Poem 3

KEEPING QUIET

- By Pablo Neruda (1904-1973)

THEME: Necessity of quiet introspection and creating mutual understanding among humans. Emphasis on meditation.

Main Points
1. The poet requests readers to keep quiet till he counts up to twelve
2. He requests us not to use any language and move our arms so much for a while as it will become a hurdle in keeping quiet.
3. When there is no rush; no movement and noise of engines, the threat of sudden strangeness will tie all of us together into an exotic moment
4. This will bring about relief to the fishermen in cold sea and the salt gatherer also will be able to look after their injured bleeding hands.
5. A good sense will also prevail on the war-mongers as they will understand the futility of the same
6. When environment is in jeopardy; human-existence is threatened on the earth, the survivor of the war will face fatal consequences.
7. Such war-mongers are also exhorted to put on clean clothes and walk about with their brothers
8. The poet urges us not to mistake inactivity advocated by him for death.
9. He clarifies that single-minded indulgence in the rat-race of self-centered goals leading to materialism is unwarranted.
10. Keeping quiet and discharging our duties peacefully will evolve better understanding in us.
11. The achievement of mental peace will lead us to introspection and mutual understanding. The absence of these two traits amounts to various conflicts in the world.
12. With the development of mutual understanding comes empathy and then our life becomes a pleasant experience.
13. The poet says like the earth the potentials may not be exhibited all the time.
14. Finally, he declares his departure while persuading us to keep quiet.

C-Extracts with questions-
1- It would be an exotic moment
   Without rush, without engines,
   We would all be together
   In a sudden strangeness.

Q- i Name the poem and the poet?
   ii-What is the exotic moment referred above?
iii- What will 'sudden strangeness' result from?

iv- What is the advantage of the exotic moment?

2- Perhaps the earth can teach us
   As when everything seems dead
   And later proves to be alive.
   Now I will count up to twelve
   And you keep quiet and I will go.
   Q-i What can the earth teach us?
   ii- What does the 'counting upto twelve' signify?
   iii- What does the poet expect us to do?

Short Answer Questions

1- What is the result of not speaking and not moving our arms so much?

2- How does the poet suggest us to keep quiet?

3- How will 'keeping quiet' benefit the mankind?