Vikram’s English Academy (ICSE)

Assignment: The Happy Prince

1. **How is the Happy Prince described?**

**Ans:** The statue of the Happy Prince stood on a tall column. He was gilded all over with thin leaves of fine gold. For eyes he had two bright sapphires and a large red ruby glowed on the hilt of the sword.

1. **Why does a sensible mother ask her little boy? Why?**

**Ans:** A sensible mother asks her little boy why he cannot be like the Happy Prince because the little boy was crying for the moon and the Happy Prince never dreams of crying for anything.

1. **Who stayed back with Reed? Where did his friends go? When? Why?**

**Ans:** The bird Swallow stayed back with Reed. His friends had gone away to Egypt six weeks ago. But he stayed behind for he was in love with the most beautiful Reed.

1. **What was the opinion of other birds about their friend’s relation with the Reed? How did the bird feel after his friends left?**

**Ans:** The other birds opined that their friend’s relation with the Reed was a very ridiculous attachment. After his friends had left, he felt lonely and began to tire of his ladylove.

1. **Why did the Reed and the bird end their relationship?**

**Ans:** After Swallow’s friends had left, he started to feel lonely and began to tire of his ladylove. One day he asked her if she was willing to go away with her but she denied as she was very attached to her home. Swallow got wild and said that she had been trifling with him and so he would be off to the Pyramids. That is how their relationship ended.

1. **Where did the bird plan to go? Why? Did he reach immediately? Why did he wait back the very first time?**

**Ans:** The bird decided to go to Pyramids as he would be able to catch up with his friends there. No, he did not reach immediately though he had left on the very same day after meeting Reed. After a long day’s flight, he was probably very tired and so decided to take rest in the city where he arrived.

1. **How many drops of water fell on him? What happened on its each fall?**

**Ans:** There were three drops of water that fell on the bird. The first drop fell when the bird was just about to put his head under a wing. The next drop fell when the bird exclaimed that it was a curious thing and the last drop fell before he could open his wings.

1. **Why was Happy Prince crying?**

**Ans:** The Happy Prince was crying because he could see all the ugliness and all the misery of the city. His heart was made of lead but He couldn’t choose but weep.

1. **Describe what happened far away in a little street.**

**Ans:** Far in a little street there was a poor house. One of the windows was open and through it the Happy Prince could see a woman seated at a table. Her face was thin and worn. She had coarse red hands all pricked by the needle. She was a seamstress. In a bed in the corner of the room her little boy was lying ill. His mother had nothing to give him except water and he was crying.

1. **Which is the first request made by Happy Prince? Why?**

**Ans:** The first request that the Happy Prince makes to the bird is to stay back with him for one night and be his messenger. He made this request as the boy was thirsty and the mother was so sad.

1. **Why does Swallow not like boys?**

**Ans:** The Swallow did not like boys as the previous summer near the river, there were two rude boys who were always throwing stones at him.

1. **Which different places did the Swallow cover as he flew away with ruby?**

**Ans:** The different places that the Swallow flew over were the roofs of the town and the cathedral tower where the white marble angels were sculptured.

1. **What happened when he passed by the palace?**

**Ans:** When the bird passed by the palace, he heard the sound of dancing. A beautiful girl came out on the balcony and wished when her dress would be ready in time for the dance. She also remarked that she had ordered flowers to be embroidered on her dress but the seamstresses were too lazy.

1. **What was the boy doing in the house? Where was his mother?**

**Ans:** The boy was tossing feverishly on his bed and the mother was so tired that she had fallen asleep.

1. **How does Swallow make the boy comfortable? How did Swallow feel after his deed?**

**Ans:** The Swallow hopped inside the house and laid the great ruby on the table beside the woman’s thimble. Then he flew gently round the bed, fanning the boy’s forehead with his wings.

1. **Mention the different reactions given by others on Swallow’s arrival.**

**Ans:** When the day broke, the Swallow flew down to the river and had a bath. The Professor of Ornithology who was passing over the bridge commented that it was a remarkable phenomenon to see a Swallow bird in winter. Wherever the Swallow went, the sparrows chirruped and said to each other that it was a very distinguished stranger.

1. **What happened when the professor saw the Swallow? How did people react to it?**

**Ans:** When the professor saw the Swallow he said that it was a remarkable phenomenon to see a Swallow bird in winter. And he wrote a long letter about it to the local newspaper. Everyone talked about it, though it was full of words that they could not understand.

1. **Why was the Swallow in high spirits? What did he do?**

**Ans:** The Swallow was in high spirits at the prospect of going to Egypt. He visited all the public monuments and sat a long time on top of the church steeple.

1. **What had Happy Prince seen in a garret?**

**Ans:** Happy Prince had seen a young man in a garret. He was leaning over desk covered with papers and in a tumbler by his side there is a bunch of withered violets. He was trying to finish a play for the Director of the Theatre but he was too cold to write any more. There was no fire in the grate and hunger had made him faint.

1. **What was so special about the sapphires? Why does he tell Swallow to pluck one of the two sapphires?**

**Ans:** The sapphires were rare which were brought from India a thousand years ago. He wants one of the sapphires to be plucked and to be taken to the young man in the garret.

1. **Does the bird pluck the first sapphire in the first instance? Justify.**

**Ans:** No, the bird does not pluck the first sapphire in the first instance. It starts crying and says that it cannot do that.

1. **Where did Swallow go after plucking out the Prince’s eye? What happened there?**

**Ans:**  After plucking out the Prince’s eye, the bird flew away to the young man’s garret. The young man had his head buried in his hands and so he did not hear the flutter of the bird’s wings. When he looked up, he found the beautiful sapphire lying on the withered violets.

1. **How different is weather in Egypt from the city, according to Swallow?**

**Ans:** In Egypt the sun is warm on the green palm-trees and the crocodiles lie in the mud and look lazily about them while in the city, the chill snow would be soon there.

1. **What does the bird promise to do in his next trip to the city? What does it imply?**

**Ans:** The bird promises that in the next trip to the city during spring, he would bring back two beautiful jewels in place of those that he had given. It implies that the bird is a regular visitor and would be back in the next year.

1. **What is seen in the square below? Who sees it?**

**Ans:**  In the square below, a little match girl is seen selling matches. Her matches have fallen in the gutter and they are spoiled. She is crying as her father would scold for not bringing money. This scene is seen by the Happy Prince.

1. **What is the bird not willing to do? Why? What does it offer instead?**

**Ans:**  The bird is not willing to pluck out the Prince’s other eye because the Happy Prince would become completely blind then. It offers instead to stay back with him always.

1. **What does the bird do after realising that the Prince has become completely blind? Which stories were told by the bird? What did Prince want to know about?**

**Ans:** After the bird realises that the Prince has completely become blind, he denies leaving him alone and decides to stay back with the Prince. The bird would tell him stories of what he had seen in strange lands. But the Prince wanted to know more marvellous stories of sufferings of men and of women.

1. **Mention the contrasting conditions seen by the bird.**

**Ans:** Swallow saw the rich making merry in their beautiful houses, while the beggars were sitting at the gates. Under the bridge, two little boys were lying in one another’s arms to try and keep themselves warm.

1. **How does the Prince react after knowing about the conditions in the city? What does the Swallow do? What was the effect on the people?**

**Ans:** After knowing about the conditions of the city, Prince told the bird that as he was covered with fine gold and he can take it off, leaf by leaf and give it to his poor. Swallow starts giving leaf after leaf of the fine gold to the poor and children’s faces grew rosier. They laughed and played games in the street.

1. **What happened after the snow came down? What happened to Swallow?**

**Ans:** After the snow came down, there was frost everywhere. Everybody went about in furs and the little boys wore caps and skated on ice. The poor little Swallow grew colder and colder but he would not leave the Prince. But at last he knew that he was going to die.

1. **Where did the bird go after he knew he was going to die? What misunderstanding did the Happy Prince have? Where was the bird actually going?**

**Ans:** The bird had just enough strength to fly up to the Prince’s shoulder and for the last time bade good bye weakly to the Prince. As the Prince was blind, he thought that the bird was finally going to Egypt. The bird was actually going to the House of Death that means he was going to die.

1. **What happened the next morning after the bird died?**

**Ans:** The next morning when the Mayor and his town councillors passed the column, the Mayor looked up at the statue and said how shabby the Happy Prince looks and that there was a dead bird at its feet.

1. **Which proclamation was issued? What was done to the statue?**

**Ans:** A proclamation that birds are not to be allowed to die there was issued. Later the statue of the Happy Prince was pulled down. It was melted in a furnace and a meeting was held to decide what was to be done with the metal.

1. **What was finally done to the statue and the bird?**

**Ans:** The overseerof the workmen at the foundry found it to be strange that the broken lead heart wouldn’t melt in the furnace. It was thrown on dustheap where the dead Swallow was also lying.

1. **Which were the two most precious things in the city? Why are they called so?**

**Ans:** The two most precious things in the city were the leaden heart and the dead bird. They are called so as they sacrificed their lives for the betterment of others.

1. **What is the moral of this story?**

**Ans:** Bringing happiness to others even at the cost of your own brings happiness to oneself.