



A Question of Trust – Revision Notes

Summary

- The story is about Horace Danby, a 50-year-old unmarried man.
 - Outwardly, he is a respectable and honest-looking person who makes a living by making locks.
 - Secretly, he is a thief, who loves collecting rare and expensive books.
 - He steals once a year, carefully planning each robbery, to buy his books.
 - One summer afternoon, he breaks into a rich woman's house, while the servants are away.
 - Just as he is about to open the safe, a young woman appears, pretending to be the owner's wife.
 - She catches Horace red-handed but cleverly convinces him to open the safe for her, saying she has forgotten the safe's combination.
 - Horace, believing her, opens the safe and hands over the jewels.
 - Later, he is arrested because the real owner's wife reported the theft.
 - He realizes the young woman tricked him—she was a thief herself.
 - Horace is sent to prison, where ironically, he uses his lock-making skills to help prison staff.
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Theme

- Deception and Trust → Even thieves can be tricked.
 - Irony of Life → Horace, a lock-maker and clever thief, gets fooled easily.
 - Appearances are Deceptive → The young woman pretended to be someone else and outsmarted Horace.
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Characters

- Horace Danby – A 50-year-old lock-maker, unmarried, respectable in appearance but a thief at heart, who steals to buy rare books.

- Young Woman – Smart, cunning thief who pretends to be the owner's wife and tricks Horace.
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☀ Message of the Story

- Intelligence without wisdom leads to downfall.
 - Crime never pays—wrongdoers eventually face consequences.
 - Appearances can be misleading, so one must think before trusting others.
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🗣 Literary Devices

- Irony → Horace, a master lock-maker and thief, is outsmarted by another thief.
 - Suspense → The woman's sudden appearance and her true identity.
 - Humour → Horace's love for rare books, despite being a thief.
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❓ Short Questions & Answers

1. Who is the author of *A Question of Trust*?
👉 Victor Canning.
 2. What was Horace Danby's occupation?
👉 He made locks and was a locksmith.
 3. Why did Horace steal once a year?
👉 To buy expensive rare books.
 4. Who tricked Horace Danby?
👉 A young woman pretending to be the owner's wife.
 5. What happened to Horace in the end?
👉 He was caught and sent to prison, where he made locks for jail staff.
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☀ Long Q&A

Q1. How was Horace Danby deceived by the young woman?



Answer: The young woman entered the house when Horace was about to open the safe. Pretending to be the owner's wife, she convinced him that she needed the jewels and that if he helped, she would let him go. Trusting her, Horace opened the safe and gave her the

jewels. Later, when the theft was reported, he realized she was not the owner's wife but a thief who had fooled him.

Q2. What is the irony in *A Question of Trust*?

Answer: The irony lies in the fact that Horace, who was a careful planner and lock-making expert, was himself deceived by another thief. Though he thought he was clever enough to avoid capture, his trust in the wrong person led to his downfall. This shows the theme that crime never pays and appearances can be deceptive.

Value-Based Q&A

1. What value does Horace's downfall teach us?
 Overconfidence and dishonesty lead to failure.
2. What moral does the story give?
 Crime and greed never succeed; honesty and wisdom are more valuable.