



By D.H. Lawrence

Page No: 35

#### Understanding the Text

1. What was the reason for young Paul's restlessness at the beginning of the story? How did it find expression?

Answer: Young Paul is restless at the beginning of the story because he was told by his mother that they were not lucky therefore don't have enough money to have a car and other luxuries of life. Besides young Paul had a feeling that deep down his mother was not as happy as she appeared to be. She blamed young Paul's father for not being lucky and making her unlucky as well because she was married to him.

2. Why do you think Paul's mother was not satisfied with the yearly birthday gift of 1,000 pounds for five years.

Answer: Paul's mother was not satisfied with the yearly birthday gift of 1000 pounds for five years because she was an unsatisfied lot. She always had the feeling that she deserved a better treatment from life and this resulted in not showing any enthusiasm for the handsome birthday gift from Paul. Instead Paul started to hear more whispers from the house for more money.

3. What was the reason for the anxiety of Paul's mother as he grew older?

Answer: As it can be implied from the story, The Rocking-horse Winner, Paul was an autistic child who also suffered Oedipus-complex. The story pictures a very young Paul who is at the threshold of teenage and is very eager to fight the sounds that keep whispering in his house that "there must be more money. He was desperate to bring happiness to his mother through money and desired to replace his father in her life. As Paul grew impatient and betted on racing horses to earn money by means of gambling. Hester, realised that her son was indulging too much in horse racing and asked the gardener and her brother to keep him away from it. She realised how tensed Paul had grown. Yet she knew not that the worry that had been eating and consuming him up was of his mother. Eager to win, Paul lost, and lost again. It was before Derby, he grew worried to earn for his mother and prove his luck to her. She was worried so much that she left the party in the middle to return to her son to see him safe and healthy. However, it was the last time she saw her son in senses.

4. Paul's final bet his family richer but cost him his life. Explain.

Answer: Paul was a child that was doomed. There had to be some signs, indications to his disintegrating health, implying his mental situation. He was possibly an autistic child who needed more than general attention and care from his family. He heard the house whispering to him all the time that there must be more money. The child was possibly schizophrenic as well for he was hearing sounds that did not exist. And he was oedipal for sure. All these were already leading him to the inevitable, however, the child had no knowledge to what was happening to him. He tried and tried to earn for his mothers sake. He wanted to prove that he is lucky to

earn and deserving of her love. And he did earn in Derby 80,000 pounds by predicting that Malabar would win through his clairvoyance. However, it deteriorated his health so much that he died in few days afterwards.

#### Talking about the Text

1. 'Luck is necessary for success in life'.

Answer: There are many who believe luck is important and one may find many such who believe in hard work. It is not though that those who believe in luck do not work hard. It is just that they believe in "do your best and God will do the rest. However, there are those who completely blame their fate for everything and do not do anything to change or improve it. Still there are people that believe that hard work is greater than luck and that it has the power to change the destiny. One may find various beliefs around them and it depends on what they chose to believe in.

2. Although Paul's mother liked to be rich she did not approve of betting on horses.

Answer: Paul's mother foolishly wished to be rich and yet was not able to achieve or materialise her desire. She blamed it on her husband for being unlucky. However, she was one of those humans who do not tread as per their cloth. She was used to a lavish lifestyle and blamed her husband and misfortune for low income. Yet there was one thing appreciable about her that she was against gambling. She did remark in her conversation with her brother that she had seen her family members pursuing it and how it led to their fall. She advised her son to not indulge in it and made him promise that he will not think about racing horses any more.

3. What were the voices that Paul heard? Did they lead him to success in the real sense?

Answer: Although the house Paul and his family lived in was a pleasant one, the money they had was not enough to maintain the social position they had to keep up. The mother realised that father had no luck to make enough money so she decided to do something on her own. It was then that the house started whispering from every corner that "there must be more money. The sounds started haunting the place and made Paul very uncomfortable and distressed and disturbed him. Though there were expensive gifts coming on Christmas, Paul could hear behind the shining rocking horse that "there must be more money. It is plausible that Paul was schizophrenic and imagined the voices on being stressed due to their misery. As it is written in the text that no body said it aloud and there is no mention of anyone else hearing such voices, it is clear that Paul imagined his fears giving them voice. Paul's fear transferred into him through his mother constantly haunted him and became his driving force. The boy was oedipal and unknowingly wished to replace his father from his mother's life. So, the autistic boy drove his shinning horse ferociously until he "got there and would be sure of the horse that would win the next race. There were times when he was not sure, so he would be careful. The gardener Bassett was his partner throughout. Later even uncle Oscar joined as such was the conviction with which Paul used to declare the winning horse's name, and the horse used to win in actual. Call it clairvoyance or sheer luck, which he aspired to have to prove to be worthy of his mother's luck, Paul made money by betting on horses and finally left 80,000 pounds for his family by losing himself.

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