Class 8

Stellar English

Literature Reader

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1 A Single Move

Sometimes we feel that we have certain weaknesses and we blame God, the circumstances and ourselves for them but we don't know that our weakness might become our strength one day. Read this story to find out how a boy's biggest weakness becomes his strength.

Kusovo was ten years old. He was on his way to a holiday camp. The boys in his bus were full of energy. Everyone was happy. The driver of their bus was a kindly old man. He liked the boys and encouraged them to sing as the bus roared through the countryside.

Some of the boys were having an argument.

"Who said Ali is the best boxer in the world? I don't believe you!"

"You don't believe me? I am telling you he is the best."

"I am going to be a boxer when I grow up."

"You will be a boxer! You can't even punch me. What kind of a boxer will you make?" Masami **sneered.**

"I am going to be a judo expert," Kusovo said.

"Judo! You have to train for years to learn judo. You have to be strong and fit always. I know because my uncle is a judo grandmaster," Abe said.

"I know," Kusovo replied. "I am going to work really hard."

As the boys were talking they noticed that the bus had started **rocking** from side to side. The driver seemed to be losing control.

"What's happened to Mr Shinozo? He never drives so fast," Kusovo said in a worried voice.

sneered: looked unpleasantly to show disrespect
rocking: moving gently

"Let's go to the front of the bus and see," Abe suggested.

As the boys moved forward the speed of the bus seemed to increase even more. The other children in the bus were screaming by now. Even their teacher, Mr Koizumi, looked grey in the face. He was trying to soothe the younger boys and get to the front of the bus at the same time.

Suddenly Kusovo saw Mr Shinozo. He was lying back **limply** in his seat. He wasn't even holding the steering wheel! Before Kusovo could think any further the bus **veered** off the road and dashed into a tree. Even as it did so, the door of the bus flew open and Kusovo was flung out. He fell on the hard ground and suddenly one of the tyres of the bus rolled on to his left arm. He was pinned under the bus and the pain in his arm was **excruciating.** He fainted from the pain.

When Kusovo regained consciousness he found himself in a hospital. He learnt that their driver had suffered a heart attack while driving the bus. He too was now in hospital. Fortunately no one had got really badly injured. Kusovo was glad.

limply: not stiff
veered: changed direction suddenly
excruciating: too much

But then he noticed that his mother was crying as she told him that.

"Why are you crying, mother?" he asked. "Everyone is well and even I have recovered, though my left arm does hurt a lot."

Suddenly he realized why his mother was crying. He tried to lift his arm as he was speaking. But he couldn't lift it! He stared at his shoulder in horror. He had no arm!

After a month in hospital Kusovo was sent home. He remembered the conversation he had been having with his friends when the accident occurred. He was going to become a black belt in judo. Now he wouldn't be able to fulfill his dream.

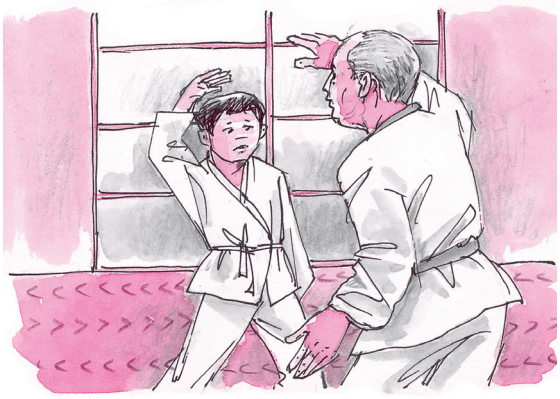
The next day when Kusovo woke up he had made a decision. He had decided to study judo despite the fact that he had lost his left arm. The boy began lessons with an old Japanese judo master.

Kusovo was doing well so he couldn't understand why, after three months of training, the master had taught him only one move.

"Sensei (Master)," Kusovo finally said, "shouldn't I be learning more moves?"

"This is the only move you know, but this is the only move you'll ever need to know," the sensei replied.

Not quite understanding, but believing in his teacher, Kusovo kept training. Several months later, the sensei took him to his first tournament. Surprising himself, Kusovo easily won his first two matches. The third match proved to be more difficult, but after some time, his opponent became impatient and charged; the boy **deftly** used his one move to win the match.



deftly: skilfully

Everyone was amazed by Kusovo's success. He was now in the finals. This time, his opponent was bigger, stronger, and more experienced. For a while, Kusovo appeared to be overmatched. Concerned that Kusovo might get hurt, the referee called a time-out. He was about to stop the match when the sensei intervened.

"No," the sensei insisted, "let him continue."

Soon after the match resumed, his opponent made a critical mistake: he dropped his guard. Instantly, Kusovo used his move to pin him down. Kusovo had won the match and the tournament. He was the champion. On the way home, Kusovo and the sensei reviewed every move that Kusovo had made in each and every match. Then Kusovo summoned the courage to ask what was really on his mind.

"Sensei, how did I win the tournament with only one move?"

"You won for two reasons," the sensei answered. "First, you've almost mastered one of the most difficult throws in all of judo. And second, the only known defence for that move is for your opponent to grab your left arm."

The boy's biggest weakness had become his biggest strength.

Kusovo understood what a wise and caring master he had. Not only had he taught him judo, he had also taught him how to use his weakness as strength.

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Kusovo was a
   - (a) ten-year old boy. ☐
   - (b) ten-year old girl. ☐
   - (c) five year old boy. ☐

2. Kusovo was a
   - (a) driver ☐
   - (b) father ☐
   - (c) master ☐

3. Kusovo lost his
   - (a) left leg in the accident. ☐
   - (b) left arm in the accident. ☐
   - (c) right arm in the accident. ☐

4. How many moves did judo master teach Kusovo?
   (a) 10 moves. ☐ (b) 100 moves. ☐ (c) 1 move. ☐

B. Write true or false.

1. Kusovo was going on a holiday camp. _____
2. The driver of the bus had a heart attack. _____
3. Kusovo wanted to become a boxer. _____
4. The third match proved to be very easy for Kusovo. _____
5. Kusovo's biggest weakness became his biggest strength. _____

C. Answer these questions.

1. What were Kusovo and his friend talking about?
2. Why did Mr Shinozo lose control of the bus?
3. How was Kusovo flung out of the bus?
4. When did Kusovo learn judo?
5. How did Kusovo win the tournament with only one move?

LANGUAGE SKILLS

D. Make sentences with the following words.

1. grandmaster _____
2. faint _____
3. stare _____
4. time-out _____
5. deftly _____

E. Match the words with their antonyms.

Words	Antonyms
1. kind	(a) weakness
2. encourange	(b) defend
3. attack	(c) discourage
4. strength	(d) cruel

WRITING SKILLS

F. Write a paragraph on an incident in your life when your weakness became your strength.

DISCUSS

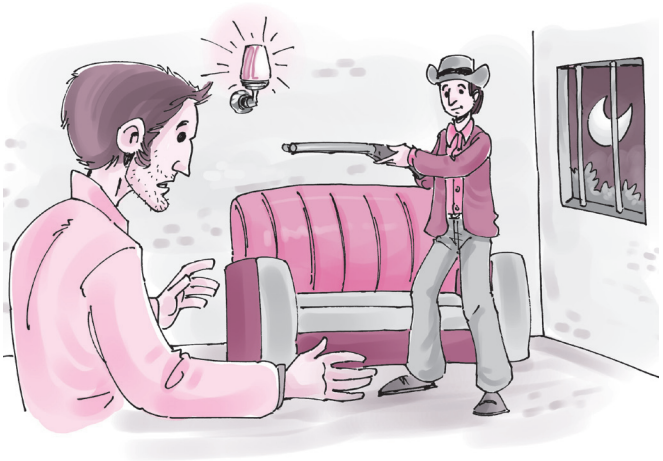
G. How can we change our weaknesses into our strengths?

2 Sally

This extract has been taken from a story written by Isaac Asimov. Isaac Asimov was a science fiction writer. The story you are going to read is about cars which are intelligent enough to ward off intruders who have come to take them away.

I sat up in bed when he turned the light on, blinking blindly till I made out what was happening. Once I could see, it didn't take much explaining. In fact, it took none at all. He had a gun in his right fist, the nasty little needle **barrel** just visible between two fingers. I knew that all he had to do was to increase the pressure of his hand and I would be torn apart.

barrel: the hollow pipe of a gun



He said, "Put on your clothes, Jake."

I didn't move. I just watched him.

He said, "Look, Jake, I know the situation. I visited you two days ago, remember. You have no guards in this place, no electrified fences, no warning signals. Nothing."

I said, "I don't need any. Meanwhile there's nothing to stop you from leaving, Mr Gellhorn. I would if I were you. This place can be very dangerous."

He laughed a little, "It is, for anyone on the wrong side of a fist gun."

"I see it," I said. "I know you've got one."

"Then get a move on. My men are waiting."

“No, Mr Gellhorn. Not unless you tell me what you want, and probably not even then.”

“I made you a **proposition** the day before yesterday.”

“The answer’s still no.”

“There’s more to the proposition now. I’ve come here with some men and an **automatobus**. You have your chance to come with me and disconnect twenty-five of the **positronic** motors. I don’t care which twenty-five you choose. We’ll load them on the bus and take them away. Once they’re disposed of, I’ll see to it that you get your fair share of the money.”

“I have your word on that, I suppose.”

He didn’t act as if he thought I was being sarcastic. He said, “You have.”

I said, “No.”

proposition: proposal
automatobus: a bus that can do work like a living being
positronic: an element

“If you insist on saying no, we’ll go about it in our own way. I’ll disconnect the motors myself, only I’ll disconnect all fifty-one. Every one of them.”

“It isn’t easy to disconnect positronic motors, Mr Gellhorn. Are you a robotics expert? Even if you are, you know, these motors have been modified by me.”

“I know that, Jake. And to be truthful, I’m not an expert. I may ruin quite a few motors trying to get them out. That’s why I’ll have to work over all fifty-one if you don’t cooperate. You see, I may only end up with twenty-five when I’m through. The first few I’ll tackle will probably suffer the most. Till I get the hang of it, you see. And if I do it myself, I think I’ll put Sally first in line.”

I said, “I can’t believe you’re serious, Mr Gellhorn.”

He said, “I’m serious, Jake.” He let it all dribble in. “If you want to help, you can keep Sally. Otherwise, she’s liable to be hurt very badly.”

I said, “I’ll come with you, but I’ll give you one more warning. You’ll be in trouble, Mr Gellhorn.”

He thought that was very funny. He was laughing very quietly as we went down the stairs together.

There was an automatobus waiting outside the driveway to the garage apartments. The shadows of three men waited beside it, and their flash beams went on as we approached.

Gellhorn said in a low voice, “I’ve got the old fellow. Come on. Move the truck up the drive and let’s get started.”

One of the others leaned in and punched the proper instructions on the control panel. We moved up the driveway with the bus following submissively.

“It won’t go inside the garage,” I said. “The door won’t take it. We don’t have buses here. Only private cars.”

“All right,” said Gellhorn. “Pull it over onto the grass and keep it out of sight.”

I could hear the **thrumming** of the cars when we were still ten yards from the garage.

thrumming: noise

Usually they quietened down if I entered the garage. This time they didn’t. I think they knew that strangers were about, and once the faces of Gellhorn and the others were visible they got noisier. Each motor was a warm rumble, and each motor was knocking irregularly until the place rattled.

The lights went up automatically as we stepped inside. Gellhorn didn’t seem bothered by the car noise, but the three men with him looked surprised and uncomfortable. I knew the type and I wasn’t worried.

One of them said, “Damn it, they’re burning gas.”

“My cars always do,” I replied stiffly.

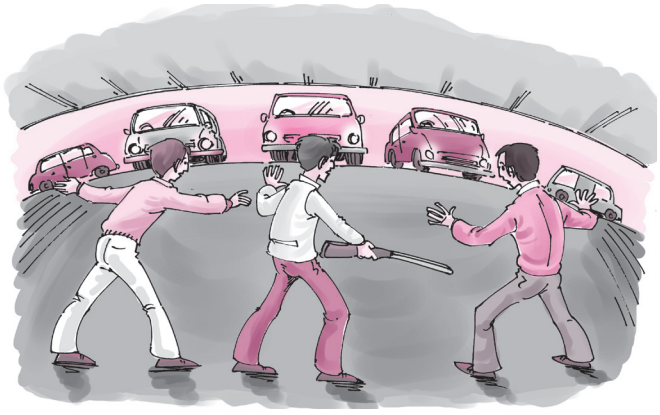
“Not tonight,” said Gellhorn. “Turn them off.”

“It’s not that easy, Mr Gellhorn,” I said.

“Get started!” he said.

I stood there. He had his fist gun pointed at me steadily. I said, “I told you, Mr Gellhorn, that my cars have been well-treated while they’ve been at the farm. They’re used to being treated that way, and they resent anything else.”

“You have one minute,” he said. “Lecture me some other time.”



''I'm trying to explain something. I'm trying to explain that my cars can understand what I say to them. A positronic motor will learn to do that with time and patience. My cars have learned. Sally understood your proposition two days ago. You'll remember she laughed when I asked her opinion. She also knows what you did to her and so do the two sedans you scattered, And the rest know what to do about **trespassers** in general."

"Look, you crazy old fool..."

"All I have to say is..." I raised my voice. "Get them!"

One of the men turned **pasty** and yelled, but his voice was drowned completely in the sound of fifty-one horns turned loose at once. They held their notes, and within the four walls of the garage the echoes· rose to a wild, metallic call. Two cars rolled forward, not hurriedly, but with no possible mistake as to their target. Two cars fell in line behind the first two. All the cars were stirring in their separate stalls.

The thugs stared, then backed.

I shouted, "Don't get up against a wall."

Apparently, they had that instinctive thought themselves. They rushed madly for the door of the garage.

trespassers: a person who goes onto somebody's place without permission
pasty: pale
splintered: broken

At the door one of Gellhorn's men turned, brought up a fist gun of his own. The needle pellet tore a thin, blue flash towards the first car. The car was Giuseppe.

A thin line of paint peeled up Giuseppe's hood, and the right half of his windshield grazed and **splintered** but did not break through.

The men were out of the door, running, and two by two the cars; crunched out after them into the night, their horns calling the charge.

I kept my hand on Gellhorn's elbow, but I don't think he could have moved in any case. His lips were trembling.

I said, "That's why I don't need electrified fences or guards. My property protects itself."

Gellhorn's eyes **swivelled** back and forth in fascination as, pair by pair, they whizzed by. He said, "They're killers!"

"Don't be silly. They won't kill your men."

swivelled: moved

"They'll just give your men a lesson. My cars have been specially trained for cross-country pursuit for just such an occasion; I think what your men will get will be worse than an outright quick kill. Have you ever been chased by an automatobile?"

—Isaac Asimov

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Who was the thief?
   (a) Jake. ☐ (b) Sally. ☐ (c) Gellhorn. ☐
2. The thief wanted to steal
   (a) cars. ☐
   (b) engines of the cars. ☐
   (c) money. ☐
3. The most intelligent car was
   (a) Sally. ☐ (b) Giuseppe. ☐ (c) Sedan. ☐

B. Write true or false.

1. Jake was the owner of all the cars in his garage. _____
2. Jake agreed with Raymond Gellhorn's proposal. _____
3. A car was 'wounded' by a gun shot. _____
4. The thieves had got a lesson. _____

C. Answer these questions.

1. Why did Mr Raymond Gellhorn bring a gun with him?
2. Why did Jake warn Mr Raymond Gellhorn?
3. What instruction did Jake give to the cars?

LANGUAGE SKILLS

D. Change the narration of the following sentences.

1. He said, "I made you a proposition the day before yesterday."
2. Gellhorn said in a low voice, "I've got the old fellow."
3. "It won't go inside the garage," I said.

E. Fill in the blanks. Choose the right word from the box.

visible signal modified suffer

1. The plain-clothed police were waiting for a _____ from their boss.
2. Innocent people _____ at the hand of the powerful people.
3. Though it was a clear night, the iceberg was hardly _____.
4. SL950 is a _____ version of the old SL940 car.

WRITING SKILLS

F. Write a paragraph on 'Artificial Intelligence—its advantages and disadvantages'.

DISCUSS

G. What would you do if you were in place of Jake? Discuss it in the class.

3 Daffodils

William Wordsworth was one of the greatest nature poets. Wordsworth was the person who made poetry easy and suitable for common people. In his poem Daffodils, the beauty of nature is praised.

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in **sprightly** dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the **sparkling** waves in glee:
A poet could not but be **gay**,
In such a **jocund** company:
I gazed–and gazed–but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:
For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in **pensive** mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

—William Wordsworth

NEW WORDS

Fluttering: moving
sprightly: full of life and energy
sparkling: shining
gay: happy
jocund: happy
pensive: sad

UNDERSTANDING THE POEM

A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. What floats high over the vales?
   (a) the poet. ☐
   (b) daffodils. ☐
   (c) the clouds. ☐
2. The daffodils were
   (a) blue. ☐
   (b) golden. ☐
   (c) violet. ☐
3. The daffodils stretched along the margin of a
   (a) bay. ☐
   (b) river. ☐
   (c) sea. ☐

B. Fill in the blanks with information from the poem.

1. The poet was wandering like a _____.
2. The daffodils were dancing in the _____.
3. The daffodils stretched in a _____ line.
4. The poet's _____ dances with the daffodils.

C. Answer these questions.

1. Where did the poet see the daffodils?
2. How many daffodils did the poet see at a glance?
3. What was the effect of the show on the poet?

LANGUAGE SKILLS

D. Make a new word by adding prefix/suffix to each word.

1. lonely : _____
2. cloud : _____
3. wave : _____
4. heart : _____

E. Make two new words out of the following words.

1. golden : (a) _____ (b) _____
2. daffodils : (a) _____ (b) _____
3. margin : (a) _____ (b) _____
4. company : (a) _____ (b) _____
5. pensive : (a) _____ (b) _____

ACTIVITY

F. Write the theme of the poem.

G. Write a short poem on the natural beauty of a spot you have visited.

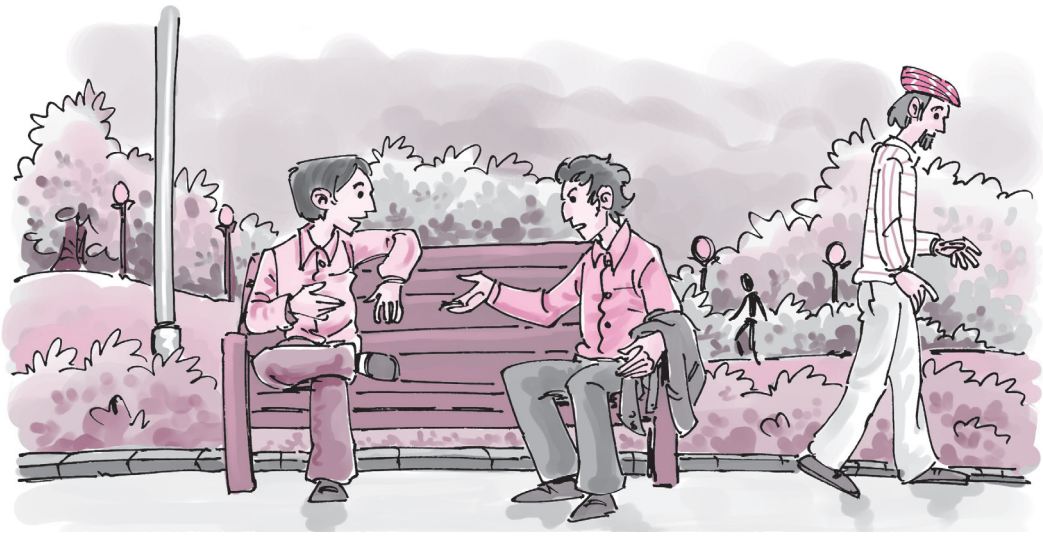
4 Dusk

The present story, Dusk *has been taken from Saki's writing. Saki is the pen name of Hector Hugh Munro, a British writer.*

The present story tells how Norman Gortsby gets fooled by the appearance of a person.

Norman Gortsby sat on a bench in the Park. With his back to the fence, he faced a street. It was early March and about six-thirty in the evening. Dusk had fallen. The only light came from the moon and some distant street lamps. There were very few people on the road, or the footpath. Some men walked in the Park, while others sat on the benches. Norman Gortsby liked this time of the day. There were people like him moving about; people whose dreams and hopes had died; men who did not want to meet others, and did not want anyone to see or recognise them. Gortsby felt like one of them, lost and defeated.

An old gentleman sat on the bench, next to him. His clothes weren't too shabby, but he didn't seem to have too much money either. He seemed to



belong to the world's forgotten set, for whom no one really cared. Slowly this man got up and left. Very soon, a young man came and sat down on the bench. He wore good clothes, but seemed quite **upset**. He cursed as he sat down. Gortsby said, "You don't seem to be in a very good **temper**."

"You wouldn't be happy if you were in my **shoes**."

"What happened?" asked Gortsby.

"I came to London this afternoon. I had planned to stay at the Patagonian Hotel in Berkshire Square, but when I got there, I realised that it had been pulled down a few weeks ago. There is a cinema hall there now. The taxi driver took me to another hotel, a little distance from that place. From there I sent a letter home giving them the address, and then went to buy a cake of soap. I can't use hotel soap, you see, and I had forgotten to bring mine. I roamed around a bit, had a drink at a bar and took a look at the shops. When I had thought of returning to the hotel, I realised I had forgotten its name, and I did not even know the name of its street. Just imagine my condition! I don't have any relatives or friends in London. I could send a telegram to my family, but they will get the letter I sent from the hotel only tomorrow. I came out with a **shilling**, but I bought a soap and had a drink, and am left with just two pence in my pocket, and nowhere to stay at night."

upset: sad
temper: mood
shoes: in my position
shilling: a unit of British currency

He kept quiet for a while, and then said, "You must be thinking that I've made up a nice story." His voice showed that he was upset.

"I believe you," said Gortsby, "but where is the soap? That's the weak point in your story!"

The young man sat up, searched in his pockets, got up, and finally said, "I must have lost it."

"If you lose a hotel and a cake of soap in one afternoon, it shows deliberate carelessness."

But even before Gortsby had finished speaking, the young man had hurried away.

"It's a pity," thought Gortsby. "His going out to get a cake of soap was the only convincing part of the story, and yet that detail itself caused him trouble. If he had brought a cake of soap, wrapped and sealed like one newly bought, it would have been perfect. In his profession he must take all precautions, so as not to be found out."

As he got up to go, he exclaimed in concern. Lying on the ground, next to the bench, was a small packet, definitely from the chemist, no doubt a cake of soap. It must have fallen from the young man's pocket when he sat down.

Soon Gortsby was hurrying down the path, looking for the chap in the overcoat. When he had almost given up hope, he saw the man. When Gortsby called out to him, he seemed somewhat angry.

"Your most important witness has turned up," said Gortsby, showing him the cake of soap. "It must have slipped out of your overcoat pocket when you sat down. It was on the ground. You must excuse me for not believing you. But since I had asked you for the proof of the soap, I must now do my part. I can lend you a **sovereign**.

sovereign: an old coin in Britain, equal to one pound

The young man quickly put it into his pocket.

"You can return the money any day this week. Here is my address, and don't lose the soap again."

The young man thanked Gortsby, and saying how lucky it was that the soap had been found, fled towards Knightsbridge.

As Gortsby turned back towards the Park, he kept thinking of how relieved the young man had been, and decided never to be too clever himself, nor judge only from what he saw.

He had almost reached the bench, where so much had happened a short while ago. He saw an old gentleman searching worriedly for something below the bench. Gortsby soon recognised him as the old man who had been sitting with him on the bench earlier that evening.

"Have you lost anything, sir?" he asked.

"Yes, a cake of soap."

—Saki

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Norman Gortsby came to the park only to
   (a) escape from others. ☐
   (b) enjoy the beauty of the park. ☐
   (c) meet the gentleman. ☐

2. Norman Gortsby felt that the old gentleman lived
   (a) alone. ☐ (b) in a hotel. ☐ (c) with the family. ☐

3. The young man who came to London wanted to stay at
   (a) Patagonian Hotel. ☐
   (b) Ashoka Hotel. ☐
   (c) Victoria Hotel. ☐

4. The young man came to the park
   (a) to chat with Norman Gortsby. ☐
   (b) because he had no place to spend the night. ☐
   (c) search the soap. ☐

5. Who was the real owner of the soap?
   (a) Norman Gortsby. ☐
   (b) the old gentleman. ☐
   (c) the young man. ☐

B. What misfortune happened to the young man who had come to London that day?

C. Answer these questions.

1. What kind of people gathered at the park at dusk?
2. Why did Norman Gortsby believe the young man?
3. Why did the young man thank Norman Gortsby?

LANGUAGE SKILLS

D. There are some errors in these sentences. Put a circle over the wrong word. Replace it with the correct word.

1. Please keep quite.
2. The Earth revolved around the Sun.
3. I am really dissappointed at your performance.
4. Delhi is one of the largest city in India.
5. I will go to a fare tomorrow.

E. Match the words with their antonyms.

Words	Antonyms
1. pull	(a) ugly
2. forgotten	(b) charged
3. nice	(c) push
4. hurried	(d) remembered
5. excused	(e) slowed

WRITING SKILLS

F. How did the young man make Norman Gortsby a fool? Write your opinion.

DISCUSS

G. Did you believe the story of the young man? Why or why not? Discuss it in the class.

H. Do you agree with the saying that 'appearance is sometimes, deceptive'? Discuss the saying with reference to this story.

5 Nephews

O Henry is one of the best-known short story writers in the world. He was an American writer. His original name was William Sydney Porter.

Nephews is one of his most famous stories.

Paulding, a millionaire, has two nephews—Vallance and Ide. The nephews have no money of their own and live on the allowance given to them by their uncle. Let us read to know what happened to them.

Vallance buttoned his coat and lit his last cigarette. He sat down on the park bench. For three minutes he thought sadly about the last hundred dollars of his last thousand dollars. He had paid the hundred dollars to a policeman for driving too fast. That was his last car ride, too.

He felt in all his pockets. Nothing! Not a single cent. That morning he had moved out of his house. He had sold his furniture to pay back some money he had borrowed. There had been no money left for his servant's wages, so he gave him all his clothes instead. The only clothes he had now were the clothes he was wearing.

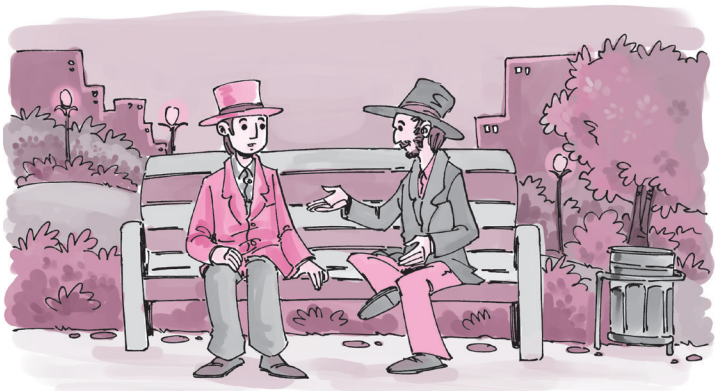
He sat there, and thought. In all of the big city of New York there was nowhere for him to go. He had nowhere to go, nothing to eat, nowhere to sleep. He had no money for a taxi ride, nor even for a flower for his girl. He could get money, of course. He could ask one of his friends, or trick someone, but he didn't want to do either. So he had decided to spend the night in the park.

All this was because his uncle was angry and had stopped sending him his allowance. And all that was because his nephew would not obey him because of a girl, who is not part of this story.

There was another nephew. The old uncle had never liked him, and long ago he had **disappeared**. No one knew where he was. Now

disappeared: left home

everyone was looking for him. He was to be the old man's new heir. He would get the allowance, the lovely house, the fine clothes, and the fast car.



And so Vallance had come to the park, to join the poor people, thin as ghosts, who often slept through the night there.

It was nearly ten o'clock. It was not exactly cold, but it was not comfortable either. Only six or seven people were in the park that evening. Most of them were sitting on the long benches, trying to keep warm. One of them got up and came over to Vallance.

It was difficult to tell his age. He might have been twenty. He might have been fifty. He had lived too long in cheap places. He was dirty looking, untidy, and unwell from drinking too much. He asked Vallance for a light.

"You don't usually come here," he said. "Your clothes are too good to be one of us. You just stopped for a rest on your way through the park, I think. You don't mind if I talk to you for a while, do you? I've got to be with somebody. You see, I'm afraid, I am very frightened. I've told two or three of those people over there about it. They think I'm mad. Please let me tell you. All I've had to eat today was a couple of pieces of bread and an apple. Tomorrow I will have three million dollars. You see that restaurant over there with all the cars around it? Tomorrow that place won't be good enough for me to eat in. Don't believe it, do you?"

"Yes, I believe it," said Vallance, with a laugh. "I had dinner in that restaurant yesterday. If I went there tonight, I couldn't buy a five-cent cup of coffee."

"You don't look like one of us. Well, I guess those things happen. I used to be rich myself some years ago. What happened to you?"

"Oh, I lost my job," said Vallance.

"You never know what will happen in this city," went on the other. "One day you're eating with silver knives and forks, the next you are eating with your

fingers. I've had plenty of bad luck, I can tell you. For five years I've been no more than a beggar. When I was small, I was taught to live without worrying about money, and I never learned to do any work. My name's Ide. I don't mind telling you. I've got to talk to somebody, you see, because I'm afraid. You wouldn't think that old Paulding, one of the millionaires who lives on Riverside Drive, was my uncle, would you? Well, he is. I lived in his house once, and had all the money I wanted. Say, you haven't got enough to buy us a couple of drinks, have you, er, what's your name?"

"Dawson," said Vallance. "No, I'm sorry to say that I have no money at all." "I've been living for a week in a builder's hut on Division Street" went on Ide. "I don't have anywhere else to go. While I was out today someone left a letter. It was from a lawyer, called Mead. I've seen his sign on Ann Street. The letter said that Paulding wants me to be his heir again. I have to go to the lawyer's office at ten tomorrow. I am heir to three million dollars, Dawson, and I shall get $10,000 a year as pocket money. And I'm afraid, I'm really afraid."

Ide jumped up and put both arms above his head. He started making wild noises, and crying. Vallance took hold of his arm and made him sit down. "Be quiet," he said. "Anyone would think you had just lost three million dollars instead of being about to get them. What are you afraid of?"

Ide sat unhappily on the bench. His hands were shaking. He held the sleeve of Vallance's coat tightly. It was dark, but the street lights were enough for Vallance to see Ide's face. He looked very frightened.

"Why, I'm afraid something will happen to me before tomorrow. I don't know what. Something that will stop me from getting that money. I'm afraid a tree will fall on me. I'm afraid a taxi will run over me, or a stone drop on me from a roof, or something. I never was afraid before. I've sat in this park a hundred nights as calm as anything, and without knowing where I would get my breakfast next day. But now it's different. I love money, Dawson, I'm happy as a god when I can hold it in my hands. I love to have people bowing to me, with the music and the flowers and fine clothes all around. As long as I knew I had nothing, I didn't mind. I was even happy sitting here dirty and hungry, watching the people coming and going along the road. But the money is close again now, and I can't wait here doing nothing for twelve hours, Dawson, I can't. There are fifty things that could happen to

me—I could go blind, my heart might stop, the world might come to an end before …"

Ide stood up again and cried out. People on the benches looked across at him. Vallance took his arm.

"Come for a walk," he said. "And try to calm yourself. There is no need to be worried or frightened. Nothing is going to happen to you. This night will be just like all other nights."

"You're right," said Ide. "Stay with me, Dawson. Be a good fellow. Walk around with me. I never was afraid like this before, and I've had plenty of trouble in my time. Do you think you could get us something to eat, old man? I feel too ill to try any begging myself."

It was late and very few people were out on the dark streets. Vallance took Ide up Fifth Avenue, and then west towards Broadway. "Wait here a few minutes," he said, leaving Ide in a quiet place. He went into a hotel that he knew, and walked slowly towards the bar. He looked just the same as he always did—a rich young man who has come to finish the evening with a last drink.

"There's a poor fellow outside, Jimmy" he said to the barman, "who says he's hungry. He looks it. Make' a sandwich or two for him, will you? I'll see that he doesn't throw them away."

"Of course, Mr Vallance," said the barman. "They don't all tell lies, and I don't like to see anybody go hungry."

He made four large sandwiches and put them into a cloth. Vallance took the food out to his friend. Ide really was hungry. He took the sandwiches, and started eating greedily. "I haven't had any free food as good as this for a year," he said. "Aren't you going to have any, Dawson?"

"I'm not hungry, thanks," said Vallance.

"We'll go back to the park," said Ide. "The police won't give us any trouble there. I'll keep the rest of this for our breakfast. I won't eat any more. If I eat too much I'll be ill. I might die of stomach trouble or something tonight, and never get to see that money again! There are still eleven hours before it's

time to go to the lawyer. You won't leave me, will you, Dawson? I'm afraid something might happen. You haven't anywhere to go, have you? "No," said Vallance, "nowhere tonight. I'll have a bench in the park with you."

"You don't seem to worry much," said Ide, "if you've told me the truth. I should think a man who has just lost a good job would be going mad."

"And I should think," said Vallance, laughing, "that one who will be richer by three million dollars tomorrow would be feeling easy and quiet."

"Yes, it's strange," said Ide, "the way people think about things. Here's your bench, Dawson, next to mine. The street lights don't shine in your eyes here. Say, Dawson, I'll get old Paulding to give you a letter to somebody about a job when I get back home. You've helped me a lot tonight. I don't believe I could have gone through the night if I hadn't met you."

"Thank you," said Vallance. "Do you lie down or sit up on these benches when you sleep?"

For hours Vallance looked up at the stars and listened to the sound of the horses on the road to the south. He thought a lot, but he was not sad. He felt no fear, no pain. Even when he thought of the girl, it was as if she lived on one of the stars he was looking at—far, far away from him. There was nothing he could do about it.

He remembered Ide's fear and laughed softly, yet without feeling very happy.

Soon the noise of bottles in milk carts could be heard all around. A new day was beginning. Vallance fell asleep on his uncomfortable bench.

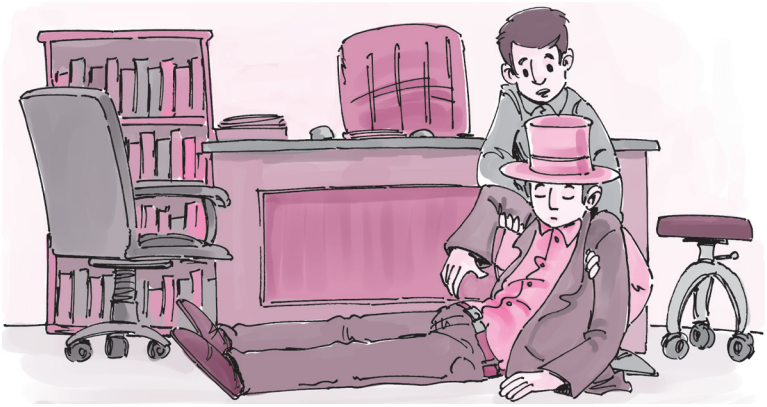
The next day, at ten o'clock, the two men stood at the door of Lawyer Mead's office in Ann Street.

Ide was more afraid than ever, and Vallance felt he could not leave him on his own.

When they went into the office, Lawyer Mead looked surprised. He and Vallance were old friends. After his greeting, he turned to Ide. Ide's face was white, and his hands were shaking.

"Mr Ide," he said, "I sent a second letter to your address last night. I think

you have not received it yet." Lawyer Mead's face looked sad. "It will tell you," he continued, "that Mr Paulding has changed his mind. He has decided not to make you his heir. I am sorry to tell you he will do nothing for you."



Ide's hands stopped shaking. The colour came back to his face. He stood up straight. With one hand he pushed his old hat to the back of his head. With the other he pointed towards the lawyer. He breathed in deeply, and then began to laugh.

"Tell old Paulding to keep his money," he said loudly and clearly. "I want none of it." He turned and walked out of his office. He looked very different from the pale-faced, frightened man who had walked in.

Lawyer Mead turned to Vallance and smiled.

"I am glad you came," he said. "Your uncle wants you to return home at once. He says he acted without thinking. He wants me to tell you that everything will be same as it was."

"Hey, Adams!" shouted Lawyer Mead, breaking off his sentence, and calling to his clerk. "Bring a glass of water—and come and help me get Mr Vallance off the floor, will you? The poor fellow has fainted!" ***—O Henry***

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Vallance had nowhere to go in New York. This shows that
   (a) Vallance was new in New York.
   (b) Vallance did not want to live with anyone in New York.
   (c) Vallance had no relatives in New York.

2. Who was supposed to be the heir of old Paulding?
   (a) Vallance.
   (b) Ide.
   (c) Mead.
3. What did Ide ask for from Vallance?
   (a) food.
   (b) light.
   (c) cigarette.
4. Whose fear was proved right?
   (a) Ide's.
   (b) Vallance's.
   (c) Mead's.

B. The story has many ironies. Can you find out some of them. One has been given for example.

Example: You see that restaurant over there with all the cars around it? Tomorrow that place won't be good enough for me to eat in.

C. Answer these questions.

1. Why was Vallance refused allowance by his uncle, Paulding?
2. Why was Ide afraid?
3. Why did Vallance faint at the lawyer's room?

LANGUAGE SKILLS

D. Join the following sentences.

1. Paulding was angry with Vallance. Paulding stopped sending Vallance allowance.
2. It was not exactly cold. It was not comfortable too.
3. One day you're eating with silver knives and forks. The next day you are eating with your fingers.
4. He was afraid. He could not spend the night alone.

WRITING SKILLS

E. What social picture do you get in this story?

F. Analyse the character of Old Paulding in brief.

DISCUSS

G. Discuss the following line in the class.

'The more possessions one has, the more worried one is.'

H. Discuss the changes that take place in the character of Mr Ide.

6 The Slave's Dream

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was an American poet. He was an African-American. In the poem, The Slave's Dream, he paints the hard life of slaves in America. The poem opens with a slave lying on the ground fast asleep. He dreams of his native place.

Beside the ungathered rice he lay,
His **sickle** in his hand;
His breast was bare, his matted hair
Was buried in the sand.

Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep,
He saw his Native **Land**.

Wide through the landscape of his dreams
The lordly Niger flowed;
Beneath the palm-trees on the plain
Once more a king he strode;
And heard the tinkling caravans
Descend the mountain-road.

He saw once more his dark-eyed **queen**
Among her children stand;
They clasped his neck, they kissed his cheeks,
They held him by the hand!–
A tear burst from the sleeper's lids
And fell into the sand.

And then at furious speed he rode
Along the Niger's bank;
His bridle-reins were golden chains,
And, with a martial clank,
At each leap he could feel his **scabbard** of steel
Smiting his stallion's flank.

Before him, like a blood-red flag,
The bright flamingoes flew;
From morn till night he followed their flight,
O'er plains where the tamarind grew,
Till he saw the roofs of **Caffre huts**,
And the ocean rose to view.

At night he heard the lion roar,
And the hyena scream,
And the river-horse, as he crushed the reeds
Beside some hidden stream;
And it passed, like a glorious roll of drums,
Through the triumph of his dream.

The forests, with their **myriad** tongues,
Shouted of Liberty;
And the blast of the Desert cried aloud,
With a voice so wild and free,
That he started in his sleep and smiled
At their **tempestuous** glee.

He did not feel the driver's whip,
Nor the burning heat of day;
For Death had illumined the Land of Sleep,
And his lifeless body lay.

A worn-out **fetter** that the soul
Had broken and thrown away!

—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

NEW WORDS

sickle: a tool for cutting corn
Land: (here) Africa
queen: wife
scabbard: the cover of a sword
Caffre huts: huts of Black Africans
myriad: many
tempestuous: full of extreme emotions
fetter: chain

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Who saw his native land?
   (a) the poet. ☐
   (b) an African Negro. ☐
   (c) an Arabian. ☐

2. Which river flowed beneath the palm-trees?
   (a) Niger. ☐
   (b) Potomac. ☐
   (c) Sindh. ☐

3. What did the slave think of in his dream?
   (a) Niger. ☐
   (b) Caffre huts. ☐
   (c) Liberty. ☐

4. How did the slave get liberty?
   (a) by rebelling. ☐
   (b) by fleeing. ☐
   (c) through death. ☐

B. Answer these questions.

1. Why did the poet use 'he' instead of giving any name to the slave?
2. Which land did 'he' belong to?
3. Why did 'he' smile?

LANGUAGE SKILLS

C. Find words from the poem that mean the following.

1. tangled in mass: _____
2. open area, scenery, view, etc.: _____
3. water from eyes: _____
4. an art of fighting with bare hands: _____
5. lighted or glowed: _____

D. Fill in the blanks with the suitable words from the poem. Follow the stanza numbers.

1. You fool. Why do you chase after your own _____? (Stanza 1)
2. Standing on the hill, I saw wide _____ below it. (Stanza 2)
3. Thousands of bats hung from the _____ of the caves. (stanza 5)
4. Don't _____ like that. It frightens me. (stanza 6)

ACTIVITY

E. Gather information about the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery observed by the UN. Discuss about it.

7 Peace, Peace, Peace!

The following excerpt has been taken from Zlata's Diary. *It is a book written by Zlata Filipovic. She was a young girl (a fifth-standard student in 1991) from Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia. In Bosnia a war broke out. The war broke out just before her 11th birthday.*

She wrote her diary, which she named 'Mimmy', describing everyday experience of war that affected her childhood days. During the war she was forced to stay at their cellar which was dark, dirty and smelly. Janine di Giovanni, a reporter, who interviewed her and wrote the introduction for her book, described Zlata as 'the Anne Frank of Sarajevo'. In one place in her diary, she expressed her utter frustration by writing. 'STOP SHOOTING' and 'PEACE, PEACE, PEACE!' She published her diary in midst of the war. She and her parents were airlifted in December 1993 to Paris by the UN. The last entry of her diary is 17 October 1993.

14 November 1991. War in Croatia, war in Dubrovnik, soldiers in Herzegovina. Mummy and Daddy keep watching the news on TV. They're worried. They talk mostly politics with their friends—I'm not interested.

26 December. Christmas was wonderful—a big tree and presents. My parents' friend Srdjan phoned from Dubrovnik. We were happy, but also sad. Here we were all warm, with lots of food and drink—and there he was at war.

Today was my last day at music school this year. I hope to have very good grades. My class is going to the cinema tomorrow to see *White Fang*. It's a wonderful book by Jack London.

5 March 1992. Oh God! Things are heating up in Sarajevo. On Sunday, **civilians** killed a Serbian wedding guest and wounded the priest. On Monday the whole city was full of barricades. By 6 p.m. people were fed up and went into the streets. A procession set out from the cathedral and made its way through the city. People sang and cried,

civilians: general people

“Bosnia, Bosnia, Sarajevo, Sarajevo. We’ll live together.”

5 April. I’m trying to concentrate on my homework, but I can hear gunfire from the hills. You can feel something is coming, something very bad. My stomach is in knots.

6 April. Today they were shooting from the Holiday Inn, killing people in front of the parliament building. Mimmy, war is here.

9 April. All the schools are closed. The heavy shelling and explosions have stopped. There’s occasional gunfire, but it quickly falls silent. Mummy and Daddy aren’t going to work. It’s very tense. Mummy is very upset. Daddy tries to calm her down.

12 April. A nice warm spring day. The middle of town was full of people. They came out to be together; they don’t want war. They want to live and enjoy themselves the way they used to. That’s only natural, isn’t it?

14 April. People are leaving Sarajevo. They’re crowding the airport, train and bus stations. Families and friends are separating. It’s so sad. These people and children aren’t guilty of anything. I don’t think Mummy and Daddy know whether to stay or go. Neither way is good.

cellar: an underground storeroom

2 May. Today was the worst ever. The shooting started around noon. Mummy, Daddy and I took Cicko, my canary, and we all ran to the **cellar**. It’s ugly, dark, smelly. We listened to the pounding shells, the thundering, noise overhead. Then I realized that this awful cellar was the only place that could save our lives. We heard glass shattering in our street. I put my fingers in my ears to block out the terrible sounds. This has been the worst day in my 11-year-old life.

5 May. We’ve rearranged the apartment. Our bedrooms are too dangerous. They face the hills, which is where they’re shooting from. We sleep on mattresses on the floor of the sitting room. It’s awful, but it’s safer. Although once the shooting starts, no place is safe but the cellar.

7 May. Today a shell fell in front of our house in the park where I used to play with my girl-friends. A lot of people were hurt, and my friend Nina was killed. A piece of **shrapnel** lodged in her brain. She was such a nice girl—the victim of a stupid war. I cry and wonder why. She didn't do anything. Nina, I'll always remember you.

shrapnel: small metal pieces that are thrown up and away from an exploding bomb

17 May. It's now definite: there's no more school. They'll grade us with the marks we got at the end of the last term.

21 May. Yesterday Mummy summoned the courage to cross the bridge. She saw Grandma and Grandad, and she heard a lot of sad news. Braco, her brother, was wounded on 14 May, driving home from work, and is in the' hospital. She went to see him today. He's badly wounded—it's his knee. Two hundred wounded were brought to the' clinic that day.

25 May. The Olympic Hall went up in flames today. Firefighters tried to save it, but it didn't stand a chance. I feel as though no one and nothing here will survive.

27 May. Two shells exploded in the street and one—in the market. Mummy was nearby at the time, and Daddy and I were worried because she hadn't come home. We kept going to the window hoping to see her. Is she alive?

I looked out of the window one more time and saw Mummy RUNNING ACROSS THE BRIDGE. As she came into the house she started shaking and crying.

10 June. There's been no electricity for quite some time. Daddy found an old wood-burning stove in the attic. We put the stove outside in the yard. We're cooking on the stove. The whole neighbourhood is. What luck to have this old stove.

16 June. Our windows broke when a shell hit a store across the street. Mummy and Daddy were in the yard getting lunch ready, and I had gone upstairs to set the table. Suddenly I heard a terrible bang. I was terrified and ran towards the hall. That same moment Mummy and Daddy were at the door, out of breath and pale. They hugged me, and we ran to the cellar.

We returned to our apartment to find the rooms full of glass. I found a piece of shrapnel and part of a grenade. Thank God I had been in the kitchen because could have been hit.

29 June. BOREDOM!!! SHOOTING!!! HUNGER!!! FEAR!!! That's my life. A child without schools, games, without friends, without nature. A child without a childhood. God, will this ever stop? I feel like crying. I am crying.

3 July. Mummy goes to work if there's no shooting, but she has to run across our bridge because of **snipers**. "I didn't realize the Miljacka was such a wide river," Mummy says. "You run and you run and there's no end to the bridge." That's fear, Mimmy. Fear that you'll be hit.

snipers: one who shoots from a hidden place

Daddy isn't working. The two of us stay at home, waiting for Mummy. When the sirens go off we worry about when and if she'll get home. Oh, the relief when she comes back!

5 July. I don't remember when I last left the apartment. It must be almost two months ago. I feel caged. All I can see through the broken windows is the deserted park. I hear the shells being fired, and everything around me smells of war. I can't stand it any more. I want to scream and cry. I can't even play the piano. It's in the dangerous room where I'm not allowed.

18 August. Mummy carries water home. It's hard, but she has to do it—Daddy has a hernia. I've forgotten what it's like for water to pour out of a tap, to shower. We use a jug now.

20 September. YIPPEE! I finally got to go out today. But the streets aren't the same, and not many people are out. They're worried, sad, everybody rushing around with bowed heads. All the shop windows have been broken and looted. My school was hit by a shell and its top floor destroyed.

I went to see Grandma and Grandad. Oh, how we hugged and kissed. They've lost weight and aged in the four months since I last saw them.

19 November. Nothing new on the political front. Some resolutions are being adopted, and we are still freezing, starving, crying and dying.

I keep wanting to explain these stupid politics to myself. It looks to me as though politics means Serbs, Croats and Muslims. But they are all human beings. Among my friends, I never knew who was a Serb, a Croat or a Muslim. Now politics wants to separate them. Why? I don't understand.

3 December. Today is my birthday. Twelve years old. The day started with kisses and congratulations. In the evening, the neighbourhood got together. I got chocolate, vitamins, a heart-shaped soap, a pendant and ear-rings. It was nice, but something was missing. Peace!

28 December. Mummy and Daddy are reading. Somehow they look even sadder to me in the light of the oil lamp (we have no more wax candles, so we make oil lamps). Daddy has lost a lot of weight. Even his glasses look too big for him. Mummy has lost weight, too, and the war has given her wrinkles. Will our suffering ever stop so that my parents can be what they used to be—cheerful and smiling?

29 September 1993. The circle is closing, and we're being strangled. Sometimes I wish I had wings so I could flyaway from this hell. But to do that I'd need wings for Mummy, wings for Daddy. And that's impossible. That's why I have to keep holding on to you, Mimmy, and hope that it will pass and I will be a child again living in peace.

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. 'Things are heating up in Sarajevo.' Which things are heating up?
   - (a) forests. ☐
   - (b) sea. ☐
   - (c) political situation. ☐

2. What disturbed the concentration of Zlata?
   - (a) gunshot. ☐
   - (b) stomachache. ☐
   - (c) power cut. ☐

3. Where did Zlata and her family took shelter during the war?
   - (a) in the attic. ☐
   - (b) in the cellar. ☐
   - (c) under the bridge. ☐

4. How was Nina killed?
   (a) A shrapnel hit her head. ☐
   (b) A bullet hit her chest. ☐
   (c) She was killed by a sniper. ☐

5. Who carried water home?
   (a) Zlata. ☐
   (b) father of Zlata. ☐
   (c) mother of Zlata. ☐

B. Fill in the blanks with information from the text.

1. Zlata heard the first gunshot on _____.
2. People were leaving _____.
3. The name of the Zlata's canary was _____.
4. On 29 June, Zlata has written that she was a child without _____.
5. The Zlata could not play her _____.

C. Answer these questions.

1. Which incident made the political situation of Sarajevo hot?
2. Why did Zlata and her parents take shelter in the cellar?
3. What was the problem with the bedroom of the Zlata?
4. Why could the father not draw water for the family?
5. When did Zlata become twelve years old?

LANGUAGE SKILLS

D. Change the following sentences as directed.

1. I hope to have very good grades. (rewrite in superlative degree)
2. All the schools are closed. (rewrite in future tense)
3. It's ugly dark smelly. (insert comma at appropriate places.)

4. “I didn’t realise the Miljacka was such a wide river,” Mummy says. (change into indirect speech.)

E. There are a few words in box A and a few in box B. Choose one from the both and make a compound word.

A		B	
music	guest	station	house
hill	war	crime	doll
safe	wax	lesson	custody

WRITING SKILLS

F. “The circle is closing, and we’re being strangled.”

Describe the horror of war felt by Zlata Filipovic in the light of her comment quoted above.

DISCUSS

G. What is the present situation of Bosnia? Collect information about the country and discuss it in your class.

8 Ozymandias

PB Shelley is one of the best-known poets of England. He wrote many poems based on prevailing political situation, especially, the French Revolution. He is also called the myth maker.

The present poem says that everyone is subject to death. Only art is permanent.

I met a traveller from an antique **land**

Who said: 'Two vast and **trunkless** legs of stone

Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,

Half sunk, a shattered **visage** lies, whose frown,

And wrinkled lip, and **sneer** of cold command,

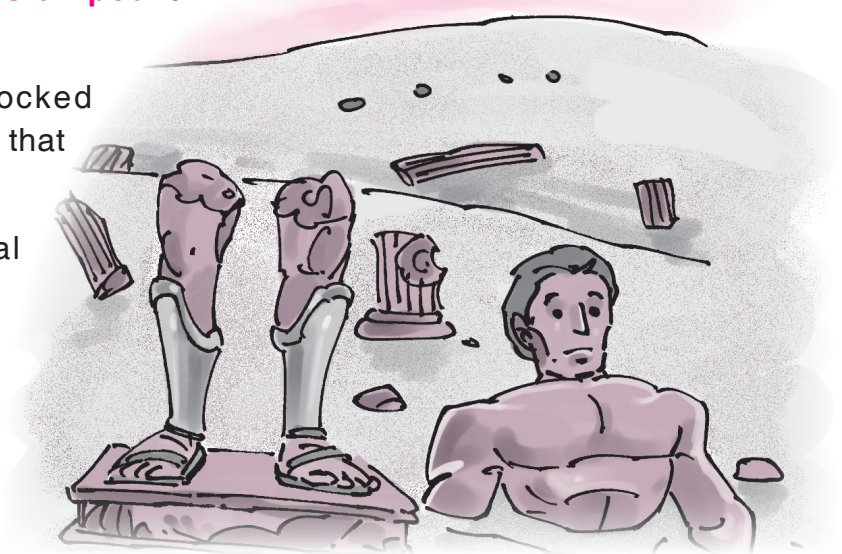
Tell that its sculptor well those **passion read**

Which yet survive, **stamped** on these lifeless things,

The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;

And on the pedestal these words appear:

'My name is Ozymandias, King of **Kings**:



Look upon my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'

Nothing beside remains. Round the decay

Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare

The lone and level stands stretch far away.' ***–Percy Bysshe Shelley***

NEW WORDS

land: a land which once was inhabited by men, but not now

trunkless: without the body

visage: face

sneer: expression of scorn or hostility because the person feels himself/herself superior to other

passion: feelings; emotions

read: observed; interpreted

stamped: carved; reproduced

King of Kings: the greatest king

UNDERSTANDING THE POEM

A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Who visited an antique land?
   (a) the poet. ☐ (b) a traveller. ☐ (c) the King of Kings. ☐
2. The statue was made of
   (a) sand. ☐ (b) wood. ☐ (c) stone. ☐
3. Who survives till date?
   (a) the King of Kings. ☐
   (b) the art of sculptor. ☐
   (c) the poet. ☐
4. Who was the King of Kings?
   (a) Ozymandias. ☐ (b) the traveller. ☐ (c) the sculptor. ☐

5. Which line/s of the poem mock/s the claim of the king?
   (a) lines third and fourth.
   (b) lines seventh and eighth.
   (c) last two lines.

B. Answer these questions.

1. What was the claim of the king?
2. What kind of king was he?
3. How do we know that the sculptor was a good judge of character?
4. What eternal truth is reflected in the poem?

LANGUAGE SKILLS

C. Punctuate the following sentences.

1. mr president you have ashamed the nation.
2. Please tell me what you feel now
3. I'm the king of all kings said he.
4. Ouch she cried in pain.

D. Make sentences with the following words.

1. antique: _____
2. sand: _____
3. pedestal: _____
4. despair: _____
5. colossal: _____

ACTIVITY

E. What do you feel about kingdoms and monarchs as you read this poem?

F. Discuss the irony in the poem.

9 The Portrait of a Lady

Khushwant Singh is one of the notable writers of India. In this story he narrates the divine relationship between him and his grandfather, and his grandmother and sparrows.

My grandmother, like everybody's grandmother, was an old woman; she had been old and wrinkled for the twenty years that I had known her. She could never have been pretty; but she was always beautiful. She moved about the house in spotless white with one hand resting on her waist to balance her stoop and the other telling the beads of her rosary.

My grandmother and I were good friends. My parents left me with her when they went to live in the city and we were constantly together. She used to wake me up in the morning and get'me ready for school. She said her morning prayer in a **monotonous** sing-song while she bathed and dressed me in the hope that I would listen and get to know it by heart. I listened because I loved her voice but never bothered to learn it. After a breakfast of a thick, stale *chapati* with a little butter and sugar spread on it, we went to school. She carried several stale *chapatis* with her for the village dogs.

monotonous: boring

My grandmother always went to school with me because the school was attached to the temple. The priest taught us the alphabet and the morning prayer. While the children sat in rows on either side of the verandah singing the alphabet or the prayer in a chorus, my grandmother sat inside reading the scriptures. When we had both finished, we would walk back together. This time the village dogs would meet us at the temple door. They followed us to our home growling and fighting each other for the chapatis we threw to them.

When my parents were comfortably settled in the city, they sent for us. That was a turning-point in our friendship. Although we shared the same room, my grandmother no longer came to school with me. I used to go to an English

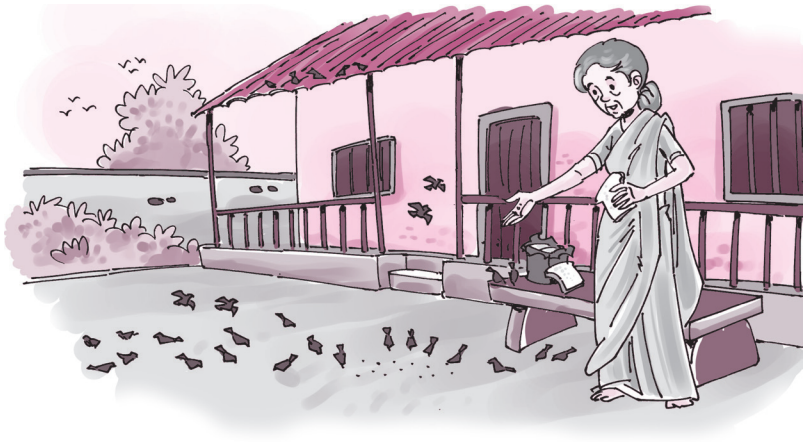
school in a bus. There were no dogs in the streets and she took to feeding sparrows in the courtyard of our city house. When I went to University, I was given a room of my own. The common link of friendship was **snapped**.

From sunrise to sunset grandmother sat by her wheel spinning and reciting prayers. Only in the afternoon she relaxed for a while to feed the sparrows. While she sat in the verandah breaking the bread into little bits, hundreds of little birds collected round her, chirruping happily. Some came and **perched** on her legs, others on her shoulders. Some even sat on her head. She smiled but never shoo'd them away. It used to be the happiest half-hour of the day for her.

snapped: broken
perched: sat

When I decided to go abroad for further studies, I was sure my grandmother would be upset. I would be away for five years, and at her age one could never tell. But my grandmother could. She was not even sentimental. She came to leave me at the railway station but did not talk or show any emotion. Her lips moved in prayer, her mind was lost in prayer. Her fingers were busy telling the beads of her rosary. Silently she kissed my forehead, and when I left I cherished the moist imprint as perhaps the last sign of physical contact between us.

But that was not so. After five years I came back home and was met by her at the station. She did not look a day older. She still had no time for words, and while she clasped me in her arms I could hear her reciting her prayer. Even on the first day of my arrival, her happiest moments were with her sparrows. In the evening a change came over her. She did not pray. She collected the women of the neighbourhood, got an old drum and started to sing. For several hours she thumped the drum and sang of the home-coming of warriors. That was the first time since I had known her that she did not pray.



The next morning she was taken ill. It was a mild fever and the doctor told us that it would go. But my grandmother thought differently. She told us that her end was near. She lay peacefully in bed praying and telling her beads. Even before we could suspect, her lips stopped moving and the rosary fell from her lifeless fingers.

The sun was setting and had lit her room and verandah with a blaze of golden light. All over the verandah and in her room right up to where grandmother lay wrapped in the red shroud, thousands of sparrows sat scattered on the floor.

There was no chirping. My mother fetched some bread broke it into little crumbs, the way my grandmother used to and threw it to them. The sparrows took no notice of the bread. When we carried my grandmother's **corpse** off, they flew away quietly. Next morning, the sweeper swept the bread crumbs into the dustbin. ***—Khushwant Singh***

corpse: body of a dead person

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Who used to wear spotless white dress?
   - (a) the writer. ☐
   - (b) the writer's mother. ☐
   - (c) the writer's grandmother. ☐

2. Who accompanied the writer to school?
   - (a) the writer's grandmother. ☐
   - (b) the writer's mother. ☐
   - (c) the writer's father. ☐

3. Who did the writer's grandmother feed while she was living in the city?
   - (a) dogs. ☐
   - (b) beggars. ☐
   - (c) sparrows. ☐

4. The writer's grandmother died of
   (a) overwork.
   (b) fever.
   (c) fasting.

B. Fill in the blanks with information from the text.

1. My grandmother and I were good _____.
2. From sunrise to sunset grandmother sat by her wheel _____ and _____ prayers.
3. When I went to the University, I was given a _____ of my own.
4. Her happiest moments were with her _____.

C. Answer these questions.

1. Why did the writer's grandmother use to go to school with the writer?
2. When was according to the writer the common link between him and his grandmother snapped?
3. What change did the writer notice in his grandmother after his return from abroad after five years?
4. Why did the sparrows not eat the bread crumbs given by the writer's mother?

LANGUAGE SKILLS

D. In each of the following sentences, there is an error. Circle the error and correct it.

1. She will singed a song at the party tomorrow.
2. How long have you staying here?
3. I was gave a rose by her.
4. If you go to italy, must see Venice.
5. Wow, what a delicious food.

E. Make sentences with the following words.

1. chorus: _____
2. scripture: _____
3. upset: _____
4. emotion: _____
5. drum: _____

WRITING SKILLS

F. What kind of relationship did the writer's grandmother and the sparrows share? Write your views about it.

DISCUSS

G. Discuss your relationship with your grandfather/grandmother.

10 The Diamond Necklace

Guy de Maupassant is one of the greatest short story writers. He was a French writer. He is considered one of the pioneers of the Modern Short Story. He was born on 5 August 1850. He wrote 300 short stories, six novels, three travel books, and one volume of verse. Maupassant wrote under several pseudonyms such as Joseph Prunier, Guy de Valmant and Maufrigneuse.

The girl was one of those pretty and charming young creatures who sometimes are born, as if by a slip of fate, into a family of clerks. She had no dowry, no expectations, no way of being known, understood, loved, married by any rich and distinguished man; so she let herself be married to a little clerk of the Ministry of Public Instruction.

She dressed plainly because she could not dress well, but she was unhappy as if she had really fallen from a higher station; since with women there is neither caste nor rank, for beauty, grace and charm take the place of family and birth. Natural **ingenuity**, instinct for what is elegant, a **supple** mind are their sole hierarchy, and often make of women of the people the equals of the very greatest ladies.

Mathilde Loisel suffered ceaselessly, feeling herself born to enjoy all delicacies and all luxuries. She was distressed at the poverty of her dwelling, at the bareness of the walls, at the shabby chairs, the ugliness of the curtains. All those things, of which another woman of her rank would never even have been conscious, tortured her and made her angry. The sight of the little Breton peasant who did her humble housework aroused in her despairing regrets and bewildering dreams. She thought of silent **antechambers** hung with Oriental **tapestry**; illumined by tall bronze **candelabra** and of two great **footmen** in knee breeches who sleep

ingenuity: cleverness
supple: flexible
antechambers: waiting room
tapestry: embroidery
candelabra: candle holder
footmen: a male servant

in the big armchairs, made drowsy by the oppressive heat of the stove. She thought of long reception halls hung with ancient silk, of the dainty cabinets containing priceless curiosities and of the little coquettish perfumed reception rooms made for chatting at five o'clock with intimate friends, with men famous and sought after, whom all women envy and whose attention they all desire.

When she sat down to dinner, before the round table covered with a tablecloth in use three days, opposite her husband, who uncovered the soup tureen and declared with a delighted air, "Ah, the good soup! I don't know anything better than that," she thought of dainty dinners, of shining silverware, of tapestry that peopled the walls with ancient personages and with strange birds flying in the midst of a fairy forest; and she thought of delicious dishes served on marvellous plates and of the whispered gallantries to which you listen with a sphinx-like smile while you are eating the pink meat of a trout or the wings of a quail.

She had no gowns, no jewels, nothing. And she loved nothing but that. She felt made for that. She would have liked so much to please, to be envied, to be charming, to be sought after.

She had a friend, a former schoolmate at the convent, who was rich, and whom she did not like to go to see any more because she felt so sad when she came home.

But one evening her husband reached home with a triumphant air and holding a large envelope in his hand.

"There," said he, "there is something for you."

She tore the paper quickly and drew out a printed card which bore these words:

The Minister of Public Instruction and Madame Georges Ramponneau request the honor of Monsieur and Madame Loisel's company at the palace of the Ministry on Monday evening, January 18th.

Instead of being delighted, as her husband had hoped, she threw the invitation on the table crossly, muttering:

"What do you wish me to do with that?"

“Why, my dear, I thought you would be glad. You never go out, and this is such a fine opportunity. I had great trouble to get it. Everyone wants to go; it is very select, and they are not giving many invitations to clerks. The whole official world will be there.”

She looked at him with an irritated glance and said impatiently:

“And what do you wish me to put on my back?” He had not thought of that. He stammered:

“Why, the gown you go to the theatre in. It looks very well to me.”

He stopped, distracted, seeing that his wife was weeping. Two great tears ran slowly from the corners of her eyes toward the corners of her mouth.

“What’s the matter? What’s the matter?” he answered.

By a violent effort she conquered her grief and replied in a calm voice, while she wiped her wet cheeks:

“Nothing. Only I have no gown, and, therefore, I can’t go to this ball. Give your card to some colleague whose wife is better equipped than I am.”

He was in despair. He resumed:

“Come, let us see, Mathilde. How much would it cost, a suitable gown, which you could use on other occasions—something very simple?”

She reflected several seconds, making her calculations and wondering also what sum she could ask without drawing on herself an immediate refusal and a frightened exclamation from the economical clerk.

Finally she replied hesitating:

“I don’t know exactly, but I think I could manage it with four hundred **francs**.”

He grew a little pale, because he was laying aside just that amount to buy a gun and treat himself to a little shooting next summer on the plain of Nanterre, with several friends who went to shoot larks there of a Sunday.

But he said:

francs: French currency

“Very well. I will give you four hundred francs. And try to have a pretty gown.”

The day of the ball drew near and Madame Loisel seemed sad, uneasy, anxious. Her frock was ready, however. Her husband said to her one evening:

“What is the matter? Come, you have seemed very queer these last three days.”

And she answered:

“It annoys me not to have a single piece of jewelry, not a single ornament, nothing to put on. I shall look poverty-stricken. I would almost rather not go at all.”

“You might wear natural flowers,” said her husband. “They’re very stylish at this time of year. For ten francs you can get two or three magnificent roses.”

She was not convinced.

“No; there’s nothing more humiliating than to look poor among other women who are rich.”

“How stupid you’ are!” her husband cried. “Go look up your friend, Madame Forestier, and ask her to lend you some jewels. You’re intimate enough with, her to do that.”

She uttered a cry of joy:

“True! I never thought of it.”

The next day she went to her friend and told her of her distress.

Madame Forestier went to a wardrobe with a mirror, took out a large jewel box, brought it back, opened it and said to Madame Loisel:

“Choose, my dear.”

She saw first some bracelets, then a pearl necklace, then a Venetian gold cross set with precious stones, of admirable workmanship. She tried on the ornaments before the mirror, hesitated and could not make up her mind to part with them, to give them back. She kept asking:

“Haven’t you any more?”

“Why, yes. Look further; I don’t know what you like.”

Suddenly she discovered, in a black satin box, a superb diamond necklace, and her heart throbbed with an immoderate desire. Her hands trembled as she took it. She fastened it round her throat, outside her high necked waist, and was lost in ecstasy at her reflection in the mirror.

Then she asked, hesitating, filled with anxious doubt:

"Will you lend me this, only this?"

"Why, yes, certainly."

She threw her arms round her friend's neck, kissed her passionately, then fled with her treasure.

The night of the ball arrived. Madame Loisel was a great success. She was prettier than any other woman present, elegant, graceful, smiling and wild with joy. All the men looked at her, asked her name, sought to be introduced. All the **attaches** of the Cabinet wished to **waltz** with her. She was **remarked** by the minister himself.

She danced with rapture, with passion, intoxicated by pleasure, forgetting all in the triumph of her beauty, in the glory of her success, in a sort of cloud of happiness comprised of all this homage, admiration, these awakened desires and of that sense of triumph which is so sweet to woman's heart.

attaches: a person who works in an embassy
waltz: dance together
remarked: (here) mentioned

She left the ball about four o'clock in the morning. Her husband had been sleeping since midnight in a little deserted anteroom with three other gentlemen whose wives were enjoying the ball.

He threw over her shoulders the wraps he had brought, the modest wraps of common life, the poverty of which contrasted with the elegance of the ball dress. She felt this and wished to escape so as not to be remarked by the other women, who were enveloping themselves in costly furs.

Loisel held her back, saying: "Wait a bit. You will catch cold outside. I will call a cab."

But she did not listen to him and rapidly descended the stairs. When they reached the street they could not find a carriage and began to look for one, shouting after the cabmen passing at a distance.

They went toward the Seine in despair, shivering with cold. At last they found on the quay one of those ancient night cabs which, as though they were ashamed to show their shabbiness during the day, are never seen round Paris until after dark.

It took them to their dwelling in the Rue des Martyrs, and sadly they mounted the stairs to their flat. All was ended for her. As to him, he reflected that he must be at the ministry at ten o'clock that morning.

She removed her wraps before the glass so as to see herself once more in all her glory. But suddenly she uttered a cry. She no longer had the necklace around her neck!

"What is the matter with you?" demanded her husband, already half undressed.

She turned distractedly toward him.

"I have—I have—I've lost Madame Forestier's necklace," she cried. He stood up, bewildered.

"What!—how? Impossible!"

They looked among the folds of her skirt, of her cloak, in her pockets, everywhere, but did not find it.

“You’re sure you had it on when you left the ball?” he asked.

“Yes, I felt it in the **vestibule** of the minister’s house.”

vestibule: an entrance hall of a large building

“But if you had lost it in the street we should have heard it fall. It must be in the cab.”

“Yes, probably. Did you take his number?” “No. And you—didn’t you notice it?”

“No. “

They looked, thunderstruck, at each other. At last Loisel put on his clothes .

“I shall go back on foot,” said he, “over the whole route, to see whether I can find it.”

He went out. She sat waiting on a chair in her ball dress, without strength to go to bed, overwhelmed, without any fire, without a thought.

Her husband returned about seven o’clock. He had found nothing.

He went to police headquarters, to the newspaper offices to offer a reward; he went to the cab companies—everywhere, in fact, whither he was urged by the least spark of hope.

She waited all day, in the same condition of mad fear before this terrible calamity.

Loisel returned at night with a hollow, pale face. He had discovered nothing.

“You must write to your friend,” said he, “that you have broken the clasp of her necklace and that you are having it mended. That will give us time to turn round.”

She wrote at his dictation.

At the end of a week they had lost all hope. Loisel, who had aged five years, declared:

“We must consider how to replace that ornament.”

The next day they took the box that had contained it and went to the jeweller whose name was found within. He consulted his books.

"It was not I, madame, who sold that necklace; I must simply have furnished the case."

Then they went from jeweller to jeweller, searching for a necklace like the other, trying to recall it, both sick with **chagrin** and grief.

They found, in a shop at the Palais Royal, a string of diamonds that seemed to them exactly like the one they had lost. It was worth forty thousand francs. They could have it for thirty-six.

So they begged the jeweller not to sell it for three days yet. And they made a bargain that he should buy it back for thirty-four thousand francs, in case they should find the lost necklace before the end of February.

Loisel possessed eighteen thousand francs which his father had left him. He would borrow the rest.

He did borrow, asking a thousand francs of one, five hundred of another, five **louis** here, three louis there. He gave notes, took up ruinous obligations, dealt with usurers and all the race of lenders. He compromised all the rest of his life, risked signing a note without even knowing whether he could meet it; and, frightened by the trouble yet to come, by the black misery that was about to fall upon him, by the prospect of all the physical privations and moral tortures that he was to suffer, he went to get the new necklace, laying upon the jeweller's counter thirty-six thousand francs.

chagrin: a feeling of disappointed
louis: French gold coin

When Madame Loisel took back the necklace Madame Forestier said to her with a chilly manner:

"You should have returned it sooner; I might have needed it."

She did not open the case, as her friend had so much feared. If she had detected the substitution, what would she have thought, what would she have said? Would she not have taken Madame Loisel for a thief?

Thereafter Madame Loisel knew the horrible existence of the needy. She bore her part, however, with sudden heroism. That dreadful debt must be paid. She would pay it. They dismissed their servant; they changed their lodgings; they rented a garret under the roof.

She came to know what heavy housework meant and the odious cares of the kitchen. She washed the dishes, using her dainty fingers and rosy nails on greasy pots and pans. She washed the soiled linen, the shirts and the, dishcloths, which she dried upon a line; she carried the slops down to the street every morning and carried up the water, stopping for breath at every landing. And dressed like a woman of the **people**, she went to the fruiterer, the grocer, the butcher, a basket on her arm, bargaining, meeting with impertinence, defending her miserable money, **sou by sou**.

Every month they had to meet some notes, renew others, obtain more time.

Her husband worked evenings, making up a tradesman's accounts, and late at night he often copied manuscript for five sous a page.

This life lasted ten years.

At the end of ten years they had paid everything, everything, with the rates of usury and the accumulations of the compound interest.

people: common/poor people
sou by sou: a phrase that means 'paise by paise'

Madame Loisel looked old now. She had become the woman of impoverished households—strong and hard and rough. With frowsy hair, skirts askew and red hands, she talked loud while washing the floor with great swishes of water. But sometimes, when her husband was at the office, she sat down near the window and she thought of that gay evening of long ago, of that ball where she had been so beautiful and so admired.

What would have happened if she had not lost that necklace? Who knows? Who knows? How strange and changeful is life! How small a thing is needed to make or ruin us!

But one Sunday, having gone to take a walk in the Champs Elysees to refresh herself after the labors of the week, she suddenly perceived a woman who was leading a child. It was Madame Forestier, still young, still beautiful, still charming.

Madame Loisel felt moved. Should she speak to her? Yes, certainly. And now that she had paid, she would tell her all about it. Why not?

She went up.

"Good-day, Jeanne."

The other, astonished to be familiarly addressed by this plain good-wife, did not recognize her at all and stammered:

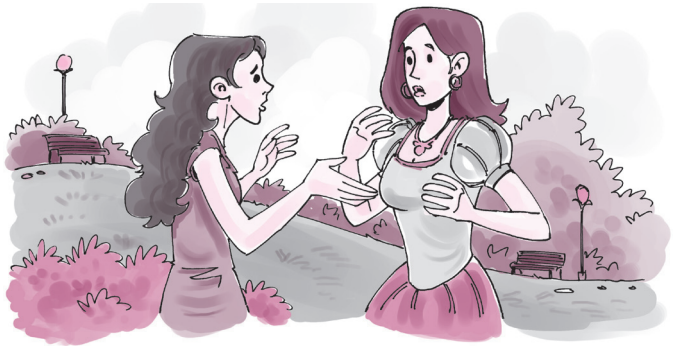
"But—madame!—I do not know—You must have mistaken."

"No. I am Mathilde Loisel."

Her friend uttered a cry.

"Oh, my poor Mathilde! How you are changed!"

"Yes, I have had a pretty hard life, since I last saw you, and great poverty—and that because of you!"



"Of me! How so?"

"Do you remember that diamond necklace you lent me to wear at the ministerial ball?"

"Yes. Well?"

"Well, I lost it."

"What do you mean? You brought it back."

"I brought you back another exactly like it. And it has taken us ten years to pay for it. You can understand that it was not easy for us, for us who had nothing. At last it is ended, and I am very glad."

Madame Forestier had stopped.

"You say that you bought a necklace of diamonds to replace mine?"

"Yes. You never noticed it, then! They were very Similar."

And she smiled with a joy that was at once proud and ingenuous. Madame Forestier, deeply moved, took her hands.

paste: imitation; fake

"Oh, my poor Mathilde! Why, my necklace was **paste**! It was worth at most only five hundred francs!"

—This story was written by Guy de Maupassant and translated by Albert M.C. McMaster, A.E. Henderson, Mme Quesada and et al

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. The heroine of the story is
   - (a) Madame Loisel. ☐
   - (b) Madame Forestier. ☐
   - (c) Madame Georges Ramponneau. ☐

2. How did Madame Loisel's dream of living a luxurious life break after marrying Loisel?
   - (a) Her husband was poor. ☐
   - (b) Her husband did not love her. ☐
   - (c) Her husband died. ☐

3. The Loisels got their punishment for being
   - (a) honest. ☐
   - (b) arrogant. ☐
   - (c) vain. ☐

B. Find out sentence/s from the story in support of the following statement.

1. Mathilde Loisel was unhappy because she thought that she was poor.
2. Mathilde Loisel was impatient.
3. Mathilde Loisel became a special guest at the party.

C. Answer these questions.

1. Why was Mathilde Loisel always unhappy?
2. What made Mathilde Loisel special at the party?
3. What difficulties did Mathilde Loisel face in buying the new necklace?
4. What lesson do you learn from this story?

LANGUAGE SKILLS

D. Change the following sentences to indirect speech.

1. "What do you wish me to do with that," she asked him.
2. "I don't know exactly, but I think I could manage it with four hundred francs," she said.
3. He said, "We must consider how to replace that ornament."

E. Write the antonyms for the following.

1. dainty: _____
2. irritated: _____
3. several: _____
4. queer: _____

WRITING SKILLS

F. Analyse the character of Mathilde Loisel.

DISCUSS

G. Discuss the climax of the story.

H. Who is the 'villain' of the story—Fate or Mathilde? Discuss it in the class.

11 Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Robert Frost was born in 1874 in San Francisco, California, USA. In his spare time, he wrote poetry. In 1913, he published his first anthology of poems, A Boy's Will *and in 1914, a second anthology,* North of Boston. *Between 1916 and 1923, he published two more anthology of poetry—the second one,* New Hampshire, *won the Pulitzer Prize in 1923. He went on to win three more Pulitzer Prizes.* Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening *is a poem full of deep meaning.*

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.
My little horse must think it **queer**
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.
He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.
The woods are lovely, dark, and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I **sleep**,
And miles to go before I sleep.

—Robert Frost

NEW WORDS

queer: strange
sleep: death

UNDERSTANDING THE POEM

A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. The poet was riding on a

   (a) car. ☐

   (b) snow scooter. ☐

   (c) horse. ☐

2. The season, depicted in the poem, is

   (a) winter. ☐

   (b) summer. ☐

   (c) spring. ☐

3. The woods are filled up with

   (a) water. ☐

   (b) mud. ☐

   (c) snow. ☐

4. The woods are

   (a) ugly. ☐

   (b) lovely. ☐

   (c) dangerous. ☐

B. Answer these questions.

1. Do you think the poet was afraid of the owner of the woods? Why or why not?
2. What did the horse want to know?
3. What promise does the poet make?
4. What is the meaning of the line, And miles to go before I sleep?

LANGUAGE SKILLS

C. Write the rhyming words in the poem.

D. Match the words with their antonyms.

Words	Antonyms
1. easy	(a) shallow
2. deep	(b) after
3. dark	(c) difficult
4. before	(d) bright

E. Make sentences with the following words.

1. village : _____
2. snow : _____
3. farmhouse : _____
4. promise : _____
5. sleep : _____
6. queer : _____
7. frozen : _____
8. mistake : _____
9. sweep : _____
10. lovely : _____

ACTIVITY

F. Discuss the message of the poem in the class.

G. Discuss the role played by the horse in the poem.

12 Stephen Hawking

Stephen Hawking is one of the greatest scientists of all time. A lot has been told about him. Here let us peep into his personal life and the influence of his parents that made such a great scientist.

Stephen William Hawking was born on 8 January 1942. The day was remarkable—the 300th anniversary of the death of Galileo. Stephen Hawking was born in Oxford, England, into a family of thinkers. His Scottish mother, Isobel Hawking, had earned her way into Oxford University in the 1930s—a time when a few women thought of going to college. She was one of the college's first female students. Stephen Hawking's father, Frank Hawking, another Oxford graduate, was a respected medical researcher with a specialty in tropical diseases. Stephen Hawking's birth came at an inopportune time for his parents, who did not have much money. The political climate was also tense, as England was dealing with World War II and the **onslaught** of German bombs.

onslaught: being attacked

The Hawkings, as one close family friend described them, were an 'eccentric' bunch. Dinner was often eaten in silence, each of the Hawkings intently reading a book. The family car was an old London taxi, and their home in St Albans was a three-story fixer-upper that never quite got fixed. The Hawkings also kept bees in the basement and made fireworks in the greenhouse!

In 1950, Hawking's father took work as the head of the Division of Parasitology

at the National Institute of Medical Research, and spent the winter months in Africa doing research. He wanted Stephen Hawking to go into medicine. But at an early age, Hawking showed a passion for science and the sky. That was evident to his mother, who, along with her children, often stretched out in the backyard on summer evenings to stare up at the stars. "Stephen always had a strong sense of wonder," she remembered. "And I could see that the stars would draw him," she added.

Early in his academic life, Hawking was recognized as a bright student, but not an exceptional student. At one point during his high school years, he was third from the bottom of his class. But Hawking focused on pursuits outside of school. He loved board games. He and a few close friends of his created new games of their own. At the age of 16, Hawking, along with several friends, constructed a computer out of recycled parts for solving rudimentary mathematical equations.

Hawking was also frequently on the go. "[He was] hardly ever still," a family friend once said of him. He remained active even after he entered Oxford University at the age of 17. He loved to dance. He also took an interest in rowing. He became one of the Oxford rowing team's **coxswain**.

coxswain: one who is in charge of a lifeboat and who controls its direction

Hawking turned down a career in medicine, as insisted by his father. He desired to study mathematics. But, since Oxford did not offer a mathematics degree, Hawking moved toward physics and, more specifically, cosmology. In 1962, he graduated with honours, and went on to attend the University of Cambridge for a Ph.D. in cosmology.

Hawking first began to notice problems with his physical health while he was at Oxford—on occasion he would trip and fall or slur his speech. He didn't look into the problem until 1963, during his first year at Cambridge. For the most part, Hawking had kept these minor symptoms to himself. But when his father took notice of the condition, he sent Hawking to see a doctor. For the next two weeks, he underwent a series of tests. "They took a muscle sample from my arm, stuck electrodes into me, and injected some radio opaque fluid into my spine, and watched it going up and down with X-rays, as they tilted the bed," he once said. "After all that, they didn't tell me what I had," he said. However, doctors informed the Hawkings that their son was

in the early stages of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). In a very simple sense, the nerves that controlled his muscles were shutting down. Doctors gave him two and a half years to live. It was a devastating news for Hawking and his family. An event, however, 'prevented' him from becoming completely despondent. Not long after he was released from the hospital, Hawking had a dream that he was going to be executed. He said this dream made him realize that there were still things to do with his life.

But the most significant change in his life was the fact that he was in love. At a New Year's party in 1963, shortly before he had been diagnosed with ALS, Hawking met Jane Wilde. They were married in 1965.

In a sense, Hawking's disease helped him become the noted scientist he is today. Before the diagnosis, Hawking hadn't always focused on his studies. "I was bored with life before my illness. There had not seemed to be anything worth doing." he said. With sudden realization that he might not even live long enough to earn his Ph.D., Hawking devoted himself into his work and research.

Stephen Hawking, by 1969, was forced to use a wheelchair. In 1968, a year after the birth of his son Robert, Hawking became a member of the Institute of Astronomy in Cambridge. He published his first book *The Large Scale Structure of Space-Time*.

In 1974, Hawking's research turned him into a celebrity within the scientific world. Hawking demonstrated that matter, in the form of radiation, can escape the gravitational force of a collapsed star. Hawking Radiation was born. The announcement sent shock waves of excitement through the scientific world. Stephen Hawking was named a Fellow of the Royal Society at the age of 32. He later earned the prestigious Albert Einstein Award. In 1975, he journeyed to Rome, where he was honored with the Pius XI Gold Medal for Science by Pope Paul VI. In 1979, Hawking joined Cambridge University. There he was appointed in one of teaching's most renowned posts—the Lucasian Professor of Mathematics. Dating back to 1663, the position has been held by just 14 other people, including Sir Isaac Newton.

Hawking's ever-expanding career was accompanied by his ever-worsening physical state. In 1985, he lost his voice. The resulting situation required

a 24-hour nursing care for him. It also affected Hawking's ability to do his research work. The predicament caught the attention of a California computer programmer, who had developed a speaking program that could be directed by head or eye movement. The invention allowed Hawking to select words on a computer screen that were then passed through a speech synthesizer. At the time of its introduction, Hawking, who still had use of his fingers, selected his words with a handheld clicker. Today, with virtually all control of his body gone, Hawking directs the program through a cheek muscle attached to a sensor.

Through the program, and the help of assistants, Stephen Hawking has continued to write at a prolific rate. In 1988 Hawking received the Commander of the Order of the British Empire. Soon he published *A Brief History of Time*. The short, informative book became an account of cosmology for the masses. The work was an instant success, spending more than four years atop the *London Sunday Times*' bestseller list. Since its publication, it has sold more than 25 million copies worldwide and been translated into more than 40 languages. In 2001, Hawking followed up his book with *The Universe in a Nutshell* and four years later, he authored *A Briefer History of Time*.

In 2007, at the age of 65, Hawking made an important step toward space travel. While visiting the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, he was given the opportunity to experience an environment without gravity. Over the course of two hours over the Atlantic, Hawking, a passenger on a modified Boeing 727, was freed from his wheelchair to experience bursts of weightlessness. Pictures of the freely floating Hawking splashed across newspapers around the globe.

Hawking is scheduled to fly to the edge of space. He said when asked about the subject in 2007, "Many people have asked me why I am taking this flight. I am doing it for many reasons... First of all, I believe that life on Earth is at an ever increasing risk of being wiped out by a disaster such as sudden global warming, nuclear war, a genetically engineered virus, or other dangers. I think the human race has no future if it doesn't go into space. I therefore want to encourage public interest in space."

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Stephen Hawking's father was a
   (a) doctor. ☐
   (b) engineer. ☐
   (c) musician. ☐

2. The first symptoms of Hawking's disease were
   (a) he would trip and fall. ☐
   (b) he had sleepless nights. ☐
   (c) he lost voice. ☐

3. Stephen Hawking married
   (a) Jane Ire. ☐
   (b) Jane Bowl. ☐
   (c) Jane Wilde. ☐

4. Stephen Hawking's first published book was
   (a) *A Brief History of Time.* ☐
   (b) *The Large Scale Structure of Space-Time.* ☐
   (c) *The Universe in a Nutshell.* ☐

5. How does Stephen Hawking want to create public interest in space?
   (a) He has decided to travel to the edge of space. ☐
   (b) He has decided to write more books on space. ☐
   (c) He has decided to make a cheap spaceship. ☐

B. Fill in the blanks with information from the text.

1. Stephen Hawking's parents were both graduates from _____.
2. At an early age, Stephen Hawkings had a passion for _____ and the sky.
3. Stephen Hawking now directs the computer program through a _____ muscle.

4. Stephen Hawking experienced an environment _____ while at Kennedy Space Center.

C. Answer these questions.

1. Why did Stephen Hawking shift from mathematics to physics?
2. What activities did Stephen Hawking love while he was at Oxford University?
3. What did the doctor say about his disease?
4. What strange thing gave Stephen Hawking a hope to live?
5. Why does Stephen Hawking want to fly to the edge of the space?

LANGUAGE SKILLS

D. Write an inflection for each of the following words.

1. graduate : _____
2. national : _____
3. cosmology : _____
4. honour : _____
5. hospital : _____
6. invention : _____

WRITING SKILLS

E. 'I therefore want to encourage public interest in space.' How far has Stephen Hawking been successful in this pursuit? Write your own assessment.

DISCUSS

F. Indian cricketer, Yuvraj Singh, has returned to cricket ground defeating cancer. Discuss his fight against the disease in your class.

G. Read at least one page from *A Brief History of Time* and discuss it in the class.

13 Uphill

Christina Rossetti was born on 5 December 1830 in London. She grew up to become a poet. She wrote a variety of romantic, devotional and children's poems. She is famous for writing 'Goblin Market' and 'Remember'. She died on 29 December 1894.

Does Does the road wind uphill all the way?

Yes, to the very end.

Will the day's journey take the whole long day?

From **morn** to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting-place?

A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.

May not the darkness hide it from my face?

You cannot miss that **inn.**

Shall I meet other **wayfarers** at night?

Those who have gone before.

Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?

They will not keep you standing at that door.

Shall I find comfort, **travel-sore** and weak?

Of **labour** you shall find the sum.

Will there be beds for me and all who **seek**?

Yea, beds for all who come.

—Christina Rossetti

NEW WORDS

morn: morning; **inn:** a small hotel providing accommodation to travellers; **wayfarer:** a person who travels on foot; **travel-sore:** aggrieved and distressed due to travel; **labour:** difficult and arduous workl **seek:** endeavour to obtain

UNDERSTANDING THE POEM

A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Uphill by Christina Rossetti compares
   - (a) a day's journey to a voyage. ☐
   - (b) uphill journey to an expedition. ☐
   - (c) life to a journey. ☐
2. The road winding up the hill symbolizes
   - (a) the beauty and pleasant experiences of the journey. ☐
   - (b) the struggle in life. ☐
   - (c) the right path that one must take. ☐

B. Answer these questions.

1. The poem is in the form of a conversation between two speakers. Does the first speaker appear doubtful and worried or calm?
2. What is implied when the road appears winding uphill to the speaker and why?
3. Which line indicates that the journey of life is long?
4. How will the traveller feel at the end of the journey?
5. Do you think that life's journey is full of difficulties and troubles? Discuss.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

C. Give homophones of the following words.

1. whole
2. night
3. hours
4. inn
5. meet
6. sight
7. sore
8. weak

ACTIVITY

D. Do you agree with the views about life as expressed in the poem? Express your views briefly.

14 The Merchant of Venice
(Act IV Scene I)

The Merchant of Venice *is one of Shakespeare's best plays. Its story in brief is : Antonio, a merchant, borrows money from Shylock, a very cunning person. He borrowed money in order to help his best friend Bassanio marry Portia. Antonio is so sure of being able to repay the loan that he pledges to give a pound of his flesh if he fails to do so. Unfortunately, his ships are lost at the sea. He fails to repay the loan on time. Shylock takes him to the court where Portia (Bassanio's wife) disguised as a Doctor of Law acts as a judge.*

CHARACTERS

Duke of Venice

Portia: Bassanio's wife, disguised as a Doctor of Law

Shylock: a Jew, who gave loan to Antonio

Bassanio: Antonio's friend and husband of Portia

Gratiano: friend of Antonio and Bassanio

Balthazar: Portia's assumed name

Nerissa: Portia's maid, disguised as a clerk

Duke: You hear the learn'd Bellario, what he writes: And here, I take it, is the doctor come.

Enter PORTIA, dressed like a doctor of laws

Give me your hand. Come you from old Bellario?

Portia: I did, my lord.

Duke: You are welcome: take your place. Are you acquainted with the **difference**. That holds this present question in the court?

difference: dispute

Portia: I am informed thoroughly of the cause. Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?

Duke: Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.

Portia: Is your name Shylock?

Shylock: Shylock is my name.

Portia: Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;
Yet in such rule that the Venetian law
Cannot **impugn** you as you do proceed.
You stand within his **danger**, do you not?

Antonio: Ay, so he says.

Portia: Do you confess the **bond**?

Antonio: I do.

Portia: Then must the Jew be merciful.

Shylock: On what compulsion must I? tell me that.

Portia: The quality of mercy is not **strain'd**,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway;
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons **justice**. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;

impugn: express doubt
danger: are liable to be punished by him
bond: agree
strain'd: mercy is not strained
justice: when justice is guided by kindness

And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much
To mitigate the justice of thy plea;
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

Shylock: My deeds upon my **head!** I crave the law,
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

Portia: Is he not able to discharge the money?

Bassanio: Yes, here I tender it for him in the court;
Yea, twice the sum: if that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart:
If this will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down truth. And I beseech you,
Wrest once the law to your authority:
To do a great right, do a little wrong,
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

Portia: It must not be; there is no power in Venice
Can alter a decree established:
'Twill be recorded for a precedent,
And many an error by the same example
Will rush into the state: it cannot be.

Shylock: A **Daniel** come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!
O wise young judge, how I do honour thee!

Portia: I pray you, let me look upon the bond.

Shylock: Here 'tis, most reverend doctor, here it is.

Portia: Shylock, there's thrice thy money offer'd thee.

Shylock: An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven:
Shall I **lay perjury** upon my soul?
No, not for Venice.

Portia: Why, this bond is **forfeit;**

head: to face the consequences of one's actions
Daniel: a character in the Bible is known for wisdom and justice
lay perjury: telling a lie
forfeit: to pay something because a person has done something wrong

And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off
Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful:
Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.

Shylock: When it is paid according to the tenor.
It doth appear you are a worthy judge;
You know the law, your exposition
Hath been most sound: I charge you by the law,
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
Proceed to judgment: by my soul I swear
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me: I stay here on my bond.

Antonio: Most heartily I do **beseech** the court
To give the judgment.

Portia: Why then, thus it is:
You must prepare your bosom for his knife.

Shylock: O noble judge! O excellent young man!

Portia: For the intent and purpose of the law
Hath full relation to the penalty,
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.

Shylock: 'Tis very true: O wise and upright judge!
How much more elder art thou than thy looks!

Portia: Therefore lay bare your bosom.

beseech: request
balance: weighing scale

Shylock: Ay, his breast: So says the bond: doth it not, noble judge?
'Nearest his heart:' those are the very words.

Portia: It is so. Are there **balance** here to weigh the flesh?

Shylock: I have them ready.

Portia: Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

Shylock: Is it so nominated in the bond?

Portia: It is not so express'd: but what of that?
'Twere good you do so much for charity.

Shylock: I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.

Portia: You, merchant, have you any thing to say?

Antonio: But little: I am arm'd and well prepared.
Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well!
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;
For herein Fortune shows herself more kind
Than is her custom: it is still her use
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow
An age of poverty; from which lingering penance

Of such misery doth she cut me off.
Commend me to your honourable wife:
Tell her the process of Antonio's end;
Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death;
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.
Repent but you that you shall lose your friend,

And he repents not that he pays your debt;
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I'll **pay it presently** with all my heart.

pay it presently: die

Bassanio: Antonio, I am married to a wife
Which is as dear to me as life itself;
But life itself, my wife, and all the world,
Are not with me esteem'd above thy life:
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all
Here to this devil, to deliver you.

Portia: Your wife would give you little thanks for that,
If she were by, to hear you make the offer.

Gratiano: I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love:
I would she were in heaven, so she could

Entreat some power to change this **currish** Jew.

Nerissa: 'Tis well you offer it behind her back;
The wish would make else an unquiet house.

Shylock: These be the Christian husbands. I have a daughter;
Would any of the stock of **Barrabas**
Had been her husband rather than a Christian!

Aside

We trifle time: I pray thee, pursue sentence.

Portia: A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine:
The court awards it, and the law doth give it.

Shylock: Most rightful judge!

Portia: And you must cut this flesh from off his breast:
The law allows it, and the court awards it.

Shylock: Most learned judge!

A sentence! Come, prepare!

Portia: **Tarry** a little; there is something else.
This bond doth give thee here no **jot** of blood;
The words expressly are 'a pound of flesh:'

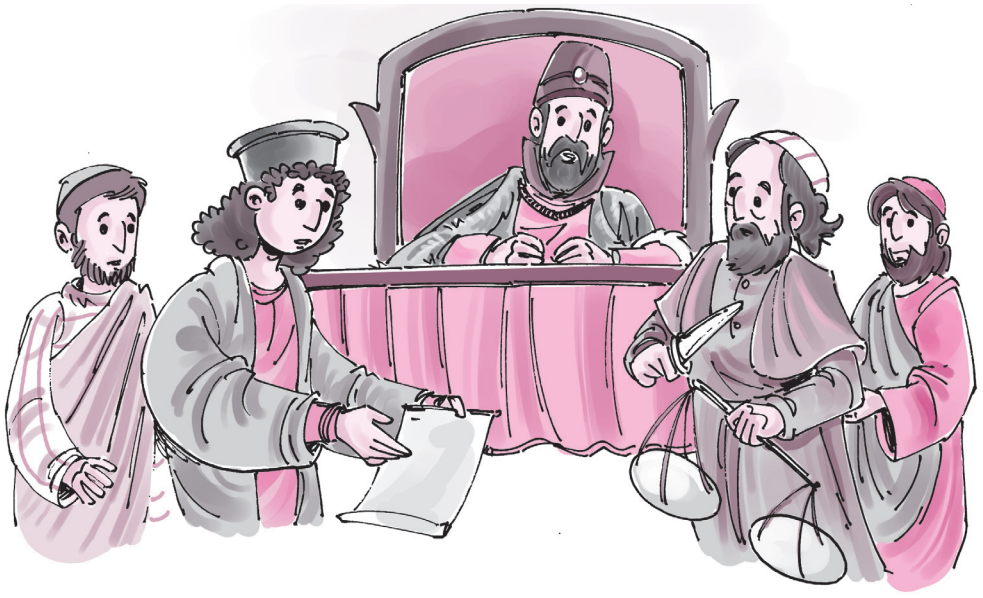
Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;
But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate
Unto the state of Venice.

Gratiano: O upright judge! Mark, Jew: O learned judge!

Shylock: Is that the law?

Portia: Thyself shalt see the act:
For, as thou urgest **justice**, be assured
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.

currish: ill-tempered like a dog
Barrabas: the thief (Old Testament)
Tarry: (here) wait
jot: drop
justice: insist on fair play



Gratiano: O learned judge! Mark, Jew: a learned judge!

Shylock: I take this offer, then; pay the bond thrice
And let the Christian go.

Bassanio: Here is the money.

Portia: **Soft!**
The Jew shall have all justice; soft! no haste:
He shall have nothing but the penalty.

Soft!: wait

Gratiano: O Jew! an upright judge, a learned judge!

Portia: Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh.

Shed thou no blood, nor cut thou less nor more

But just a pound of flesh: if thou cut'st more
Or less than a just pound, be it but so much
As makes it light or heavy in the substance,
Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair,
Thou diest and all thy goods are confiscate.

Gratiano: A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew!
Now, infidel, I have you on the hip.

Portia: Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfeiture.

Shylock: Give me my **principal**, and let me go.

Bassanio: I have it ready for thee; here it is.

Portia: He hath refused it in the open court:
He shall have merely justice and his bond.

Gratiano: A Daniel, still say I, a second Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

Shylock: Shall I not have barely my principal?

Portia: Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.

Shylock: Why, then the devil give him good of it!
I'll stay no longer **question**.

principal: principal amount (one thousand ducats)
question: not fight the case

Portia: Tarry, Jew:
The law hath yet another hold on you.
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be proved against an alien
That by direct or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the state;
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st;
For it appears, by manifest proceeding,
That indirectly and directly too
Thou hast contrived against the very life
Of the defendant; and thou hast incurr'd
The danger formerly by me rehearsed.
Down therefore and beg mercy of the duke.

Gratiano: Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang thyself:
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,
Thou hast not left the value of a cord;
Therefore thou must be hang'd at the state's charge.

Duke: That thou shalt see the difference of our spirits,
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it:
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;
The other half comes to the general state,
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

Portia: Ay, for the state, not for Antonio.

Shylock: Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:
You take my house when you do take the prop
That doth sustain my house; you take my life
When you do take the means whereby I live.

Portia: What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

Gratiano: A halter **gratis**; nothing else, for God's sake.

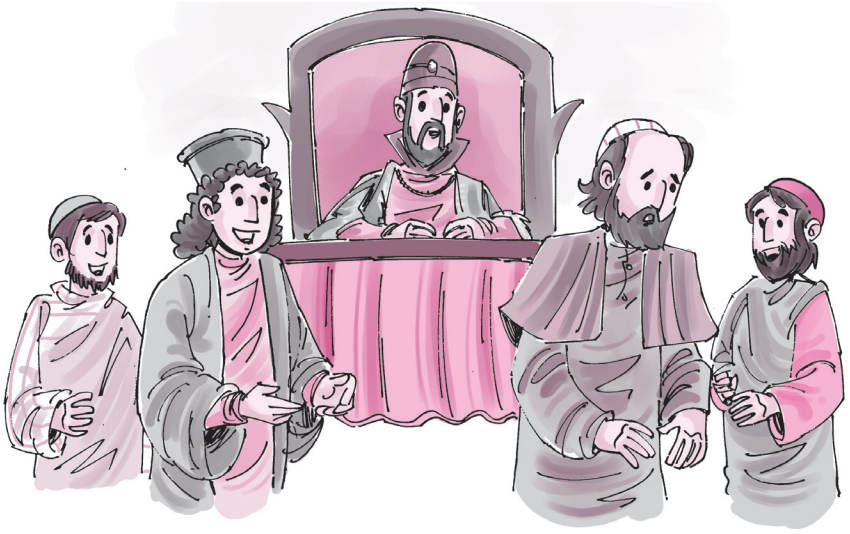
Antonio: So please my lord the duke and all the court
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,
I am content; so he will let me have
The other half in use, to render it,
Upon his death, unto the gentleman
That lately stole his daughter:
Two things provided more, that, for this favour,
He presently become a Christian;
The other, that he do record a gift,
Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

gratis: a hangman's rope free of charge
recant: take back

Duke: He shall do this, or else I do **recant**
The pardon that I late pronounced here.

Portia: Art thou contented, Jew? what dost thou say?

Shylock: I am content.



Portia: Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

Shylock: I pray you, give me leave to go from hence;
I am not well: send the deed after me,
And I will sign it.

Duke: Get thee gone, but do it.

Gratiano: In christening shalt thou have two god-fathers:
Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font.

Exit SHYLOCK

—William Shakespeare

UNDERSTANDING THE PLAY

A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Who was the head of the court?
   (a) Portia. ☐ (b) Shylock. ☐ (c) Duke. ☐
2. Who made the bond with Shylock?
   (a) Bassanio. ☐ (b) Antonio. ☐ (c) Gratiano. ☐

3. Who did Bassanio call 'devil'?

(a) Portia. ☐ (b) Shylock. ☐ (c) Duke. ☐

4. Who wanted to die rather than beg mercy?

(a) Shylock. ☐ (b) Antonio. ☐ (c) Bassanio. ☐

5. 'A Daniel came to judgement!' Who is being referred as 'Daniel'?

(a) Shylock. ☐ (b) Portia. ☐ (c) Antonio. ☐

B. Write true or false.

1. Shylock was a kind man. _____
2. Antonio was a man of word. _____
3. Portia's intelligence saved Antonio's life. _____
4. God showers blessings to both who forgives and who is forgiven. _____

C. Answer these questions.

1. Portia thinks that mercy is the greatest quality. Give reasons.
2. What was Shylock's argument for not forgiving Antonio?
3. Why did Shylock not cut a pound of Antonio's flesh?

WRITING SKILLS

D. Write a paragraph on, 'One should never borrow or lend money'.

E. Do you think Shylock got justice? Write your own view.

DISCUSS

F. Discuss the following topic in the class.

A person who digs a pit for others, himself falls into it.

G. Discuss the role of mercy in the smooth conduct of life.