

H. G. Wells. The Invisible Man. From Chapter 1

The stranger came early in February, one wintry day, through a biting wind and a driving snow, the last snowfall of the year, over the down, walking from Bramblehurst railway station, and carrying a little black portmanteau in his thickly gloved hand. He was wrapped up from head to foot, and the brim of his soft felt hat hid every inch of his face but the shiny tip of his nose; the snow had piled itself against his shoulders and chest, and added a white crest to the burden he carried. He staggered into the "Coach and Horses" more dead than alive, and flung his portmanteau down. "A fire," he cried, "in the name of human charity! A room and a fire!" He stamped and shook the snow from off himself in the bar, and followed Mrs. Hall into her guest parlour to strike his bargain. And with that much introduction, that and a couple of sovereigns flung upon the table, he took up his quarters in the inn.

Mrs. Hall lit the fire and left him there while she went to prepare him a meal with her own hands. A guest to stop at Iping in the wintertime was an unheard-of piece of luck, let alone a guest who was no "haggler," and she was resolved to show herself worthy of her good fortune. As soon as the bacon was well under way, and Millie, her lymphatic aid, had been brisked up a bit by a few deftly chosen expressions of contempt, she carried the cloth, plates, and glasses into the parlour and began to lay them with the utmost éclat. Although the fire was burning up briskly, she was surprised to see that her visitor still wore his hat and coat, standing with his back to her and staring out of the window at the falling snow in the yard. His gloved hands were clasped behind him, and he seemed to be lost in thought. She noticed that the melting snow that still sprinkled his shoulders dripped upon her carpet. "Can I take your hat and coat, sir?" she said, "and give them a good dry in the kitchen?"

"No," he said without turning.

Define Each Word

stagger: _____

fling: _____

haggle: _____

deft: _____

contempt: _____

Write the Correct Word from the Vocabulary

1. The customer _____ incessantly with the salesman over the price of the used Volkswagen Beetle.
2. The _____ and disregard with which the arrogant patient addressed the nurses greatly irritated the hospital staff.
3. The old boxer, his face bloodied by a younger and stronger opponent, _____ to his corner after the eighth round.
4. During the interview, Richard _____ avoided answering questions about his dismissal from his previous job.
5. After he blocked a penalty kick in the last minute of the match, the ecstatic goal keeper picked up the ball and _____ into the stands.

Comprehension and Discussion: Answer Each Question in Complete Sentences

1. How does the narrator describe the physical appearance of the stranger?

2. Why is Mrs. Hall happy that the stranger appeared at her guest house? How does she try to make him feel welcome?

