

Talisman - Words in context

1. Even as Anh ran through the winding streets, she knew it was too late. The muggy Hanoi heat was almost at its peak, the sun beaming down like a fiery spotlight trained on her as she wound around the overfilled, airless streets.
2. Her heartbeat pounding in her ears drowned out the overwhelming noise of the city. The shouting voices of traders selling their wares, thousands of scooters aggressively honking as they loudly exhaled black clouds, and tourists' exclamations of delight all faded, echoing in the background of Anh's terrified thoughts. She had to return the amulet before midday- before it was too late.
3. Through the heavy smog, Anh ran for her life, pushing bodies out of the way.
4. Anh could feel the seconds ticking away. An unbearable pressure weighed heavily on her, slowing her feet and brain, as though the pavements had melted and she was trying to run through thick tar which was dragging her down to the molten core of the Earth. Fighting with every remaining ounce of strength she had left, she turned the final corner. The temple was in sight. She forced her feet to complete the last few steps, reaching inside her pocket as she did so to withdraw the smooth, round talisman. Gazing up at the temple, the stifling heat pressed down like a colossal, crushing foot on her, wringing the sweat from her body as she was pressed between the mangle of heavy clouds and hot tarmac. A gentle, faintly sinister tinkling noise drifted out from the beautiful building.



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1. Find and copy 2 words from paragraph 1 which have similar meaning to the word 'humid'.

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2. Find and copy 2 words or phrases from paragraph 2 and 3 which suggest there is a high level of pollution in Hanoi.

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3. What does the word 'return' (paragraph 2) suggest about the amulet?

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4. What does the phrase 'before it was too late' (paragraph 2) suggest about the amulet?

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5. In paragraph 4, rather than writing 'centre' of the Earth, the author has chosen the phrase 'molten core' of the Earth. Why has the author chosen these words?

to make it more frightening

to show Anh is far away from the temple

because it is more scientific

to emphasise the theme of heat

6. Find and copy a word meaning 'huge' in paragraph 4.

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7. A mangle (paragraph 4) is an old-fashioned machine that was used for pressing water out of clothes. What phrase tells you Anh felt like she was having liquid pressed out of her?

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8. What does the word 'sinister' (paragraph 4) suggest about the temple?

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