



By O. Henry

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Think About It

1. What is Johnsy's illness? What can cure her, the medicine or the willingness to live?

Answer: Johnsy was suffering from pneumonia. Only the willingness to live could cure her. She had made up her mind that she was not going to get well. The doctor said that if she did not want to live, then medicines would not help her.

2. Do you think the feeling of depression Johnsy has is common among teenagers?

Answer: Yes, I think the feeling of depression Johnsy is very common among teenagers. Because of the present lifestyle, teenagers are under constant pressure to outperform in every field. They are burdened with studies and the anxiety of future. They are also subjected to a lot of parental and peer pressure. Along with all this, they are also expected to behave in a certain manner as deemed appropriate by the society. Most of the times, they are unable to bear so much of stress and end up being depressed.

3. Behrman has a dream. What is it? Does it come true?

Answer: Behrman was a sixty year old painter. His lifelong dream was to paint a masterpiece. It does come true when he paints a leaf such that it looks extremely natural. He painted the last leaf left on a creeper.

4. What is Behrman's masterpiece? What makes Sue say so?

Answer: Behrman's masterpiece was the last leaf on the ivy creeper. Sue calls it masterpiece because this painting rekindled the willingness to survive in Johnsy's heart and she was able to recover from her illness. Johnsy thought that she would die when the last leaf fell from the ivy creeper. But Behrman spent an entire night in a heavy storm to paint a fresh green leaf. Behrman suffered from pneumonia because of getting drenched while painting and eventually died. However, on seeing that leaf Johnsy thought it was real and got a feeling of self-belief. She realized she could get well if she wanted to and came out of her illness.

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