

Commentary on  
"night of the scorpion"  
by nissim ezekiel  
essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The scorpion then departs, "... he risked the rain again... , probably because he was scared off by all the villagers that then come to the house upon hearing about the sting. Ezekiel uses the simile "... like swarms of flies... " to describe their number and behaviour and then develops it in the following line, "... buzzed the name of God a hundred times... ". The onomatopoeia of " buzzed" allows us to hear the constant noise they made. The reason the villagers are compared to flies is to show exactly how exasperating they are and that they are not welcome, like flies. This displays that the narrator does not admire the kind of care that the villagers are showing.

He just wants them to leave him and his family alone. The scorpion is seen as evil again in line ten, "... the Evil One. ". This portrays the villagers as being superstitious. " With candles and with lanterns throwing giant scorpion shadows... " The element of smell is brought about because of the candles and the burning oil in the lanterns. We can also kind of compare this to witch hunts that used to occur in the past where peasants would gather in the eve of night with fire and lights to go searching for an evildoer.

We can also imagine the ear of the child observing the scene as the peasants' lanterns formed " giant scorpion shadows" on the walls of his home. We know that the scorpion has already fled so Ezekiel is perhaps describing the shadow that the small group of people makes that resembles the scorpion. They are made to seem evil as well, perhaps more evil than the scorpion. Onomatopoeia is used again as these people " clicked their tongues" while searching for the scorpion. The next fourteen lines of the poem recounts the words of wisdom voiced by the peasants in the hope that the woman would survive.