



B.A. Part - I English (Communication Skills)
Semester-I
Unit No. I

Department of Distance Education
Punjabi University, Patiala
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PROSE PARABLES

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Note:-The students can download syllabus from
 departmental website **www.dccpbi.com**

(I) KABULIWALLAH

(II) THE EYES ARE NOT HERE

Introduction to the Author (1861-1941) :

Rabindranath Tagore was born in 1861 in Calcutta. He was a poet, a dramatist, a short story writer, a novelist and a philosopher. He is known as Gurudev and founded Shantiniketan. A nobel laureate in Literature, his devotional poems called 'Gitanjali' are a source of inspiration to millions. He is accredited with modernizing Bengali Literature. He translated his own works into English. He took into cognizance many political and national issues. His novels, stories, songs, dance dramas and essays spoke about topics, political and personal.

He has the distinction of penning national anthem of two countries i.e. India as well as Bangladesh. His style was colloquial, natural and contemplative. Division of class, caste and gender are often deep rooted in the minds of adults; but for children, these barriers are non-existent. 'Kabuliwallah' describes how relationship between a little girl and a salesman breaks the shackles of such barriers.

About the Story :

'Kabuliwallah' is a touching story of bond between two persons. The Kabuliwallah is touched by Mini's innocence that seems like reflection of his own daughter whom he had left in Kabul for earning a livelihood in Calcutta. The story shows that children are more pliant in transcending barriers of age and caste. Eight years old Mini forms a bond with the Pathan and her father is able to empathise with the feelings of Rahmun because the father in him is able to feel the depth of affection stirring in the heart of the Pathan.

Story :

Mini, the five year old daughter of the author is the central figure in the story. The narrator calls her a 'chatterbox' who does not waste a single minute in silence. Her mother would put a full stop to her prattle but the doting father was more tolerant. He could not refrain from having a lively talk with her. One morning when he was in the midst of the seventeenth chapter of his novel, she came and opened her Pandora's box of questions. The narrator was busy in

concluding the chapter of his novel where Pratap Singh, the hero was about to escape with the heroine Kanchan Lata through the third storey window. Suddenly the girl ran to the window shouting 'Kabuliwallah, Kabuliwallah'. She began to call him. The narrator feared that his seventeenth chapter would never be finished as the man would come in to sell his wares. The Kabuliwallah looked up at the child who, out of terror, ran inside. Because she thought that inside his bag, there were two or three children like her. The pedlar came in and greeted the narrator with a smile. As the man had been called in, the narrator had to make some purchases. A conversation regarding Afghanistan and Russians ensued. When he was about to leave, he enquired about Mini, calling her 'the little one'. Mini was called in and Kabuliwallah offered her nuts and raisins. But she was not tempted.

One morning he found Kabuliwallah and Mini seated near the door. They were chatting like friends. Her little sari's corner was stuffed with almonds and raisins gifted to her by the Pathan. He gave the Pathan a coin of eight annas. This coin became a cause of conflict. He found his wife rebuking his daughter for accepting eight annas from Kabuliwallah. The pathan had gifted eight annas to Mini. The narrator intervened and saved the child from the wrath of the mother.

Friendship grew between Mini and the Pathan. Both shared jokes. The most humorous joke was about going to father-in-law's house, which in the case of the girl meant being wed and amongst men of Kabuliwallah class, it was a humorous expression for going to jail. The Kabuliwallah would shake his fist at the invisible relative saying that he would bash his father-in-law. Mini would burst in peals of laughter and her friend would join her.

The narrator was fond of travelling, though he had 'never left Calcutta'. All his journey's were mental. In the presence of Kabuliwallah he would be transported to the foot of arid mountain peaks with narrow little defiles twisting in and out amongst their towering heights. His imaginative journeys would be cut short by warnings of his wife who was distrustful of Kabuliwallah and feared that he would take away her daughter to sell her as a slave in Kabul. She was a timid lady who was perturbed by any sudden occurrence such as noise in the street. She was in the habit of jumping to conclusions.

Rahmun's regular visits startled even the narrator but their jokes and innocent laughter reassured him. One day Rehman was arrested by the police. What had transpired was unfortunate. A certain neighbour, who had bought a shawl from him, tried to evade paying the debt by denying that he had ever bought a shawl. A quarrel broke out between them. Pathan struck him and the police arrested him. Mini asked him if he was going to his father-in-law's house. He said he would have thrashed his father-in-law but his hands were bound.

Rehman's was sentenced. Time passed and he was forgotten. Mini had grown young and developed new interests and new relationships. On the day of her marriage, Rahmun came to see Mini. The narrator wanted to send him away. But the latter showed him hand expression of his daughter which he carried with him

lovingly. Rahmun was taken aback on seeing a grown up Mini in a bride's costume. Then the truth dawned upon him that his own daughter would have grown up by now. The narrator realized the feelings of a father and gave Rahmun a bank note telling him to marry his daughter off.

This present meant curtailing some of wedding festivities leaving the ladies despondent. But the narrator's heart was cheerful at the thought at Kabuliwallah's meeting with his long lost daughter.

Critical Comments :

It is a very popular story that brings out the ability to form bond of love which is intrinsic to the nature of human beings. Besides, it negates the biases of gender, caste and belief which afflict the mind of an adult. Children are not beguiled by these divisions. The story also reveals a father's sensitivity i.e. to empathise with the plight of another father. It also shows that human beings care and make sacrifices to help needy brethren. After initial terror, Mini is able to form a bond with Rahmun who comes from a different community and is advanced in age. Mini's father, too, realizes that Rahmun has a daughter like Mini. So he restricts his budget to help Rahmun.

SOLVED SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

Q. Describe Mini's father.

Ans. Mini's father is a writer. He writes novels that are apparently Romantic adventures. In contrast to his wife who is a timid, apprehensive lady; he is rational and is not perturbed by friendship between his daughter and the Kabuliwallah. He can empathise with others. He realizes the feelings of Kabuliwallah. His fatherly instincts make him generous towards him. He gives him some money so that he could go back to his native place and do something for his daughter. This act of generosity provided more satisfaction than a lavish marriage ceremony of his own daughter.

Q. How does Mini form an affectionate relationship with Kabuliwallah?

Ans. Mini's innocence lent her power to form a friendly bond with the pathan. She was devoid of grown ups ego's resistance to a stranger. Kabuliwallah was attracted towards Mini as he had a daughter as old as Mini. He had come away from home in quest of a livelihood; there was a natural longing for reunion with his daughter. Mini was an emotional substitute...Besides even grown ups are fascinated by guideless innocence of young ones Kabuliwallah.

VOCABULARY

Chattering	:	Talkative, one who talks too much
Prattle	:	To talk for the sake of talking

Demur	:	One who sells in the streets
Quaint	:	Strange
Gigantic	:	Large, big in size
Witticism	:	Presence of mind
Euphemism	:	Phrase used in order to avoid unpleasant
Wander	:	Roaming
Conjure	:	To guess, imagine
Absurd	:	Vague
Ablution	:	To make pure
Dispersed	:	Scattered
Apparition	:	Ghost
Despondent	:	Diasppointed

(ii) THE EYES ARE NOT HERE

Introduction to the author :

Ruskin Bond was born in Kasauli, Himachal Pardesh, India, but grew up in Jamnagar (Gujrat), Dehradun and Shimla. He is a prolific writer and winner of innumerable literary awards. In a span of about 60 years he has authored more than thirty books for children as well as a hundred short stories, essays, novels and memoirs. 'The Night Train at Deoli', 'Time Stops at Shamli,' and 'Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra' are his famous collections of short stories. He wrote his first novel, 'The Room on the Roof' at the age of 17, which received John Llewellyn Rhys Memorial Prize in 1957. In 1992, he was honored with Sahitya Akademy Award. Currently he has been editing many anthologies. His historical covel 'A Flight of Pigeons' prompted eminent director Shyam Benegal to produce a movie 'Junoon' in 1978.

About the story :

'The Eyes are not Here' also known as 'The girl on the Train' was originally published in *Contemporary Indian English Stories*. The story is about two co-passengers travelling in a train who interact with each other for some time. Both are blind and unaware of the fact that the other one is blind. The narrator deliberately hides this fact and learns from another passenger that the girl with whom he was interacting is blind only after she gets off the train. The story juxtaposes irony and pathos that arouse touching response from the reader.

Story in detail :

The narrator is alone in a compartment of the train. He is totally blind; but he is in the habit of playing the game of concealment by pretending that he is not blind. A girl boards the same train. The narrator hears her parent's voice instructing the girl how to behave during travel; the usual instructions of the concerned parents : Do not lean out of the window : where things should be kept : and how to avoid speaking to the strangers. The narrator cannot see the face of the girl but he is able to judge that she is wearing slippers. He likes her voice and the sound of her slippers. He wants to know what her destination is. His query startles her. The girl says that she is not aware of another passenger's presence. The narrator presumes that she could not see him as he might be occupying a dark corner of the compartment : or probably she has failed to see him because people register only what is essential to notice. The girl tells him that she is getting down at Saharnpur. In response to her inquiry the narrator tells her that his destination is Dehra and then Mussoorie. The girl is excited and feels that he is lucky to visit such a beautiful place, that too, in October. The narrator agrees that October is the best time to visit a hill station. During this period, the hills are covered with wild Dahlias, the sun is delicious; and it is pleasant to sit in front of a log-fire and drink brandy.

The narrator thinks about the effect of his words on her. He wonders if he appears to be a romantic fool to her. Then he makes a mistake by asking about the scenery outside. But his doubts are removed as she tells him to see it for himself. He moves along the berth and pretends to see through the open window. To sound convincing he tells her that they seem to be stationary while the trees seem to be moving in the opposite direction. The girl asks if he could see any animals and quips in that there are hardly any animals left in the forests near Dehra.

Cautiously, he tells the girl that her face is interesting. The girl expresses relief; for she is tired of being told that she has a pretty face. The narrator interjects that an interesting face can be pretty as well. The next station is about to come, the girl feels relieved as she does not like travelling for long. The narrator is fascinated by her voice and presence in the compartment while she is collecting her things to leave. He starts wondering what is her hair style, if it is tied in a bun, or plaited, or hung loose over her shoulders. Meanwhile the train stops, the girl moves to get down. Perhaps, at the door she brushes against someone. A male voice apologises. She has left leaving behind fragrance of perfume, and an echo good-bye in sweet voice.

The train moves on, the narrator gets another companion to replay the game. The man's voice awakens him from his reverie, "You must be disappointed; he said, 'I'm sorry I'm not as attractive a travelling companion as the one who just left'.

The narrator enquires from new entrant also about the hair style of the girl. He is perplexed and replus that he is unable to recollect her style but she had beautiful

eyes which were of no use to her as she was totally blind. The man wonders why her beautiful eyes remained unnoticed.

Theme :

The story brings out a note of pathos and irony. Both the pivotal characters in the story remain deprived of the deeper interaction. Particularly the narrator feels a sense of loss when she leaves. Some kind of emotion is stirred which is apparent from his statement that he would have liked her to travel for a longer period. His desire to touch her hair is indicative of his tender feelings. The irony is that both of them are unable to judge the blindness of each other. The story presents the loneliness experienced by physically challenged people.

Solved Short Question Answers**Q. Comment on the use of irony in the story.**

Ans. The irony in the story is that both the travellers are blind yet neither of them is able to let the other know. The narrator, who is under the impression of having played the role of a normal sighted person discovers at the end, through the comment of a new passenger that the girl was blind like himself. When the girl says 'I didn't know anyone else as here', the narrator, thinks, even people with good eyesight fail to notice their surroundings fully because perception is generally a selective phenomena.

Q. What is the significance of the title 'The Eyes are not Here'?

Ans. The title of the story reflects a deep note of pathos giving a vivid peep into the loneliness of people, cut off from their surrounding when they are not blessed with the gift of vision. The narrator is touched by young traveller's feminine presence. He becomes even sentimental which is apparent from his thought that he would have liked her to travel for long. He is unable to see 'the beauty of the girl.' He keeps imagining about the style of her hair. The girl has been called beautiful by many as she says 'I'm tired of people telling I've a pretty face. It is tragic that she herself cannot see her own beauty in the mirror.

STUDY NOTES

Anxious	:	Worried
Startled	:	Surprised
Essentials	:	Basic necessities
Formidable	:	difficult to deal
Rumble of Wheels	:	Low continuous & throbbing sound
Ventured	:	Endeavoured
Gallant	:	Courageous and honourable
Tantalising	:	Tempting
Reverie	:	A day dream

(I) THE DEATH OF A HERO

(II) GRIEF

Introduction to the Author :

Jai Nimbkar, born in 1932, is a writer of many interesting stories as well as novels. Her stories have been published in various Indian Journals. In 1970, writer's Workshop, Calcutta published her stories in a volume titled 'The Lotus Leaf'. In 1974, a novel called 'Separate Prisons' was published. Another short story collection 'Bird and other Stories' came in 1993, alongwith a novel 'Come Rain'. Recently she has been writing in Marathi.

Sketch of the Story :

'The Death of a Hero' is about an ordinary school teacher Mr. Tagde whose conscience is awakened by the villainous behavior of a student of his school, who is from a well-connected family. The spoilt boy violates discipline and an outraged Tagde wants to submit a report against him seeking expulsion of the boy. He keeps his heroic and valourous stance throughout the story deriving strength from his morally upright stand; but eventually, influential people compel him to accept a kind of compromise.

Summary :

Mr. Tagde is a private school teacher. He has worked in the school without any individual self assertiveness. His conscience is awakened when a student belonging to influential parents behaves in unruly manner. He prepares a report against the boy seeking expulsion of the boy. The principal wants to scuttle it saying that it is too harsh a punishment for the boy's pranks. Mr. Tagde tells him that the boy has damaged school benches with razor blades and a black board with a piece of tin. Breaking of window panes by throwing stones at them, stealing of books and note-books and pens belonging to girl students outside the class are some of his routine outrageous acts. Though the principal is aware of Mr. Tagde's mature uprightness yet he does not want to forward the report. Tagde does not relent. The principal agrees to forward without his endorsement. Later on, on his way back, Tagde becomes aware of his actions. The retaliation would mean a loss of job. But he thinks he can fight for justice without fear of

consequences as his children are already settled and his retirement is due in next two years. This rebellion gives him a renewed strength.

In the evening, he is visited by Mr. Thakar a lawyer, on the behest of the Principal Mr. Tagde tells him firmly that he is not going to change his mind. The Lawyer tells him that it is a suicidal act. But he is firm as he is determined to fight against the rotten system. Next morning, a rich Brahmin Vishnupant Joshi comes to his place to persuade him. The latter does not submit to his pressure. He is warned that he may not lose the job but pension also. Tagde stands like a rock. He is even beaten up by the companions of Veerander More.

He takes the boy out of school within three months, provided the report is withdrawn. There is again a turmoil in his mind and the old timid and submissive Tagde falls in line. The hero in him falls from the high pedestal. He nods thus saving three more years of service and retirement benefits.

Critical Comment :

The story highlights the age-long and familiar struggle between justice and integrity. Occasionally people from lower working class try to stand up for what is right but their rebellion does not reach climax as the strength of people from higher social strata make all possible efforts to suppress it. Eventually the heroic effort dissipates into meek submission. Mr. Tagde, who at the fag end of his service career becomes aware of the presence of a hero in him who can fight for the right, suddenly succumbs to the pressure exerted by prestigious class.

VOCABULARY

Delinquent	:	A young person behaving in illegal or unacceptable manner
Expulsion	:	To be expelled from an institute
Rational	:	A person guided by reason
Rake-up	:	To begin
Extempore	:	Without preparation
Manoeuvrers	:	People who can manipulate anything
Exultation	:	State of being proud and gay
Jeopardise	:	To put at risk
Measly	:	Meagre; small

(II) GRIEF

About the Author :

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov (1860-1904) was a Russian writer with immense creative potential. His fame rests on his beautifully written stories and plays. Due to his father's financial losses he left his hometown to enroll in Moscow University Medical School and obtained a degree in Medicine. During his study, he wrote many comic stories for some monetary gains. A novel titled 'The Shooting Party' was translated into English in 1926. His stories highlight mental states of his characters ; often loneliness. He was awarded Pushkin award in 1888. He was a widely read author. His international popularity emerged after First World War when his works were translated into English.

About the Story :

The story 'Grief' is a psychological story. It presents man's need to communicate his pain to the others. It also reflects the self centeredness and indifference to the feelings of sorrow of other human beings. Iona, the cab driver is full of grief as he has lost his only son. He does not find a single person in this whole world, who can lend him a patient ear.

Summary :

Grief is the portrayal of the despair of a man who, in moment of bereavement, wants a sympathetic listener; but fails to find one and ultimately unburdens his heart in front of the mare that pulls his cab. The very first line echoes his despair, ' To whom shall I tell my grief.' Iona Potapov is a sledge driver who has lost his young son a week ago. He does not even have time to mourn his death because, being poor, he has to go daily to work for earning his bread. He waits in the market for a farer. Snow flakes are falling making him look like a white ghost. His horse, too, is covered with snow, giving the impression of being a half penny ginger bread horse. He is sitting on the box almost doubled, the way a broken spirited man would sit. The horse also seems to be lost in pathetic thoughts as it has been ' torn away from the plough, from the familiar gray landscapes' and has to trudge amidst monstrous lights and constant humdrum of city life.

A military man startles him by announcing that he wants to go to Vyborskaya. The officer gets into the cab. As they go through the streets, angry voices reprimand Iona for driving carelessly. The officer admonishes him and tells him to keep to the right. Iona seems to be dazed. He wants to say something but his lips fail to produce a sound. The officer enquires what does he want to say with an effort, Iona tells him that his son had died a week ago. The officer responds formally. Iona turns towards the officer to narrate the whole story but is scolded by the officer for not paying attention to the road ahead.

Next time three young men hire his sledge. They want to go to Police bridge. One of them, a hunchback, with cracked voice offers a four of twenty Kopeck. Though

the fare is not adequate but money hardly matters to Iona as long as he has a fare. New travellers are rough and drunk. They use foul language and quarrel among themselves for the seat. As the cab moves, they abuse Iona for being clumsy and slow and eventually slap him on the back of neck telling him to use his whip to spur the mare. Iona laughs off all insults. On being asked if he is married, he says his son is dead; death has chosen a wrong victim.

Iona turns to tell them his tale of woe. They reach the destination and Iona is left alone to experience his loneliness and sadness. He is craving to find one patient listener but people pass past him, unaware of the rising storm in his heart. Spotting a house porter with a parcel, he decides to share his grief with him, but he is told to drive on. Ultimately he comes back to his stable. Back home, he is troubled for earning less, that is not sufficient for him and his horse. He blames himself for his lack of success. He is saddened by the thought that his son would have earned more than him and proved a better cabman.

In the yard, people are snoring. A young man gets up to drink water - Iona tries to tell him how his son had died but the man falls asleep after drinking water. Iona, now, is thirsty for speech. For a week, the burden of his heart is choking him. His loneliness is interrupted by the realisation of having no comrade to listen to his agony. He wants to narrate details of the tragic incident - what were his son's last words; innumerable details regarding his funeral; how he went to hospital to collect his clothes.

Iona wants a listener with a human heart. He desires to elicit a response of sympathy from the lips of a fellow human being, but there is none. He goes into the stable. He addresses his mare as a human being. He even asks her how would she feel the pain of the loss of her imagined colt. He tells her that his son Ionitch Kuzma had gone forever, never to return. He opens his heart to her. The creature does not shun him : 'The little mare munches, listens and breathes on her master's hands.' Iona talks letting out all suppressed sad thoughts that were lying dormant and unexpressed in his heart.

Theme :

Grief is a growing story about an individual's personal tragedy, humanity's self centeredness and growing indifference to the feelings of sorrow of others. It is also about the alienation of modern man. Iona, a cabdriver, who can't get respite from drudgery because of poverty tries to give his sorrow concrete shape in the form of words; but people who don't have the heart and time, frustrate all his attempts. Whenever he tries to tell others we have to face indifference. The military officer is more concerned with his safety telling Iona to keep a watch on the road instead of listening to him. The hunchback dismisses him by philosophising with a sigh. 'We shall all die....' The parcel boy tells him to move on. Ultimately Iona finds a patient listener in his mare. He pours his pain in her front to be relieved. The story is tragic and exposes the hollowness of human beings who are insensitive to the misery of fellow beings.

VOCABULARY

Twilight	:	Time after sunset when getting dark
Budged	:	Give way
Cranes her neck	:	straightens her neck
Pedestrian	:	One who walks on foot
Jocorely	:	Amusing or humourously
Wry	:	Suppressed
Altercation	:	Small quarrel or argument
Disinclined	:	Not interested
Shoving	:	Pushing
Kopecks	:	Currency of Russia
Indignantly	:	Outraged, State of being angry
Deliberation	:	Intentionally
Anguish	:	Too much pain

Solved Short Answer Questions**Q. What compels Iona to talk to his mare ?**

Ans : Iona, the cabdriver, after the loss of his son is yearning to share his pain with a compassionate listener. All his attempts are frustrated by the insensitive attitude of people who are preoccupied with their own affairs. He finds his mare more sympathetic, so he pours out his choked feelings of sorrow and misery before her.

Q. Why didn't Iona get time to mourn the death of his son ?

Ans : The type of tragedy Iona had suffered required time and some sympathetic comrades that could lessen the burden of his misery. It is doubly tragic that the old man at the age of retirement and hurt by personal loss had to toil compelled by his poverty. He had to buy fodder for the mare and food for himself, so he had to go on the road in the chilly weather, seeking farers and could not find time to mourn the death of his only son.

**(I) UNCLE PODGER HANGS A PICTURE
(II) THE DOCTOR'S WORD**

Introduction to the Author :

Jerome K. Jerome born in Walsall, Staffordshire in 1859, is one of the best humorous writers. Before becoming a writer, he pursued the career of an actor. The volume of humorous pieces 'On the stage-and-off' is based on theatre. Later on his second book 'Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow' established him as a writer. But he is best remembered for his travelogue. 'Three Men in a Boat' that he wrote after his honeymoon on the river Thames. The success of this travelogue promoted fashion of rowing in Thames. In 1892, the author and his friend jointly ventured to establish a humorous magazine 'The Idler'. Many writers of high reputation such as Mark Twain contributed to it.

About the Story :

'Uncle Podger hangs a picture' is a famous extract from 'Three Men in a Boat'. This piece is full of fun and humour. It presents an interesting picture of a disorganized and inefficient person who takes the responsibility on him to hang a picture on the wall. He makes every member of the family busy in his work. He accomplishes his work by midnight in a very crude way and feels proud of it.

Summary :

The story centres around Uncle Podger who views himself as a man with great prowess to accomplish routine tasks. A picture once is received from the frame maker and Uncle Podger takes it on him to hang it properly on the wall; but everything becomes messy. He would take off his coat to start the job. He sends his daughter to bring the nails and then the boy is sent after her to tell her the size of the required nails. This unfoldment gradually draws in the entire family into confusing events. He shouts at will to fetch him his hammer; Tom for the rule and step-ladder or the kitchen chair. Jim is asked to bring spirit-level from Mr. Goggles. Maria is asked to be there to hold the ladder and the light.

He tries to lift up the picture and drops it. The picture gets out of the frame. While trying to save the glass he cuts himself. Jumping around the room, he tries to find his handkerchief, which was in the pocket of his coat. The coat is missing as he has forgotten where he has kept it. He asks all others to find the coat. He

keeps hindering their search for the coat. He calls them a bunch of idiots who are unable to find the coat put off by him a few minutes ago. He finds it himself because he discovers that he has been sitting on it.

Half an hour is wasted in tying his injured finger. A new glass is brought. All tools and the ladder are assembled again at the site where picture is to be hung. The whole family forms a semi-circle around Uncle Podger to help him. Two people hold the chair, third helps him on it, fourth gives him a nail, and the fifth passes him the hammer. The nail is dropped. All go down on their knees to search the nail. By the time, they find the nail, he loses the hammer. Again he starts shouting at them for not finding the required tools. In this whole row, he loses the sight of the mark, he has made on the wall to hang the picture. Each one of them tries to find the mark but reaches different locations. He takes the rule and tries to remeasure but his mathematical calculation drives him crazy. All the members try to help him, but all in vain. In this commotion, original number is lost Uncle Podger has to remeasure to make another mark. He makes use of a string this time. He tries to reach a point three inches beyond his reach. The string goes off his hand and he falls on the piano creating musical effect.

Eventually, the spot is fixed again. He tries to drive the nail into the wall with a blow of hammer, he smashes his thumb, and drops the hammer with a yell on somebody's toe. He has to make another attempt. Now, the blow is so hard that the nail goes through the plaster clean, hammer goes after it. He hits the wall and his nose gets hurt.

The whole operation of fixing a spot with the string and putting the nail is repeated once again. After so much exertion, around midnight the picture is up slant and insecure. The wall is without plaster. Everyone except Uncle Podger is dead tired. Uncle Podger is proud for the accomplishment of the job.

Comments :

This excerpt from 'Three Men in a Boat' has been a source of delight for the readers for being humorous writing. This describes the confusion caused by the actions of a character who overvalues his ability in handling day to day affairs. Uncle Podger is bossy, billying and a disorganized who turns simple acts into acts that exhaust others making him an object.

VOCABULARY

Commotion	-	Noise and excitement
Penn'orth	-	Worth a penny
Hinder	-	To create obstacle
Grovel for	-	Search for
Precipitated	-	Struck against

Sneer	-	Make fun
Dead-beat	-	Dead tired

Please do consult glossary of your text-book at page 37.

SOLVED ANSWER QUESTIONS

Q. Draw a pen portrait of Uncle Podger.

Ans. Uncle Podger is the pivotal character, whose actions are used to arouse humour. The story's humour rests primarily on his over confidence and innocent unawareness of his clumsy way of doing things. He is a miniature replica of Don Quixote who thinks himself to be what he is not. When he exercises his so-called 'skills', everything goes wrong. Other characters in the story, too, are instrumental in invoking fun. When the inefficient and disorganized Uncle Podger takes the responsibility of hanging the picture on the wall, the family members that he ropes in also exhibit the same immaturity and inefficiency, as is shown by Uncle Podger. Each of them discovers a different spot on the wall where the nail has to go in. All reach at a different result while calculating mentally the distance from the corner. Thus, poor Uncle Podger has to face the wrath of his wife Maria for hanging the picture on the wall.

(ii) THE DOCTOR'S WORD

Introduction to the Author :

R.K. Narayan was born in Madras, South India in 1906. He is among the best known and widely read writers of India. 'Malgudi Days', 'Swami and his friends', 'The Guide', 'Vendor of Sweets', 'The English Teacher' are his famous works. The description of characters in 'Malgudi Days', a South Indian town is almost vividly alive because of his descriptive ability to create scenes and characters picturesquely. His stories resonate humour and irony. 'An Astrologer's Days and other Stories', 'Gods, Demons and other Stories' are his well-known collection of short stories.

About the Story :

The story 'The Doctor's Word' is about a renowned doctor, Dr. Raman who faces a dilemma when he sees his childhood friend dying. From personal and professional experience he knows that the hope of his recovery is negligible; but when the family members enquire about the patient's condition, he evades the answer. On the other hand, when Gopal wants to know the truth about his life, Dr. Raman known for his straight forward nature is caught in emotional turmoil. He negates his professional judgement and assures his friend a long life.

Summary :

Dr. Raman was a renowned doctor. People came to him only when the patient was in a critical condition. He would reprimand them; why could not they come a day early. Actually, two factors were responsible for not paying a visit to the doctor. First, his fee was twenty five rupees, secondly, calling Dr. Raman signified that it was a matter of life and death. His arrival meant a decision this way or that way : either recovery or demise. He would not conceal facts; his verdict was curt and final for the people. His opinion was valued. He did not believe in offering comforting lies. However, whenever he saw a chance to save the patient, he would fight like a hero and save him.

One day he found himself in a position where he needed someone to tell him soothing lies. Gopal, his childhood friend was in a critical condition. His son had called him to save his father's life. Raman and Gopal had not met for many months, usually they would meet on Sundays. Gopal had fallen ill; his family consulted a nearby doctor. But when his condition worsened, there was no other safe option.

As a doctor, Dr. Raman knew that Gopal was on the edge. But it was not an easy affair to tell the truth to Gopal's family. He initiated the treatment, gave the patient an injection and waited for sometime. The sick man's wife asked him for a cup of coffee. Though famished, as he had missed his midday meal, he declined. He instructed her not to disturb Gopal and left in his car. He returned half an hour later accompanied by an assistant and a nurse. He told his wife that he had to perform a small operation so she should go to next house till she was called in. Distraught lady had to be assisted out of the room by the nurse.

At about eight in the morning, Gopal opened his eyes. The assistant was glad, he took it as a sign of recovery. The doctor told him it was a false sign, such things happen in such cases. He observed if his pulse kept same till morning, he would survive; but it was a bleak probability.

The assistant was sent away. Gopal opened his eyes and smiled at his friend. He was able to take in a little food. All felt relieved and swarmed around the doctor to express their gratitude.

Gopal's wife enquired about the condition of her husband. The doctor's evasive approach made her very tense. Her terrified imploring tone failed to elicit a definite response from the doctor. A waiting sound disturbed Gopal. The doctor shut the door to keep the gloomy noises away.

Gopal asked Dr. Raman about his condition and appealed to tell him the truth, so that he could sign his will to make the family secure and thwart the evil designs of his relatives. He implored him to sign as a witness. The doctor knew about his family circumstances. But asking Gopal to sign the will meant putting his life in danger because Dr. Raman's verdict would sound like a death sentence. For the first time in his life, he had to suppress his judgement. He told Gopal not to worry about the will and assured him that he would live up to the

age of ninety. It was not easy to state, but the doctor acted confidently for the sake of his friend's life. He came back and on his way to home, he stopped at the hospital and instructed his assistant to go to Lawley Extension, Gopal's house, to take care of the patient as he expected his collapse anytime.

Next morning, he reached Gopal's house in a state of worry. To his surprise, he saw the patient in a better condition. With his stethoscope, he checked his heart and informed the anxious lady that her husband was out of crisis. On his way back, the assistant enquired if it was true that Gopal would survive. He assured in affirmation, but how Gopal had survived that attack, remained a mystery to him.

Critical Comments :

'The Doctor's Word' revolves around the ethical question of giving verdict by a doctor in case of terminal illness of a patient. Is it professional to give a patient false hope of recovery when the doctor knows that the patient is going to die? By not telling the truth the doctor may prevent the patient from taking important decision like preparing the 'will' and by giving conclusive assessment, it may be psychologically damaging because the patient reposes hope in efficiency of the doctor. Gopal reposes all confidence in Dr. Raman. The story also exposes people's economic limitation to visit a good doctor and their fear of facing the truth about their dear ones condition.

WORD MEANINGS

Arena	:	Area, field
Ominous	:	Evil, sinister
Yama's hands	:	Death
Kindergarten	:	Childhood
Sternly	:	In a strict manner
Whimpered	:	Soft crying noises
Enthusiastically	:	With zeal
Wail	:	To cry in agony
Ruminated	:	Thought about
Evasive	:	Dilly dallying
Resumed his seat	:	Took his seat again; Reoccupied

SOLVED ANSWER QUESTION

Q. What is the impact of Dr. Raman's assurance to Gopal?

Ans. Gopal was hanging between life and death. He wanted to know the truth about the chance out of his recovery, from his physician, who is also his dear friend Dr. Raman, contrary to his professional nature, assured him that he would survive so he need not sign any will. This assurance brought a miraculous recovery which even Dr. Raman had not expected. It remained a mystery to him through out life.

Q. Was it justified on the part of Dr. Raman to stall the signing of Gopal's will?

Ans. Practically, it was not a right decision for the welfare of the family because the doctor knew that the patient was in a critical condition. But by allowing Gopal to sign the will, he would have hastened his end. Emotionally, he had to give Gopal a hope, hoping himself that his judgement might prove wrong. Moreover, Dr. Raman, as a friend did not want to take away the faintest hope of life from Gopal. So, he was justified in telling him not to sign the will.

**GREEN PARROTS IN A CAGE
THE DOLL'S HOUSE**

Author :

Gopi Gauba (1916-1986) was born in Hyderabad, Sind (Now in Pakistan). Her early education took place in Karachi and Shantiniketan. After marriage she lived in Lahore for some time, then moved to Mumbai. She got involved with the activities of India PEN, helped in the publication of its Journal. She was a regular contributor to 'The Times of India'. She published two children's books 'Green Parrots in a Cage' was awarded a BBC Prize.

The story has two strands running parallel and merging at the end of the story. The one strand describes the story of the parrots, how they were acquired, befriended, loved and then set free; the other is a sensitive portrayal of the events of 1947. It shows the anguish of the people who are about to leave a land : their home for generations, for a supposed home they do not know. The element of tension and brutality and uncertainty have been beautifully woven into the texture of the story.

Summary :

One day a parrot seller, a tall middle aged man wearing a large yellow turban visited the narrator. He had a cage in his hand in which there were two green parrots. He wanted to sell those parrots. The narrator was not willing to buy them but the imploring look of her three year old son compelled her to buy the parrots. She thought she was herself about to leave the town, what would she do with the parrots. The parrot seller was also in the dire need of money because he wanted to go back home.

The emphasis shifts to the theme of partition. The year was 1947, when many people needed money to go home. She guessed that the man was perhaps from Kutch (Gujrat) part of the country. The main reason for buying the parrots was her belief that the man was not likely to release the birds. Therefore she decided to keep them. The narrator's son was excited at the possession. She fed the birds with 'Green Chillis, ripe Guavas and Water'. The child enthusiastically offered his own fingers to the birds. While bandaging his injured fingers, the mother told him that the parrots were angry due to captivity. The child grasped the meaning of his mother, yet the idea of setting the birds free did not appeal to him, moreover it meant an open invitation to the cats. The narrator thought of many places

including a mosque in city of Hyderabad. She abandoned the idea because a hundred pigeons lived in the mosque. Finally, she decided to leave them in her orchard, on the outskirts of the town. An old gardener, Ramai looked after it. But going that far was risky as the situation in the city was tense. Din Mohammed, who was with the family of the narrator, for a long time, refused to go there. He advised her to give the parrots to the Maulana, who promised to look after them well. Maulana was upset because saying good-bye to narrator's mother and grandmother, who had come to the neighbourhood of the mosque as brides, was painful. The narrator requested him to look after her father, who wanted to stay back to settle the affairs of the people left behind. The birds were to be set free in the orchard because being untrained they were likely to be captured again. So an open and a free place was more suitable for them.

The narrator decided to drive to the orchard. Din Mohammed declined because she had left the two women of the family at the station. A second coachman, Khan Sahib was requested. She was sure nobody would hurt her because she was pregnant. Her three year old child conversed with the coachman. The narrator looked at familiar places knowing that she would not remain there for long to watch them again. Reaching the orchard, the narrator called for Ramai, heavy silence came as a response. The sight and smell of the orchard made her sentimental. She wept. She opened the gates of the cage. The mother and the son waited for the parrots to fly. But the birds sat still though earlier they were eager to come out of cage. But now the opportunity of freedom aroused a sense of fear in them. The narrator thought, may be one of the birds, like her, was pregnant, but soon wanted to make a nest of her own. But eventually, they came out and flew into the infinite sky without saying farewell even. Suddenly, the orchard ceased to be a place of beauty and a symbol of freedom. It had become spooky and frightening. The narrator returned with a heavy heart.

Critical Comments :

The story presents trauma experienced by the people who passed through the upheaval of 1947. The parrots serve as the Objective Correlative to the quest of freedom in a period of great uncertainty and uprootedness. The two parallel themes of exile and security move hand in hand and merge together, when the narrator feels that orchard is no more a place of beauty inhabited by singing birds, but a place for goblins and ghosts.

STUDY-NOTES

Clobbered	:	Hit
Desolate	:	Lonely
Solemnly	:	Calmly
Antics	:	Pranks

Spooks	:	Ghosts
Erie	:	Scary and desolate place
Limpid	:	Clear
Marauding	:	Plundering
Gnarled	:	Twisted
Strutting	:	Walking with pompous gait
Thunderous	:	Struck by lightening
Desperate	:	Losing hope

SOLVED ANSWER QUESTIONS

Q. Why did the narrator break down when she reached the orchard?

Ans. The narrator was aware of the fact that she was visiting the orchard for the last time perhaps. She became emotional and broke down. It intensified her feelings of homelessness. Moreover the beautiful place had been a source of aesthetic joy which she was going to lose. It had been a prized possession for her which would now be a home for goblins and spooks.

Q. What are the two parallel strands in the story?

Ans. The two parallel strands in 'Green Parrots in a cage' revolve around the motive of freedom and social upheaval. The parrots symbolize a man's inherent desire for freedom. The caged parrots want to fly out of cage. The second idea centres around the anguish of the people who have been forced to leave their native places under the shadow of violence and threat. But finally reconciliation takes place when the narrator realizes that the orchard is an alien place.

(II) THE DOLL'S HOUSE

About the Author :

New Zealand born, Katherine Mansfield Beauchamp wrote under the pen name of Katherine Mansfield. She was educated at Queens college, London. She was not only a short story writer but a also cellist. Her early stories were published in Magazines. During her life time, three collections of short stories were published. Translated in many languages, her stories have been a source of joy to literary fans. Her letters and journals were also published. Centring around small things, written in simple language and style, her stories capture small touching scenes of life. Mansfield is ranked with T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, and Virginia Woolf in her literary achievements. Unfortunately, she died quite young due to tuberculosis.

'The Doll's House' presents the vivid image of children's world, who are innocent about the casteism and distinction between the rich and the poor. The story revolves around an expensive toy, a doll's house presented to Burnell sisters by one of their rich relatives. It is a fascinating replica of a house with chimneys, carpeted drawing room, bed-rooms and also a lawn. A little lamp in that small house is quite eye-catching. The girls are over enthusiastic to invite their school mates to see it. During assembly they whisper to their class-fellows in an assumed manner of superiority and secretiveness. All keep coming to the Burnells to have a look at the doll's house. The Kelvey daughters are social outcast because their mother is a maid. One day Kezia, finding the backyard desolate invites kelvey daughters who are passing in front of her house. She is snubbed by her mother.

Summary : ‘

The Doll's House' by Mansfield highlights the age old pathetic disparity between the 'haves' and have-nots'. Burnell's are rich folk. Mrs. Hay, one of their relatives sends the children a doll's house. It is quite big so it is carried by the Carter and Pat into courtyard and is placed on two wooden boxes. It was freshly painted, so it was kept out for some time to let the smell of paint go off.

The doll's house was dark, oily, spinach green and bright yellow. Two solid chimneys glued on to the roof. They were painted red and white. The door that looked like a little slab of toffee gleamed with yellow varnish. The house had four windows, and a tiny porch painted in yellow lent it a majestic look. The whole front house could be swung back. One could gaze at drawing and dinning room, the kitchen and two bedrooms. The way the house opened was considered better than peering through a slit of a door into a little hall with a hat stand and two umbrellas. The author says perhaps it is the way God opens houses at the dead of the night when he takes a quite turn with an angel...

The Burnell children found it unique; which had never been seen by them. The house had other wonders. All the rooms had pictures on the wall, pictures were in gold frames; there was red carpets on all the floor except the kitchen; red plush chairs in drawing room tables, beds with real bed clothes, a cradle, a stove, a dresser etc. Kezia was fascinated by a lamp which stood in the middle-of the dinning room. It was an exquisite lamp with white globe. It seemed to be alive than any other article in the doll's house. It did not give light but something like oil inside it moved on shaking it. Two dolls representing father and mother were sprawling in drawing room and two baby dolls asleep upstairs seemed big for the doll's house.

When Burnell children visited school next day, they were over eager to talk about the gift but as it was assembly time, there was no opportunity to share the virtues of their gift. Even during recess Isabel Burnel pretending to be important conveyed the impression of having a secret to tell her classmates. During playtime Isabel was surrounded by her classmates each trying to be more intimate. A court was held under a huge pine tree at the side of the playground.

It was the only school in that area. So students belonging to all ranks came to that school. There were children from affluent and prestigious families-sons and daughters of businessmen, doctors and engineers. On the other hand, there were kids from lower middle class. The children were forced to mix together. But a kind of natural division existed. Even the teachers maintained this prejudiced stance. Kelveys were among outcasts. Burnells and many other children were not allowed to speak to them. Their mother was a washerwoman and father was in prison. Mrs. Kelvey's daughters wore clothes donated by rich householders. The effect was so funny as the girls often wore unfitting even unmatched clothes. The girls were aware of their social position, so they never mingled with other group. Silently, they hovered around the group gathered under the pine tree and tried to listen what others were talking.

Isabel extolled the virtues of the doll's house. Kezia, the younger Burnell hurriedly added that she was forgetting the wonderful lamp. The girls were very excited. Burnell sisters selected the visitors who would visit their house to see the ultimate gift. In the next few days, all the girls and boys saw the doll's house. It was a sensational topic of discussion. Only Kelveys were not allowed to see it. Though Kezia had asked her mother to let Kelvey sisters see it yet her mother had firmly denounced the idea.

One day while children were munching their mutton sandwich, in a group. They saw Kelveys eating out of their newspaper. Emmie Cole whispered that Lil Kelvey was going to be a servant when she grows up. Emboldened girls came to Lil and Else and subjected them to humiliation by asking questions about their father. Taunting girls were ecstatic. They were exceptionally daring and spirited.

In the afternoon, Kezia sneaked into the backyard. She swung on the big white gates of the courtyard. She noticed Kelveys were coming along the road. Her first impulse was to slip away to avoid them. After some hesitation, she made up her mind and clambering back on the gate, she wished them. Kelveys were astounded. Else stared and Lil gave her silly smile. Kezia invited them to have a look at the doll's house. Kelvey sisters declined the invitation knowing they were not the welcome guests. Kezia assured them that there was nobody in the backyard, so they could sneak silently and see the doll's house. After initial reluctance, they meekly followed Kezia. While Kezia was showing them the inside of the house, cold furious voice of Aunt Beryl interrupted them. She told the girls to get out of the house making it clear that they were not welcome there and it was a forbidden place for them. Both the girls left in a state of shame and misery. They clung to each other. Humiliated girls sat on the drain pipe. Gradually the pain of the insult subsided. One of the sisters had the satisfaction of seeing the lamp in the doll's house.

Critical Comments :

The story 'The Doll's House' is a specimen of child psychology-how the rich wards inculcate the attitude of superiority; how the poor gradually learn to be submissive and become immune to humiliation. But, despite class

discrimination, innocence of children does not lose its character altogether as is apparent from Kezia's friendly behavior with Lil and Elsie. The school in the story, being the only school in the area, is a melting pot for the children belonging to all classes but still there is an invisible line of demarcation as the children from affluent families do not form a bond with their lesser fortunate class-mates. The story is written in modernist mode with minute details and haphazard narrative voice-relevant to children's expression.

STUDY NOTES

Propped	:	Raised on a platform
Gleaming	:	Shining
Sprawled	:	Laid; spread out
Brushed Through	:	Crossed through touching each other
Nudging	:	Pushing
Consequence	:	As a result
Gaolbird	:	Person in prison
Congeaed	:	Thick; clambered-climbed slowly

SOLVED ANSWER QUESTION

Q. Describe Kezia.

Ans. Kezia is the youngest of the Burnell sisters. She is the most important character in the story. By nature she is innocent in a world governed by class distinctions and pretensions of superiority. Kezia is untouched by the elders' snobbish attitude. She is a symbol of child's naturalness. She is not bossy like her elder sister Isabel and cruel like Lena who derived pleasure from humiliating the Elvey sisters. Lil and Elsie, ignored by all, are treated as human beings by Kezia. She argues with her mother to invite them to see the doll's house.

Q. Give the description of the doll's house.

Ans. The doll's house was a model of a luxurious house with shining colours. Two red and white chimneys were glued on to the roof. Yellow varnished door that looked like a little slab of toffee led into the house. There were four windows that looked real and a tiny porch painted yellow. The doll's house also had a drawing room, a dining room, a kitchen and two bedrooms. The front of the house could be swung back revealing the interiors. The most fascinating item was an exquisite little amber lamp with a white globe placed in the dining room. Another attractive aspect of the doll's house was that the house was inhabited by a family of dolls.

**B.A. PART-I
SEMESTER-I**

ENGLISH (COMMUNICATION SKILLS)

Lesson No. 1.5

Author : Madhu Sharma

- (I) A SERVICE OF LOVE**
- (II) DUSK**

Introduction to the Author :

O' Henry, the most popular American short story writer was born in North Carolina. His real name was William Sidney Porter. O' Henry was his pen name. He wanted to conceal his identity as he had been a convict in a case of misusing the funds of a bank where he had worked. He had no formal academic qualification but his love for books made him a man of letters. Success came to him later in life, prior to it, he worked in a drugstore and a bank. His attempt to publish a Weekly Magazine also proved unfruitful. There was a remarkable comeback after his release from the Jail. He died in 1910, at the age of 47, but by this time he had gained worldwide acclaim as America's favorite short story writer by publishing 300 stories.

'A service of Love' echoes the theme mentioned in his popular story 'The Gift of Magi' : when people are in love, they make great sacrifices. Both the stories are based on the theme of love. Joe and Delia love each other so much that each of them sacrifices their individual career by doing menial jobs that they never wanted to do. Delia wants Joe to pursue his classes of painting and Joe on the other hand, takes up a job to fulfill Delia's ambition of becoming a competent musician. Both are artists in their respective forms and are passionate about it. They, finally, value the feeling of love for each other and sacrifice their passion for music and painting. The discovery in the end deepens their love for each other and their initial dictum 'When one loves one's Art, no service seems too hard' gets transformed into 'When one loves someone, no service seems hard'.

Summary :

The story 'A Service of Love' shows the sustaining power of love, that makes individuals do things to give their love a concrete expression. Joe Larrabee belonging to Middle West was blessed with the gift of painting. At an early age of six, he painted the picture of a town pump with an important citizen passing it in a hurry. His painting was put in a drug store window. At twenty, he went to New York with small capital and seriously tried to acquire the required competence in

his art. There was a studio which was often visited by a number of students learning Art and Music. He met Delia in this studio. Delia was gifted with vocal ability to sing. So her relatives collected some money to help her learn music from a professional musician. Their meetings and mutual interaction bloomed into love and consequently they became life partners. They started living in a flat as Mr. and Mrs. Larrabee. The place was quite lonely; but they were happy. Love for art and each other made life beautiful for them. Joe was learning painting from Magister, a famous painter whose fee was high. Delia was a student of Rosenstock, a renowned musician.

Both Joe and Delia dreamt of scaling heights of fame and fortune in their respective fields. Joe imagined that he would make paintings and the old gentlemen with side - whiskers and thick purses would fight with one another in his studio for buying his paintings. Delia wanted to be the master of playing piano and hold concerts to draw crowds from all over the country who would be ready to pay double to hear her concert.

But gradually art became weak. They were unable to pay their fee. Delia decided to give music lessons. She searched for students for two three days and joyfully informed Joe that she had been hired by General A.B. Pinkney's daughter. She painted a vivid and rosy picture of the luxury and nobility of the General. Both husband and wife would leave early in the pursuit of their work. Thought Joe was not happy as he did not want Delia to give up her training in music, Delia assured him that giving lessons in music was equally useful to become a musician. She was never tired of telling him about the satisfaction she was getting from the new venture. She described Clementina, the General's daughter, was beautiful delicate creature always dressed in white; General was a thorough gentleman. Joe quipped heroically that he would not let her work for wages; he, too, would sell papers or take up some odd job. Delia affectionately dissuaded him from wasting time in activities that would thwart his artistic volition.

At the weekend Delia brought fifteen dollars. She expressed regret as General's daughter was not doing enough practice but she was all praise for the General. She admired his well-maintained drawing-room with rugs in it. She felt that it was a matter of pride to be the music teacher of General's daughter. Joe, too, talked of a lucky opportunity to hang his pictures in Tinkle's window. When Delia placed her earnings on the table, Joe, too, did the same and told that his painting was bought by a rich man from Peoria. He was supposed to paint another oil sketch for him. They planned celebration.

Next Saturday evening, Joe arrived home earlier, kept the dollars at the dining table. He washed the dark paint smeared on his hands. Half an hour later, Delia arrived home with her right hand bandaged. After usual greetings, Joe asked her, she told him that Clementina spilled a boiling dish on her hand and wrist. She had a queer habit of having a welsh rabbit after music lessons. There was no servant in General's house that day; so it got hurt. Delia enquired from Joe if he had sold another sketch because she had seen the money on the table. Joe

probed deeply about her injured hand. A tearful Delia confessed General and his daughter was a fanciful fabrication. The fact was that she had been working in a laundry shop. A girl had accidentally set down a hot iron on her hand. She had taken up the job to keep Joe's ambition alive. Delia's sacrifice prompted Joe to tell her that he never sold any painting. The rich buyer of his sketches was creation of his fancy.

Infact, Joe was working in the engine room of the same laundry where Delia was working. It was Joe who had sent the cotton soiled in oil for the girl who had her hand burned with an iron. Both of them felt a fresh surge of mutual love for each other.

Comments :

'A Service of Love' is a remarkable piece of genre of short story. It leaves a touching impression on our minds, as it appeals to the heart : The core reservoir of subtle and sublime emotion of love. Love, lends us propensity to make sacrifices for the sake of the person loved. This sacrifice does not leave one bereft of happiness, rather it brings a greater reward in the form of deepening love. Joe and Delia love each other very much. Each of them sacrifices their artistic ambitions for the more important goal of pleasing the person they love. Stories of O' Henry are captivating and written in simple language.

STUDY NOTES

Genius	:	A person with extraordinary talent
Hastily	:	In a hurry
Chiaroscuro	:	Blend of art and shade in painting
Diction	:	Phrase ; principle
Escritoire	:	Writing table
Whiskery	:	Moustache
Contemptuous	:	Hateful
Vulgarians	:	Common men
Byzantine	:	Very beautiful

SOLVED ANSWER QUESTIONS

Q. 'When one loves one's Art no service seems too hard' : Comment.

Ans. People, who are gifted with artistic sensibility feel that for letting their art bloom if they've to undergo hardships and renounce practical gains, is the only attitude an artist should harbor. Joe and Delia try to live upto this dictum. They get a sustaining energy from it whenever they are under

financial duress. But harsh reality compels them to act otherwise, the resultant sacrifice changes the dictum into when one loves, no sacrifice is hard :

Q. Give a portrait of Delia.

Ans. Delia is a sweet and pleasant character. She aims to be a musician and become a famous pianoist. Her marriage is an outcome of her love for Joe. When she realises that Joe would not be able to continue his painting classes due to financial restraints, she like a typical sacrificing wife restraints her career and takes up a menial job to support Joe. She fabricates a story of being the teacher of general's daughter. She does not want to hurt Joe, so she underplays the incident of her burnt hand.

(II) DUSK

Life sketch of the writer :

Hector Hugh Munro (1880-1916) was born in Burma. He began his career by taking up writing in the genre of political satire. He was a correspondent in Russia. The only book published in his own name is historical study, 'The Rise of the Russian Empire'. Most of his stories were published in the news papers and were later collected into many unbearable "Bassington" was published in 1912. His stories are full of wit, unusual twists and have surprising endings. His writing is full of humour and cynical reflection. He died in First World War during action in France.

Outline :

'Dusk' is a typical story reflecting Munro's style. Gortsby is a cynical character who enjoys dusk, because it gives him pleasure. A young man comes and tells him that he is new to the place without any money, and has forgotten the address of the hotel where he had lodged. Gortsby demands the proof of his story's credibility which the young man is unable to furnish. The young man leaves the place and Gortsby finds an evidence. He goes to the young man and apologises and gives him a sovereign. He regrets having doubted the young man. Meanwhile an old man comes and declares himself the claimant of the soap-cake-referred to as the evidence of the youngman's story. The story is a comment on the various guises, deceits and guiles. Herein, lies Munro's art of story-telling.

Summary :

It was Dusk, the sun was about to set. Gortsby who was sitting in the park observing the few people, strolling in the park. It was early March. The silence and almost empty park seemed a reflection of his. He identified himself with the dusk which, according to him was the time of the 'defeated'. He was not facing any financial problem; unfulfilment of certain subtle ambition had made him passively resigned and cynical, the bench on which he was sitting had another

occupant : an old man who carried an air of defiance. To Gortsby he appeared as one of the lamenters of the world. Gortsby was observing and analyzing the old man. The old man vacated the bench which was soon occupied by a young man who looked frustrated. He uttered an expletive. This made Gortsby take interest in him. He enquired about the cause of young man's frustration who told him the tale of his foolish mistake.

He said that he was a newcomer to the city. His story was to be in Pantagonian hotel in Berkshire square. On reaching the hotel, he found that the hotel had been dismantled and a cinema had been constructed in its place. The taxi driver took him to another hotel where he put his stay. He informed his family members giving them the address of the new hotel. He remembered that he had forgotten to pack his soap. He disliked using hotel soap, so he went out to buy one. He stralled in the city markets for sometime and spent the money he had. The last two pences were spent in purchasing the cake of soap. When he was to return, he forgot the address of the hotel and the street it was located in.

It was a difficult situation. He was in a strange place, without connections and without money. He said his story may sound false. But Gortsby could understand his situation as he had passed through the same situation once. But luckily he was not alone. His friend, who was with him remembered that their hotel was by the side of a canal. Gortsby wanted an evidence of the story narrated by him. He asked him to produce the soap cake purchased by him. The young man searched his pockets but it was not there. The young man hurriedly left the place. Soon after Gortsby discovered a soap cake properly wrapped and sealed, lying near the bench. This convinced Gortsby that the young man was not telling a clever tale. He found him and apologized and lent him a sovereign to help him.

On his way back, he thought that it was a lesson to him not to be too clever in judging by circumstances alone. At the same time another elderly man appears near the bench. He seemed to have lost something when Gortsby asked him what was he looking for. The old man replied that he lost a cake of soap. It is the anticlimax of the story. Jolted, Gortsby realizes that inspite of all his cleverness, co-incidences had sided with the clever young man whose tale was totally false.

Theme :

Dusk is an appealing story in which coincidences play a role and the main character Gortsby, inspite of his clever judgement is befooled by the trickster, young man. The plot is simple. Gortsby's disbelief in young man's clever story changes into apologetic submission to his design. He not only gives the man a sovereign but also the soap which, actually, another old man had forgotten on

the bench. The story's a fine specimen of Munro's art of inculcating the element of surprise. The climax of the story arouses humour because the reader is able to visualize Gortsby's jolt on discovering how he has been duped by the young man.

STUDY NOTES

Sward	:	Grassy Area
Unobtrusively	:	Which is not apparent
Forlorn	:	Alone; lonely
Disillusioned	:	Disappointed
Expletive	:	Abusive language
Quandry	:	In a dilemma
Jadid	:	Tired

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

Q. What significance Gortsby assigns to Dusk?

Ans. Gortsby, who considers himself among the defeated, feels that dusk is the hour of the defeated and tired. This cynical attitude gives him a certain kind of pleasure by sitting in a park and by merely observing people. So, dusk is a symbol of escape or temporary isolation in moments of sadness. Moreover, it reveals that the losers don't want to be probed particularly the reason of their defeat.

Q. How did the young man befool Gortsby?

Ans. The youngman drew the attention of Gortsby by using an expletive when he occupied a seat on the bench. This aroused Gortsby's interest and he wanted to know the reason of his frustration. The youngman told him how he had forgotten the address of his hotel where he had lodged as he had come out to buy a soap cake. Gortsby demanded an evidence and the youngman failed to produce one. Gortsby was befooled because in reality the soap cake did not belong to the youngman. Gortsby realised that inspite of his cleverness in judging people, he could be befooled.