

Chapter 2 - The Thief's Story

Read and Find Out

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Question 1.

Who does 'I' refer to in this story?

Answer:

I refers to Hari Singh, the narrator of the story who is a 15 year old experienced thief.

Question 2.

What is he "a fairly successful hand" at?

Answer:

He is a fairly successful hand at stealing. He is an experienced thief. He is so clean and swift in his work that he robs people without being caught.

Question 3.

What does he get from Anil in return for his work?

Answer:

In return of Hari Singh's work, Anil gives him food and a place to live in.

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Question 4.

How does the thief think Anil will react to the theft?

Answer:

According to Hari, Anil would be sad not because of the loss of money but because of the loss of trust he had in Hari.

Question 5.

What does he say about the different reactions of people when they are robbed?

Answer:

Hari's experience at theft had made him aware of differences in reactions of people when they're robbed. According to him, a greedy man shows fear; the rich, anger and a poor man, acceptance.

Question 6.

Does Anil realise that he has been robbed?

Answer:

Yes, Anil realised that he had been robbed, as he gave a fifty rupee note to Hari which was still damp due to the night's rain.

Think About It

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Question 1.

What are Hari Singh's reactions at the prospect of receiving an education? Do they change overtime? {Hint: compare, for example, the thought: 'I knew that once I could

write like an educated man there would be no limit to what I could achieve' with these later thoughts:

'Whole sentences, I knew, could one day bring me more than a few hundred rupees. It was a simple matter to steal and sometimes just as simple to be caught. But to be a really big man, a clever and respected man, was something else.') What makes him return to Anil?

Answer:

Hari was very happy and grateful when he learned to write his name. He was very excited when Anil promised to teach him to write whole sentences as well. He knew that being an educated man will add to his abilities and he could achieve anything. But when he left Anil's house, he realised that stealing was simply a crime to indulge himself but being educated was an entirely different thing. He knew the respect, reputation and possibilities that would come to him once he was educated. And so his urge to receive education compelled him to return to Anil.

Question 2.

Why does Anil not hand the thief over to the police? Do you think most people would have done so? In what ways is Anil different from such employers?

Answer:

Unlike others, Anil does not handover Hari to the police on theft charges. He knew about the theft but he did not thrash him nor even mentioned it in front of Hari. He was glad that Hari had realised his mistake and the importance of education in life.

Anil wanted Hari to become a literate man and lead a respectful life.

He is different from other such employers because he is very understanding. Hari's return gave him the hope of a change in him.

Talk About It

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Question 1.

Do you think people like Anil and Hari Singh are found only in fiction, or are there such people in real life?

Answer:

People like Anil and Hari Singh are found only in fiction. Though exceptions might be there, these people are rarely found. Anil was a kind and considerate person who was concerned, about Hari's education and future. And Hari was a thief whose heart changes after realising the importance of education for his future. People like these are imaginary in today's world.

Question 2.

Do you think it is a significant detail in story that Anil is a struggling writer? this explain his behaviour in any way

Answer:

Yes, it is a significant detail that Anil is a struggling writer. His lifestyle was simple and used to spend according to his pocket at all time His struggle sometimes gave him a lot of income while at other times he used to worry about the next payment. Hari's observation about the discontinuation in his work justifies his behavior regarding money.

Question 3.

Have you met anyone like Hari Singh? Can you think and imagine the circumstances that can turn a fifteen year old boy into a thief?

Answer:

No, I haven't met anyone like Hari Singh but the existence of such people is certain. A fifteen year old boy can be forced by circumstances to become a thief. It may be the need to feed the stomach, to satisfy illegal addiction, to maintain health, to fulfil luxurious demands etc

Question 4.

Where is the story set? (You can get clues from the names of the persons and places mentioned in it). Which language or languages are spoken in these places? Do you think the characters in the story spoke to each other in English?

Answer:

The story is set somewhere in Uttar Pradesh near Lucknow. We can say so because the story mentions that there is a railway station for Express train to Lucknow. The presence of sweet shops and bazaars also indicate it to be a decent-sized town. No, the characters in the story do not speak to each other in English but probably in Hindi.

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