

● LIVE CLASS 12th ENGLISH

BACKLOG
MARATHON
S E R I E S

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The **LAST LESSON**

Summary

- The story is set during the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871). | France was defeated by Prussia, led by Bismarck. | The French districts of Alsace and Lorraine passed into Prussian hands.
- The narrator, a young schoolboy named Franz, starts late for his "last lesson" and is in "great dread of a scolding".
- He sees Prussian soldiers drilling and a crowd at the town hall's bulletin-board, the source of bad news for the last two years - lost battles, the draft, orders of the commanding officer.
- The blacksmith, Wachter, tells Franz he will "get to your school in plenty of time".
- The school - usually loud with "a great bustle," desks opening and closing, and lessons repeated "in unison," - is "all so still".
- Franz is surprised to see M. Hamel in his "beautiful green coat, his frilled shirt, and the little black silk cap," which he only wore on inspection and prize days.

Setting.



Summary



- Most surprising- Old village people, including the former mayor, former postmaster, and old Hauser, are sitting on the back benches.
- M. Hamel announces that an order has come from Berlin to teach only German in the schools of Alsace and Lorraine, and that this is their last French lesson- "What a thunderclap these words were to me!"
- Franz regrets not learning his French lessons and recognizes M. Hamel's formal attire was "in honour of this last lesson". - M Hamel blamed himself and elders of the households for not giving importance to studies.
- M. Hamel emphasizes that the French language is the "most beautiful," "clearest," and "most logical," and that holding fast to one's language is "as if they had the key to their prison" when people are enslaved.
- The village people were there to thank M. Hamel for his "forty years of faithful service".
- Lessons of grammar, writing- new copies for us, written in a beautiful round hand — France, Alsace, France, Alsace. They looked like little flags floating everywhere in the school-room,
- "Will they make them sing in German, even the pigeons?"
- The lesson concludes when the church-clock strikes twelve and the trumpets of the returning Prussian soldiers sound.- M. Hamel, choked with emotion, writes "Vive La France!" on the blackboard and dismisses the school.



Questions



What was the order from Berlin ? How did that order affect the people of Alsace, particularly M. Hamel and his students ?

A shocking order had come from Berlin. The schools in the two French speaking occupied districts of Alsace and Lorraine were to teach only in German. This stunned everyone. The order from Berlin hurt the pride of the people. Patriotic feelings were aroused in them. The village elders had already sat on the last benches with students. M. Hamel announced that it was his last lesson in French. He would leave the place for good. A new master would replace him to teach German. The news aroused patriotic feelings and love for French in students as well as the villagers. The village elders had come to show their respect for M. Hamel as he had served the community faithfully for forty years. M. Hamel spoke at length about French language. He called French the most beautiful language in the world. It was also the clearest and the most logical language. He expressed his dismay that the people of Alsace were quite indifferent to the learning of French. He called upon them to guard it among themselves and never forget it. Their language was the key to their unity and liberation. Everyone listened to him with rapt attention and respect.

Questions

Draw a character sketch of M. Hamel as it is shown in 'The Last Lesson.'

C.S - Franz
=

Key Points



- In 'The Last Lesson' Alphonse Daudet has presented M. Hamel's character with all sympathy and respect. He is presented in the mould of a traditional school-master. He always kept his 'terrible' ruler under his arm. Mr. Hamel was a hard task-master and a crank. We also see the other side of M. Hamel's character after the order from Berlin came. He was a transformed person now. He realised that it was his last lesson in French and the next day a new teacher would replace him. He would teach them in German. Patriotic feelings were aroused in him. He became extra soft and gentle towards his students. He didn't scold Franz for coming late. Nor did he use his ruler when Franz got mixed up and confused. He declared that it was his last lesson in French.
- M. Hamel was highly respected both by his students and the village elders. He had served faithfully for 40 years in the same school. The village elders came to pay their respect to such a grand teacher.
- M. Hamel loved France and French from the core of his heart. He considered French as the most beautiful language in the world. He asked the Frenchmen to guard it among themselves and never to forget it.

Questions

The day of the last lesson was full of regret and sadness. Describe the events of the day in the classroom in the light of the above remark.

- Naturally, the day of the last lesson in French was full of regret and sadness. Everyone, students, village elders and the people were totally in a depressing mood. The new order from Berlin shocked and stunned the people. It aroused patriotic feelings among them for their native language. Even the school appeared so solemn and strange. The village elders were sitting quietly with the students on the back benches. Everybody looked sad. M. Hamel spoke in a grave and gentle tone. He announced that he was delivering his last lesson in French. Only German will be taught in the schools of Alsace and Lorraine from the next day. He chided the people who pretended to be Frenchmen and who didn't know even their native language. He called French the most beautiful and logical language in the world. His parting message was that they should safeguard their language. It was key to their freedom.



Questions

- M. Hamel's last message had a profound effect on the audience. The village elders and students heard him with rapt attention and respect. They had assembled there to thank M. Hamel for his forty years of faithful service to the community. Even little Franz developed a new respect for M. Hamel. He forgot all about his ruler and how cranky he was.



Lost **SPRING**

Summary

Dono barcho - Character
Sketch.



W

• Saheb-e-Alam (Ragpicker):

- Lives in the slums of Seemapuri.
- Wants to get educated and desires a better life, preferring to be self-employed.
- His name means "lord of the universe," but he doesn't know the meaning.
- Poor kids don't even have chappals.
- Seemapuri - place on the periphery of Delhi yet miles away from it, metaphorically Ragpickers of Seemapuri live in structures of mud with roofs of tin and tarpaulin, lacking sewage, drainage, or running water.
- The 10,000 ragpickers of Seemapuri have ration cards to vote and buy grain, but lack any other identity.
- Survival in Seemapuri means ragpicking, which is "wrapped in wonder for children" and a "means of survival" for elders.
- He now works at a tea stall for 800 rupees and all meals, but "is no longer his own master".

Summary

• Mukesh (Bangle Maker's Son):

- Lives in Firozabad, where every family is engaged in making bangles.
- He dreams of becoming a car mechanic or driving a car and believes in breaking the vicious circle.
- About 20,000 children work illegally in the glass furnaces with high temperatures, in dingy cells without air and light
- Bangle makers mostly lose their eyesight before becoming adults.
- Bangle making- god given lineage
- The bangle-makers caught in poverty and in a vicious circle of the sahkars, the middlemen, the policemen, the keepers of law, the bureaucrats and the politicians who exploit them.
- Do you also dream of flying a plane?



Questions



"Seemapuri is a part of Delhi, yet miles away from it." Give your views on the statement.

- Seemapuri is a settlement of more than 10,000 ragpickers. It is a place on the periphery of Delhi. Actually, it is a part of Delhi. It is a little hell where ragpickers survive on dirt and garbage. Those who live here are squatters who came from Bangladesh in 1971. They live here without an identity and without permits. They do have ration cards that enable them to vote and buy grain. Food is more important for them than their identity. Children grow up in dirt to become partners in survival. And survival in Seemapuri means ragpicking. Through the years it has acquired the 'proportions of a fine art'. An army of barefoot children appears in the morning. They carry their plastic bags on their shoulders. They disappear by noon. Garbage has a different meaning for children. For them it is wrapped in 'wonder'. But for elders it is a means of survival.
- Seemapuri may be on the periphery of Delhi yet it is miles away from it, metaphorically. It is a little hell. Ragpickers live in structures of mud. They have roofs of tin and tarpaulin. There is no sewage, drainage or running water. The place stinks. It is unimaginable that it is a part of Delhi, the capital of India.

Questions



Describe the bangle-makers of Firozabad. How does the vicious circle of the 'Sahukars' and the middlemen never allow them to come out of a web of poverty?

- Firozabad is famous for its bangles. But the life of bangle-makers of Firozabad is full of hardships and obstacles. These obstacles force them to lead a life of poverty and deprivation. Every other family in the town is engaged in this profession. It is the centre of India's glass blowing industries. They have been welding glass and making bangles for all the women in India. Over 20,000 children work illegally in the glass furnaces with high temperatures. They are exposed to all health-hazards. These factories are in stinking lanes choked with garbage. They work in dingy rooms with no windows and outlets for fresh air. Their eyes are more adjusted to the dark than to the light outside. That is why many of them end up losing their eyesight before they become adults.
- Firozabad refuses to move with the times. Bangle-workers have fallen in a web of poverty. Mind-numbing toil has killed all their dreams and hopes. They can't organise themselves into a cooperative. They have fallen into a vicious circle of 'sahukars', middlemen and the police. It seems that the bangle-workers of Firozabad are condemned to poverty and perpetual exploitation.

Questions

Describe the difficulties the bangle makers of Firozabad have to face in their lives.

- Firozabad is famous for its beautiful and colourful bangles. Everywhere wherever eyes go, one finds nothing but bangles. One can see them in every house, every yard and every street. Spirals of bangles are everywhere. They are in all colours—sunny gold, paddy green, royal blue, pink, purple, red and all the seven colours of the rainbow. They are piled on four-wheeled handcarts. Every woman knows the sanctity of the bangles. They symbolise an Indian woman's 'suhag'. ~~They represent auspiciousness in marriage.~~
- It is only the irony of fate that the bangle-makers of Firozabad whose beautiful bangles make everyone happy, themselves live and die in squalor. They live in dark hutments. The stinking lanes are choked with garbage. Crumbling walls, wobbly doors and no windows tell their pathetic story. Humans and animals coexist. Years of mind-numbing toil has killed all their initiative and ability to dream. They are caught in a web of poverty. A vicious circle of moneylenders, the middlemen and the police conspires to make their life burdensome and hellish. They have no other option than living and dying in squalor and poverty.



My Mother **AT SIXTY-SIX**

needing death

Driving from my parent's home to Cochin last Friday

morning, I saw my mother, beside me,

doze, open mouthed, her face ashen like that

of a corpse and realised with pain

that she was as old as she looked, but soon

put that thought away, and looked out at

Young Trees sprinting, the merry children spilling out of their homes,

but after the airport's security check, standing a few yards

away, I looked again at her,

wan, pale as a late winter's moon

and felt that old familiar ache,

my childhood's fear, but all I said was,

see you soon, Amma, all I did was

smile and smile and smile.....

of looking out mom

hiding her pain

→ Reassure herself and her mom.



Summary

- The poet is driving from her parent's home to the Cochin airport.
- Her mother, who is sixty-six years old, is sitting beside her.
- The old lady is dozing with her mouth open.
- Her face looks pale and faded like ash.
- It arouses pain in the poet's heart.
- The poet turns away her attention from her mother & looks outside.
- The world outside is full of life and activities.



Summary

- Trees seem running past and children seem to be enjoying while coming out of their homes.
- They have to undergo a security check up at the airport.
- Standing a few yards away, she looks at her mother again.
- The old lady looks faded and weak like the late winter's moon.
- The old familiar ache and fear of the poet's childhood return and torment her.
- But she hides her real feelings. She scatters smiles wishing to meet her old 'Amma' again.



Questions

A highly changed sensibility pervades over the poem.' What is it and how does the poet seek a way out of it?

'My Mother at Sixty-six', is amply enveloped by a highly changed sensibility. The poet experiences it while driving down to the airport with her mother. When she looks at her mother's 'ashen face', 'her childhood fear' comes to her. It is that one day her mother wouldn't be there. So, the deep sensibility of the meaning of life pervades over her. This thought of her mother's being snatched away by death rankles her mind, though she is driving to the airport. She is reminded of the waning moon with its death-like and pale light when she looks at her mother's face. She looks again at her face and finds it 'as a late winter's moon'. However, at the same time, she has a streak of positivity when she looks at the young trees sprinting and merry children spilling out of their homes. She now knows that death is inevitable and she must accept it. So, she bids farewell, smiling.



Questions

Imagine the mother senses her daughter's fears of her inching towards death and the inevitable end.

Write a letter, as the mother, telling her daughter to say goodbye to her fears.

Pallipuram Cochin, Kerala

18 December 2023

My dear Kamala

I am writing this letter to you about what I felt when you dropped me at the airport. I felt something wasn't right. You were not speaking to me and it made me conscious that something was disturbing you. I felt that you felt concerned and despaired at how I looked. Well, I looked all right seeing my age, though a little paleness may have generated some tragic thoughts about me in you. It is natural at my age. The youthful body no longer remains with any human being of my age. Surely, you were thinking that one day you'll be motherless. But it is a universal truth that anybody born shall have to die one day. Imagine what kind of life it would be if no one died. Well, change is life and whatever happens, happens for the better. One generation fades when another is born. So, never think much about people ageing and vanishing forever. They are the souls and souls never die. Enjoy. Live long.

Your Mom

Keeping **QUIET**

Summary

Title Just =



Intro sp.

- The poet urges us to count twelve and be still.
- For a moment we should stop talking in different languages. We should not move our arms so much.
- The moment of stillness will be a fascinating moment.
- It will be a moment of complete silence without rush and the noise of machines.
- Fishermen will not harm whales in the cold sea. The man gathering salt will take care of his hurt hands.
- Those who are indulging in different kinds of wars should be still for some time.
- Let them come out in their best dresses with their brothers and walk under the shady trees.
- But 'stillness' should not be confused with total inactivity and death. The poet has no association with death.
- Constant moving doesn't do us any good. ✓
- Men can't understand themselves and keep on threatening themselves with death.
- If they keep quiet and be still, a long silence can do a lot of good to them.
- The earth is a symbol of life under apparent stillness. When everything seems dead, life on the earth goes on under apparent stillness.



Questions

Write a paragraph focusing on how the poems "Keeping Quiet" and "My Mother at Sixty-six" illuminate different facets of human introspection and the significance of quiet reflection in understanding oneself.

"Keeping Quiet" by Pablo Neruda talks about rejuvenation of life. It also highlights the need of mutual understanding and universal brotherhood. There is no association with death. The poem talks regarding the need of learning to avoid harmful activities. We must learn lessons from Earth to preserve and nurture life. In the poem "My Mother at Sixty-six", Kamala Das offer contrasting yet complementary perspectives on human introspection and the importance of quiet reflection. In Neruda's poem, the act of keeping quiet is portrayed as a deliberate choice to disconnect from the chaos of daily life and to introspect deeply. It underscores the transformative power of silence in fostering a profound understanding of oneself and the world. On the other hand, Kamala Das' poem reflects on a personal moment of introspection while observing her aging mother. The quiet reflection here is involuntary, triggered by the passage of time and the contemplation of mortality. Through these poems, we see how different circumstances—whether chosen or imposed—can lead to moments of introspection that reveal deeper truths about oneself and the relationships around us.

Questions

Both poems illuminate the significance of quiet reflection in navigating the complexities of human emotions, memories, and the passage of time, ultimately highlighting the universal need for moments of stillness to gain clarity and insight into our inner selves.

This poem helps understand complex subtleties of human relationships. Her childhood fear of separation is also highlighted. There is reflection on ageing as well as contrast to youth and energy. The significance of parting words and smiling leaves an indelible impact on us. He was trying to reassure oneself.

Questions

"Keeping Quiet" is loaded with a great lesson that is necessary for the well-being of the mankind. How does the poet give out this message?

'Keeping Quiet' on the surface level is a simple poem. It gives out an important message if we delve it deep. The poet advocates that we should be silent and quiet. What he means is that man has harmed much by his actions. Impliedly, in the name of progress man has caused great trouble in the world. There is fear of annihilation of everything as is seen in the poet's talking about 'green wars', 'wars with gas', etc. It would not be wrong to say that man is sitting at the mouth of a mighty volcano. It will destroy everything when it bursts out. So, the poet implies that man should sit quiet and introspect. The poet asks us that instead of fighting and waging wars we should go out for a walk with our brothers under the shady trees. We must enjoy our doing nothing for some time. Thus, the poem implies that man needs to introspect and sit silent to ensure peace and happiness instead of living a hectic life.

The **TIGER KING**

Summary

- Astrologers had foretold that the Tiger King would actually have to die.
- A great miracle took place.
- The ten-day-old Jilani Jung Jung Bahadur could speak very clearly. He told them that everybody that was born would die. He only wanted to know the manner of his death.
- The chief astrologer told that the Maharaja's death would come from a tiger. He should be particularly careful with the hundredth tiger.
- The Maharaja banned tiger hunting in the state. Those who disobeyed, their wealth and property would be confiscated.
- The Maharaja started out on a tiger hunt.
- He killed seventy tigers in ten years.
- A high ranking English officer wanted to hunt tigers in the forests of Pratibandapuram. The Maharaja got rid of him by giving 50 diamond rings to his wife.

✓ 3 lines



Summary

- The tiger population became extinct in the kingdom.
- The Maharaja married a girl from a state which had a large number of tigers.
- The Maharaja would kill five or six tigers each time he visited his father-in-law.
- In this way, he killed 99 tigers and the hunt for the hundredth began.
- When the hundredth tiger was not found, the dewan brought a tiger from the People's Park in Madras.
- The tiger was brought straight to the forest where the Maharaja was hunting.
- The Maharaja took a careful aim and the tiger fell down on the ground in a heap.
- Later on one of the hunters found that the tiger was not dead. The Maharaja had missed the aim.
- They didn't want that the king must come to know of it. So, the tiger was killed.



Summary

- It was the third birthday of the Maharaja's son. The Maharaja bought a wooden tiger as a special birthday gift to his son.
- When the Maharaja was playing with the wooden tiger, a needle-like sliver pierced his right hand.
- Infection flared up and it became a sore.
- Three surgeons operated upon the Maharaja but they couldn't save him from dying.
- So the hundredth tiger took its final revenge upon the Maharaja.



Questions

Draw a character-sketch of the Tiger King in your own words.

- The Maharaja of Pratibandapuram, Sir Jilani Jung Jung Bahadur, had many titles and sub-names. But he was popular as the Tiger King. The chief astrologer predicted that his death would come from a tiger.
- Crown prince Jung Jung Bahadur was brought up by an English governess. He was tutored in English by an Englishman. When he grew up to twenty he took the reign in his hands.
- The Maharaja continued his campaign of tiger-hunting with rare singlemindedness. Within a span of ten years he killed 70 tigers. It was his master strategy to marry a girl of a state which had a large tiger population. So he was able to kill 99 tigers in all.
- The Tiger King could pay any price to maintain his kingdom. He had antagonised a high ranking British officer by refusing to give him permission to shoot tigers in his state. He had to give him a bribe worth three lakh rupees in the form of diamond rings to retain his kingdom.
- The Maharaja knew how to take work from his minions. He could be hot-headed. He doubled the tax on the people. It is ironical that the Maharaja met with his death by a wooden tiger and the hundredth tiger took revenge upon him.

Questions

What was the Maharaja's mission? How did he resolve to overcome the obstacles in the fulfilment of his mission?

The Maharaja had vowed to hunt a hundred tigers to save himself from being killed by a tiger. When he had killed seventy tigers, the tiger population became extinct in his state. He found no tigers to kill. This brought his mission to a standstill. He thought of another plan to facilitate his killing spree. He asked his dewan to find a princess for him from the neighbouring kingdom with the large tiger population. The king would kill 5 to 6 tigers during each visit to his in laws and this effort took his toll to 99 tigers as such but he had to wait a long time for his hundredth tiger, his growing restlessness was a sign of trouble even for the dewan. He managed to get an old tiger in the jungle of Madras. By finally killing it, he accomplished his target of 100 tigers which could actually save him from his death as predicted by the astrologer.

Questions

Kalki's The Tiger King is a satire on the pride and unbridled power and rule of the stubborn Maharaja of Pratibandapuram. Describe the use of dramatic irony leading to the death of the Tiger King.

- Kalki's The Tiger King is a satire on the pride and stubbornness of those in power. The Maharaja of Pratibandapuram tried to belie what was written in his fate. The chief astrologer had predicted that the cause of his death would be a tiger. Not that the king didn't try his best to belie the prediction. His campaign of tiger-hunting was very successful. He was singleminded and determined. But the satirical aspect of the whole story is the king's inability to kill the hundredth tiger. All his strategies and wise plans worked till he killed 99 tigers. But the hundredth tiger deluded him till his death.
- The irony of fate brings quite an unexpected end of the Maharaja. The last tiger he thought to be dead survived. The King's bullet had missed its mark. Ironically, the hundredth tiger which caused his death, was not a ferocious beast of blood and flesh. It was a wooden tiger. One of the slivers of wood pierced his right hand and caused infection and a suppurating sore. It ultimately led to his death.

The **THIRD LEVEL**

Summary

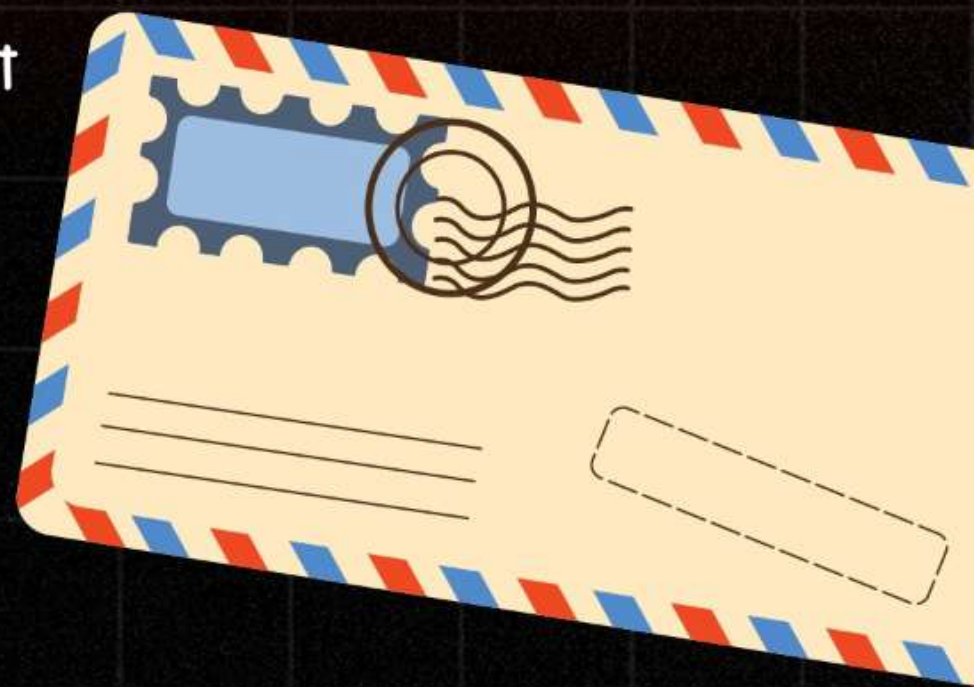
- One day while coming back from work, Charley wandered into an unfamiliar corridor and emerged on a third level - different world of gas lights, brass spittoons, derby hats, beards, sideburns and fancy moustaches..
- Charley attempted to buy tickets to Galesburg, Illinois, but failed because the clerk rejected his modern currency.
- The railway authorities swear that there are only two levels at the Grand Central. No one has ever seen the third level there.
- He buys old currency. But he never again finds the corridor that leads to the third level at the Grand Central.
- Charley consults his psychiatrist friend Sam. He tells him about the third level. Sam calls it 'a waking-dream wish fulfilment'.
- Actually, Charley doesn't feel at home in the modern world of fear, insecurity and war. Therefore, he just escapes into the world of dreams and fancies.



Mental
Escape

Summary

- Sam claim that he has an escapist tendency. His stamp collecting is nothing but a temporary refuge from reality.
- The situation changed when Sam went missing- nobody knew where. Charley suspects him to be in Galesburg, Illinois as he was very fond of the place.- Charley finds out that Sam bought old currency worth three hundred dollars.
- Charley discovered a marked envelope addressed to his grandfather at his home in Galesburg. in his stamp collection from Sam, postmarked July 18, 1894, confirming that Sam had found the third level and had successfully reached Galesburg and was enjoying a simpler life.
- Sam, who had purchased old-style currency to fund his journey, had left behind his psychiatric practice to open a business in the past, and he encouraged Charley and his wife, Louisa, to continue their search for the third level.
- The most surprising thing was- the letter was not there before



Questions

Imp

Discuss the narrative techniques used by the author in The Third Level. How do these techniques effectively convey the themes of escapism and nostalgia? Provide specific examples from the text to support your analysis.

As I wandered through Grand Central Station, I stumbled upon something surreal-The Third Level, a place lost in time, untouched by the anxieties of the present. Jack Finney's narrative techniques beautifully blend reality with illusion, making me question whether this level was real or just a desperate escape from modern-day pressures. The setting a dimly lit station with spittoons, brass cuspidors and gas lamps- felt like stepping into the past, a stark contrast to my hurried, stress-ridden life. Finney masterfully uses contrast and irony; while I yearned for the peace of the 1890s, my psychiatrist dismissed it as escapism. Yet, the letter from Sam hinted that the Third Level was more than just my imagination. Through vivid descriptions, symbolism, and an unreliable narrator, the story captures the nostalgia for simpler times and the human need for escape. Was the Third Level real? Perhaps, but more importantly, it was my refuge.

Questions

In the story "The Third Level", reality and fantasy are interwoven. Justify.

The story revolves around post World War II scenario of 20th century. The protagonist Charley wants to escape from reality. He took the subway, reached third level. There were only two levels at the Grand Central Station. Sam, his psychiatrist calls it awaking dream wish fulfillment. He buys old style currency with all his money. He keeps looking for third level but never finds it again. Sam goes missing – finds Sam's letter in grandfather's collection of first day covers. In the story "The Third Level" by Jack Finney, reality and fantasy are interwoven through the narrative structure and the experiences of the protagonist, Charley. Throughout the story, Charley grapples with the question of whether the third level he discovers is real or a figment of his imagination. As he delves deeper into the historical details and meets people who seem to belong to the past, the lines between reality and fantasy blur for both Charley and the reader. The story explores Charley's psychological state, suggesting that his experiences of the third level could be a manifestation of his desire to escape the pressures and anxieties of modern life. This psychological dimension adds a layer of ambiguity to whether the third level truly exists or is a coping mechanism.

Questions

Charley's imaginative description of the third level where he saw the old locomotive, smaller rooms, fewer ticket windows and train gates, old looking information booth. There were open gas flame lights, brass spittoons on the floor, pocket gold watch with cover. "The World" newspaper edition dated 11th June 1894. The use of old style currency notes and old dressing style of men and women supported this fantasy.

The third level can be interpreted as a metaphor for the desire to escape reality and find refuge in a simpler, more nostalgic past. It symbolises Charley's longing for a different time and place, which resonates with readers' own fantasies of escaping the constraints of everyday life. This ambiguity reinforces the idea that reality and fantasy can coexist in the mind, leaving room for interpretation and personal reflection.

Overall, "The Third Level" effectively intertwines reality and fantasy by challenging the boundaries between what is perceived as real and what is imagined. It invites readers to ponder the nature of perception, memory, and the allure of nostalgia, making it a compelling exploration of human imagination and the quest for meaning beyond the confines of everyday life.

Questions

Describe briefly the Third Level. How did it differ from the Second Level?

- The Grand Central Station of New York has subways on two levels from where the commuters take trains to different destinations. No Third Level was ever built. However, the protagonist of the story, Charley, believes in the existence of a Third Level, operating in a time-frame of 1890s.
- The Third Level signifies an escape from the modern world that is "full of insecurity, fear, war, worry and all the rest of it...." The period of 1890s represents a peaceful life not possible in the present era. The Third Level had an old-fashioned atmosphere, with gas lamps, wooden floors, and antique furniture. The walls were also made of brick and looked old. The Third Level was devoid of any modern technology, unlike the other levels of the station. There were no electric lights, escalators or elevators. This was a significant difference that Charley noticed.

Deep **WATER**

Summary

- The narrator decided to learn to swim at the YMCA pool in Yakima, which was safe, unlike the treacherous Yakima River.
- The narrator developed an aversion to water after an experience at a California beach when he was three or four, where waves knocked him down and buried him in the water, instilling "terror in his heart".
- The "misadventure" happened when he was alone at the pool.
- A "big bruiser of a boy" picked him up and tossed him into the deep end.
- He went down, planning to make a big jump from the bottom, come to the surface, and paddle to the edge.
- The jump failed, and he experienced two more unsuccessful attempts to return to the surface, with his legs becoming paralyzed.
- Eventually, all effort ceased, and "a blackness swept over [his] brain," wiping out fear.
- He was later found lying on his stomach beside the pool, vomiting.



Summary

- The fear ruined his fishing and boating trips.
- Finally, the narrator hired an instructor and practiced five days a week for three months, learning piece by piece, including exhaling underwater and kicking with his legs.
- To be certain the terror was gone, he swam two miles across Lake Wentworth.
- He cemented his conquest by stripping, diving into Warm Lake, and swimming across to the other shore and back, shouting with joy.
- The experience taught him that "There is terror only in the fear of death".



Questions

What was the sense of panic that gripped William O. Douglas ? How did he overcome that fear ?

- William O. Douglas had developed an aversion to water when he was just a boy of three or four. His father had taken him to the beach in California. As he and his father stood together in the surf, he was knocked down by the waves and was buried in water. His breath had gone and terror gripped his heart at the overpowering force of the waves. He was frightened and developed a permanent fear for water. This fear revived when he was at the Y.M.C.A. swimming pool where a big boy of eighteen tossed him into the deep end of the pool and he nearly drowned. His hands and legs were paralysed and rigid. His lungs ached and head pounded. When he came to senses, he found himself lying beside the pool, vomiting.
- William O. Douglas decided to get an instructor and learn how to swim. He went to a pool and practised five days a week. The instructor made him a perfect swimmer. But, he was not sure that all his terror had left. So he went to Lake Wentworth and dived off a dock. He swam two miles across the lake. Finally his fear fled and he swam on freely. This is how he conquered his fear of water.

Questions

What purpose does William O. Douglas have in recounting a childhood experience of terror and his conquering of it? What is the deeper or larger meaning that he draws from this experience?

- It is quite true that childhood fears are deeply entrenched in our mind. It is very difficult to get rid of them.
- In 'Deep Water' the author William O. Douglas recounts a childhood 'misadventure'. He describes how he was tossed into the pool by a big boy. He was nearly drowned in the swimming pool. He was so frightened that the fear of water stayed with him for years. He was transformed into a perfect swimmer by an instructor. And finally, after a lot of swimming practice, he was able to overcome his fear of water.
- 'Deep Water' is just not a childhood experience of terror and the conquering of that terror. It has a deeper and larger meaning. Through his own experience William O. Douglas wants to convey a definite message. It is the message of hope, struggle and determination when life tests us. The current story can undoubtedly be viewed as a figurative manifestation of life's challenges. To overcome his fear of water was a challenge for Douglas. He accepted the challenge, struggled a lot to overcome his fear and emerged victorious.

Questions

- The psychology of fear is very complex. There is terror only in the fear of death. Roosevelt had rightly said, "All we have to fear is fear itself." William O. Douglas experienced both the sensation of dying and the terror that fear of it can produce. The will to live conquers all obstacles. It wins over all terrors and fears.

Questions

Fear is something that we must learn to overcome if we want to succeed in life. How did Douglas get over his fear of water?

Roosevelt uttered the basic truth when he said, "All we have to fear is fear itself." In death there is peace. There is terror only in the fear of death. The narrator experienced both the experiences. He experienced the 'sensation of dying' and the 'terror' that fear of it could produce. The narrator's aversion to water started when he was just four. He stood together with his father in the surf. The waves knocked him down and swept over him. He was frightened and he developed terror in his heart at the overpowering force of the waves. This terror returned when he was tossed into the deep end of the Y.M.C.A. pool by a big bruiser of a boy. After that a haunting fear gripped his heart. This made him learn swimming. An instructor did make him a perfect swimmer. But still he remained terror-stricken when he was alone in the pool. The old sensation returned. He went to Lake Wentworth and swam across the lake. He laughed and said, "Well, Mr. Terror, what do you think you can do to me?" The terror fled and terror never troubled him again. The experience had a deep meaning for the narrator. Only those who have known stark terror and conquered, can appreciate it.

A Thing OF BEAUTY

Summary

- A thing of beauty is a joy for ever.
- Its value never decreases.
- A thing of beauty is a shelter for us. It gives us a sound sleep full of sweet dreams.
- Our sadness, evil nature and unhealthy ways make our living quite unpleasant.
- But a thing of beauty removes the pall of sadness from our spirits.
- Trees provide a shady boon for sheep.



Summary

- Clear small streams provide a cooling shady cover of thickets against the hot season.
- Daffodils bloom among the green surroundings. Beautiful musk-roses bloom around mid forest thickets.
- The beauty provided by these beautiful objects of nature is lovelier than all the stories that we have heard or read.
- Nature provides us an immortal drink that pours into our hearts right from heaven.
- The poet identifies several natural elements, including the sun, the moon, trees, daffodils, clear streams, and musk-rose blooms, as sources of perennial joy.
- The "grandeur" of the stories regarding the "mighty dead" continues to inspire us. These tales serve as an "endless fountain of immortal drink," providing heavenly bliss.



Questions

'A thing of beauty is a joy forever.' Is a thing of beauty enough to give us joy? To be happy, don't we require mental peace, mutual brotherhood, success in our endeavours, etc.? Support your answer with appropriate reasons.

I agree with Keats that a thing of beauty is a joy forever. But beauty alone is not enough to make us happy. If we are stressed due to a problem and we are not getting a solution to it, by merely looking at beauty we cannot attain joy. As long as we don't get the solution to the problem, nothing can make us joyous. If we are fighting with one another, a thing of beauty cannot make us joyous. If we have worked hard to get through our exams, but we don't secure as many marks as we desired, and those marks are not enough to get us admission into a desired college or stream, a thing of beauty can't give us joy. So, apart from beauty, there are many other things which are necessary to give us joy.

Questions

How does a thing of beauty bring joy in our lives?

Keats' philosophy that a thing of beauty brings joy in our lives, is correct only to some extent. A thing of beauty does bring joy in our lives but it is momentary. As long as a thing of beauty is in front of us, we can have joy but as soon as we get away from that beautiful thing, we are unhappy. A thing of beauty can bring us joy only if our mind is fresh and heart is happy. A tense mind and unhappy heart can never attain joy from a beautiful thing.

Questions

How does Keats' poem, 'A Thing of Beauty' appeal richly to the senses, stimulating the reader's inner sight as well as the sense of touch and smell? Write your answer in about 120-150 words.

- John Keats, a great Romantic poet, through his poem gives a message that a thing of beauty is a joy forever. When we read it, we visualise the beautiful things as well the sense of comfort they provide us. The poem stimulates our inner sight as well as the sense of touch and smell. We feel that a thing of beauty is a joy forever.
- The sun, the moon, trees old and young, and daffodil flowers, small streams with clear water, mass of ferns and the blooming musk-roses, wreaths of beautiful flowers, and all beautiful things in this world, evoke our imagination, sense of hearing, touch and smell. Keats poetic descriptions – present beauty that appeals to our senses and gives delight.

**THANK
YOU**

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