

William Golding
Lord of the Flies — Chapter 9
Wrap your mind around these questions!

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1. Along the shoreward edge of the shallows the advancing clearness was full of strange, moonbeam-bodied creatures with fiery eyes. Here and there a larger pebble clung to its own air and was covered with a coat of pearls. The tide swelled in over the rain-pitted sand and smoothed everything with a layer of silver. Now it touched the first of the stains that seeped from the broken body and the creatures made a moving patch of light as they gathered at the edge. The water rose further and dressed Simon's coarse hair with brightness. The line of his cheek silvered and the turn of his shoulder became sculptured marble. The strange, attendant creatures, with their fiery eyes and trailing vapours, busied themselves round his head. The body lifted a fraction of an inch from the sand and a bubble of air escaped from the mouth with a wet plop. Then it turned gently in the water.

Somewhere over the darkened curve of the world the sun and moon were pulling; and the film of water on the earth planet was held, bulging slightly on one side while the solid core turned. The great wave of the tide moved further along the island and the water lifted. Softly, surrounded by a fringe of inquisitive bright creatures, itself a silver shape beneath the steadfast constellations, Simon's dead body moved out towards the open sea.

- What purpose do these "strange, moonbeam-bodied creatures with fiery eyes" have in this scene? (6)
 - Explain the comment that "a larger pebble clung to its own air". (4)
 - Explain the meaning of the "coat of pearls". (4)
 - Explain the purpose of dressing Simon's hair "with brightness". (4)
 - What image is the author portraying when he describes the line of Simon's cheek being "silvered" and his shoulder "sculptured marble"? (4)
2. The description of the burial of Simon in the sea is a remarkable funeral image within a fantastical, magical, mystical world.
- Explain this funeral image. (10)
3. Simon's death in itself meant much more than just the murder of an innocent child.
- Why had the boys killed Simon? (10)
 - Explain Simon's death within the greater tapestry of religious imagery. (10)

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