

SHORT STORIES

1. THE KILLERS

(ERNEST HEMINGWAY)

Q: Describe the scene in Henry's Lunchroom on the arrival of the Killers.

Ans.:-

Henry's Lunch-room was a small restaurant. It was visited regularly by middle and lower-middle class people. At the time of the incident the lunch-room was making preparations for dinner. The killers Al and Max entered the lunchroom. It was almost empty at that moment. They asked for some food that was not ready at that moment. They were provided with the available food. They ate with their gloves on. Their faces were different but they were dressed like twins. They were wearing derby hats, tight over coats, silk mufflers and gloves. They talked vulgarly.

They covered the staff with guns and started setting the scene for murder. They gagged the staff. They declared that they had come to kill a man named Ole Anderson. They looked quite calm and composed because they were professionals.

The atmosphere in the lunchroom was charged with horror and suspense. It could be sworn that a murder was in the offing.

Then, slowly the suspense began to dissolve, as the victim did not turn up at his usual time. The killers decided to go back. They left, and the atmosphere came back to normal. After the killers had gone away, the proprietor sent one of the servants to Ole Anderson's residence to warn him against the danger to his life.

The business in the lunchroom resumed. The shadow of terror cast by the presence of the killers vanished with their departure.

The scene at the lunchroom during the presence of the killers is not unusual. In the slums of all big cities scenes of violence, drunken brawls and dacoaties are quite common. Restaurants and lunchrooms are usual venues of such events. That is why there is no unusual commotion or panic in the lunchroom during or after the scene.

Q: What does the story tell us about American Society?

Ans.

The story is a realistic picture of American social life at the lower level of society. It is a movie picture. We can see the characters in action and can hear what they say. We learn a lot from what we see and hear. We learn that Americans are very practical and business like. They are neither romantic nor emotional.

They do not try to sugar coat their bad deeds. They do not waste time in excuses and explanations. The killers in the story just announce that they are going to kill a man. They do not bother about excuses. They are callous like machines--- horror proof and even shame proof. We see that crime is no longer a horror in American society. For some people it is just business. You can hire a killer as easily as you can engage a taxi. This is, of course, the bottom of moral decline.

American society of the present day is a purely materialistic society. The people have lost their softer human side. They think only in terms of money and power. Everybody lives for himself. Therefore nobody cares for what another does. Nobody is interested in the affairs of the man next-door. Nobody likes anybody to stand in his way. Therefore they do not hesitate from doing away with their rivals.

This purely selfish attitude of individuals results in the collapse of society. And American society is now on the verge of a terrible collapse.

A Brief Note on Ole Anderson

The character of Ole Anderson has great significance in explaining the background of this story. It is through his reaction that Hemingway wants to convey his views about death. He wants to show that even strong men like the boxer feel helpless before the reality of death. The impending danger to his life had made him deeply dejected. He had been running from his enemies for a long time to save his life. He had now resigned himself to his fate and had realized the futility of the escapist attitude. That is why he did not agree to the suggestion of Nick to go to some other place to save his life. He also considered it useless to seek the help of the police. He was convinced that death is unavoidable and it should be embraced calmly and bravely when it comes. In this respect he has been compared with Nick who felt much upset at the treatment of the terrorists and wanted to go to some safer place. Ole Anderson stands for the stoical acceptance of the reality of death, while Nick symbolizes the escapist attitude to it.

2. RAPPACCINI'S DAUGHTER

By (Nathaniel Hawthorne)

Q. Discuss the theme of the story.

Answer:

The theme of the story is man's inhuman lust¹ for knowledge and power. Scientists work for power through knowledge. They are

ambitious to rule over the rulers through their power of knowledge. They do not bother about human aspects of their work.

Prof. Rappaccini is a typical scientist. His lust for power leads him to experimenting with poisons. The result of his work is a horrible variety of deadly poisons. The poisonous herbs developed by him make his garden a zone of death². Some of the herbs are so lethal³ that even their smell can kill a man. Breathing the poisonous air of the garden makes the professor and his daughter immune⁴ to poison. No poison can kill them. But any antidote⁵ can kill them because poison is the breath of their life. So the professor's daughter dies the moment she drinks a few drops of Baglioni's antidote. The death of the professor's only daughter is the moral lesson of the story.

The old Professor learns the lesson at the cost of his only daughter ----
-a very heavy cost, no doubt.

Thus the story carries a note of warning not only against too much love for science but also against selfishness of all kinds.

Some critics have pointed out another moral aspect of the story. They say that it is not the professor's love for science but it is his love for his daughter that leads him to his dangerous exploits⁶. He does not like to be separated from his daughter by her marriage. That is why he makes her dangerous for all other human beings. Whatever the case, the story cuts both ways equally well.

GIOVANNI'S CHARACTER

Young Giovanni is a voice of reason in the in human atmosphere of the story. He is always worried about the danger created by the cruel old professor Rappaccini. He hates the old professor's lust for lethal knowledge. He knows that it is actually lust for power.

Unfortunately (or fortunately?) he falls in love with the professor's daughter. But he is shocked to discover that the girl's breath is poisonous. He tries to cure her and make her a normal human being. But the well-meant attempt ends in the girl's death. The cure for poison kills her because poison was her life.

Giovanni acts in love. His failure turns into Professor Rappaccini's punishment for his evil designs. So we can say that Giovanni's humane role brings out the moral lesson of the story. Giovanni deserves respect and pity. He is respectable because he tries to prevent the harm caused by the old professor's love and work for science with a negative purpose. He has a positive and constructive approach to life and love. He deserves pity for the tragic end of his love affair. The irony of his fate is that his well-meant efforts to save the girl (his beloved) end in her death, whereas her father's dangerous experiments with poison had made her life secure against poisons. Young Giovanni also deserves respect for his hard work as a student.

Although he is not the central figure in the story, yet he is a lovable character for these qualities of his character.

CHARACTER SKETCH OF BEATRICE

Rappaccini's Daughter is a tragic love story, and Beatrice is its heroine. She plays an important role in explaining the theme or background idea of this fantasy. She was the only daughter of Dr. Rappaccini. God had made her the paragon of beauty and physical grace. She was also an embodiment of innocence, sweetness and purity. Her voice was as enchanting as the "sunshine in the south". Her sweetness of temperament and magical face had made her famous in the whole town of Padua.

Beatrice is the only daughter of Prof. Rappaccini. She is young and beautiful. Her father's inhuman lust for knowledge has turned her into a poisonous human being. Her breath can kill. She hates her father's science, but loves him too much to defy him.

So she becomes his agent of destruction by helping him in his work. She looks after the garden. But her father's love for destruction cannot infect her. She remains a deeply human character. She knows her misfortune, but wishes to live a healthy normal life. She wishes to be loved, but finds it impossible to go against her father's cruel will. She dies a tragic death in trying to test the effect of Baglioni's cure. Her last words reflect her true nature. She is a purely human character in spite of the inhuman teachings of her father. Her innocence and her sufferings make her a lovable character. So, her death comes as a shock.

Beatrice deserves pity not only for her sudden tragic death, but also for her love and obedience to her father. She dies by the antidote given by her lover Giovanni, but actually she is a victim of her father's thoughtless love and jealousy. She is to be pitied more for her unhappy isolation and of her only love affair.

The character of Beatrice inspires love as well as pity. She is a lonely girl deprived of true happiness and love. Her character has symbolic significance. She stands for the beautiful world of nature that is being corrupted and polluted by the science.

What is Fantasy?

Fantasy: (also spelled phantasy)

It is an Imaginative fiction dependent for effect on strangeness of setting (such as other worlds or times) and of characters (such as supernatural or unnatural beings). Science fiction can be seen as a form of fantasy, but the terms are not interchangeable,

as science fiction usually is set in the future and is based on some aspect of science or technology, while fantasy is set in an imaginary world and features the magic of mythical beings.

Explain the following lines

“ I would rather have been loved, not feared”, says Beatrice before dying.

“ Believe it though my body be fed with poison, my spirit is God’s creature, and needs love as its daily food”

EXPLANATION:

Rappaccini’s Daughter by Hawthorne is a fantastic Love story that has tragic end. It emphasizes the importance of love in human life. The writer wants to show that love is a spiritual bond between young lovers. It is a spontaneous impulse that makes life charming purposeful and enjoyable.

Beatrice is a love-thirsty girl because her father had kept her secluded from human society. She readily used Professor Baglioni’s medicine to assure her lover that she was sincere in her love. Before death she admitted to Giovanni that though her body had been poisoned by her father, yet her soul was God’s creation that needed love for its nourishment and growth.

The story shows that love of humanity is also essential to keep man truly humane and sensible. Dr. Rappaccini was a loveless man who was more interested in research work than in human beings or human welfare. He wanted to get knowledge of power than the knowledge of service. He committed the mistake of making his daughter dangerous and fearful for others. When her daughter came to know the real intention of her father at the time of her death, she told him, “I would rather have been loved, not feared.” The story teaches the moral lesson that it is better to make oneself lovable and useful for others than to become authoritative and awful.

Thus Beatrice serves as the mouthpiece of Hawthorn to convey his moral message that love makes life charming, and that it is better to make oneself lovable and loving than to be dangerous and awful for his fellowmen.

3. THE NEW CONSTITUTION

By (Saadat Hassan Manto)

Q. Narrate the story in your own words.

Answer:

“The New Constitution” is a story of political awareness at the lowest level of our society. It is a powerful story that shows how the common man looks hopefully at every promise of a change in the political set up. The New Constitution means the Government of India

Act, 1935, which introduced a democratic setup in India. Mangu, a *tongawala* of Lahore eagerly listened to his educated fares talking about the new constitution. They said it would ensure equality of rights. The people of India would form their own Government under the new constitution. They would no longer be slaves to the British Rule. Mangu believed what he heard, so he was very happy and hopeful. The new constitution was introduced on the first April. Mangu hated the ruling nation. To his dismay he learnt that the promise of the New Constitution was a false promise. The promised change had not come.

The story also expressed the falsity of the promises made by politicians in general and alien rulers in particular. As Mr. White, the British Deputy Commissioner of Mayaour in Paul Scott's novel said, "we were in India for what we could get out of it". At the same time it tries to create awareness among the people to save them from further exploitation by their rulers in future.

Manto is famous for his excellent stories on the movement for Pakistan. He is also one of the outstanding critics of society. In this story he makes us realize that the Indians were no doubt against the British rule but they were easily deceived by false promises because of their simplicity and ignorance.

IRONY IN THE STORY

"The New Constitution" brings to light the irony of political situation in the sub-continent under the British rule. The rulers introduced the government of India act, 1935 with tall promises. But those promises were never fulfilled. The New Constitution promised self-government. But it was only a restricted self-government as it was under complete British control. It did not bring any profitable change for the people. They had been told that this New Constitution would make life easy and comfortable for them. It would ensure respect for the common man. It would give them all the rights which their rulers enjoyed. But all these promises turned out to be false.

The New Constitution was nothing more than a new political set up. It failed to fulfill the hopes of the common man. The story brings out the irony of politics very effectively.

The irony is brought out suddenly when Mangu finds himself arrested for beating a gora soldier. What he did was unfair. He should not have lost his temper. But he was a simple honest man. His feelings of hatred against the alien rulers got the better of his manners. The so-called new setup had given him the courage to avenge the insult and injury he had once suffered at the hands of a gora. His hatred against that gora was generalized to the whole gora

nation. In beating the gora soldier he was encouraged by the concept of equality of rights promised by the new constitution. But he soon learnt that the promise was false. This lesson of irony came to him as a shock. His fond hopes about the future of his nation were shattered by this incident.

CHARACTER-SKETCH OF MANGU

Mangu is a tongawala in Lahore. He stands for the common man of the sub-continent. He is keenly interested in the politics of the country. His political awareness comes from contact with educated people who sometimes happen to travel by his Tonga. He has heard a lot about the New Constitution, which is going to be promulgated on first April. This new constitution promises to ensure basic human rights for all the people in the country. Like every body else Mangu, too, is very hopeful. He hopes that the new constitution will bring the British rule to an end. Then no gora will be able to bully an Indian.

Mangu shares his awareness with other tongawalas on the Tonga stand. He tells them what he hears from his fares about the new constitution every day. This has made him quite a leader of his community.

Like every common man in our country Mangu too is very optimistic about the future of the nation. He hopes things will improve under the new setup. But when the setup comes he learns that he was mistaken. The promised change does not come with it. The alien rulers are still the masters. Every person of their nation still enjoys the same prestige. Mangu's fight with the gora soldier brings this sad fact to light for him. We pity him for having fought with a member of the ruling nation.

Mangu is not just a poor tongawala. He represents the Indian nation under the British rule. His hatred for the white rulers reflects the general hatred. It was this hatred that eventually led to the exit of the white rulers.

(In short Ustad Mangu is a wonderful character. He is a faithful representative of the slave nations who detest their foreign rulers but feel helpless against their inhuman treatment. He is a man who tries to look at the outside world in the light of his inner aspirations and expectations. This makes him ridiculous.)

4. BREAKFAST

By (John Stienbeck)

SUBSTANCE OF THE STORY

The story is a faithful account of the writer's visit to a family of cotton-pickers. He came upon this family as he was walking along a

lonely road one morning. He saw a tent by the roadside. A woman carrying a baby was cooking breakfast for the family. Two men, one young and the other old, came out of the tent. They welcomed the writer and invited him to breakfast. They looked very happy and contented with their lot. They said they were happy because they had got a cotton-picking job. They had been working in the cotton fields for the past twelve days. As they sat down to breakfast they told the writer how happy they were with their honest labour. They offered the writer a job in the cotton fields. He was deeply impressed by the simple, honest living and hospitality of cotton-pickers.

The sudden meeting with the simple, honest family of cotton pickers became an everlasting sweet memory for the writer. It was a surprise for him because he did not know that such sincere and hospitable people existed in this society. The nice behaviour and devout faith of these poor uneducated people impressed him. They greeted the writer and invited him to breakfast. They told him how happy they were because they had a job to do and enough to eat. They offered the writer a job in the cotton fields. Before breakfast they thanked God for His blessings and prayed to him for further blessings. The story leaves a pleasant impression on the reader's mind.

Q: What does the story teach us?

The breakfast, which the writer shared with the cotton pickers, was simple and delicious. It was delicious because it was the fruit of honest labour. The woman was a very good cook. The breakfast consisted of roasted meat, biscuits and coffee. Every thing was very well cooked and enough for all.

The young man said,

“We been eating good for twelve days.”

The simple statement shows how thankful these people are for the blessings God has bestowed on them. It reflects the poor man's faith in providence (). This faith of the poor man is the element of great beauty, which the writer speaks of. He is impressed by the cheerful, contented life of the poor cotton-pickers. The breakfast with the cotton-pickers becomes a cherished memory for him. There is a lesson in the story for those who are not satisfied with their lot. It teaches them to be thankful for what they have instead of grumbling against the will of God. The simple, honest cotton-pickers are very hospitable. They love to share their things with others. They cordially welcome guests.

Q: The story gives us a glimpse of the free, happy and peaceful life of cotton-pickers. Do you agree?

Yes, the story gives us a glimpse of the free, happy and peaceful life of cotton-pickers. These poor people live on occasional day-labour. They have no permanent source of income. Cotton-picking is occasional employment. Yet the cotton-pickers can manage to live within their means. They live a simple life. They do not need much. Their wants are few and cheap. So they do not have to run after money.

The story also shows that the cotton-pickers are deeply religious people. They never grumble over their hard lot. They thank God for what they get. They are very generous and hospitable. They love to share their things with others. They are free from the vices of the rich. They are not selfish, greedy and dishonest. The story shows that they enjoy true happiness and satisfaction.

These simple but generous people live an ideal life of peace and contentment. They have no worries. They do not yearn for wealth and comfort. They love to work for a simple honest living. They have no ambitious plans for future. They are thankful for what they have at present. They love to share their blessings with others. They not only invite the writer to breakfast, but also offer to help him with a job in the cotton fields.

From what we read in the story we can safely conclude that these are the people who enjoy true happiness and satisfaction in this world of woes and worries.

5. TAKE PITY

Story in outline

Take Pity is a pathetic account of a kind hearted man's futile efforts to rescue a poor family from abject poverty and death. The man, Rosen, is a coffee salesman. The poor family is a widow, Eva, and her two daughters. Eva fails to make a living from her husband's shop. She and her two daughters are starving. Rosen tries to help them in many ways. But Eva refuses to live on charity. Rosen asks her to marry him. But she rejects the offer. Then he sends her some money. He sends the money through a friend who says it was repayment of a loan given by her husband. Eva refuses to take the money. She is determined to live an independent life. She is very willful. But Rosen knows that she will lose her foolish war against Fate. He becomes desperate. He tries to kill himself, leaving all his property to her. But he fails even in this last attempt. Eva is moved. She comes to him to accept his offer of marriage. But Rosen has had enough. He refuses to do anything for her, although it goes against his nature to reject a request.

The story reveals some surprising secrets of human nature. It gives us a better understanding of human psychology and emotions.

Rosen's unusual softness is contrasted with Eva's unusual stiffness. His frustration in his sincere attempts to help her out of her misery makes him desperate. It moves Eva at last, and she consents to marry him. But now it is too late. Rosen is no longer the generous self-sacrificing man he always had been. His character is changed. This change is more painful than Eva's sufferings.

EVA'S CHARACTER

Eva is a young widow with two daughters. She is determined to make her own living. So she rejects every offer of help from the kind-hearted coffee salesman, Rosen. She counts on her courage. But she fails to realize that courage alone cannot overcome fate. The truth dawns on her too late. She feels very sorry for her refusal to accept Rosen's sincere offers of help. She regrets her harsh attitude towards the kind-hearted man. So she tries to make it up with him. But now he is sick of her. He has already gone too far in his sincere efforts to help her. He is frustrated. So he refuses to forgive her.

Eva's courage is heartless courage. She is too willful to realize the sufferings of her poor daughters. Why should she subject them to starvation, when she knows that she cannot make even a bare living? Her courage is rather pride that nobody can admire. It breaks Rosen's heart and changes his whole character. In the end Eva repents. She feels sorry for her stiffness towards the sincere and kind-hearted man. Her character too is entirely changed. Her resolution to live her own independent life breaks down. She is moved to pity for the brokenhearted man. She decides to accept his offer of marriage although it is against her nature. But she repents too late. It is too late to make amends for the harm she has done to Rosen.

A COMMENT ON ROSEN'S BEHAVIOUR

Rosen is a coffee salesman. He is a very kind-hearted man. He does his best to save the poor family of Axel Kalish. But Axel's widow Eva is too willful. She is determined to make her own living. Rosen knows that it is impossible. So he offers to help her. But she rejects every offer. He even offers to marry her. But she refuses. Rosen cannot see her and her two daughters starving to death. He becomes desperate. He tries to kill himself, leaving all his property to the poor family. But this last effort also fails. He is a lovable character. He goes far out of his way to help the starving family. He is selfless and sincere. His role is a noble role. Human society has never been devoid of such people, but they are rare, too rare these days.

Rosen uses every trick to save the unfortunate family from starvation. Being a businessman he knows that the shop set up by Eva's deceased husband will fail. The locality does not need that shop. He

advises Eva to move away to a better location. But the headstrong girl refuses to take his advice. He tries to help her with food and money. But she heartlessly refuses to accept his sincere offers. He even offers to marry her. And finally he even tries to kill himself, leaving all his property to Eva and her daughters. He fails even in this last desperate attempt. It breaks his heart. Now at last Eva realizes her fault. She feels sorry for the pains that she has caused Rosen. She tries to make amends but now it is too late. Rosen is truly a great man although he is neither rich nor famous. His role in the story inspires love and respect.

6. THE HAPPY PRINCE

By Oscar Wilde

STORY IN OUTLINE

The story is an allegory. It brings out the importance of charity. We learn that love and sacrifice can endear us to God. The prince in the story is no living prince. He is the statue of a dead prince decorated with gold leaves and precious stones. He is known as the Happy Prince because there is a smile on his lips. But the smile gradually gives way to tears. The Happy Prince cannot help crying over the scenes of misery in the houses of the poor. He decides to help them with his gold leaves and costly stones. The little swallow acts as his messenger, and he gives away all his wealth. The Swallow was on his way back to his homeland when the prince had detained him to help the poor. He still wished to go back but now it was too late. The intense cold killed him. Thus the little swallow lost his life in helping the poor. His death broke the prince's heart. So the swallow and the prince perished for a noble cause. But their death was not the end. It made them immortal. That is why the angel selected the dead swallow and the lifeless heart of the prince as the noblest things on earth. The story teaches a very useful and very true lesson. We learn that God loves those who love their fellow human beings.

THE LITTLE SWALLOW'S ROLE

The little swallow plays a very important role in the story. He acts as the agent of charity. He carries gold leaves and precious stones to the poor people who need these things. He does the noble work of rescue and relief. Being a migratory bird the swallow is on his way back home. The winter is coming, and soon it will be too cold for the swallow to live. But he is a kind-hearted swallow. He stays with the happy prince to help the poor in the city. He knows that this noble job will cost him his life. But he is too kind hearted to leave the noble prince. He stays on till it is too late. The cold kills him. He dies but his work for a noble cause makes him immortal. The angle of God carries away his dead body as one of the most precious things on earth.

The role played by the little swallow has a lesson for us. We learn that even a little bird can help the poor and the needy if he gets a chance. Why not human beings? Why not little children? They can also do a lot of good if they try. We also learn that God loves those who do good to others. The little bird gets an opportunity to do good. He takes pity on the unhappy prince and consents to help him in helping the poor and the needy. He lays down his life for this noble cause. He dies of cold but his noble role makes his name immortal. In the same way we, too, can become immortal by doing good deeds.

ROLE OF THE PRINCE

The Happy Prince is not a living Prince. He is the statue of a prince, mounted on a tall column in the center of the city. It is the statue of a dead prince with the soul of the prince in it. He is decorated with gold leaves and precious stones. There is a smile on his lips. People call him the Happy Prince because of this smile. He is a supernatural character, because he can see, hear and speak. Standing on the top of the tall column, he can see the condition of the people of the city. He is deeply moved by the misery of the poor. When he was alive he lived a life of comfort. He neither knew nor cared for the sufferings of the poor people of his country. Now he regrets why he did not help them when he was alive. He requests the little swallow to act as his messenger. Through this messenger he gives away all his wealth. He loses his outward beauty and gains the beauty of the heart. Then the little swallow dies, and his heart breaks, but God treasures his broken heart as the most beautiful thing on earth.

The Prince's noble role teaches us that we can get real happiness, peace and love of God by helping the poor.

7. ARABY

STORY IN OUTLINE

Araby was a sort of bazar. The writer visited it when he was a small schoolboy. His visit was a labour of love. He was asked by his beloved to visit the Araby. He was too small to be a lover, but he fell in love all the same. The girl was his friend Mangan's sister. He loved her madly. Her word was more than a law for him. So he went to Araby just because she wished him to do so. He was late because he had to wait for his uncle to get some money. When he reached there the bazar had almost closed. Only a Chinaware stall was open. The boy stopped. The sales girl asked him if he wanted to buy anything. He said, no, he did not need anything. He had a strange feeling of frustration as he came out. He was too young, to understand that feeling.

The boy's visit to Araby was fruitless just like his childish love affair. He undertook this visit as a sacred duty. He only wished to please the girl without thinking of any other reward for his pains. He also wished to buy something nice for her. But he was too small to decide what he should buy for her. In his confusion he could not make any choice. So he came back frustrated. Still he was not angry with the girl who had sent him out on this useless errand. He is rather angry at his own adequacy.()

THE BOY'S LOVE

The boy's love for the girl was not a proper love affair between a young man and a girl. The boy was too young for that. His love was just childish infatuation(); a silent adoration. He was too timid to express his love by word or deed. He just looked at the girl whenever he had a chance. He felt small and foolish in her presence. Therefore he could never make his feelings known to her. He could never tell her how much he loved her. Sometimes he followed her along the street quietly and at a respectful distance, without a word between them. Sometimes he peeped at her from an upstairs window of his house, lying flat on the floor to avoid being seen. Sometimes he broke out into passionate expression like "O'Love, O'Love", but he could never say these words in her presence. In short his love was just a childish, foolish, one-sided affair. It only made him suffer, still he could not give it up.

This kind of love is quite common in the process of growth from childhood to youth. This period of physical and emotional growth is called puberty. During this period the sensitive and imaginative child develops a deep attachment to one of the young people around him or her. Some students fall in this kind of love with their teachers. This kind of emotional attachment is sincere but transitory in nature. it Passes off as the child steps into youth.

THE TITLE OF THE STORY

Araby, the title of the story, is an apt choice. It applies to the story perfectly. Actually Araby is the name of a bazar. The hero of the story visits this bazar on the request of his beloved. He arrives late. The bazar is closed. Only a china ware shop is open. But the boy cannot buy anything. He forgets what he needs. He is disappointed with his visit to the bazar. He has

undertaken this visit only as a labour of love. but now he realizes it was a labour lost, for it did not help him in his love affair in any way. His fruitless visit to Araby is like his fruitless love. it does not make him happy. His frustration at the end of the visit reflects his unhappy experience of love. his love affair is just like his visit to Araby.

The meaning of the title expands beyond the story. On the larger scale we may compare the world to the bazar Araby. Man's life, an everlasting search for peace and love, is like the boy's visit to Araby. The boy never knew what could bring him solid happiness and satisfaction. He keeps running after one pleasure or another. But every pleasure results in further search and struggle. Only by good luck a man may have what he really needs. Thus the title of the story sums up within it the whole story of human life, including the tragic end.

8. THE TELL TALE HEART

By Edger Allen Poe

STORY IN OUTLINE

The tell tale heart is a tale of horror. It reflects psychology of a killer. He kills an old man just because he does not like the old man's vulture-like eye. The reason is not sound enough for a murder. But the murderer is not a mad man. He commits the murder concisely and very methodically. He goes to the old man's house around midnight with a muffled light. He pushes the bedroom door open just a little and finds the man in his bed.

The old man wakes up. The killer waits few minutes. Then he again peeps in and finds the old man lying awake. He looks at the old man's vulture eye with disgust and bursts in. He pulls the old man off his bed and overturns the heavy bed on him. In this way he smothers() the old man to death. Then he chops the dead body into pieces and conceals the pieces under the wooden boards of the floor.

Just then three policemen enter the house. They ask questions about a cry that was heard in the street. It came from the old man's house. The killer tells them that it might have been his own cry in a dream. He says the old man was not at home and he had left him (the killer) to look after the house. He said he slept in the house.

Then suddenly the killer's fear of detection gets the better of him, He hears the old man's heart beating loudly under the floor. The fear goes on growing rapidly till the killer cries out in confession, declaring that he has killed the old man. He is arrested and taken away .The story ends on a note of horror.

Q. 2. Is the killer in the story a mad man?**Answer.**

The killer tells the story in all its detail. He went to the old man's house around midnight. He opened the door very carefully. But his hand slipped, and the noise awakened the old man. He sat up in his bed. Peering into the dark. The killer waited for about an hour. But the old man did not lie down to sleep. It seemed he was alarmed. The killer could not bear the suspense. He darted a thin gleam of light on the old man's face. It caught the vulture eye. The killer flew into a fury. He pulled the old man down and smothered him to death under the heavy bed. Then he chopped the body into pieces and concealed the pieces under the wooden planks of the floor. He did all this dirty job very quietly and neatly.

The killer does the dirty job very cautiously and methodically. A madman could not have been so cool and cautious. So the killer cannot be regarded as a madman. But the reason for which he kills the old man is not sound enough for murder. A normal man cannot commit murder for such a flimsy reason. Nobody in his senses can kill a man just for his ugly appearance. Therefore the killer is not a normal man in full possession of his senses.

The reason, for which the killer confesses the murder, is again inadequate(). It is impossible for a human heart to go on beating after death. But the killer in this story says he clearly heard the dead old man's heart beating under the floor.

On the bases of these two pieces of the killer's reasoning we can say that he is not a normal human being. There is something seriously abnormal and dangerous in his nature.

Q.3. what happens after the murder?**Answer.**

By 40'clock the killer had disposed off the old man's dead-body. Just then there came a knock on the door. He opened the door. Three policemen entered the room. They told him that some of the neighbours had reported a cry in that house. The killer confidently told them that it was his own cry during sleep. He said the old man was not at home.

The policemen searched the house, but found nothing to rouse suspicion. The killer felt so safe that he began to chat with them. Suddenly he was startled by the noise of the dead man's heart beating under the floor. He tried to keep cool, but the noise became louder. He thought the policemen were also hearing that noise. He got so nervous that he confessed the murder and handed himself over to the police.

This part of the story reveals the effect of fear on the emotions of a weak man after committing a crime. He is afraid of exposure. The fear keeps haunting him till he is obliged to get rid of it either by coming out with a straight confession or by killing himself. It depends on the nature of the man. The killer in this story takes the first alternative. He at first tries his best to hush up the fear. He goes on speaking loudly and quickly in order to silence the voice of fear in his heart, and give the impression that he has nothing to hide. But the fear is too strong, so he suddenly breaks down and comes out with an open confession.

9. THE NECKLACE

The Substance of The Story

Mr. Loisel, a clerk, got an invitation to a party at the Ministry. His beautiful young wife was in tears because she had no jewelry for the great occasion. She did not like to miss this chance to show off. So she borrowed a beautiful necklace from a rich friend, Madame Forestier. Unfortunately she lost the necklace at the party. She had no choice but to replace it with an identical necklace. She bought one for 36000 francs on credit, and give it to Madame Forestier. The lady took it as her own necklace.

The poor clerk and his wife had to live in abject poverty for 10 years to repay the heavy loan. Then one day it came out that the lost necklace was an imitation worth only 500 francs. The disclosure came as a shock to the clerk's wife but it had come too late.

Like a true Maupassant story, this story also has a surprise-ending. This was the writer's famous trick by which he used to expose social or moral blunders committed by simple, honest people of this age---- the irony of fate and the irony of situation. The trick became widely popular. People loved to read his stories. Many of the well known writers followed his example. In Urdu fiction Saadat Hassan Manto was one of the most popular followers of Maupassant. Some of the other best writers of today also follow this good tradition. In real life, too, we often come across such sudden surprises.

Character-sketch of Matilda

Matilda is the young and beautiful wife of Mr.Loisel, a clerk in the board of Education. She is proud of her elegant beauty. She is unhappy with her poor lot. She thinks she is a victim of social injustice and irony of fate. She is unhappy with her husband's small house and old furniture. She feels she has been deprived of the comforts and luxuries which she might have enjoyed by marrying a rich man. In short she is sick and ashamed of her present miserable life. But all this does not mean that she does not love her husband. Of

course she loves him deeply though much of the credit for this love goes to the husband. He does his best to make her as happy as he can afford. He puts up with her foolish demands, and yields to all her stupid whims. Matilda is a simple, child like immature girl until she finds her self face to face with the bitter consequences of her folly. The loss of the necklace proves a turning point in the development of her character. It makes her a careful and responsible woman. Her grumbling over the poor lot of her husband gives way to respect and gratitude for his tolerance and generosity.

Matilda thus plays two different roles in the story. Before the loss of the necklace she is a thoughtless, ungrateful, proud beauty, unhappy with the poverty of her husband. After the loss she becomes a mature, humble and grateful wife who can gladly sacrifice every pleasure to get her husband out of his financial misery. This change in her character makes her a lovable character in spite of all her faults and follies.

THE HUSBAND'S CHARACTER

Mr. Loisel is a clerk in the board of Education. His role in the story is a role of a noble hero. His love and sacrifice for his proud, ungrateful wife make him a lovable character. He knows that his wife does not respect him. Still he loves and obeys her. He does his best to make her life comfortable. He never rebukes her for her insulting attitude. He does not reproach her for the loss of the necklace. His behaviour after the loss is the behaviour of an ideal partner--- a really great man. He does not grumble. Instead he manfully besides to face the misfortune. He almost sells himself away to pay for the loss. He works day and night to repay the heavy loan. He goes through the worst for his ungrateful wife. And yet he never complains, never blames her for his misery. In short he is an ideal life partner. He is surely a character to be loved and remembered.

Loisel is one of the few ---- very few lovers who remain lovers even after marriage. Usually a love marriage soon leads to disillusionment resulting in dissolution. Matilda is lucky to have Mr. Loisel as her husband. He loves her so much that none of her foolish pranks annoys him. He gladly faces the bitter consequences of his foolish wife's acts of folly. He is a character to be admired and loved.

ONE ACT PLAYS

1. THE BEAR

REFERENCE:

These lines have been taken from the play "The Bear" written by "Anton Chekhov".

CONTEXT:

The play is powerful farce. The writer has exposed the feudal mentality through a delightful comedy. Popova, the heroine, is a beautiful young widow. She is in deep mourning for her husband who died seven months ago. She wants to show the world how faithful a wife she is. She has shut herself up in her bower refuses to see visitors. Smirnov, a middle-aged landlord, calls on her for recovery of a loan taken by her husband. She tries to put him off. He insists to see her. So she has to see him. He asks for his money. She tells him to come day after tomorrow. Bitter quarrels follows. During the quarrel Smirnov suggests that she should marry instead of wasting her life away for her disloyal husband. Popova gives in because she does not like to lose such a good offer.

QUESTIONS

(Q.1) Prove the play a farcical comedy portraying the behaviour of the feudal?

Answer:

Anton Chekhov was not only a dramatist but also a great short story writer. The present play "The Bear" is a farce, full of fun, fury and boisterous noisy laughter. The play revolves around two main characters and the behaviour of the characters is ridiculous, funny, and sentimental.

Popova's husband has died and she has cut herself off from society. She has closed herself in the four walls of her house and is leading a completely secluded life when the play opens, Luka, her servant, is seen advising her to take part in the activities of life. She announces that since the death of her husband, life has lost all its meaning for her. Through their conversation, we come to know that Popova's late husband had not been a nice fellow. He had not treated Popova well. Still Popova is bent upon showing the soul of the dead husband how faithful she is. So she rebukes Luka for advising her to take full interest in life, as it's a saying:

"There are women who love their husbands as blindly, as enthusiastically and as enigmatically as nuns their cloister."

The writer has exposed the feudal mentality through a delightful comedy. Smirnov, a middle aged landlord, calls on Popova for the recovery of a loan taken by her husband. The servant, Luka, brings the message. She refuses to admit Smirnov. But he insists on seeing her. So she has to see him. Smirnov asks for his money. She tells him to come day after tomorrow. Smirnov says he will not leave the house without money. He would rather stay in the house till the day after tomorrow. A bitter quarrel follows. During the quarrel Smirnov suggests that she should marry instead of wasting her life away for her cruel, disloyal husband. He presses this point home and succeeds in persuading her to marry him. Popova gives in because she does not like to lose such a good offer.

The play is a delightful satire on utilitarian morality as well. Smirnov marries Popova for her wealth and status. She too sees her own advantage. Smirnov is not only a jovial fellow but also a landlord. It is thus an equal bargain for both of them. Apart from this serious theme the play is remarkable for its superb humour of dialogue and situation. So the play is a good farce and has farcical situation.

(Q.2) Draw woman nature discussing Popova's character.

Answer:

Popova is a rich young widow of feudal class. She is true representative of her class. She is foolish, frivolous and selfish. She loves to show off even in sorrow. She wishes to be honoured as a faithful wife. That is why she seems to take her husband's death seriously. She is hypocrite because she does not love her husband so much as she pretends. She is a very talkative lady and it is through her continuous talk that we are able to guess that most of the time she is telling lies and is, in fact quite unfaithful and insincere. She says:

"I shall be true till death and show him how I can love."

Smirnov, a friend of her husband, has come to collect his bill but she refuses and says that she will pay the bill, the day after tomorrow. Smirnov asks her to pay immediately. So they decide to fight a duel with each other. But she does not know how to fire a shot, and says to Smirnov:

"Before we fight you must know to fire. I have never held a pistol in my hands before."

Smirnov who is as perfect a shot as one who,

"Can put a bullet through a coin tossed into the air as it comes down"

Smirnov begins to tell her and on the other hand he himself declares that he is **"going to fire in the air"** because **"its' my affair"**. Meanwhile the moody Smirnov falls in love with Popova. He kneels before her and says:

"I love you as I have never loved before! I have refused twelve woman, nine have refused me, but I never loved one of them as I love you."

At first she shows hatred towards him. He gets up and quickly goes to the door but she stops him. **"No, stop ... No ... go away, go away I hate you", "yes, yes go away"**. All of a sudden we see popova lowering her eyes and they embrace each other most passionately.

Through the character of Popova, the writer has described and shown the nature of woman. Like ladies of her class Popova is very emotional. She flies into a rage whenever something happens against her desire. She cannot stand defiance. Popova has no character. She is often in conflict with herself. For instance she vows never to forget her husband, but at the same time she admits that he was not good husband. Popova easily falls for temptation. So she accepts

Smirnov's offer readily. She is a complex character because she is not what she seems. All in all she is a truly feudal character showing the woman's nature.

CHARACTER SKETCH OF SMIRNOV

Smirnov is a middle-aged landlord. He is a very intelligent and clever man. He knows how to make his way in the world. He knows the psychology of a woman. That is why he is not disturbed by the hostile attitude of Popova. He knows how to handle her.

Smirnov has no respect for others. He openly condemns Popova's husband. He does not mind speaking indecently about the dead man. His conversation with Popova is not polite. He seems to have no manners. But actually he is very clever. He wants to achieve his object. And he knows that is the best way to achieve it. Woman likes a bold and outspoken man. So Smirnov deals with her, as Smirnov is a man of the world and a businessman. He is very much like the heroes of Bernard Shaw.

The delightful humour of speech and action in the play owes its origin to the odd speech and manners of Smirnov. Even in a furious mood, his speech carries a note of humour, because his fury is the fury of a foolish man. We cannot help smiling at his irritation.

Smirnov behaves like a fool but he is not really a fool. He is rather a shrewd businessman who pretends to be a rude intruding fool. Popova is really taken in by his trick. He knows that she will fall for it. She pretends to be angry but in fact she likes the bold manner of Smirnov. So we see that Smirnov succeeds in his purpose.

(2) THE BOY COMES HOME

REFERENCE:

These lines have been taken from the play "The Boy Comes Home" written by A.A. Milne.

CONTEXT:

The play is a fateful event in the family affairs of Uncle James, a successful businessman who believes in strict discipline. Philip, the young nephew of Uncle James, comes home after four years of active war services in the army. He is now a mature young man though only 21. He gets up late against the strict orders of his uncle to get up early. Uncle James is angry to see that Philip has violated the strict rules of his discipline. He presses Philip to join him in his jam business. But Philip refuses to do so, holding that he would prefer to be an architect. His uncle refuses to give him the money for that job. Philip takes out his revolver. Uncle

James gives in. but suddenly Philip announces to join the business of his uncle. It is a favourable change for the family.

QUESTIONS

Q.1 The play discusses generation gap. Is it true?

Answer:

The play may be described as a light comedy. It is witty and amusing throughout. The characters are flesh and blood, and true to life. We find a touch of universality in this play. We come across such fellows and such situations, sometimes they turn out to be tragic unfortunately. The play is about a fateful event in the family affairs of Uncle James, a successful businessman who believes in strict discipline.

Philips, the young nephew of Uncle James, comes home after four years of active war services in the army. He is no longer a shy young boy of 17. He is now a mature young man though only 21. He behaves not as a child but as master of the house. He gets up late against the strict orders of his uncle to get up early. Philips asks for breakfast. The cook refuses to prepare breakfast, because Uncle James does not allow late breakfast in his house.

The cook says that she would rather resign than to violate the discipline. Philip at once pays her wages and dismisses her from service. The cook can't bear the loss of her job, so she readily agrees to prepare breakfast for him.

Uncle James enters, he is angry to see that Philip has violated the strict rules of his discipline. He presses Philip to join him in his Jam business. But Philip refuses to do so, holding that he would prefer to be an architect. His uncle refuses to give him the money for that job. Philip takes out his revolver. Uncle James is cowed down by this show of force. He agrees to give Philip the money he needs. Then suddenly Philip announces his consent to join the Jam business of his uncle. Thus he succeeds in breaking down the mechanical discipline maintained by his uncle. It is a favourable change for the family.

The author has thus discussed the generation gap in the play. He expresses that old generation wishes to impose its rules and regulations on young generation. But young generation refuses to follow such rules rather they want to lead life and to select their career according to their own will. As we see in the play. Uncle James tries to convince Philip to join him in his business. He even uses force of purse for this purpose. As a result Philip

uses force of pistol against the force of purse. James agrees to all this demands readily and Philip,

“Picking him up by the scruff, and helping him into the chair, says to him, “Good man, that’s the way to talk”.

Uncle James is now ready to face the facts of life as the new generation sees them.

(Q. 2) Compare the powers, Power of Purse and Power of Pistol.

Answer:

Every play is based on some conflict, whether it is the conflict going within one person or character’s mind or between two characters in the play or between two forces as a man and nature or between a man and society.

So far as this short one act play “The Boy Comes Home” is concerned, conflict appears between the uncle and the nephew or in other words between James and Philip or between two forces i.e. the force of money and the force of arms. When the play opens, we see Philip the young man, who has been in the army for four years asking the maid-servant to give him his breakfast at 10’O’clock. It is his habit that is not liked by Uncle James, who is a cold businessman, who stresses on punctuality, civility and respect. James happens to come there, and grows angry on hearing that Philip is having breakfast. He says that he wanted to talk to Philip about his coming into business. Philip says that he should wait for him in the drawing room. James sits in an armchair and dozes off. In his dream he warns Philip not to smoke in the house. He says that he should understand, once for all while he remains in this house that he must be punctual, civil and respectful. Philip tells his uncle that he was leaving his house and taking rooms some where else. He asks him to give him an allowance, or all the money his father had left. James replies that he will not give him any money before he grows twenty-five.

Uncle James says that Philip should join his business of making Jams. Philip wants to become an architect. James says that Philip must have learned to obey the orders and recognize authority. Philip does not show any intention or inclination for that business. He flatly and frankly refuses to join. But on other hand he is not free, because his money is in the possession of James and James threatens to use the force of purse against Philip. Philip has also grown up and well conscious of his worth, he takes out a revolver and displays a bomb, telling James what harm may come, by aiming at James. Here Philip uses the force of arms or pistol against the force of purse and finally brings his uncle, James to his knees and finds victory over him. His uncle is submissive and he agrees to

join him in his Jam business, of his own accord or free will. Uncle James is totally frightened. **“Now James opens his eyes with a start and looks round him in bewildered way. He rubs his eyes, takes out his watch and looks at it, and then stares round the room again. The door from the dining room opens and Philip comes in with a piece of toast in his hand.”**

This is the real Philip who has actually arrived to have the proposed meeting and, thanks to the dream, Uncle James is now a changed and molded man, ready to understand the problems of the young man. Now the mode of the dialogue has reversed and we hear such dialogue.

Philip: (surprised)... Rather late I'm afraid

James: That's all right (he laughs awkwardly)

Or

Philip: It's a bit late, isn't it?

James: Well, if you're four years behind so is everybody else.

The writer has in fact brought home a point to the readers, i.e. those who threaten others with force are themselves defeated with other force. So a social and moral lesson may also be got, that is we should not use force against innocent dependants to exploit them, otherwise, we, ourselves may fall a prey to their exploitation or threat, because.

“The time has always rights to do what is right”

In the play, James the bullying uncle, stiff necked arrogant and harsh turns out to be the most submissive and humble one in no time, but on revolver point, by no other than his nephew, who joins him in his Jam business of his own accord or free will. As it is a light comedy and its job is to provide delight and instruction to the audience, It not only amuses the readers but also restores their shattered faith in life, by giving them moral support.

(3) SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT

REFERENCE:

These lines have been taken from the play “Something to Talk About” written by Eden Philpotts.

CONTEXT:

The play is a delightful comedy. This is a satire on the mentality of aristocratic English class. Wolf a notorious burglar enters stealthily the house of Sydney's to take away their rich gifts of Christmas. The whole family comes there and enjoys the

presence of the burglar. They are very happy and treat the wolf like an old friend. It is the burglar who is surprised, not the family. This turning of the tables makes the story very amusing. Wolf puts all their presents in a bag but leaves them, when Wolf is told about more precious gifts in a neighbouring house. The Sydney's save their gifts and enjoy the presence of Wolf.

QUESTIONS

Character and Ideas of wolf

Wolf is the central figure of the play around which all events take place. We do not know his real name. He is notorious by the title of the Wolf. He is a great burglar of England "The Terror of England" exclaims Lady Redchester, very rightly when she recognizes him. He is so well known that even Lord Redchester exclaims, "The wolf comes to our little place! Surely not! Some imposter pretending to be the Wolf". And when he becomes sure about the identity of the wolf, he says, "Glad to know you" and shakes hands with him. Wolf appears in the library of Tudor Redchester at 3'O clock on Christmas morning, wearing tight-fitting suit, a cap on his head, a black mask over his eyes. He carries an electric torch in one had and a bag in the other hand. He lets the torch travel over the room and finds the safe. Wolf is an expert at opening the safes. No safe is 'safe' from him. He is well known for opening the safe within in no time. He is fumbling with the safe, when Mr. Sydney comes into the library. He orders him to 'hands up'. He asks Sydney if he knows the password of this safe. He is told that only his father knows it and it contains valuable gifts of Christmas. He is amazed at the information, given by Mr. Sydney. Wolf has exact information about everything, especially about the safe. He claims himself before Lord Redchester.

"I have a thousand secrete channels of information."

Wolf is romantic by nature. When Guy asks his permission to call Lettice, in there, he promptly says, "I never can say no to beauty". He is working on the safe when she comes to the library and utters these words:

**"Oh! How brave of him! How thrilling! How do you do?
(Shakes hands). Do you think you can manage it?
(Looks at safe)."**

He becomes so involved with her that she takes the revolver from him and puts it on the mantle piece.

His dialogue tells that he must be a well-educated man. When Bishop advises him to leave criminal life Lettice says that he is "lost sheep in wolf clothing'. At that he at once counters

her by saying that, “Wolves do change their hair but not their hearts”. He is an intelligent fellow and has good knowledge about his own field of practice. He is very vigilant. He is always conscious of his own interest. He is active and smart. Again and again he warns the Sydney to be silent otherwise he would ‘plug’ them. He is a little philosopher. When Lady Redchester talks about Charles who is “so interested in the criminal classes”. He promptly says, **“There ain’t no criminal classes, any more than virtuous classes. The rogues and the rulers may both come from the gutter, or the palace. A man may be in the House of commons today and the House of Detention tomorrow, can’t he?”** This shows that he has deep knowledge of human psychology and sociology. He is rather a greedy fellow and it is because of his greed that he loses all the Christmas gifts of the Sydney’s. Although he has answered before that, **“a bird in hand is better than two in the bush.”** It is actually the psychologically round approach of the Sydney’s that they are able to win him.

(Q): Portray Sydney’s behaviour as a family thriving for some change.

Answer:

“Something to talk about’ is a delightful comedy in one act by Philpotts. The play is about a burglar and a rich family. It is a clever and pleasant representation of the temperament of Modern English people, who might well find nocturnal alarm a matter of objective entertainment. The members of the family don’t lose wits at the arrival of the burglar. They behave so politely, confidently, light heartedly and sincerely that it is the burglar who is bewildered at being treated with such genuine politeness. The comedy lies in ‘the tables turned’. It is the burglar who meets the unexpected.

The Sydney’s are an interesting family. They represent the modern man who loves thrilling situations. They are living an uneventful life. They want to have a thrill so that they may become famous in the locality. They want publicity at all costs. Therefore they welcome the wolf in their house. They are so hungry for adventure that they are not afraid of the wolf. They were fed up with the dull routine of their lives and wanted something unusual to happen in the family. People always say that Sydney’s are the oldest and dullest family in which nothing but weddings and funerals take place. As it is said **“Change is the law of nature and it is the nature of man to make changes.”**

Guy even says to the burglar,

“.....? People always say we are the oldest and dullest family in the country. Nothing ever happens to the Sydney.

The point to note here is that change seems to be the desire of human life. It is not a height of irony that he is welcoming a burglar for the sake of change. Later part of the play indicates that not only Guy alone, but also, all members of the family have been suffering from the same disease for a long time. As Guy says,

“ We never get into newspapers, we never even have accidents out hunting, and no burglars, no fires; nothing but weddings and funerals. But now all’s changed!”

Lady Redchester calls him a new sort of “Santa Claus”. Bishop preaches him that he should change and become God’s sheep. Each one is amazed to see the wolf. They are ready to assist him in robbing the safe. The Wolf is told all details of the gifts, which are enclosed, in the safe. For the sake of fun, he is told to try his luck by using gas cylinder to unlock the safe. They want to amuse themselves with the help of Wolf. When he fails to do so; he is told the exact code No. of the safe. All gifts of Christmas are brought out of the safe. He checks them one by one and on requests of family members, they are given to each of them. The necklace is given to the mother who is very happy to wear it as it suits her; similarly each of them is happy to try their ornaments and gifts and are thankful to their father who has brought them for Christmas.

When the Wolf intends to take them back; they are reluctant. They request him not to rob them of their gifts on such a sacred day; The Wolf says to them that he has also a family to support. The clergyman, the uncle of Sydney, plays a hideous trick on the wolf. He shows him the house of another rich man with much more valuable things and the details of his safety to return after theft. Thus the tables are turned. Lord Redchester sums up the situation in these words,

Grand Fellow! Something to talk about at last.

The confidence of Guy, the child like happiness of Lettice, the dignified bearing of Lord Redchester, Lady Redchester’s calling the burglar a new sort of Santa Claus. Fatherly behaviour of uncle Bishop and the humorous reaction of Preston baffle the burglar and amuse the reader to a very delightful extent. Thus is clearly shows Sydney’s behaviour as a family driving for some change.

(4) SMOKE SCREENS

REFERENC:

These lines have been taken from the play "Smoke Screens" written by Harold Brighouse.

COTEXT:

The play is a serious social comedy. Its story is a three-sided conflict. Primrose, the young heroine is a modern girl. Her mother, Lucy Aston, is a liberal lady divorced by her charming husband. Susan, her aunt, is a conservative. Lucy does not like to interfere with her daughter's affairs. Susan tries to warn her against the dangers faced by Primrose. Primrose wants to marry a foot baller, John. Her mother and Susan are astonished. Susan leaves the house in disgust. Her mother decides to let her marry. But she says she will keep a vigilant watch over her daughter's husband through the smoke screen of her taxi0car business. She does not like to lose her daughter. But she is quite helpless.

QUESTIONS

(Q. 1) Everyone is behind some smoke screens having his own to grind, discuss.

Answer:

"Smoke Screens" is a beautiful play by Brighouse. It is a serious social comedy. Its story is a three-sided conflict. Primrose, the young heroine, is a modern girl. Her mother Lucy Aston is a liberal lady divorced from her charming husband. Susan her aunt is conservative. She does not like the free social contacts of her niece. She wants to give her a lecture but she does not listen to her. Primrose thinks that she needs no lectures because she can look after herself. The play is basically about a self-made woman who has divorced her husband and successfully established herself in society. Perhaps while busy in her fight against life, she has not been giving proper attention to her daughter Primrose. The play also shows the generation gap. It also has a lesson for the parents who try to crush the individuality of their Children and want to tailor them according to their own liking. Lucy is living with her daughter primrose of twenty in a well-furnished flat. She worked hard and established a taxi cab business.

Her sister Susan comes to meet her she is a married woman of fifty. When the curtain rises, Susan is seen in the room. The door opens and primrose enters. She searches for her bag, which contains her lipstick and three pounds cash. Susan asks her that she wanted to talk to her. She says that she has no time for her and takes her bag and goes out. She has been somewhat harsh to her aunt.

Lucy enters and Susan talks to her about Primrose's rudeness. Lucy says she might have made some mistake

somewhere. Susan says that it was not so. She thinks that Lucy was a splendid woman who had fought life like a heroine. Lucy says that life is crook and fights back crooked.

Lucy could not be a domestic mother to Primrose while she was running a business. Susan complains that primrose was a spoiled child. Lucy says that each generation has its own techniques. When we want our children to be like us, they want to be left alone to be themselves. She says that she doesn't know whether Primrose is a mess, or just a nice kid with a hard modern surface.

Clarice, a friend of Primrose, enters and paints a very ugly picture of her brother John. Both the women don't understand why she was presenting such a horrible picture of her brother. Just then Primrose enters and announces that she was marrying John. She thinks that marriage is a jolly fine institution. She says that Lucy had married a handsome man but failed. Now she was marrying an ugly man out of love, not for his physical charms.

Lucy admits that it is always a losing game to be a mother. She is ready to see John, the future husband of her daughter.

Lucy exclaims, "The smoke Screens." She expresses her determination that she will shoot John if he is not kind to primrose. Because it is true that

"One of the most important things in life is to profit from your losses."

Thus Lucy remains behind the screen. Her handsome husband had been a smoke screen of an ugly man. Ugly John is a smoke screen of a nice man, rude and impertinent. Primrose is a smoke screen of a yielding mother. Thus all the important characters of the play are smoke screens. The writer has very successfully presented the human theme in the play.

(Q. 2) Children of broken families are difficult to handle. How?

Answer:

From this play we can gather that the children of broken families are really difficult to handle as in this play we have seen through the character of Primrose.

Primrose the young, beautiful and courageous heroine is a modern girl of twenty. Her mode, manner, expression are bright and jolly, though these are somewhat harsh and rude of her aunt Susan, who belongs to the country side and being a rigid, conservative believes in old traditions and moral values of

life. Primrose likes to mix up with the people of her age. She spends most of her time outdoors. She goes out even at the odd time of night, to avail the opportunities of life. She wants to enjoy herself each and every moment of life. She does not like to poke her nose in the personal matters of other people she does not allow others to interfere in her life. She does not feel it necessary to remain a housewife once and for all. She is aware of the effects of beauty that is why she tries to look attractive. She becomes disrespectful to her aunt when she offends her. She also tries to remove the doubts and apprehensions of her conservative aunt about going out of the house all alone at night. New generation must be confident of her actions.

She convinces her mother for marrying an ugly football player Mr. John.

The ideas of Primrose show her determination and cageyness in her decision. She knows about the unhappy marriage of her mother. Although she misses her father but she avoids talking about her father because she loves her mother very much. She has no craze for money. She has love for family life. She prefers married life to well-settled business of taxicabs.

Through her character we can also detect that the children of broken families are often very much confident, self-reliant and dependable because they get total freedom which may also spoil them.

Therefore, it is really a difficult task to handle a child of a broken family.

POETRY: A NEW ANTHOLOGY OF ENGLISH VERSE

LEISURE

Reference:

These lines have been taken from the poem "Leisure" written by William Davies.

Context:

This poem is a protest against the unnecessary commitment of man with worldly affairs. We are always in a hurry and have no leisure time to look at the beauty spread all around us. Man's miserable life brings him nothing but sadness and worries.

Explanation:

(Lines 1 – 4)

In these lines the poet bewails our rushed life. The poet says that we cannot call this life a pure life, if it is full of worries and anxiety. We have no time to stand at a certain place and look carefully at nature. Even we cannot spare a few moments to stand under the branches of green trees and enjoy the beautiful and restful shades of the trees. The common animals like sheep and cows are better than us in enjoying life. We cannot look at the common animals like sheep and cows grazing in the pastures. We have committed ourselves with worldly affairs unnecessarily and cannot enjoy nature and the natural beauty spread all around us.

(Lines 5 – 6)

In these lines the poet tells us, when we pass through some forest, we do not have time to stop for some moments to look at the trees tall and short, and enjoy their natural beauty. The dark green trees provide a soothing effect but we are always sick-hurried and cannot enjoy at least the simple beauty. Also we cannot look at the small animals like squirrels concealing their food-grain in the grass for the winter. This minor scene can also give us relief.

(Lines 7 – 8)

In these lines the poet says that human beings cannot see the beauty that is hidden in the streams. During day time, when the rays of the sun fall upon the clear water of the brooks, the water reflects and shines like stars in the sky during night. Sometimes water of streams, because of its clearness seems so beautiful that even stones beneath the water can be observed, which look like stars in the clear blue water. This scene also resembles the stars shining in the sky at night.

(Lines 9 – 10) & (11 – 12)

The poet says we are so hard luck that we cannot watch a girl or a woman who dances in the field. The feet of the dancing girl are very attractive and bewitching but we cannot spare time to look at these feet as how they dance. This dancing girl can also amuse us with her performance. The poet also mourns that we have no time to wait for the words, the mouth of the dancing girl has to utter. As a sort of smile has appeared in her eyes but we cannot wait for such time as the words from her eyes are transferred to her lips. Those words can amuse us. In fact the

poet uses personification, a poetic device to explain the natural beauty scattered all around us. The poet personifies beauty as a young beautiful dancing girl having a smiling face.

(Lines 13 – 14)

In these concluding lines the poet regrets to say that ours is a poor life. In a way it cannot be life if it is full of cares and worries. Unluckily, we have no time to stand at a place and look carefully at nature that can refresh us. As such our life is nothing but lamentation through and through. As human beings we should spare some moments and look at nature and natural beauty spread around us and enjoy life.

TARTARY

Reference:

This stanza has been taken from the poem “Tartary” by Walter De Le Mare.

Context:

This poem is a descriptive picture of an imaginary kingdom of Tartary. The poet considers himself the king of that state and wants to enjoy all the delights of life. He would have a throne of pure gold. Beautiful pets would roam about to please him. Musicians would play on instruments at the time of his meals. His rich land would be full of honey, fruits, beautiful gardens and attractive valleys. In fact, this poem is a journey into the realm of imagination.

EXPLANATION

Stanza 1

In these lines the poet presents the picture of an imaginary kingdom “Tartary”. He considers himself the king of this empire. He says if he were the king of Tartary, he would be its sole king. There should be no one else to share this kingdom. His bed would be made of ivory, a precious material. His throne would be made of pure gold. There would not be any mixture of base metal in it. He would have a spacious court in which peacocks would move here and there very proudly. His forests would be full of wild animals like tigers and lions. They would freely stroll in the forests as its real owners. His kingdom would have pools full of different kinds of fish. They would swim aslant. They would be

very happy and freer than any other object. The tiny fins of these fish would be sloppy towards the sunlight and would shine proudly and happily.

Stanza 2

In this stanza the poet further imagines himself as the king of Tartary and mentions his mealtime. He says that if he were the king of Tartary, bugles would call him to meals every day. This would become a ceremonial event. There would be great trumpeters that would produce heavy and noisy sounds. In the evening there would be lamps of different kinds. The light emitted by these lamps would be as yellow as pure honey. Some of the lights would be as red as pure and bitter wine. And during his meal and even in the evening, the players would play upon harp, pipe and many other musical devices. All these musical instruments would create sweet and beautiful music.

Stanza 3

In this stanza the poet says something about himself. He says that if he were the king of Tartary, he would wear dress of pure pearls. The pearls would be of white and gold colour. There would also be green beads among them. All these pearls would be mixed and would be as thick as grains of seeds. Further the poet wishes that he would wear his dress, his small sword before the waning of the morning star. This would mean that he would prepare himself very early in the morning. His carriage would be drawn by seven specific horses known as zebras. And these horses would draw his carriage through the deep and dark shades and clearings of Tartary.

Stanza 4

In these lines the poet says if he were the king of the imaginary kingdom, Tartary, he would be the sole owner of its silvery pale rivers. Water of these rivers would be very clear and tasty. He would be king of its fruits of all types. Hills of the land of Tartary would be his. The gorges bushes, tall trees and the entire valley would be under his command and control. He would enjoy all the natural objects. The bright stars shining in the sky and the perfumed morning air would also please him. The shivering lakes of Tartary would be like the quiet and motionless oceans. There would be beautiful juicy trees of different kinds of fruits. These would attract birds and would delight him as well as the birds in

the beautiful red valleys, red because of fruits and colourful flowers. This imaginary kingdom would please the poet all the time. All the beautiful natural objects mentioned by the poet shows his deep love for nature.

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

By Elizabeth Sewell

Reference:

These lines have been taken from the poem “New Year Resolutions”, written by Elizabeth Sewell.

Context:

This poem is about the New Year resolutions and promises. Another year has lapsed. On the start of the new year, the poetess takes stock of herself very realistically. She tries to make this world a better place by making new pledges. Her untraditional resolution is to face and lie with reality.

EXPLANATION

Lines: 1 – 3

In these lines the poetess describes her mental state and the way she would drink to purify her soul. She says that she will drink wine at night secretly. She will have long draughts during night and will purge herself from all kinds of evils. This will assist her in helping other people because her own mind and spirit will be free from all types of evils. “Long draughts of Quiet” also suggests that she will keep quiet most of time. This will be the best means for the purification of her soul and it will help her in leading beneficial and successful life. She says; she will talk less and hear more and mould her life into betterment.

Lines 4 – 6

In the given lines Elizabeth says, she will remember herself twice daily, in the evening and in the morning. She will take into consideration what her aim of creation is. She will try to understand the purpose of life in general. Perhaps she means that she should recognize herself, which will help her in recognizing God and leading life for benefit of others.

Lines 7 – 9

These are concluding lines of the poem. Here, the poetess says she will accept reality. While, sleeping at night, she will consider the bitter reality of life. During the new year she will make some promises and pledges. She will sleep on thin, less-fleshy arms of reality. Accepting reality and facts is always a difficult thing, but she will accept it bravely. She will feel relieved and satisfied, when she comes to know that she has spent her life for the benefit of others. The image of bony arms is a hard reality. Even then she will get delight and feel comforted when she has fulfilled her promises and resolutions, she has made on the start of the new year.

WOMAN WORK

By Maya Angelou

Reference:

These lines have been taken from the poem "Woman Work" written by Maya Angelou.

Context:

The poetess feels extremely bored and tired after attending to her house-hold affairs. She feels that only the natural phenomena can exercise healthy influence on her. The natural objects can save her from unbearable boredom and can raise her spirits. A house-hold woman remains awfully busy with the domestic chores. Even then, she can enjoy nature through her imagination. It is an indirect praise of the woman's greatness. In general, the poem is an escape from the drudgery of the mechanical routine and taking shelter in ideal life.

EXPLANATION

Stanza 1 = Lines 1 - 4

In these lines the poetess gives vent to her feelings for her dull and busy life. She is tired of the routine work of a working woman. She says she has to look after children at home. Also she has to repair clothes of the members of her family. She has to clean the floor of her house and has to collect edibles from the shop for her family. After that she has to cook those things which she has brought from shop.

Stanza 2

These lines are a continuation of her domestic chores. She has mentioned some of the chores in the previous stanza and of some talks here. She says that she has to cook chicken for the family. Also she has to dry the baby after bathing it. After that she has to prepare meal for her guests. She has to remove unwanted plants from her garden. She has to press the clothes of her children and other members of her family. She has to dress her little children and also has to cut bamboos. She has to clean the whole house. All these chores are quite tough and require courage and for bearance on the part of a domestic woman.

Stanza 3

In these lines the poetess wants to enjoy the natural objects. She has got tired of the domestic work and wants to go close to nature. She says that the sun light should shine on her, rain should fall on her. The dewdrops should gently fall upon her. All these things can cool her brow. All these natural objects can give her satisfaction and peace.

Stanza 4

These lines are an expression of her escapism from the busy life of a working woman. The domestic woman remains awfully busy and dreams of an ideal life. In these lines she asks storm to blow her from the busy world across the sky with its stormy wind. As such she will be able to get relief from the hurly burly of life. She asks the storm to take her to an imaginary world for rest. Only imagination can give her, peace, solace and satisfaction, otherwise physically it is not possible to run away from this world. Shelley in "Ode to the West Wind" says, oh, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud! I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

Stanza 5

This stanza is also an expression of taking relief and refuge with natural objects. She asks the snow-flakes to fall gently on her body and completely cover it up and make it all white. When she will be completely under the charm and burden of the white snow, she will get solace. She further asks snow to touch and give her cold icy kisses, so that she may be able to have rest that night. Actually the natural objects can please a person and give company for some time.

Stanza 5

In these lines the poetess addresses all the natural objects to help her in giving relief from the busy life of a working woman. She wants to lose herself among the natural objects. That is why she asks the sun, rain, the curving sky, the mountains, the ocean, the leaf and the stone to give her relief. Actually she wants to get relief and joy from all these things and wants to run away from dark and dull life at home. That is why she asks the moon to glow, the shining stars to give her shelter with them. She calls all these things her own because she wants some leisure and satisfaction in these natural things. Nature can give delight to her and can transport her to peace and tranquility.

THE REBEL

By D.J. Enright

Reference:

These lines have been taken from the poem "The Rebel" written by D.J. Enright.

Context:

This poem deals with the attitude of a social rebel. Actually a rebellion is a manner to look different from others. Such a social rebel is neither dangerous nor vicious. He does not make the other people's lives miserable. He just wants to look different. Young dissatisfied people may behave like this. But the society should not have social rebels.

EXPLANATION

Lines 1 - 2

In these lines the poet expresses the attitude of a social rebel. When every body keeps short and uniform hair, the rebel knowingly grows his hair long. This, he does for the fact that he wants to look different from others.

Lines 3 - 4

In these lines the poet says that the rebel goes against the custom and tradition of the society. When the rest of the society grows long hair, the rebel cuts his hair short. This he does just to have a difference from others.

Lines 5 - 6

In these lines the poet expresses the thought when every member of the society talks during a lesson or meeting, the rebel keeps silent because he wants to be prominent.

Lines 7 – 8

In these lines the poet says when no-body talks during the lesson or meeting, the rebel creates disturbance by talking loudly just to look distinct.

Lines 9 – 10

These lines show a different position of a rebel. When every person of the society wears simple and uniform clothes, the rebel uses strange and odd clothes. He wants to look distinguished from others.

Lines 11 – 12

In these lines the poet says when all other members of the society use queer and strange clothes, the rebel dresses himself very seriously and soberly.

Lines 13 – 14

In these lines the poet expresses his idea of a rebel. If some people love dogs as pet animals, the rebel talks about the usefulness of cats. He prefers cats to dogs.

Lines 15 – 16

If a rebel is in company of those people who love cats, he prefers dogs to cats. He wants to look different at all costs.

Lines 17 – 18

The poet says if people require the sunlight and praise the sun the rebel is against them. He says that the sun is not required and there is need for rain.

Lines 19 – 20

When everybody of the society welcomes and requires rain, the rebel says something about the sun. He feels sorry for the absence of the sun. According to him, there is need for the sunlight.

Lines 21 – 22

When every members of the society goes to some gathering and attends the meeting, the rebel stays at home and keeps himself busy by reading a book indoors.

Lines 23 – 24

When everybody of the society stays at home and reads a book, the rebel tries to find some crowd of the people and wants to attend to them.

Lines 25 – 26

When every person asks for something, the rebel rejects the same with thanks because he is a person quite different from others.

Lines 27 – 28

When everybody of the society does not like and does not receive anything and says thanks, for that, the rebel, on purpose, requires that thing and asks for it.

Lines 29 – 30

In these lines the poet concludes that it is very good that we have social rebels in the society. But naturally, it is not good to become a social rebel. The poet further suggests that if we already have the social rebels, we should tolerate them. Without them life will become monotonous and dull.

PATRIOT INTO TRAITOR

Robert Browning

Reference:

This is stanza has been taken from the poem “Patriot into Traitor” written by Robert Browning.

Context:

This poem is a criticism of politics and people’s opinion. When a leader comes into power, people call him a patriot. When he is dethroned, the same leader is considered a traitor. This is the tragedy of modern politics. The leader in this poem fell a victim to the same state of affairs. When he came into power, people showered flowers at him as a patriot. But after a year, they declared him a traitor, when he was no more in power. They took

him to the gallows. But Browning has ended his poem not on a tragic, rather on a next world optimistic note.

EXPLANATION

Stanza 1

In these lines the poet says through the mouth of a political leader, when for the first time, only one year ago, on that very day, he came to power, the people gave him a very warm welcome. There were roses mixed with myrtle flowers which people spread on his way through and through. The house-tops were crowded with people and they were moving and swinging like mad people. Also they were so happy as if they were mad. The minarets and domes of churches were shining with light. These churches were decorated with colourful flags. All this was on that very day when the politician came into power and it took place only one year ago.

Stanza 2

When the people were given him a warm welcome they rang bells and raised slogans. These different voices mingled with one another and produced a sort of music. The air became misty and heavy because of the noisy slogans and the ringing bells. The slogans of the crowd were so heavy and loud that the adjacent walls of the road-side houses trembled with various cries and noise of the crowd. These people were welcoming him so happily that if he had told them that mere noise and slogans did not please him. And that they should give him the sun, that is there in the sky far away from them, they would have replied, that was executed (done and what else they could do for him 'the leader').

Stanza 3

In these lines the leader regretfully says that the people did not help him, instead, it was he who leaped at the sun and made impossible, possible for them. He brought the sun down and handed it over to his dear friends (country men). He made them realize that every impossible could be made possible for sincere friends. As such he made every effort and did not leave any thing undone for them. Had he left anything undone, nobody else would have done that for them. But he further says with great sorrow that today when only one year has lapsed and that he is no more in chair, his reward can be seen. It can also be seen

what he is reaping as a reward of his deeds. He has been branded as a traitor by the people of his nation.

Stanza 4

In these lines the poet mourns that nobody can be seen on the housetops to welcome him now. It is quite opposite to the scene when he was received by them. Now there are only a few people, who are rather paralyzed and are standing at the windows. Now they are watching a different sight. This sight is a sort of ridicule and everybody agrees to it. Obviously, the sight is horrible because the leader is now being taken to the slaughter-house, or it can be better said, the leader thinks, that he is being taken to the gallows to be hanged there. It is all the reward of his good deeds. His deeds have been converted into wicked deeds and people are now punishing him for his supposed misdeeds.

Stanza 5

In these lines the poet also mopes over his sad condition. He says that the people are carrying him to the gallows in the rain. They unnecessarily, have tied his hands behind his back with a tight rope. When they are taking him to the slaughter-house, the rope cuts his both hands at wrists. The culprit (the leader) feels that his fore-head is bleeding. This is because everybody in his right sense is throwing stones at him. Everybody feels that he has done nothing for his countrymen. Every person has turned against him and the achievements of his past one year have been changed to misdeeds. This means they have forgotten his service to them and they are now punishing him for his good work for them.

Stanza 6

In the given lines the poet, through the mouth of the deposed leader says that he was brought honourably to the chair and with great pomp and show but now he is being taken very insultingly to the gallows. He says sometimes great heroes fall from their climax and die. Such has not happened to him. Had he died in the peak of his power, he would have been happy. Further the leader ridiculously says that heroes can not expect reward from God in the next world because they get their reward in this world. In his case people have not done him justice. They have killed him. He says after death he will go to his Lord Creator where God Might question him about his deeds he had

done for the people. He would reply that he had done his best for them but they rewarded him with shame. Now he will ask God for a reward because God is just and He would give him the best reward in the other world for his service to his people. He would be safe with God in the world here after.

THE HUNTSMAN

Edward Lawbury

Reference:

These lines have been taken from the poem "The Huntsman" written by Edward Lawbury.

Context:

This poem tells a Kenyan folk-lore. It tells that some-times a hunter becomes hunted himself. Kagwa went hunting and found a talking skull. He came to the king and informed him to the fact. The king ordered to know the reality. When it was found not so, Kagwa was killed. Strange enough it was that after his murder the skull spoke. The story tells us that irresponsible talking can bring destruction. The elements of suspense and irony create a shocking impact.

EXPLANATION

Stanza 1

In these lines the poet says that Kagwa, a famous hunter, hunted lions and tigers through forests and bushes. He used his spear for hunting. One day, while hunting, he found the skull of a man in the forest. The skull was talking. Kagwa asked the talking skull, how it had come there. The skull opened its mouth and replied that talking had brought it there.

Stanza 2

In this stanza the poet says that after getting the skull, Kagwa went home hurriedly. He appeared before the court of the king and talked about the skull Kagwa told the king that he had found a skull which was talking. On hearing these words the king was surprised so much. He thought that no dead skull ever talked. After that the king said slowly to himself that he had never heard of or seen a skull that talked. He said, since his birth from his mother he had never heard of such a thing.

Stanza 3

In these lines the poet says, when Kagwa told about the talking skull, the king called out his guards. The king ordered two of the guards to go with Kagwa and find the talking skull. He also told the guards if Kagwa proved a liar, and there was no such thing as the talking skull, Kagwa must be killed himself.

Stanza 4

In the given lines the poet says that Kagwa and two guards of the king rode their horses to the forest. For some days they looked for it but found nothing like a talking skull. But after some more struggle they found a skull. Kagwa asked the skull how he had come there. The skull remained silent. Kagwa again earnestly requested the skull but it did not talk. And they all were surprised.

Stanza 5

In the concluding stanza the guards ordered Kagwa to kneel down. The guards killed him with sword and lance. When Kagwa was put to death, the already dead skull opened its mouth and asked the hunter, how he had come there. The dead body of Kagwa replied, talking had brought him there. This simple story has a meaningful moral. It teaches us that irresponsible and worthless talking can bring destruction or death to the talker.

ONE ART

Elizabeth Bishop

Reference:

These lines have been taken from the poem "One Art" written by Elizabeth Bishop.

Context:

In this poem the poetess wants to teach us that the art of losing things is necessary to lead a pleasant life. We should not bother, whether things are lost or snatched from us. The loss of door-keys or some other possession should be accepted as a part of life. No loss should disturb us, we should take our defeats and losses lightly.

Stanza 1

Explanation:

In these lines the poetess wants to teach us an uncommon lesson about losing things. She says that the art of losing things is not difficult to learn. Many things are included or intend to be lost. The loss of these things which we lose everyday, will bring no disaster. Actually, the poetess wants to teach us the art of acceptance and resignation.

Stanza 2

In these lines the poetess tells us that we should try to lose something everyday and accept the confusion created by this loss. For example, if we lose door keys, naturally, an hour is spent in trouble. After that we will get used to the loss, or we shall find some solution to the problem. Even then if we try to learn the art of losing things, it is not difficult to master.

Stanza 3

The poetess says, we should try to lose things farther and faster. This practice will habituate you to losing things and you will not feel any trouble. Once you get used to losing things, then forget the names of people with whom you lived and forget the place where you did go and spent some time. Forgetting names and places will not put you in trouble if you have mastered the art of losing.

Stanza 4

In the given lines the poetess cites some personal examples. She says that once she lost the watch given to her by her mother. This watch was very dear to her but its losing did not create any disturbance to her. After that she lost three very dear houses by migrating from one place to another. She lost these houses one after the other. But this did not disturb her. So the art of losing things is not difficult to learn.

Stanza 5

In these lines, also the poetess quotes some other examples. She says that she lost two dearest cities and more than that she left two very dear rivers and also some property and estate that she owned. In addition, she lost even a whole continent, when she migrated from North America to South America. She says that she remembers all these things but their loss is not a disaster.

She means to say that some times even kings have to leave their dominions but this does not bring any devastation.

Stanza 6

In these lines the poetess concludes her lesson. She says even if we lose our very dear friends, relatives, their most joking voice, their most loved gestures, these do not bring any destruction. She says, perhaps she has not told a lie in this regard. Obviously, the art of losing things is not difficult to learn, although it looks so. But one thing is clear that losing things does not bring any disaster. The poetess wants to teach us that for leading peaceful life, it is necessary to accept the hard realities of life and accept even the worst impact of our losses. It is necessary to take our defeats and failures lightly.

THE SOLITARY REAPER

William Wordsworth

Reference:

These lines have been taken from the poem "The Solitary Reaper" written by Wordsworth.

Context:

In this poem the poet tells us the story of a lovely Highland Girl, who is working in a field and singing a song. He is deeply impressed by her song and remembers the melody of her song even after he has left the place. He cannot understand the language of the song but the sad beauty of her voice goes straight to his heart. The atmosphere of the poem and the song of the girl as a part of the beauty of Nature leave a lasting impression on the mind of the poet.

Lines 1 – 4

Explanation:

In these lines the poet tells us about a young girl of Scotland. He tells us to look at the girl who is reaping grain and also singing a sweet song. He advises the passerby to stop short and listen to her song or pass very silently by her, so that she is not disturbed.

Lines 5 – 8

The poet says that the highland girl cuts and binds the grain in sheaves. She is also singing a sad song. She is very busy in her song as well as her work. The poet once again advises the passerby to listen to her song. He says that the whole deep valley is echoing with her sweet song. The whole dale is listening to her sweet voice. We should also listen to her song and enjoy it.

Lines 9 – 12

In the given lines the poet compares the sweet voice of the girl to that of a nightingale. Nightingale is considered a sweet-voice bird. The poet says no nightingale has so far sung as melodious a song as the girl sings. When some group of tired travelers reaches a shady place, in the Arabian deserts, the nightingale welcomes the caravan with its sweet song. It is obvious that commonly there is no nightingale in the deserts. But if there is some oasis, it is but natural that a nightingale is found there. So when a tired caravan reaches any oasis or shrubby area the nightingale welcomes it. The poet says that the voice of the singing girl is rather sweeter than that of a nightingale.

Lines 13 – 16

These lines show a comparison between the song of the girl and the song of the cuckoo. He says that such a sweet voice was never heard from the cuckoo even in the spring season. The song of cuckoo is always very sweet but the voice of the girl, who was singing, was sweeter than the cuckoo's. The voice of the girl was so sweet that it broke the silence of the seas and of the far off islands on north-western coast of Scotland. These islands are never disturbed by any storm but the voice of the girl intruded into the silence of this group of islands. This was because of the praiseworthy song of the girl which even affected the seas.

Lines 17 – 20

In these lines the poet tells us about the language of the song. He does not understand the alien language of the song. He says will no one tell him the meaning of the song of the girl. He says that perhaps the girl is singing some sad song of the past. He guesses the language and the meaning of the song. Perhaps the girl is singing some unhappy song or singing about events that have taken place in the past. Perhaps she is singing about battles which have been fought in the far off past.

Lines 21 – 24

These lines are also an expression of the un-understandable language of the song. The poet again guesses at the theme. Perhaps she is singing a simple song on some ordinary matter of the present age. Perhaps she is singing simple sorrow of loss or of some misery. May be she is singing for the lover who has jilted her. Probably, the incident of loss or pain has taken place in the past and it may be experienced again in future.

Lines 25 – 28

These lines also show that the poet did not know the theme of the song. He says whatever theme she sang, irrespective of that, it seemed that the song of the young girl would not come to an end. The poet says that he saw the girl busy at her work and also singing while reaping with a sickle in bent motion.

Lines 29 – 32

These are the concluding lines of the poem. The poet says that first he listened to her song standing still and motionless. But as he mounted up the hill of Scotland, the tune of the song was so sweet that it struck the heart of the poet. He was so impressed that he carried, the melody of the song with him long after the song was ended by the girl. Actually, the poet, being a poet of nature, was profoundly impressed by this natural scene. He remembered this song for its natural melodious effect.

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

William Shakespeare

Reference:

These lines have been taken from the poem “All the World’s a Stage” written by William Shakespeare.

Context:

This sonnet of Shakespeare is from his famous play “As You Like It”. This poem describes various stages of human life. Life has been compared to a play or drama played by every man and woman on the stage of the world. His seven stages of life are the seven acts of a play. This shows Shakespeare’s deep knowledge and transience of human life.

Lines 1 – 5

Explanation:

In these lines the poet compares this world to a stage. All men and women are only actors and actresses on the stage of this world. All these people have different routes to enter this stage and also have different exits to go out. They enter this stage when they are born and leave this stage when they die. Every person, during his life time plays many parts. These parts are called seven ages. These ages are actually like acts of a play.

Lines 5 – 10

The first stage of a man's life is his infancy. During his infancy he cries and throws up milk and vomits when he is in the hands of a mother or a nurse. The second stage is his boy-hood. This is his school going period. It is the time when he complains all the time. His face shines like the bright and fresh morning. He carries his school bag and unwillingly goes to school at the speed of an insect.

Lines 10 – 12

This is the third stage of man's life. Now he is a grown up person and assumes the form of a lover. It is the time when he loves his beloved ardently. He sighs like a furnace or an oven. He writes a song in praise of his beloved's eye or brow. He also sings such songs again and again as he burns in his emotions.

Lines 12 – 16

In these lines the poet shows the fourth stage of a man's life. When he matures, he becomes a soldier. He takes strange oaths. He has a beard like a tiger or a leopard. He is fierce like these animals. During this stage of life, man is jealous of honour of other. He is very quick-tempered and owns quarrels. Since he is warm-blooded, he looks for temporary reputation and fame. To achieve this temporary fame, he is even ready to go into the mouth of a gun. He does not bother for dangers.

Lines 16 – 20

This is the fifth stage of man's life. Here man becomes middle aged and mature like a judge and has a fair round belly full of the meat of chickens. Perhaps, he has become fat because he eats meat and fat castrated cocks in excess. It is the stage when he is firm, serious and grim. His conversation is full of many different proverbs of the world of the past and is also full of the examples

from the modern age. He has beard of formal cut and as such plays this part of life.

Lines 20 – 26

This is the sixth stage of man's life. In this stage man shifts from middle age, to old age. Now he wears pantaloons with slippers on his feet. He has become thin, weak and lean. He wears now spectacles on his nose because of his weak eye-sight. He has also a purse by his side in which he keeps money and tobacco. He uses long socks which he has saved during his youth. Now these socks are very loose to his lean leg and look strange. His big loud manly voice has turned into the shrill voice of a child. Since, some of his teeth have fallen, whenever he tries to speak. It seems as if he were playing upon a pipe or as if he were whistling.

Lines 27 – 29

This is the last stage of man's life. In this stage he changes from his old age to the oldest one. This is a strange stage of life. In this period all the life which has been previously full of strange events, comes to an end. Man becomes child once again. This is like his second childhood. In this stage he is childish as well as childlike. At this stage he forgets almost everything. His memory becomes very weak. He loses teeth, eye-sight and taste. He is without everything. This is the stage in which he completes the drama of his life and leaves the stage of this world for the next.

DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL

By T.S. Eliot

REFERENCE:

These lines have been taken from the poem Departure and Arrival written by T. S. Eliot.

CONTEXT:

The poet in this poem says that man should keep in view his departure right at his arrival in the world. He should determine objects of his life and work for them. Man should leave a better world before his departure to the next world. As sons of the twentieth century we should set good examples for the coming generation, so that we may be remembered forever. We must struggle to make the future better, before we start for our

destination. The poem shows Eliot's faith in idealism and optimism.

EXPLANATION

STANZA: 1

In these lines the poet has compared life to a sea. He says that while standing upon the shore of the sea of life, we delay for a few moments and ponder over the situation for sometime, doubtfully. This we do for what we know about the previous life of our forefathers. After that we take heart and cheerfully sail across the harbour by crossing its limits. Then we have no guide map to show us of the dangers of rocks that lie below water. Even then, we start our journey very courageously. The sea of life is full of dangers and threats but we start our life even if we do not know about them.

STANZA: 2

In the given lines the poet says that although the path of life is slow, troublesome and zigzag, although it is full of countless fears, yet it appears to the hopeful eye of our young generation, very colourful. It is like a street, on both sides of which hawthorn flowers and roses have grown and the street is red and beautiful. We hope it may be so. But it never happens that life is always colourful. Would that we might know about the future life, but we cannot predict the nature of our future life. We do not have certain knowledge of the future years.

STANZA: 3

Many great duties devolve upon the 20th century. These duties are even more important than those granted to the previous age. These duties call upon us to be more responsible, because no body knows what has been written in our fate. So no body knows what we can give to the future life in terms of good and great deeds. No body knows whether, we will overcome the pains and miseries of our future life. Also no body knows whether 20th century will create heroes greater and better than those of the olden times (19th century). But we hope that the future years will bring us better conditions and heroes.

STANZA: 4

In the given lines the poet assures that if they (people of twentieth century) have to make the 20th century greater than the past ones, its inhabitants will have to work hard with eager

and willing hearts to help make its destiny shining. They should work hard for the better future of their own century and see that this century achieves proud estate and then, this century should bequeath its best estate to the future centuries.

STANZA: 5

The 20th century should produce a legacy of advantages and benefits and bestow it upon the coming century. So that the sons of this century are counted among those who have been trying and labouring hard for good of their century till their death. And that the people of the coming century may not ask any other question than to know that people of 20th century have helped making their future glorious. And they have raised their flag and of the coming century, to height.

STANZA: 6

In these lines the poet says that some time in future years when the people of 20th century have gone grey and have become old, by then, they will desire to see that place again which they have left behind. They will like to see what-ever changes they have brought or whatever has been done for the betterment of the coming century by them shall be recommended. This makes no difference even if people of 20th century live no more and have gone to the unknown places (have died) they will like not to be forgotten in any age because of their good deeds for the future generation.

12. A POISON TREE

By William Blake

Reference:

These lines have been taken from the poem "A Poison Tree" written by William Blake.

Context:

In this poem the poet says that hatred is like a poisonous tree. If anger and scorn are not expressed, they keep on growing. The poet expressed his anger to his friend, it disappeared. He did not express his anger to his enemy it grew into a poisonous tree., The poisonous tree killed his enemy No doubt, hatred which is the outcome of lack of trust can harm, a rival but cultivating hatred in itself is not an admirable thing. The use of the Word "Apple" is reminiscent of the Garden of Eden and the idea of temptation.

Explanation

Stanza: 1

In these lines the poet says that once he got angry with his friend. He expressed his anger to his friend and it came to an end. In the same way, he became angry with his enemy but he did not disclose his anger to him. As a result, anger of the poet went on increasing. This is but natural if a person gives vent to his emotions, he feels relaxed. If he does not disclose his anger or other emotions, they keep on growing which is not a good sign.

Stanza: 2

The poet says when he did not disclose his anger to his enemy; it went on increasing and become a plant. He developed a sort of fear. He Watered his plant with fright twice daily, i.e., in the morning' and in the evening. This water came from his eyes in the, form of tears out of anger and guiles. Both water and sun are necessary for the growth of tree. Water and sun helped him in growing his tree of wrath.

Stanza: 3

In these lines the poet tells u that as a result of his taking care of the tree it grew day and night very rapidly. One day it brought an attractive fruit in the form of an apple. His enemy observed that the fruit was shining and beautiful. He wanted to have it cunningly.

Stanza: 4

In the given lines, the poet expresses the out-come of the efforts made by him. He says since his enemy wanted to pluck the fruit of the tree cultivated by him, he entered his garden very secretly. It was night time and darkness had covered the poles or the whole universe. The enemy touched the apple and died at the spot in making efforts to pluck the fruit because it was poisonous from inside. In the morning the poet was very glad when he found that his enemy lying dead straight, under the tree, He was very cunningly deceived by his trick. The gist of the poem is that developing anger and hatred in itself are dangerous and harmful. One may injure one's opponents by one's anger and scorn but developing them is not admirable.

13. BECAUSE I COULD NOT STOP FOR DEATH

By Emily Dickinson

Reference:

These lines have been taken from the poem "Because I Could Not Stop for Death" written by Emily Dickinson.

Context:

In this poem the poetess talks about the gentle nature of its approach. She describes our existence in this world from cradle to the grave. To her, it is a journey from life to death. Actually dying to the poetess is the end of death and a start of eternal life. The poetess travels with death and finally they reach a mound of earth which is, in fact the grave. The grave is an entrance to the life after death and immortality.

EXPLANATION**Stanza: 1**

In these lines the poetess says that she was so busy that she could not wait for death to accompany her. Death was so kind that he stopped and waited for her. The vehicle of death carried only two persons-the poetess and death. Also there was immortality which was not visible. Their carriage was carrying them towards eternity. The suggestion is that death is always present with human beings but it is not visible. When death kills a person he goes to eternity and cannot return from there. Death has killed her and now she goes to eternity.

Stanza: 2

The poetess says that death and she herself drove very slowly the vehicle of life. Death was not in a hurry. She deferred all her chores. She even put away her hard work and her spare time for the decency of death. Both the poetess and death carried on their journey in the same carriage, towards immortality.

Stanza: 3

In these lines the poetess says that she and death passed by the school where children were contesting at the recess time in a circle. They also passed by the ripe corn which was waiting to be reaped. The ripened grain had covered many plains of field. During their journey they also saw the setting sun while passing by it. The children at school, the ripe corn and the setting sun may be her childhood, youth and old age.

Stanza: 4

In this stanza the poetess says that it was rather the sun which, while going down passed by them. Then, after the sunset, night prevailed. The dew-drops began to fall gently. These drops brought light, cold and shivering. She arrived because she was wearing very decent dress. The dress consisted of her feminine scarf and thin gauzed clothes.

Stanza: 5

In these lines the poetess tells that they continued their journey for quite some time. At last they stopped at a house which was merely a swelling of the ground. It was the grave. The roof of the house was hardly visible because its cornice was so low that it was at level with the ground or in the ground. In this stanza the suggestion is that man continues his life, passes by many events, good or bad and finally reaches the grave. The grave is very low and it seems as if it were a bulging of the ground.

Stanza: 6

After stopping at the grave, the poetess says that there is a feeling that many centuries elapse in the grave but all this time seems to be even shorter than a day. The poetess further says that at the very outset of their journey she had guessed that the horses of their carriage were carrying them towards eternity. The whole poem is full of the thought that with man's arrival at this world, death also journeys with him. Man performs many task and acts in various stages of life. Right from his infancy, school-life maturity and old age, he passes and finally reaches the grave, an eternal destination. It is here that eternity, or his never-ending life, or life from time to timelessness starts.

14. LIGHTS OUT

By Edward Thomas

Reference:

These lines have been taken from the poem "Lights Out" written by Edward Thomas.

Context:

In this poem the poet has compared "sleep" to an immeasurable forest. It is so deep that all paths leading to it come to an end there. All the lights are put out and man cannot find his way. He is lost there. Sleep is the greatest blessing. It overpowers every one. No one can i away from it. After the day's long, hectic activities, everyone has to reach this forest. The implicit idea is perhaps of death.

EXPLANATION

Stanza: 1

In these lines the poet has compared sleep to a deep and thick forest. He says he has reached the initial, stage of sleep. It is like an immeasurable deep and thick forest where all human-beings have to lose their way. No matter, if they lead a straight or a zigzag path. They hey, at last to come to the edge of sleep sooner or later because there is no alternative. Everybody, whoever, he

is has to sleep. Sleep is a great blessing, without which man cannot pull on with in life. The suggestion in this stanza is 'that man has to die sooner or later and has to reach the borders of death after completing the journey of life.

Stanza: 2

This stanza gives an expression to the thought that all the roads that remain busy right from the appearance of day, till the arrival of night, people moving on such roads, have to reach the edge of deep forest (sleep or death). All the travellers (human-beings) suddenly blur because of the overpowering of sleep (or death) and soon they sink in (or die). They are fast asleep because of the day's long work journey of life).

Stanza: 3

In this stanza the poet says that when sleep overpowers a person he forgets everything. His love, disappointment and desire and ambition etc. all come to an end. Every kind of joy and all troubles no matter, how sweet the joy is, or how bitter the troubles are, come to an end.' In sleep, man forgets everything even if it is sweeter than the noblest thing/task.

Stanza: 4

In the give lines the poet further explain the state of sleep. He says sleep dominates a person he forgets even -the most beautiful face, from which in normal conditions, he would not turn away his eye. He also forgets the most interesting book when sleep overpowers him. The poet further says that he enters sleep which is necessary and because of necessity he has to enter the field of sleep alone and has also to wake-up alone. The poet does- not know how this whole process takes place.

Stanza: 5

In this concluding stanza again the poet compares sleep to tall trees. He says when he is in the grip of sleep, he feels as if the tall trees were rising more and more, spreading their shade. In the same way the undergrowth or the greenery of the tall trees becomes hazy and cloudy. The shade of the tall trees presses him to go into deep sleep. Layer above layer of sleep comes upon him silently unless he is fully under the influence of sleep. He is forced to obey and hear what the sleep commands him. When he is fully dominated by sleep, he loses his way and becomes unaware of himself. Slumber is tantamount to death. He who is in sleep is unaware of himself and all the worldly things as he would be in death.

SUMMARIES

LEISURE

The poem starts with a question about the life, which is full of worries and cares and has deprived the modern man of leisure to enjoy the beauty and charms of nature. The poet depicts that we are absorbed so much in the problems of the world that we have no time to stand and see the beauties of this world. We are so busy in our daily routine that we have no time to watch what nature has got to show us. It seems that cattle are better than we are as they have the leisure to stand under the branches of trees and enjoy the blessings of nature. Similarly we pass through jungle like a blind man who does not see the beautiful creatures of the wood. We have no time to stand and watch the habits of the little squirrel that is hiding the nuts in the grass for the rainy season. We have no eyes for the beauties of nature. The streams appear so beautiful in daylight, the rays of the sunshine like stars in the water and remind us of a starry night. So with the help of beautiful simile, the poet compares the shining water of the stream to a starlet night but also we have not got the time to appreciate its beauty because we are busy in our own petty problems. Then the poet personifies beauty as living being and regrets that in our rushed life we have no time to appreciate the joys that "Beauty" can give us, as Keats also points out.

"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever".

But we have no eyes to see this superb blessing of God. Beauty has feet and it dances well. Beauty is an abstract quality but the poet personifies it and in this way makes it a living thing that can move, dance and smile. She smiles with her eyes and that smile slowly conquers her whole face but we cannot relish that delight, as we have no spare time. As Thomas fuller says,

**"The poor is not he who hath not much but
he who craves much."**

So the poet comes to the conclusion that we are spending a dull life. Our life is full of tension and worries. This life is not worth living in only because of our busy routine. The so-called

mechanical revolution has made man a machine also. He works like a computer and acts like robot. Time has become very precious for him. He thinks about time in terms of money, so he cannot waste time for himself. Our busy life has taken us away from the beauties of nature. Wordsworth presents the same idea when he says,

**“The world is too much with us
late and soon. Getting and spending,
We lay waste our powers.
Little we see in nature that is ours”**

The poet feels that life must be relished in a leisurely manner. The repetition of the line “We have no time to stand and stare.” emphasizes the poet’s basic idea.

TARTARY

(By Walter De La Mare)

The poet, Walter De La Mare, imagines himself, in this poem as the “Lord of Tartary”. Tartary is a land of dream, beauty and fertility. It is replete with unheard and unseen delights. He desires to have a bed made of ivory, throne made of beaten gold, court full of dancing peacocks, forests full of roaming tigers and pools teemed with great fishes. He imagines himself wearing a robe clustered with pearls of gold

of green and white colour, holding a curved sword in his hand and riding a chariot driven by seven Zebras. He is fond of music and enjoys harp, flute and mandolin. He also desires to derive pleasure from the natural beauty and charming objects of Tartary as S.T.Coleridge puts it in own way,

**“Where Alph, The Sacred river, ran
Through caverns, measureless to man
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills
Where blossomed many an incense-beaming tree.**

The poet expresses his hidden wish. He wishes to be an absolute master of Tartary, a far-off land given the lineaments of a romantic land, beautiful, rich, fertile and full of delights. Then, he would lead a luxurious life. His bed would be made of

solid gold. Beautiful peacocks would decorate his court and his royal jungles would be full of fierce roaming tigers. His beautiful ponds would be full of pretty fish whose fins would shine in the light of the sun and thus make the whole court colourful and delighting. The poet wishes to enjoy a life full of colour, pomp and show if he were the Lord of Tartary. Then his life would be changed altogether. His guards would blow bugle whenever the royal meal would be served. So his court would be full of the sounds of bugles and trumpets all the time. During the evening time, the beauty of the court would be enhanced and it would be illuminated with yellow and red light. Then like the courts of the great kings, the music and dance would be presented in his honour.

All kinds of musical instruments would be played to produce sweet and melodious tunes. If he were the king, he would wear the royal dress decorated with different colours of beads and pearls. His robe would be full of white, golden and green coloured gems. Early in the morning before the waning of the morning star, he would put on his royal dress adorned with a curved sword. Seven Zebras would

drive his carriage and thus he would inspect his royal estate passing through the green patches of his dark forests, as Coleridge says:

***“And here were forests ancient as the hills, Enfolding
Sunny spots of greenery.”***

He would be the owner of all the fruits of Tartary land and all the rivers shining in the light of sun would be his. He would be the master of the hills, valleys, forests and roves. Thus shining stars and the sweet smelling air, the winding lakes and the birds that are singing in the citron trees, all would be his subject. So he would be able to enjoy all these things fully.

**Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean.**

NEWYEAR RESOLUTIONS

In this poem, the poetess, Elizabeth Sewell, has made an extraordinary resolution to make herself a better woman by facing and living with reality in the start of the New Year. New Year is generally understood as starting of a new chapter of one's life. People make resolution by taking stock of their lives and resolving to be better ones.

Socrates, the great Greek philosopher, is reported to have said that unexamined life is not worthy of living and it is almost a tradition with the sensible and reasonable people to take stock of their life and to resolve to be better people, at the start of the new year. So, the poetess has decided to live with reality in the New Year. Reality is not always comfortable but pinching and disturbing. The use of the image "bony arms" points to this fact. But the poetess is resolute and will draw comfort fulfilling her resolution. The phrase 'draining of long draughts' is linked with drinking wine but the poetess intends to drink calmness and thinks it necessary for cleansing herself. It is quite natural and true

that in loneliness and quiet one can examine one's life honestly. It is a self-criticism. Life examined critically purifies one for better future life.

Explanation:

It is a short and interesting poem written by Elizabeth Sewell. The arrival of New Year is usually celebrated with great fervour and enthusiasm. It is a tradition to make some promises in the light of which one wants to spend one's New Year. Usually people pledge to become better human beings in the New Year.

The poetess makes an extraordinary resolution at the beginning of the New Year. She says that in order to purify her soul, she will remain quiet. She will drink long sips of quietness. It is a beautiful simile as if quietness is a medicine that can make her clean physically and spiritually from impurities. Quietness seems to purify her because when a person is quiet and is not taking active part in the problems of the world, he gets time to have an insight into his own soul. He can then see his own impurities and drawbacks and can get rid of them. The poetess also wants to do this. She will face the reality. She will not have

any high opinion about herself in future. She will not lead a conceited life and have no superiority complex about herself.

From now on, she will speak the truth to herself. She will not misjudge her own personality. In order to fulfill this goal. She will remind herself about her own reality twice during a day. Her assessment about herself will be true and real. During the night also, she will not forget the reality. Nodoubt, it is a time when one forgets bitter realities of this world and is lost in the imaginary world of dreams. But she pledges that she will not lose her contact with reality though it is hard like the bony arms yet she will prefer it because she has made her pledge and only the fulfillment of her promise will make her happy.

It is very hard thing to face the reality and specially the reality about our own self. Our ego and our conceited self stop us from seeing our weakness. Without facing these realities, we are unable to improve ourselves. So the resolution to see the reality is the first step towards reformation.

WOMANWORK

Explanation of Main Idea

Maya Angelou, the poetess, has described the domestic routine of a housewife. The routine is mechanical, i.e. caring for the children, mending clothes, mopping floor, buying and cooking food and pressing clothes etc. It is in fact drudgery. No leisure is available to a woman. Even then she is dreaming of ideal life. She longs for rain, sunshine and snowfall. It gives woman strength to sustenance. She wishes to be one with Nature and loves to be a part of the mountain, oceans, leaf and stone, star shine, moon glow. She likes to participate in nature around her. She is tired of her daily mechanical routine and requests the storm to rescue her as follows:

Storm, blow me from here

With your fiercest wind

Let me float across the sky

Till I can rest again

The poetess, Maya Angelou has success fully described the disgust of the house woman for the dullness of life of drudgery and her longing for ideal life and union with nature around her.

Critical Appreciation

In this poem, Maya Angelou, an American poetess, tells us about the routine work of a woman. She is busy in daily chores. She attends the children and looks after them. She also mends the old cloths. She cleans the floor and also does all the shopping for the house. She has to cook food for the whole family. She looks after the young baby when it is wet and cries. Sometimes, she invites guests at her house and she has to serve them. She also cuts the cane for different household works such as making chair. Then, she cleans the whole house.

All this daily work just makes her life dull and bored. She may not remain creative and productive. In the house of such busy work she spares some time to enjoy the beauties of nature. She invites the sun to warm her and asks rain to fall on her forehead and make her clam and cool again. She asks the storm that with the help of its violent winds, it should take her to the skies where she can float and fly lightly and forget all her worries and troubles, where she can forget about the drudgery of this mechanical life and have some rest and relaxation. It is, in fact, a universal truth.

She asks the snow to cover her with its soft flakes. It seems that snow is kissing her and its touch is very cold and icy. So she addresses the things of nature, shining sun, falling rain, round and high sky, lofty mountains, vast oceans, green leaves, shining stars, glowing moon and even the humblest stones of this universe. She thinks that these are the only things she possesses because only they give her comfort during her work. She enjoys them all instead of her dull and boring work.

As Ted Hughes says:

The convenience of the high trees,

The air's buoyancy and the sun's ray

All an advantage to me;

The monotonous work of the house gives her no pleasure. She is constantly under pressure that she has to do so many things. She is taken for granted by all the members of family. She is

neither paid nor appreciated. But, all this boring and dull work has made her a machine. Her senses are not yet dull. She still has got her imaginative power and can enjoy the dream of an ideal life. All these natural things give her power and strength to do her work. The beauty of the natural objects recharges her and pacifies the creative side of her mind.

The Rebel

(By D.J. Enright)

Main Idea:

In this poem, the poet, D.J. Enright, describes the likes, dislikes and actions of a rebel as contrasted with a sensible and sane man. The attitude of a rebel is contradictory and non-conforming. In it lies the very characteristics and psychology of the rebel. The rebel is a troubled individual. His deviations from the normal are indicative, of his mental approach towards life and society. He grows long hair while all others have short and vice versa. Similarly he dislikes talk during the lesson, prefers fantastic clothes to uniform. He loves cats while others love dogs. He enjoys reading a book in seclusion in contrast to others while they go to meeting. In short, the rebel negates the normal in every respect and walk of life. The poet has not employed the technical terms yet he has successfully identified the rebel from his deviant behaviour. Although at the end of the poem he says:

It is very good that we have rebels

You may not find it very good to be one.

Critical Appreciation:

The poet tells us about the attitude of people who revolt against society. It is indeed a mockery. The poet has used a mocking style in the poem. The poet expresses that such people are against everything. They want to help their individuality. They are against conventions and creeds. In fact they are fed up with the monotonous society. So they try to introduce some changes through their attitude and appearance.

When there is a fashion to have short hair, the rebellious person will not follow it and he will have long hair so that the people know that he is not one of them. But when on the other

hand as the fashion to keep long hair comes, he will quickly cut his hair short in order to maintain his individuality.

In every field of life, his behaviour is same. In classroom when boys and girls are given permission to speak and ask questions, the rebel will remain silent but when the others are silent and listening to the lectures attentively, his complex of self excitation forces him to speak and thus make himself prominent. In this way, he also disturbs the whole class but he is happy that he has kept his identity.

He also displays his odd behaviour in the way he dresses himself. When the people wear the similar dress to look decent, sober and alike he wears unique and colourful clothes for the sake of exhibitionism and when there is fashion or trend to wear colourful and gaudy clothes, he will wear dull and decent clothes to distinguish himself.

In the same way while talking to people, he displays his strange trends and tastes. If the people are praising dogs, he will appreciate cats. While talking to cat lovers he will speak in favour of dogs. This shows that he does not care about the emotions and feelings of people. He does not want to be friendly with them. His only goal and motive is to distinguish himself from others and in order to achieve that goal, he can go to any extent.

In every walk of life he shows his eccentric attitude. If people are praising the sun and want to have warm weather, he will speak in favour of rain and cold weather. But if people are happy on a rainy day, he will feel sorry and regret the absence of the sun. When there is a social gathering, the rebel does not want to take part in it and prefers to stay at home and read some books. But when nobody is going out, the Rebel goes out and wants to have meeting with people who are enjoying their stay at home. The Rebel agrees when all other people are saying "NO". His answer is in the negative, when all the people show affirmation. So he is different from common people in all respects. He keeps his identity due to his eccentric behaviour. His style of living is quite different from that of ordinary people.

Still, the poet appreciates him and says that it is good to have rebellious people among us. They save the society from dullness and uniformity. His attitude towards the rebel is

sympathetic and lively. He does not condemn him, rather he takes delight in the strange activities and contradictory attitude of the rebel. Although, it is good to have rebels among us but surely we don't want to become one because the life is surely very difficult for them. In fact they make their own life miserable trying to become unique and different. They face the harsh criticism of people and are disliked by the general public. Although all the variety and diversity in the society is because of them. This is the main tragedy of the rebel that he is not considered a normal person.

Patriot into Traitor

Dramatic Monologue:

A poem written in the form of a speech of an individual character; it compresses into a single vivid scene a narrative sense of the speaker's history and psychological insight into his character.

It is a poem in which one character speaks, while there are other characters present on the scene.

There is a difference between a soliloquy and a dramatic monologue, in soliloquy a speaker is alone (it can be called a lengthy aside.)

It is dramatic because it is full of dramatic irony.

Patriot into Traitor as a Dramatic Monologue:

Browning through this dramatic monologue has captured the mood of disillusionment and frustration of a leader who was considered a hero yesterday, but due to an unfortunate political upheaval, branded as a traitor. His tragic downfall is pitiable. And now condemned by the people, he hopefully waits for the judgement of God to redeem him.

There are sudden and catastrophic changes shown in the rise and fall of the leader. The reader becomes surprisingly aware of the sudden and catastrophic rise and fall of the hero which has taken with in the lapse of one year.

Summary

In this dramatic monologue, Robert Browning describes the rise and fall of a political leader. Not only the rise but also the fall is sudden and quick. The poem has a special relevance to the political conditions prevailing in the third world countries today.

The poet says that in the early part of the life of a political leader, success appears to be on his side. People loved him and adorned his way with petals of roses mixed with other flowers. They welcomed him from the house-tops with flags and it was only a year ago. The bells rang for him and there were crowd and cries everywhere (even in churches). The leader said that if he uttered to the people that he disliked the mere noises and the sun might be brought also from the sky on earth, the people would say what the next order to comply with. Instead he himself jumped at the sun to bring it on the earth for the people. He remained unsuccessful because no human being could achieve like that. But he, the leader was not given the reward. He could get nothing except being branded as traitor.

Now an year has lapsed. There is nobody on the house-tops to welcome him. The leader is walking while it is raining. A tight rope is cutting his both wrists. His forehead is bleeding. People who greeted him with open arms just an year ago, are now, pelting stones on him and condemning him for his misdeeds.

The fallen leader concludes that his entrance into the political life was a success. But his end is by no means praiseworthy. He says that he has paid what he owned to the people. Now, he will be rewarded by God in the life hereafter.

The poet wants to make it clear that in third world countries democracy and democratic traditions are not still deep rooted. Democratic tolerance is not present. Therefore the political leaders have to meet such circumstances. The poem contains a lesson for the people of third world countries. It is the lesson of steadfastness and tolerance in social as well as political life.

Dramatic irony, political satire exact and realistic expression and optimistic end have made the poem a remarkable piece of poetic art.

The Huntsman

The narrative poem "The Huntsman" is based on a Kenyan folklore. The poet "Edward Lawbury" advises us through the story of a Kenyan hunter, Kagwa who himself becomes the prey to fate, to avoid the unnecessary talk.

Kagwa was a hunter of lions and he used to hunt through bush and forest with his spear. One day he found a human skull and asked it how it had come there in the forest. The skull opened its mouth and replied that the habit of talking had brought it there. He hurriedly went to the king's court and told the king about this miraculous discovery. The king expressed his doubts about the truth of the tale.

Instead of granting Kagwa a prize, the king called out his guards and ordered two of them to accompany Kagwa and search for the talking skull. The king further ordered them to kill Kagwa if such a strange skull was not found there.

Kagwa and two guards rode through the jungle for many days and nights but they could find nothing. At last, they found a skull, Kagwa asked it how it had come there. But the skull did not answer. Kagwa began to implore. But the skull remained silent.

Upon this the guards ordered Kagwa to kneel down and they killed him in compliance with the king's orders. After it the skull opened its mouth and asked Kagwa, how he had come there. The dead Kagwa answered that talking brought him there. In this way the story of Kagwa proved the old maxim, "Think before you speak". No doubt useless and irresponsible talk bring disaster for the talkative one.

The poem is a sad example of sick humour. After going through it we experience mixed feelings of humour and regret at the same time. Funny and unfunny aspects of life blended with the elements of suspense and irony create a shocking impact.

The poem also describes the attitude of dictators and can be called a political satire. As it is shown that the dictators never

like common people's talk. They do not believe in anything without certifying it in their own way.

Narrative style, end stopped lines, monosyllabic words and proper stanzac form provide this free verse an impressive outlook. The poet is successful in drawing our attention to the tragic fact of life.

One Art

Plain and straightforward but ironic poem "One Art" is related with philosophy as well as religion. The poetess "Elizabeth Bishop" teaches us the great value of resignation and contentment. She is of the view that the true art of losing helps us in developing a spirit of acceptance and resignation. The art of losing, in fact, means to live life, hoping for the best, and to be ready to face and accept the worst.

The poetess says that it is not difficult to have a mastery over the art of losing something because many things have their existence only to be lost and their loss has no serious consequences. She advises to face difficulties and fluster of losing minor things like door keys and to bear our sufferings with patience. She asks to lose something daily to be perfect in this art.

We can learn this great art by practice. Practice of forgetting the names of people and places may help one to learn this art without any harm. She gives her own example that she has lost her mother's watch, three houses, some property and even her homeland but it is not a disaster.

She says that she can even lose someone very dear to her and can prove that this art is very easy to master.

Infact, the poetess advocates that to live in this world successfully, one must have patience and courage to bear losses. The people who are always eager to make great achievements should also be ready to make sacrifices. Nothing can be achieved easily. The actual reality demands that one has to suffer loss before gaining something. So, a person who is determined to achieve great success should not give up struggle to avoid losses.

The poem can be discussed as a satire. Everyone must lose something. Some one loses time and friends other loses property and kingdom. We also lose such things but we have no enough courage to confess it. There is also irony in this poem that to resign to fate is very difficult art but one has to learn it to lead a contented life. It combines the elements of satire, humour and irony. The tragedy of death which is inevitable is not referred. the subject is discussed in a mocking and non serious way but the poetess is successful in conveying the message.

Proper stanza form with an additional line, repetition of master and disaster, concrete images of common life and mocking yet didactic style have made this poem a master piece of its own kind.

The Solitary Reaper

The Solitary Reaper, a lyrical poem by Wordsworth, a renown romantic poet deals with the common experience of daily life. The poet recounts an incident of the past beautifully in verse. This is an excellent example of the poet's aesthetic sense and high artistic taste.

One day the poet saw a mountain girl who was all alone reaping grain and singing by herself. The poet did not like the singing girl to be disturbed by the passers by.

She was cutting and binding the grain and during the course of her work she was singing a melancholic song. The song was more sweet and melodious than the songs of nightingale who used to greet the weary travelers among the Arabian Oasis and was more thrilling than the songs of the cuckoo in the Spring time. The whole valley was full of this musical song and her beautiful tune was breaking the silences of the seas among the farthest Hebrides.

The poet could not understand the theme of the song as it was in foreign local dialect yet he tried to guess the meaning. He guessed that the song was perhaps a complaint about old unpleasant far-off events and battles which took place long ago. It might be a simple matter related to the past or present.

In the end the poet does not bother about the theme. He got absorbed in the miraculous sight. He stood motionless and still, listening to the sweet strain and looking the girl .

The music impressed him so much that he hears it in his solitude even now when it is heard no more. Hence this sweet poem proves the truth of Keats, **“A thing of beauty is a joy forever”**

Tender feelings, past memories, natural beauty and loneliness mixed with realistic and sentimental style make this narrative a true representation of Wordsworth. The beauty of song is given a romantic touch by hinting at the Arabian Oasis, Island of Hebrides, Weary travelers and unknown language. Loneliness is the main feature giving the song fairy-tale like impression. Most probably the song would not be so impressive if it was not heard in solitude. Monosyllabic as well as polysyllabic vocabulary, subject matter of the song, similes of the nightingale and the cuckoo and suitable rhyming scheme are the remarkable features of this lyric.

All The World's A Stage

The great dramatist of all ages, Shakespeare presents a unique treatment of human life in his play “As You Like It”. This masterpiece of keen observation, All The World's a Stage is infact a speech delivered by one of the characters of the above mentioned play.

In this poem the poet compares the entire world to a stage, where all the men and women play their particular part. During the course of drama of life the character appear and disappear on the stage to perform their role. There are seven stages of this drama. Birth is entrance and death is exit.

The first period begins and helpless infant in the nurse's arms vomits feebly. In the second stage a complaining school boy appears on the stage. He goes to school unwillingly like a snail. Then a teenager enters the stage sighing like a furnace and singing songs for his beloved. After this, man acts as a soldier ready to fight suddenly, seeking prompt fame even in the cannon's mouth to make his mark in the history.

In the fifth period a judge, with formal beard, fairly round belly and severe eyes appears on the stage of the world. He knows many proverbs and can quote a lot of modern instances.

In the sixth stage he becomes an old man, lean and weak. There are whistles in his voice and he wears glasses on his nose. He keeps a small bag with him and the world is so vast for his weak body.

In the last, (seventh stage) he is on the verge of end (death). He has lost every quality of his youth and has become a helpless child again thus ends this eventful history(life).

These different stages hint at the fact that nothing is permanent in this life as life is transient. Interpretation of human life is understandable to some extent but is not agreeable fully.

Subtle and sublime rhyme scheme, blank verse, realistic comparison straightforward treatment, fresh imagery, theatrical vocabulary and run-on-lines here and there are its special technical features.

NOVEL: THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA

Ernest Hemingway

THEME OF THE NOVEL

(GENERAL IMPACT OF THE NOVEL)

(WHERE IN LIES REAL INTEREST IN THE NOVEL?)

“The Old Man and The Sea” is not just an entertainer or a time-killer. It has something that goes deep down our psyche and arouses us out of our feckless, uneventful, lethargic day-to-day living. The old man is, infact, a sort of an “every man” who wishes to conquer the unconquerable, the Prometheus who desires to pull himself free from

the prison of Fate. Hemingway has caught the true spirit of adventurism.

The old man's adventure on the sea is not just an event, "one-in-a-series" but something new, something challenging, something impossible. He is pitted not just against a huge marlin or greedy reckless sharks but against all the forces of nature, rather the forces of universe that try to keep man subdued. They grudge him his success and cheat him of his final victory.

Nevertheless he remains unbeaten to the end; his pride is unscathed and his spirit unbent. He rightly remarks that a man may be destroyed but not defeated. His struggle against the Marlin and his fight against the sharks are as much objective as subjective. He is Odysseus, Achilles, Agamemnon and Macbeth combined.

He struggles nobly against the fish and kills it successfully but reaches the truly tragic height when he fights against the Sharks. It is his "be all and end-all".

He fights like Macbeth and suffers like Lear. He has the cleverness of Odysseus and nobility and charm of Hamlet. In crucial moments, the great tragic heroes say great things and so does Santiago: "Man is not made for defeat. A man may be destroyed but not defeated."

We can say that Hemingway has given us a message that a man should live a life of struggle. He should have courage to face the circumstances. When someone wants to prove his dignity he has to fight against the heavy odds without any help and even without any resources. He is to use all the available things to defend his pride.

CHARACTER SKETCH OF MANOLIN

Manolin, the boy, is the symbol of the old man's lost youth. It is he who has been teaching him fishing since his early childhood. The old man treats him like a loving father. Being issueless and widower Santiago is attached to him as a true friend, a mentor and a lover. Manolin too returns his passion with the same vehemence. He is attached to the old man as a calf to its mother.

Manolin takes very good care of the old man. He helps him carry gear to and from the shack. He listens to him avidly and showers the sincerest praises on him. He calls him, and believes it truly, that old man is the greatest fisherman in the world. He serves the old man with beer and brings him sumptuous supper from time to time.

It is true that he deserts the old man under pressure from his parents but his heart is still with him. When the old man does not return for three days, he is exceedingly restless. He is the first person to discover him in the shack and is so sorry for his miserable condition that he cries his heart out. He brings him hot coffee and promises to stay with

him forever and ever. When Santiago says, he is unlucky, Manolin bursts: "The hell with the luck. I'll bring luck with me." He is thus a paragon of friendship, love and loyalty.

THE OLD MAN'S LIFE IN HIS SHACK

Old man is a born fisherman and is as at home in the sea as any fish. He has spent all his life in voyaging and fishing. However, this amphibian lives on land as well. Normally he comes back in the evening, carries his gear to his shack, sometime all by himself, but mostly assisted by the boy, Manolin. His shack made of "the tough bud-shields of the royal palm" is simply furnished. Besides, a table, and a chair, it has a spring bed covered not with a mattress or foam but with old newspapers. There are a couple of pictures on Biblical themes as well as "a tinted photograph of his wife", which remains covered in one corner "under his clean shirt" lest he should feel lonely.

He has a fireplace "on the dirt floor to cook with charcoal" but there is nothing in his house to be cooked. He tries to put off the boy by pretending that he has "a pot of yellow rice," for his supper, but the boy knows too well that the promised "yellow rice and fish" is a dream. Infact they go through "this fiction everyday".

Their conversation centers on baseball and the champion of this game. Dimagio is the favourite hero of the old man. Infact he is competing with Dimagio all the time and turns out to be his equal in fishing. His great feat on the sea is of course as big as any victory of Dimagio.

DRAG OF THE GREAT FISH

The old man hooks a huge Marlin, 1500 pounds or more and 18 feet in length. It is the biggest fish caught by any fisherman in that area so far. The old man perceives by pressure of his thumb and finger on line that it is a male and it is one hundred fathoms deep.

He also knows that the fish has the hook "side ways in his mouth' and is rushing away with it. He lets the line slip through his fingers and makes the two reserve coils fast with this line. He does not lunge at the line lest it should throw the hook out. He says to the fish, "Eat it a little more. Eat it well." And then he strikes hard with both hands again and again so that the points of hook firmly stuck in its flesh.

This done, he braces himself “against the thwart”, leaning back against the pull. The fish starts pulling the skiff steadily.

It is a long drag that lasts for about three days and two nights. All this while the old man stands leaning against the bow with the line taut against his back. Towards the nightfall he covers his shoulders with a sack and slowly brings it under the line. The fish never comes up but swims nobly at a steady speed. Once or twice it gives a lurch; the line cuts through his right hand and once his face strikes against the stern and he is nearly pulled overboard. However, he endures the great pain in his back, the cuts in his hands and the bruises on his face patiently.

HOW DOES THE OLD MAN FINALLY KILL THE FISH?

Marlin, the old man hooks, drags his skiff for a couple of nights and two and half days. Another man in his place would have been panicky and given up but the old man knows better. He knows that a fish however strong and big it might be, can't drag the skiff forever. Hunger and toil must take its toll. In the meantime he eats raw tuna to keep himself strong.

At long last, the fish as he had predicted, starts circling. He now gains line with every circle, forcing the fish to come closer with every round. As the fish comes alongside, he pulls with all his strength, and turns “part way over” but then it rights itself and swims away. It happens several times. The old man says, “Fish you are going to have to die any way. Do you have to kill me too?” he is so enamoured of the beauty and nobility of the fish that he calls it a brother. He even goes on to say, “Come on and kill me. I don't care who kills who.”

As the fish, now tired and exhausted, comes along side, he drops the line, puts his foot on it, lifts the harpoon as high as he can and drives it down with all his might “in to the fish's side just behind the great chest fin.” He feels the iron go in and pushes “all his weight after it.” There oozes out a cloud of blood from the fish's heart. It is dead. Soon it is afloat, green, golden and silver. The greatest adventure on sea has been accomplished although it is by no means the end of old man's labour and struggle.

THE OLD MAN'S FIGHT AGAINST THE SHARKS

The old man feels truly elated after he had killed the biggest marlin hunted by any fisherman in that area. He is sure that even great Di

Magio would be proud of him that day. He lashes the fish alongside his boat and sail southwest, unaware of the blackest tragedy that awaits him.

Hardly an hour passes when, attracted by the scent, the first shark, a Mako, hits him. It is armed with teeth sharper than the edge of the sword; it is the worst enemy that could be imagined on the sea. The unconquerable man runs the harpoon into the head of the shark. He hits it "with resolution and complete malignancy." It turns over and sinks in water. The old man is deeply grieved to think that his fish has been mutilated. It seems to him "as though he himself were hit."

This however, is the beginning not the end. The scent of the fish spreads far and wide attracting entire shoals of sharks from the deep. The old man is now pitted against not one but legions. He wishes "it had been a dream" but then he reminds himself "man is not made for defeat. A man can be destroyed but not defeated." He kills them one after the other, first with the harpoon, then with the oar with the knife lashed to it, then with his club and lastly with his tiller. He gives a brave fight and makes short work of several sharks but they are too many: but that cannot dampen his courage. However, it does not mean that he is a superman or a giant. He has the common weaknesses, which become all the more prominent when he is pitted against forces much stronger than he.

After he hooks the fish, he wishes a successful end of this adventure. Without compromising on his skill or in any way relaxing his efforts, he promises scores of "Hail Mary's and Our Fathers." Perhaps he does this to keep up his heart. However, his anxiety culminates into a delirium. When the sharks hit him, he cannot help calling out helplessly, "I'd like to buy some luck if there's any place they sell it." He then accuses himself of violating his luck by going "too far outside." Nevertheless towards the end of the novel, he emerges a living martyr, reconciled to the fortune and ready to make new start.

THE OLD MAN'S REVERIES

The old man is alone on the sea. The boy Manolin has been taken away from him and he has no radio to bring him baseball or music. Quite naturally, he takes to self-communing. His deliberations sometimes become his reveries or a vocal stream of the subconscious. Although talking during fishing is injudicious yet he cannot help doing so.

He talks to the bird that alights upon his line to take rest, to the hand as it cramps. His conversation on these occasions is amusing and witty and at the same time thought provoking. Most instructive and penetrating are, however, his jibes (طنز) at himself. It is here that he takes stock of things, thrashes and analyses. He gets at the truth at

one leap that is enlightening not only to himself but also the reader. Some times his thinking aloud becomes so realistic a sort of vocal current in the stream of subconscious. It is inclusive of all his experience, his desires, his ambitions, his pride, his disappointments and his courage. It is through these communing that we get at the real man in him. These are most revealing in nature and perhaps the most important part of the novel.

DiMaggio, A Great Source Of Inspiration For The Old Man.

Hemingway's novel 'The Old Man and the Sea' is a shining example of human valour, self-reliance and endurance. Its hero, the old man went out in the deep sea alone and succeeded in hooking a big marlin. The marlin was too strong for him and he could not haul it to the surface of the sea. The fish started dragging the old man along with his boat. The old man decided to defeat this powerful creature with his skill and experience.

The struggle with the marlin continued for two days and nights. During this time the old man got dead tired and his hands were badly injured. He did not think of giving up the struggle. He decided to boost up his morale by reviving his past victories and recalled his historic hand game competition with a Negro. Then he tried to feel strong by remembering of his hero Joe DiMaggio, the base-ball champion. DiMaggio was a great player and a remarkable leader. DiMaggio always proved to be a deciding factor for his team and brought it victories. This champion of base-ball played neatly and skillfully in spite of the pain of a bone spur in his heel. Moreover, the old man's admiration for DiMaggio owed to another factor, as DiMaggio was born of a fisherman.

By reviving his hero, the old man tried to collect his strength and managed to endure the great pain. He prayed to be worthy of his hero. He says to himself, "**Pain does not matter to man.**" In this way the old man minimized his sense of loneliness and stimulated his falling courage.

The writer in fact wanted to show, how age and miseries of life waste human energies and weaken the vigorous one yet cannot dampen the courage. Thus the main theme of the novel is also

proved by mentioning DiMaggio's importance that **Man is not made for defeat.**

HERO OF THE NOVEL

Character sketch of Santiago, the old man

The hero of the novel is an old man. His name is Santiago. He is a born fisherman. He lives in a coastal village near Havana. He is not a common angler. He hooks big fish like Dolphin, Marlin and Shark. He is strong and gaunt. His eyes are of sea colour. He has no relations and lives alone. A boy, Manolin looks after him. He fishes in Gulf Stream with the help of a small skiff. He has simple and cheap fishing apparatus. The boy, Manolin helps him in fetching the apparatus to and from his shack. His shack is made of sturdy fibred guano. There is a table, a chair, a bed covered with newspapers and an army blanket in his shack. He has decorated the walls of his shack with the pictures of Jesus Christ and Virgin of Cobre. His shirt as well as the sail of his skiff is patched with floor sack. His sail is so tattered that the writer calls it "**The flag of permanent defeat**". The people call him "**salao**" because of his continuous hard luck. He has been without fish for eighty-four days. For the first forty days the boy, Manolin was with him but then his parents send him to another boat because they have become fed up with his skiff that always returns empty. The boy Manolin loves him very much and does not want to leave him but he is bound to obey his parents. Now he tries to help the old man by serving him with food, beer and sardines (for bait).

The old man is an ordinary sailor but the light of determination in his eyes makes him someone special. He calls himself "**A Strange Old Man**". He is no doubt a strange old man so far as his courage and endurance is concerned. After eighty-four desperate days of fruitless struggle he is still ready to test his luck and to go fishing to regain his reputation as a successful fisherman and also to remove the slur of being Salao. Following are some of the important aspects of his character that make him hero of the novel and representative of the whole human race:

- **His loneliness:**

Santiago, the hero is leading a life of loneliness. He is leading his life courageously. He has formed the habit of talking to himself to overcome his feeling of loneliness. He thought aloud and talked to himself to console and comfort himself. He has put the photograph of his wife under his clean shirt in the corner because it makes him too lonely. His cry during the heroic struggle, **“I wish I had the boy. To help me and to see this”** indicates his feeling. He talks to sea, to fish and to the bird.

The writer wants to show that need of a companion is natural. A man can live alone but cannot avoid feeling lonely.

- **His passion of love:**

The old man is kind hearted and loving by nature. His behaviour with the boy indicates his love. He even loves the birds that could not catch any fish. He invites a bird to take rest in his skiff. He thinks that fish are man's brother. He feels sorry for the huge Marlin, as he says when he was trying to beat the fish he says

- **His expertise:**

The old man is not only a fisherman par excellence but also a confident explorer of the sea. He is one of those very few people who stand in no need of the conventional apparatus like a compass or a wireless set for guidance. He can locate his position in any part of the sea with the help of trade wind. When the fish drags him into the high seas, he is not at all afraid. Another fisherman in his place would have cut off the line and sailed back, but he says, **“Fish I will stay with you until I am dead”**. He is so daring not because of stupidity but because of his sound knowledge and his well-placed confidence.

- **His sense of humour:**

The conversation between Santiago and Manolin is lighthearted and perfectly enjoyable. His address to the bird especially his remarks “what the birds are coming to,” his taunts and threats to his own left hand. His promises to say, “Our Fathers and Hail Mary's” as well as his remarks “consider them said” are all very amusing. He says to the second shark, **“Go and see your friend or maybe it's your mother,”** and he says to himself “you talk too much old man,” are all humorous.

- **His Reveries:**

The old man is alone on the sea. The boy Manolin has been taken away from him and he has no radio to bring him baseball or music. Quite naturally, he takes to self-communing. His deliberations sometimes become his reveries or a vocal stream of the subconscious. Although talking during fishing is injudicious yet he cannot help doing so. He talks to the bird that alights upon his line to take rest, to the hand as it cramps. His conversation on these occasions is amusing and witty and at the same time thought provoking.

Following are some other points about the hero:

- **His struggle: His optimism: His unscathed pride:**
- **His symbolic significance: His sense of religion:**
- **His past memories: His confidence: His resolution:**