



Clockwork Man

The Clockwork Man

Lightning raced across a leaden sky, splitting the grey background like a shattered window. Hailstones clattered to the ground, some of them bouncing heavily off a corrugated tin roof that had been laid with hurried care across two stout branches. The branches, in turn, had been propped against the battered wall of an old railway carriage.

Somewhere underneath the tin roof, and buried beneath a pile of musty blankets, a man shivered as a defence against the cold. It was a new sensation for him, the cold. When he'd been built by his master many years before, there was nothing about him that would have understood what it even meant to be cold. But back then, everything had been different.

Sir Reginald Paisley had been a master craftsman who specialised in building clockwork mechanisms. When steam had taken over the world, clockwork had become old technology. Still, Paisley had continued to tinker until, one day, he'd built something that couldn't be powered by steam: a man.

Sir Reginald had been so exuberant about his creation that he'd wound the man up and marched him out into the street to show him off. At first, the people cowered away and slammed their doors, as they did whenever any new invention was unveiled. But, over time, they accepted the clockwork man and would even stop to chat with him, if time allowed.

The clockwork man had tried his best to chat back to the people, but he hadn't been built knowing what to say. Human emotions seemed strange to him. To help him practise, Sir Reginald had created him a family: a wife and a daughter. The three of them would practise talking to each other every day until they became so good at it that something human began to wind its way into their clockwork souls.

Over time, the mechanisms in his wife and daughter had rusted until they stopped working altogether. That was the first time the man had experienced sadness, and a little more of him became human. When Sir Reginald passed away, the clockwork man found himself in a world that had forgotten about clockwork and had no space in it for a clockwork man.

He'd fled the village as soon as he could, taking only a sack filled with clothes and blankets with him. The woods around the village had offered him shelter and solitude, but he had been surprised to find that what he craved was companionship. He'd spent a hundred years becoming more human, and now he wished more than anything to have the most human thing of all: friendship.

The next few villages had already heard of the clockwork man and turned him away into the night. But, on the outskirts of a distant town, the clockwork man had stumbled upon a group of people who had welcomed him with open arms. The railway workers never stayed in one place for long; they went where the track went and bunked up wherever they could lay their heads. In the clockwork man, they'd found somebody who would work tirelessly and with great strength, and that was good enough for them.

The clockwork man turned over in his bed and smiled. He listened to the hail crashing onto the tin roof. Tomorrow, he'd help his friends to lay more track and see where their journey took them. Wherever it was, he looked forward to seeing it.

1

Complete the table below with **one** piece of evidence from the text to support each statement.

	Evidence
The clockwork man hadn't always had human emotions.	
People were scared of the clockwork man.	

2 marks**2**

What impression do you get of the clockwork man's experience of life?

Give **two** impressions, using evidence from the text to support your answer.

1. _____

2. _____

3 marks

3

Using information from the text, tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is **true** or **false**.

	True	False
The clockwork man is excited about the future.		
Sir Reginald Paisley helped the clockwork man.		
The clockwork man was welcome everywhere he went.		
Steam technology replaced clockwork.		

 2 marks
4

Look at the paragraph beginning: 'Sir Reginald had been so...'

Which of the following two words describe how Sir Reginald felt about building the clockwork man?

Tick **two**.

Cautious

☐

Reserved

☐

Excited

☐

Elated

☐

 2 marks
5

Who did the clockwork man practise talking with?

 1 mark