

The Portrait of a Lady - Khushwant Singh

why was it hard for the author to believe that his grandmother was once young and pretty?

Looking at his grandmother who short, fat and slightly stooped in stature, it was very difficult for him to believe the stories of his grandmother's beauty in her younger days.

The author had only seen and known his grandmother as an old woman. It had been the same situation for twenty years. As a child, therefore, he found it hard to believe that she was young and pretty once upon a time.

Three reasons why the author's grandmother was disturbed when he started going to the city school?

when the author started going to the city school his grandmother was disturbed because she could not help him with his lessons in English etc also she was unhappy when she heard that the author was being given music lessons and that there were no religious teachings about God and the scriptures at his school

the three main reasons for why the author's grandmother was disturbed when he started going to the school are written below:

1 she couldn't teach him as the author was being taught English lessons, law of gravitation of which all grandmother was unaware.

2 she did not like the idea of learning music in the school as she considered that it was the work of prostitutes.

3 she could no more go to leave the author in the school as he used to go by a motor bus in the school..

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During her village life, everyday she would prepare the author for school. She dressed him up, gave him breakfast and would accompany his grandson to school because his school was

attached to the temple. While the children learned alphabets and prayer the grandmother would read the scriptures at the temple. But after she came to the city, there wasn't much to do. So she would sit and do some clothing work in her spinning wheel and at the afternoon she would feed the sparrows. These were her routines in both village and city

when she and the author came to city,, her relationship with author curtailed to an extent of silence ,she couldn't accompany him to his school, cannot help him in his lessons .Instead she would spend her time at home spinning wheel ,reciting prayers form sunrise to sunset,only in afternoon she relaxed to feed sparrows(her happiest time).

the three phases of the author's relationship with his grandmother before he left the country to study abroad

The author's relationship with his grandmother went through several changes with time. In the first stage living in a village with her, his grandmother took care of all the needs of the child. She was quite active and agile. It was her domain and she was the queen of her kingdom. In this period she was the sole unchallenged guardian, mentor and creator of the child.

The turning point came in their relationship when they came to city to stay with the author's parents. In city, he joined an English School and started to go to school in a motor bus. Here the role of his grandmother in his bringing up was curtailed a little bit. Now she could not accompany him to the school. Despite taking lot of interest in his studies she could not help him in his lessons because he was learning English, law of gravity, Archimedes' principle and many more such things which she could not understand and this made her unhappy. She found herself at loss as she could not change the things her way. She was dismayed and withdrew herself to some extent. Perhaps she had realized that in the makeover of the child, her role was finished and this very thought saddened her most.

After finishing school, the author went to university.

After Finishing school ,the author went to university after which he was given **a room of his own** thus **breaking the existing link of friendship**

why was it hard for the author to belive that his grand motherwas young and pretty?

It was very hard for the author to believe that his grandmother was once a very young and preety lady because since his birth he had seen her the same old and wrinkled lady.Now it is difficult for him to imagine her as what she was when she was young

The author had only seen and known his grandmother as an old woman. It had been the same situation for twenty years. As a child, therefore, he found it hard to believe that she was young and pretty once upon a time.

what were the three ways in which author's grandmother spent her days after he went to school???

1. Reciting prayers.
2. Spinning the wheel.
- 3 Feeding sparrows.

The grandmother had a divine beauty. How does the author bring this out?

The author brings out the inner beauty of the grandmother by comparing her to a snow covered winter landscape. This comparison shows her calmness and serenity.

The author brings it out in the serenity and peacefulness that lit up her face.

Describe in brief the three phases of grandmother's relationship with her grandson.

1. first Phase:- The Grandmother looked after the author as his parents were trying hard to find an opportunity in the city to settle down there. She was quite active and agile. She woke him up early in the morning, prepared him breakfast and escorted him to school.

2. Second Phase:- Now came the turning point in author's life when his parents came to the village to take him to the city. In the city he was given a room separate from his grandmother. Now he went to school by bus, the grandmother couldn't accompany him to school. There he learnt about science and music, grandmother couldn't help him in science and she didn't like him learning about music since she considered it only for beggars and prostitutes.

3. Third Phase:- this was the most important phase in their relation. Khushwant's grandmother was a strong person. Whatever she went through in her heart she always restrained herself from demonstrating her emotions. He recalls that when he went abroad for further studies his grandmother was there to see him off on railway station quite calm busy telling the beads of her rosary and reciting prayers as always. When he came back after five years he found her more and more religious and more and more self contained. She spent still more time in prayers and spinning the wheel. Feeding the birds was her only happy pastime. But just the day before her death for the first time she broke this routine and gave up her prayers. That day she sang the songs of the home coming of the warriors on a withered drum along with the ladies of neighborhood in order to celebrate her grandson's return from abroad. Next morning she got ill. Although the doctor said it was a mild fever and would go away she could foresee that her end was near. She was upset that she omitted her prayers just before the final departure from the world. She did not want to waste any more time talking to anybody. She lay peacefully in bed praying and telling the beads till her lips stopped moving and rosary fell from her lifeless fingers. To mourn her death thousands of sparrows flew in and sat scattered around her body in utter

silence. They even ignored the breadcrumbs thrown for them by Khushwant's mother. They only flew away after the corpse was carried away for last rites.

A Photograph by Shirley Toulson

1) What does the word 'cardboard' denote in the poem? Why has this word been used?

Ans: The cardboard means a very stiff and thick paper, here the cardboard is a part of the frame that keeps the photograph intact. Its use in poem is ironical. It keeps the photograph of that 12 year old girl safe who herself was terribly transient. The player's mother had died some years ago.

2) What has the camera captured?

Ans: The camera had captured all the three girls alive in it. It has captured the pretty face of the poet's mother who as a girl of twelve at that time. It has also captured the smiling faces of the two girl cousins Betty and Dolly. They are holding the hands of the poet's mother.

3) What has not changed over the years? Does this suggest something to you?

Ans: The sea has not changed over the years. It rings out the transient nature and its object. Time spares none. The pretty faces and the feet of the three girls are terribly transient or mortal when compared to the ageless and unchangeable sea.

4) The poet's mother laughed at the snapshot. What did this laugh indicate?

Ans: The poet's mother laughs at the snapshot which was taken years ago. In the photograph, she as well as her two little cousins stood at the beach. She laughed at the way all of them were dressed up for the beach. Perhaps they looked funny. Their laughter indicated the youthful spirit.

5) What is the meaning of the line "Both wry with the laboured ease or loss"

Ans: Both the mother and the poet suffered a great sense of loss. The mother has lost her childhood innocence and joyful spirit that the photograph has captured some years ago. For the poet, the smile of her mother has become thing of the past. She has silently resigned to her faith. Ironically both labour to bear their loss with ease.

6) What does "this circumstance" refer to?

Ans: The circumstance refers to the death of the poet's mother. The photograph of her dead mother brings sad nostalgic feelings in the past. But the poet has nothing to say at all about the circumstance. The silence of the poet makes the silence prevailing there still deeper.

7) The three stanzas depict three different phases. What are they?

Ans: In the first stanza, the poet's mother is shown as a twelve year old girl with pretty smiling face. Then she is paddling with her two girl cousins. This face is before the poet's birth. The second face describes the middle aged mother laughing at her own snapshot. The third face describes the chilling pale of silence that the death of her mother has left of the past.

A Photograph: Theme and Summary

THEME

Our days captured in still pictures have the power to once again evoke smiles and tears of the past. A search for the lost happiness in photographs is uplifting and saddening, both at the same time. Who would not want to relive the days when the friends and family were together and days passed by without a worry. But after the momentary happiness, the present only pinches more as the void after their departure makes itself felt harder.

The poet here presents a poignant scene of the rush of memories felt when she looks at her mother's smiling picture from before she was born. The smile was heartening but poles apart from her morose expression later in life. If not in reality, the poet got the warm comfort of her smile through the photograph.

Through the poem, we realize the essential worth of a picture, and how memories of the past prove a fuel for future life.

SUMMARY

The poet looks at the photograph of her mother, which was taken when her mother was 12 years old. She had gone for a sea holiday with her cousins Betty and Dolly and while they were paddling, her uncle took a photograph of them. Each of the cousins was holding the hands of the poet's mother who was the eldest among them. All the three of them stood smiling through their hair while the photo was taken. Her mother had a sweet face. All these happened before she was born. Years fled past since then. Her mother grew up into an adult. They all underwent changes while the sea stood still. After about twenty or thirty years the poet's mother would look at the photograph laughing nostalgically and remembering the past. She would appreciate the dress worn by her cousins Betty and Dolly. The sea holiday belonged to the past of her mother and the poet still remembers how her mother would laugh looking at the snap shot. For the poet both these bring great sadness and an acute sense of loss. Her mother died 12 years ago and now the poet has nothing to say about this circumstance of the photograph.

KEY SENTENCES

1. The poet looks at the cardboard on which there is a childhood photograph of her mother.
2. She had gone for a sea holiday with two her cousins Betty and Dolly
3. While they were paddling, their uncle took a photograph of them.
4. Both the cousins were holding the hands of her mother who was the eldest among the girls.
5. This was before the poet was born
6. Time fled past since and all those who are in the photograph underwent changes while the sea remained the same.
7. Her mother would look at the photograph after about twenty to thirty years and laugh nostalgically.
8. Now for the poet her mother's laughter and her sea holiday is a thing of the past.
9. Her mother died about 12 years ago.
10. The silence of the photograph silences the poet.
11. She experiences great loss.

The Summer of a Beautiful Whitehorse

1. Why was it difficult for Aram to believe the sight of his cousin Mourad with the beautiful white horse?

Ans: When Aram looked through the window, he saw his cousin Mourad with a beautiful white horse and it was a sight which was very difficult for him to believe for two reasons:

First, the whole of the Garoghlonian family to which the two boys belonged were extremely poor and therefore it was not possible for Mourad to buy that horse. Secondly, in that case, it would mean that Mourad had stolen that horse. But that was also not possible, because the Garoghlonian family was also very much famous for their honesty and therefore Mourad could not steal that horse either.

2. Where had Mourad been hiding the horse?

Answer: Mourad had been hiding the horse in the barn of a deserted vineyard which was owned by a farmer named Fetvajian.

3. What did the farmer John Byro tell the two boys when one day they accidentally met him with his horse in their custody?

Answer: The farmer examined the horse when one morning he found it with the two boys and he told them that he could swear that the horse was his very horse which had been stolen from him many weeks before if he did not know about their parents. He added that the fame of their

family for honesty was very well known to him and therefore he liked to say that the horse could be the twin of his stolen horse.

4. What did John Byro tell Aram's mother and Uncle Khosrove when he got his horse back?

Answer: After John Byro got his horse back mysteriously one day, he came to Aram's house and told Aram's mother and Uncle Khosrove that he did not know what to think about the whole matter. It was because the horse was stronger than ever and was better tempered too and therefore he thanked God.

5. What were the two things for which the Garoghlonian family was famous?

Answer: The Garoghlonian family was famous for the following two things:

1. Their poverty
2. Their honesty

6. What points were put forward by Aram in defense of Mourad's act of stealing the horse?

Answer: Aram argued to himself that stealing a horse for a ride was not the same thing as stealing something else, such as money. And then he went a little ahead by saying that if one was so much crazy about horses the way Mourad and he himself were, it was not stealing at all. It would

not become stealing until they offered to sell the horse and he was sure that last thing they would never be doing.

7. Which excuses were given by Aram to himself for taking a ride on the horse despite knowing fully the truth about the theft of the horse by Mourad?

Ans: Aram dismissed stealing a horse as much graver a crime as stealing money. Secondly, he believed that if it was something like a horse for which both he and his cousin were crazy then it couldn't be stealing.

Additionally, it was not going to become stealing until they offered to sell the horse.

8. Why was Aram unwilling to return the horse so soon?

Ans: Aram was crazy for horse and he wanted to learn horse riding at all costs. The horse would not let him to ride over it and hence he was unwilling to return the horse at least till he would learn to ride it.

9. **Did the boys return the horse because they were conscience-stricken or because they were afraid?** Ans: The most beautiful essence of this story is the fact that the boys were very innocent and meant no harm to anyone. They were just dreamy and wished to ride a horse. It pricked their conscience when they saw the clean heart of the farmer, John Byro, who didn't suspect them even for once for stealing the horse. They were not afraid but were guilt-stricken when they met a pure-hearted soul like John, who couldn't even think of people of their clan stealing, even after he said it was confirmed that the horse resembled his, just like twins. The children might have also been afraid of ruining the prestige and honour of their families.
10. **When he met Mourad and Aram on the road, John Byro inspected the white horse. Why did he not take this horse from Mourad and Aram? Do you think he knew that it was his horse? Explain.**

Ans: John Byro knew that it was his horse because as he inspected the horse's teeth, it matched the teeth of the lost horse. But, he did not accuse the boys because he did not want to humiliate them and the tribe. Another thing is that he knew how 'honesty' matters for the family.

11. **"This was that part that wouldn't permit me to believe what saw". What part does the narrator mean?**Ans: Aram refers to their poverty. They lived in extreme poverty and it was difficult to understand how they got food to satisfy their hunger. He frankly admits that every branch of the family was living in the most amazing and comical poverty in the world.
12. **How did Aram define stealing when he had to decide whether or not to ride the horse?**Ans: It seemed to him that stealing a horse for a ride was not the same thing as stealing something else such as money. Since he and Mourad were quite crazy about horses it wasn't stealing. He convinced himself with the thought that it would become stealing only when they offered to sell it.
9. **What were the peculiarities in uncle?**Ans: Uncle Khosrove's crazy streak was famous. He was a big man with a powerful head of black hair and very large moustache. He was quite furious in temper, very irritable and impatient. He would stop anyone from talking by roaring his pet phrase. "It is no harm; pay no attention to it".
10. **What do you think induced the voice to return the horse to its owner?**Ans: The boys were impressed by John Byro's attitude towards their parents and families. He knew their parents very well and so believed whatever the boys said. Secondly the fame of their family for honesty was well-known to him. The boys returned the horse to him for the sake of family's pride and dignity. Their conscience did not allow them to keep the horse any longer. They were afraid to lose a family reputation which was known for honesty and integrity.
11. **Do you think John Byro recognized his horse? Why did he not accuse the boys of stealing the horse?**Ans: Yes, John Byro did recognize his horse. He examined his teeth and knew for sure that the horse was his own. He did not accuse the boys and indirectly told them that it was wrong to steal. He talked about the family's reputation for honesty and said that he would never suspect them of stealing.

12. **Why did John Byro visit Aram's house in his surrey after getting his horse back?**Ans: John Byro visited Aram's house in his surrey to show that the stolen horse had been returned. He just wanted to tell them the horse was stronger and better tempered now.
9. **Describe Mourad's parting from the beautiful white horse?**Ans: Mourad looked at the horse for some time as he had grown fond of him. When he had gone to return it, in John Byro's vineyard, he had tried to put his arms around his neck, pressed his nose into the horse's nose and patted him. The horse was stronger now and better behaved after being with Mourad for some days.
10. **Describe the incident which confirms that narrator's Uncle Khosrove indeed was crazy?**Ans: One day Uncle Khosrove was having the moustache trimmed at barber's shop. His son Aram came running to him to tell him that their house was on fire. Khosrove roared at him saying "It is no harm; pay no attention to it." The barber repeated what the boy had said. Khosrove roared again, "Enough, it is no harm I say."
11. **Describe narrator's experience when he rode white horse alone?**Ans: The narrator had a frightful experience when he rode the horse alone. He leapt to the back of the horse but he did not move, As advised by Mourad, he kicked into the muscles of the horse. It reared and snorted. Then it began to run. It ran down the road to a vineyard and begin to leap over the vines. As it leapt over the seventh vine the narrator fell. The horse continued running.
12. **Give a brief account of Mourad's joy ride?**Ans: Mourad kicked his heels into the horse and shouted, "Vazire, run!" The horse stood on its hind legs, snorted and ran forward at full speed. Mourad raced the horse across the field of dry grass to an irrigation ditch. He crossed the ditch on the horse. When he returned five minutes later he was dripping wet.
13. **How did Mourad tend the young robin with a hurt wing? What aspect of his character is revealed in this incident?**Ans: Mourad repaired the hurt wing of the young robin and threw the bird into the air. After a few unsuccessful attempts, the robin flew away. This incidents shows that Mourad was a great lover of birds and animals. He was a kind hearted boy.

Long Answer Questions:-

1. Why did the two boys ultimately return the horse all of a sudden although they had planned to keep it at least for six months?

Answer: Although the two boys had planned to keep the horse for at least six months, they returned it all of a sudden the morning after they accidentally met the farmer John Byro from whom Mourad had stolen the horse. The farmer examined the horse and told them that he could swear

that the horse was his very horse which had been stolen from him many weeks before if he did not know about their parents. He added that the fame of their family for honesty was very well known to him and therefore he liked to say that the horse could be the twin of his stolen horse. What John Byro told them served as an eye opener for the two boys especially Mourad and they became conscious how precious and strong their family's fame for honesty was and therefore they did not

want to tarnish that name and prestige and immediately returned the horse.

2. Mourad was the natural descendant of the crazy streak of uncle Khosrove. Explain the statement giving instances from the story, 'The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse'?

Ans: Uncle Khosrove was considered in the Garoghlanian tribe as one of the craziest persons. It was also believed that the tribe that Mourad was the natural descendant of the crazy streak in their tribe. Uncle Khosrove's craziness was out of the world. He had the largest moustache in the surrounding. His talk was not less than roaring, which was but natural for him. Once when his son came running to tell him about his house on fire, he simply said, 'It is no harm; pay no attention to it'. The barber who reminded him that it was his own house also got rebukes. Khosrove also

asked John Byro not to worry about the horse or the loss of money or even for his paining legs and answered in the same way.

Mourad was considered the natural descendant of this man though not a biological descendant mainly because of the crazy acts he was involved in. The act of stealing a horse because he was crazy about it is an example to prove the same. Like the punch line of uncle Khosrove i.e. 'It is no

harm; pay no attention to it' Mourad used to say that he had a way with the things, animals and even people. Thus Mourad said that he had a way with the horse, with the dogs and with the farmers too.

3. Discuss the charactersketch of Mourad?

Ans: Mourad, the central character in the story „The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse is depicted as a young boy, who enjoyed being alive and having fun. He had a crazy streak in him which he had inherited from his family. He belonged to a tribe that was poor, had no money and lived in an acute form of poverty. As a young lad he upheld the family customs and traditions. He believed in all the values that his tribe and family had tried to inculcate in him. He could not resist the temptation to ride a horse and stole a horse from John Byro, hid it and then went for horse riding early in the morning at 4:00 am along with his nine year old cousin Aram. He justified his act by saying that it wasn't stealing because they had no intention of selling it for money.

Mourad was crazy and fun loving. While riding the horse, he sang loudly and joyfully. He was confident about his riding abilities and said that he had a way with a horse. It was only when John Byro touched his conscience when he declared that if he had not trusted the honesty of their tribe, he would have sworn that the horse belonged to him. Mourad realised his mistake. His conscience pricked him and he returned the horse. The fun loving boy had had his fun and then his honesty urged him to uphold his family values and traditions.

Value based question:

1. **Listening to the conscience helps one to do the right. Give your own view in context to the chapter, "Summer of the Beautiful White Horse".** Ans: Listening to the conscience undoubtedly helps one to do the right things, as we have seen in the chapter. Mourad stole the horse of John Byro just for the sake of riding it, he believed that he did not have the intention of keeping it. After many days John Byro discovers his horse but keeping in view the reputation of the family he agreed that the horse was not his. It was the twin of his horse. This evokes the conscience of Mourad and he with his cousin Aram went and kept the horse from where it was taken. The voice of the conscience never motivates anyone to do wrong, therefore before doing anything if we listen to our conscience we will never do the wrong.

Notice Writing

1. Start with your school name at the top. Use capital letter only.
2. Then write NOTICE in the next line. You can also leave a line. it is your choice.
3. Write the date at the left side.
4. Underneath, write the heading. No need to capitalize this heading.
5. Write the body of the notice informing the readers about the time and venue of the function or anything you want to convey.
6. Write your name and designation on the left side.
7. Put the Notice in a square.

Sample Notice

<p style="text-align: center;">Carmel School, Shornur</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Notice</p> <p style="text-align: right;">December 10, 2016</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Annual Day Celebration 2016</u></p> <p>This is to inform all students that Annual Day 2016 will be celebrated on December 31 from 6 pm to 11 pm at the school auditorium with various cultural programmes. Ottappalam Sub Collector Mr Ravi Teja IAS will grace the occasion as the Chief Guest. Students who would like to participate in various programmes should contact their respective class teachers latest by December 20, 2016.</p> <p>Rani (Event in charge)</p>
