

CHAPTER - 7

GLORY AT TWILIGHT

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Understanding the Text

1. Give reasons for the following

- a. Satyajit attending the village wedding.
- b. Satyajit's recollection of the forgerer when he was on the train.
- c. Srinath and his family members' eager expectation of Satyajit's arrival.
- d. Srinath's disappointment with Satyajit.
- e. Satyajit's feeling that he was an impostor.
- f. Satyajit not disclosing his present financial status to his uncle.

Answer

a. Satyajit attending the village wedding was a mere fact of pride and self-realisation. He was nobody in his younger days. Thus, when he gained some prestige and became a recognised person, he enjoyed the attention and fame that he got. The village people gave him looks of wonder and amazement. He appreciated the homage which people offered. When Satyajit became open-handed in the flush of prosperity, he started attaining an air of pride and stature. Satyajit knew one thing for sure that it was his benediction which would pave Srinath's way through the present daughter crisis.

b. He was contemplating on how the wheel of fortune keeps turning and never favours the same person. He thought about the forgerer because he knew one thing for sure. If luck leads to attainment of success before one might expect failure would strike faster. If success would come fast, downfall would be faster. Ironically, although catching the forgerer paved his way towards glory, promotion and prosperity, he had all regrets for the man. The thought that came to his mind was the fact that he could have given the forgerer a chance to live. The moment in his life was ironic because it was he who needed a second chance to make a living, now that he had lost everything.

c. There was a very valid reason for Srinath and his family members to have high expectations and eager eyes towards Satyajit's arrival. Satyajit was very liberal in his days of prosperity. His wealth made him reach high levels of status. Although they did not share any blood relation but Satyajit boasted and felt pride in helping Srinath in the marriage of his other daughters. He enjoyed success and attention while they needed money. It was a relation of pure give and take.

d. Srinath had extremely high and sure-to-be-fulfilled expectations from Satyajit. Thus, when he

the situation, he decided to listen to the false echo that convinced him to keep misleading his uncle. He was very well aware of the glory which had departed and thus wanted to remain joyous, though fake, at this twilight of the gone splendour. This is where he knowingly becomes an impostor to his uncle.

f. Satyajit was so much in the limelight since the time he had attained glory that he was ashamed of revealing about his failure to anybody. Srinath was especially one of the few people whom he would never want to know about his turn of fortune. He was considered to be the person who had a lot of money and was always ready to help. His image was that of a God who held a very high and prestigious position in the society. It was because of Satyajit's benediction that all the daughters of Srinath could be married. He couldn't reveal the tragedy of his life that he was no more in a position to be called their benefactor. He could not expose the harsh reality that he could no longer be known as the philanthropist present at times of need.

2. Describe the cycle of events in Satyajit's life that brought him back to where he began.

Answer

Satyajit witnessed a lot of changes in his life till the time the story was written. He had started his career as a client at a bank. He then caught a forgery and thus got promoted as a Managing Director. However, all these events turned out to be a turning point in his life. At present, he regretted reaching heights of success just by chance and not hard work. Now he realises that the tempo of failure is always faster than that of success. Today, he faced crisis when it came to job, wealth, in fact any resource at all. The wheel of fortune had turned and had completed an entire rotation bringing Satyajit back to where he had begun. He was reduced to nothing after enjoying glorious days when he owned a fortune. Once, it was he who was looked up to for financing and fulfilling the needs of the people. Now, he had to avert such situations to avoid the shame and dismay he felt at his present situation.

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Talking about the Text

1. It is difficult to adjust to a fall from glory.

Answer

The story explains the truth very clearly as to how it becomes extremely difficult for a man to adjust to the fact and accept defeat after being an achiever. Falling suddenly after gaining extreme heights of glory it becomes very difficult for a person to come in terms with his failure. Every known person in the vicinity knows the success story. Thus, it becomes hard to cope up with the loss, let alone telling people the tragic story.

2. 'Failure had a tempo faster than success.'

Answer

The concept of people who achieve success very fast also fail very fast holds truth as far as this story is concerned. The tempo of failure is always faster than success. Thus, on one hand, we strive so much to attain success while on the other hand, it takes just seconds for failure to reach us. Most of the times, it is just a matter of chance that a man gains success while a man's failure is pre-destined and occurs only because of his own actions. Success when planned and achieved because of hard work stays for long. However, when failure strikes, it is very abrupt and never knocks on the door before approaching. Thus, it can be said that the tempo of failure is faster than that of success.

3. Satyajit should have revealed his predicament to his uncle.

Answer

Predicament refers to an unpleasantly difficult, perplexing, or dangerous situation. Here, in this story, Satyajit was sandwiched in between his tragic loss of wealth and his uncle's expectations to fund him for the latter's daughter's marriage. He could not reveal his present status because of his ego and pride, especially after he was considered to be the benedict to his uncle. He was selfish and didn't want to let go of his status as a God among all the devotees at his uncle's place. However, revelation usually lightens the mood and unburdens one's heart. Thus, it might have been easier for Satyajit to be true and honest about his actual situation and let go of his pride.

4. The author's comment on crime and punishment.

Answer

The author, at the beginning of the story, always believed in the fact that he achieved what he was supposed to. He found it right and just to be promoted to the post of a Managing Director even though he didn't deserve it. However, after fortune turned its face away from him, he realised that he hated the person for whom he was promoted. He disliked the forger because of whom he gained so much glory and fame. Now, he just wishes that the hands of clock would turn back and he would let go of the person who committed the crime. He possessed contempt in his heart for the person who did this felony because he was the cause of his sudden success because of which he had to suffer. This was a point of epiphany when he realised that tide and time waited for none and thus, it was too late to seek him out and give him a chance to live.

Apperciation

1. How is Satyajit's financial crash introduced to the reader?

Answer

Satyajit has an entire list of denials. He was working on quitting some habits like smoking. This realisation dawned on him when he was about to smoke in the train he was travelling on. While reaching out for his cigarettes he gave it a second thought. He had rationed his habits as it was a time of crisis for him. He could not afford unrestricted luxury. He was bitten by the stark reality that the wheel of fortune did not favour him.

2. Comment on the way in which the story is narrated from Satyajit's perspective.

Answer

Satyajit has been extremely biased in expressing his opinion in the story. The story could also be presented as a diary entry. The narration seems to be in a continuous tone of justification. Satyajit explains himself at every point of the story - may it be feeling regretful for not giving the forgerer another chance or feeling joyous at being considered to be a God by his hosts. His revelation about failure striking faster than success portrays the completely broken condition of his spirit and soul. He very well seems to interpret the fact that the tempo of failure occurs to a man faster than success. His moments of epiphany to forgive the man who had committed forgery, to consider himself stupid for coming at an occasion where Srinath and his family members expected benediction from him, and to pull Srinath through the crisis of getting his daughter married rather than gifting the house and the fish-pond to his own family.

3. How has the author used the episode of the bank theft to comment on Satyajit's success in his career?

Answer

The author has very well knit the entire frame of the story. He wanted to show a common man's rise from a mere client to the post of Managing Director. He, in turn, wanted to explain how success earned through short-cut could be shortlived. He introduced this incident in the story making it the key episode, highlighting on how Satyajit managed to get promoted by play of chance. The author elaborates on a situation here on how men rise by occurrence of such incidents based on luck. It was just a matter of chance that he got the position and, thus, didn't have any rational reasons for the same. Thus, with no solid foundation for him to achieve what he did his success came to an end in a short while. The author wants to exemplify through this story that the tempo of failure is always faster than success.

4. How do these lines capture the essence of the story: 'Glory was all overlaid with dark shame. Glory was dead.'

Answer

The line 'Glory was all overlaid with dark shame' very well exemplifies the state of mind of the narrator. He seems to be a kind of person who is unable to accept defeat or failure. He has broken down completely and yet is not in favour of revealing his loss of wealth and position publicly. He had enjoyed his status as the superior being in the concerned society for a very long time and had always been glorified by all, especially his uncle. His uncle's daughters got married well because of the 'benediction' by Satyajit. Hence, it was impossible for the author to digest the fact that now the tables had turned and he owned nothing. Thus, he makes failure sound synonymous to shame. He thinks that the opposite of being glorious at one point of time is utter shame in public. 'Glory is dead' is the final statement which reveals the author's complete helplessness and vulnerability to the situation.