

NAME:

COURSE:

**THE MURDER**

*In a few minutes they emerged, carrying the **stiffened** body between them. It was wrapped in a comforter. They eased it up into the wagon-box. Jim walked back towards them. 'Do I have to go in with you now?'*

*'Where's your wife, Mr Moore?' the deputy sheriff demanded.*

*'I don't know,' he said wearily. 'She's somewhere around.'*

*'You're sure you didn't kill her too?'*

*'No. I didn't touch her. I'll find her and bring her in this afternoon. That is, if you don't want me to go in with you now.'*

*'We've got your statement,' the **coroner** said. 'And by God, we've got eyes, haven't we, Will? Of course there's a technical charge of murder against you, but it'll be dismissed.\* Always is in this part of the country. Go kind of light on your wife, Mr Moore.'*

*'I won't hurt her,' said Jim.*

*He stood and watched the buckboard jolt away. He kicked his feet reluctantly in the dust. The hot June sun showed its face over the hills and flashed viciously on the bedroom window.*

*Jim went slowly into the house, and brought out a nine-foot, loaded bull **whip**. He crossed the yard and walked into the **barn**. And as he climbed the ladder to the hay-loft, he heard the high, puppy whimpering start.*

*When Jim came out of the barn again, he carried Jelka over his shoulder. By the water-trough he set her tenderly on the ground. Her hair was littered with bits of **hay**. The back of her **shirtwaist** was streaked with blood.*

*Jim wetted his bandana at the pipe and washed her bitten lips, and washed her face and brushed back her hair. Her dusty black eyes followed every move he made.*

*'You hurt me,' she said. 'You hurt me bad.'*

*He **nodded** gravely. 'Bad as I could without killing you.'*

*The sun shone hotly on the ground. A few blowflies buzzed about, looking for the blood.*

**QUESTIONS**

**1. Vocabulary. Match the following words to the definitions or synonyms.**

stiffened	coroner	whip	barn	hay	shirtwaist	nod
			A large building on a farm in which grains are kept.			
			A piece of leather or rope which is fastened to a stick, used for hitting animals or people.			
			Something that cannot be easily bent or moved.			
			An official who examines the reasons for a person's death, esp. if it was violent or unexpected.			
			To show agreement, approval or greeting.			

**2. Answer the following questions according to the text above or the story.**

a. How old was Jim when his parents died?

