destroyed by

10. True or False - Montag pulled the plug on the living room fish bowl. Explain your answer.

True – The fish bowl metaphor is again an interesting one. Surrounded by glass, one sits in the parlour room watching the world through the TV screens – just as a fish watches the world through the glass of his bowl. Goldfish are also viewed as being very stupid creatures, with a very short memory – very similar to the way that we are led to believe, through the

characterisation of Mildred, that those who have allowed technology to take over their lives are now behaving

11. True or False - Faber objected to Montag's poetry reading. Explain your answer.

True – Faber immediately senses the danger of Montag's actions and tries to stop him

12. Which lady was affected by the original intent of the poetry?

Mrs Bowles. She cries hysterically because she is touched by the poetry, however, she is angry with Montag. This is presumably because she sees a glimmer of what is missing from her, and everyone else's, life

13. True or False - In the late hours of the night, Faber refused to console Montag for foolishly reading poetry to the poor, silly women. Explain your answer.

True – When Montag says he feels guilty, Faber cuts him off, implying that in war there are always innocent victims, but this should never be allowed to stop necessary change.

14. Listening to Captain Beatty play his hand and needle Montag had what effect upon Guy?

Page 115 – He feels beaten. He is confused and feels even more baffled than before

15. What interrupted the poker game?

The fire alarm

16. Captain Beatty drove the Salamander to whose house?

Montag's

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PART THREE: BURNING BRIGHT

PAGES 113 – 165 (Answers)

1. True or False - Beatty had given Montag a hint that he was under suspicion by sending the Hound. Explain your answer.

True – Unfortunately Montag did not take the hint. Page 121 – “Didn’t I hint enough when I sent the Hound around your place?”

2. Who must have brought back the books from the garden?

Mildred

3. Who said, "When you're quite finished, you're under arrest"?

Beatty

4. What three people turned in an alarm against Montag?

His wife Mildred, and her friends, Mrs Phelps and Mrs Bowles

5. What happened to Montag's green bullet, his electronic ear?

Beatty strikes Montag on the side of the head, and the green seashell falls from his ear. Beatty finds it and puts it in his pocket

6. Montag shot one continuous pulse of liquid fire on whom?

Beatty – when he threatened to use the seashell to track down Faber

7. True or False - Other Salamanders were in route to recover and destroy Mildred's four remaining books. Explain your answer.

True – Page 129 – “Other Salamanders were roaring their engines far away, and police cars were cutting their way across town with their sirens.”

8. True or False - Faber went to the steaming lump of tar to see if Montag had really torched Beatty. Explain your answer.

False – Page 131 – Montag feels that Faber is “back there in the steaming lump of tar that had no name or identity now.” Montag has lost touch with Faber because the green earpiece was in Beatty’s pocket when he was killed. It is Faber’s voice that he has lost, not the man himself

9. True or False - Montag "stumbled and fell" because the beetle "fired from an invisible rifle." Explain your answer.

True – However, this is a symbolic attack; symbolic of the attack of an uncaring society on people, like Montag and Faber, who do care. The beetle, or the people in it do not know who Montag is. They are driving very fast (“Fired from an invisible rifle”) and, as we know, the people of Montag’s world have very little respect for the lives of anyone else. The car simply does not slow down to allow him safe passage across the road (whether this is intentional or not is unclear) and in his panic to get out of its way, Montag stumbles and falls

10. True or False - Sirens successfully followed Montag to Faber's house and destroyed the other audiocapsules. Explain your answer.

False – Page 143 – There were no other audiocapsules, “...my equipment was limited...I haven't got another green bullet, the right kind.”

11. What is Montag's plan?

Page 139 – When Faber asks Montag what his plans are, he replies, “To keep running”. It is Faber who tells him where to run to and to whom

12. How much money did Montag give Faber?

A hundred dollars

13. Because of its odour indexes, the new Mechanical Hound can remember how many scents?

Ten thousand

14. Why did Montag want Faber to turn on the air-conditioning and sprinklers?

To try to dissipate Montag's scent enough so that the Hound would not be able to pick it up, and would not therefore be a danger to Faber

15. True or False - Faber "vanished in the Hound's muzzle." Explain your answer.

False – Page 145 – It seems that the ruse to throw the hound off the scent has worked because the Hound, although it stops at Faber's house, does not go in, and eventually passes by

16. Interpret: "Twenty million Montags running, soon, if the cameras caught him." What does this mean?

If the cameras which beam information into the houses of the citizens pick up Montag's running image, his attempted escape will appear on twenty million TV walls in twenty million houses. Everyone will watch what happens to him and escape will become impossible.

17. Why had the search veered inland?

Page 155 – They lost track of Montag at the river but, unwilling to disappoint their viewers, the cameras and the chase turned back towards the city. Granger believes that some unknown will be apprehended and the people will be told that Montag was caught

18. Who died in Montag's place?

An innocent man. The Hound's victim is a man who is out, presumably walking, and who is accused of being Montag. The authorities know he isn't, but they also know that no-one in their audience knows what Montag looks like. They appear to catch their prey, and they also manage to destroy an 'undesirable' all at the same time

19. What did Granger mean by saying "Welcome back from the dead" to Montag?

As far as anyone who knew the old Montag is concerned, he was killed by the Hound, live on TV. Granger welcomes Montag back from the dead because only the men gathered around the fire know the truth – that Montag is alive

20. When a person from Granger's crowd is stopped by a city person, why isn't there anything on his personhood to incriminate himself?

Because the only thing which could incriminate them – their knowledge – is stored in their heads

21. Yes or No: Might a different chapter live in a different town? Explain your answer.

Yes – Page 160 – “Chapter One of Thoreau's Walden in Green River, Chapter Two in Willow Farm, Maine.” These people cannot congregate together as it would be too dangerous for them. The important thing to these people is that the books survive somewhere; it does not matter that the chapters are not together, but that they are in existence somewhere

22. Millie's ineptitude with her hands was compared to whose wonderful carvings?

Granger's grandfather. The contrast helps to sum up Montag's, and the other men's frustration and their reasons for wanting books kept alive. Granger's grandfather is dead but left some beauty in the world after he was gone; Millie, after her death, will have left nothing of any value. Nor will many of the people of this dystopian society.

23. Granger stressed this one thought: "You're not important. You're not anything." Why did he espouse such an idea?

Because Granger feels that man as an individual is not important. One man can make very little difference, but man as a collective group can make a lot of difference. He refers to the Phoenix, a mythological bird who was said to die in fire and be reborn out of the ashes. Granger sees the Phoenix as symbolic of mankind; programmed to self-destruct every few centuries and then to rise again. In the face of this, one man is indeed unimportant.