

Stuart Cloete
Claws of the Cat
Some more easy questions!

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His mind was very clear. He knew what he must do. He knew he must do it quickly, because if he once stopped he knew he could not go on. The cows. The cows must be allowed to run with the calves. He would not be able to milk. The horses could run. If the kraal was left open, Wit Booi would bring in the sheep. The poultry he would feed heavily and then they must manage for themselves.

He off-saddled the mare, letting the saddle fall to the ground with its burden. Then he washed her back and flanks free from blood, because blood would cause her hair to come out. Then running a riem through a pulley on one of the beams of the barn, he hoisted the dead body of the lynx and tied its end. It could hang there, beside the sheep it had killed, till to-morrow when his father came.

The grave for Moskou was another matter. It was hard to dig with one hand. He drove in the spade, pressed it home with his foot, and then scooped out the earth, levering the spade shaft against his knee. It was not a proper grave. It was more of a scraping in the black ground that ended, when he had dragged Moskou into it, as a mound beside the violet bed. That had been the only place to bury him. Here he would be remembered, and safe.

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1. Why is the boy alone on the farm? (4)
 2. Explain what has happened to prevent the boy from milking the cows. (4)
 3. "The grave for Moskou was another matter."
 - Who was Moskou? How had he died? (4)
 4. Why does the boy decide to bury Moskou "beside the violet bed"? (4)
 5. Quote TWO words from the passage which indicate that this story has been set in South Africa. Provide the meaning of these two words. (4)
 6. The initial part of this story, where Japie has been left alone and is looking after the farm, is very slow moving.
 - Can you provide any good reasons for the narrator following this style? (4)
 7. The father concludes that Japie is "big enough" to have been left alone on the farm.
 - What evidence is there to support this conclusion? (5)

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