



KOSHYS
INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES

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Language - Generic English

BA/BVA

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1. Don't Look into the Vanity Bag

1. What is the summary of the poem vanity bag?

Vanity Bag sets out to investigate the delicate chords that weave the woman's life, which is obviously a metaphor for the woman's thinking. No matter how often one tries to INVESTIGATE through tightly kept secrets, these are not simply divulged.

2. What does the vanity bag contain?

Vanity Kits contain things like earbuds, cotton, etc etc, it varies depending on hotel to hotel. Sometimes they are given on flights. Answer: A small case containing a mirror, pressed powder, and a powder puff; a compact.

3. What is the vanity a metaphor for?

the vanity of something: the lack of importance of something compared to other things that are much more important.

II. The Axe

1. Why is 'margosa tree' is given so much importance in the story?

Answer: We come to know in the story that 'margosa' tree is very dear to dear to Velan, the protagonist of the story. He plants this tree along with others but at the end of the story, this tree is destined to be felled. He requests the fellers to fell the tree after he has left. It is not simply 'margosa' tree but anything that is created. We do the creation with the hope that it will remain forever but the truth is that creation is associated with destruction also.

2. What message does R.K. Narayan convey through his story?

Answer: The message that R.K. Narayan wants to give the reader is that people have nothing to do with tender things like gardening or beauty of the garden or personal emotions of the people. Everything centers around earning money and people sacrifice such things for money without a second thought.

3. Draw a character sketch of Velan.

Answer: Velan, the protagonist of the story is a very self-respecting person. He leaves his village because his father slapped him before other people. He is very honest and dedicated to his job. He does his job with the same dedication even after the death of the gardener and when nobody was there to supervise his work. He is highly attached to his garden specially the 'margosa' tree which he raised with great care. He cannot bear thought of his garden specially margosa tree being cut before his eyes so he requests the workmen when he has left the place.

4. How did Velan turn the weed covered land into a real beautiful garden?

Velan's main business consisted in destroying all the vegetation he saw. Day after day he sat in the sun and tore up by hand the unwanted plants. And all the jungle gradually disappeared and the land stood as bare as a football field. He started growing up a beautiful garden there, whispered to the plants as he watered them, "Now look sharp, young fellows. He heaped manure, aired the roots, trimmed the branches, and watered the plants twice a day, and on the whole gave an impression of hustling Nature; and Nature seemed to respond. For he did present a good-sized garden to his master and his family.

5. Comment on the appearance of the palatial house - 'Kumar Baugh.'

The house proudly held up a dome. Balconies with intricately carved wood-work hung down from the sides of the house; smooth, rounded pillars, deep verandas, chequered marble floors, and spacious halls ranged one behind another, gave the house such an imposing appearance that Velan asked himself, "Can any mortal live in this? I thought such mansions existed only in Swarga Loka" When he saw the kitchen and the dining room he said, "Why, our whole village could be accommodated in this eating place alone!" The housebuilder's assistant told him, "We have built bigger houses, things costing nearly two lakhs. What is this house? It has hardly cost your master a lakh of rupees. It is just a little more than an ordinary house, that is all.

6. Why did Velan feel miserable when the tenants began living in the house?

Velan found life intolerable because they people had no regard for a garden. They walked on flower beds, children climbed the fruit trees and plucked unripe fruits, and they dug pits on the garden paths. Velan had no courage to protest. They ordered him about, sent him on errands, made him wash the cow, and lectured to him on how to grow a garden. He detested the whole business and often thought of throwing up his work and returning to his village. But the idea was unbearable: he couldn't live away from his plants. Fortune however, soon favoured him. The tenants left. The house was locked up for a few years. Occasionally one of the sons of the late owner came round and inspected the garden.

7. Describe the behaviour of the people who represented the company to which the house was sold.

The company representatives went round the garden and said, " We have to clear every bit of this jungle. All this will have to go." Some mighty person looked Velan up and down and said, "You are the gardener I suppose? We have not much use for a garden now. All the trees, except half a dozen on the very boundary of the property, will have to go. We can't afford to waste space. This flower garden . . . H'm it is ... old fashioned and crude, and apart from it the front portion of the site is too valuable to be wasted."

8. How did Velan react when he saw men cutting down the old Margosa tree? Presently

Velan came out of his hut with a bundle on his head. He looked at the tree-cutters and said, "You are very kind to an old man. You are very kind to wait." He looked at the margosa and wiped his eyes, "Brother, don't start cutting till I am really gone far, far away." The tree-cutters squatted on the ground and watched the old man go. Nearly half an hour later his voice came from a distance, half indistinctly, "Don't cut yet. I am still within hearing. Please wait till I am gone farther,"

write in brief the analysis of the story Axe.

The Axe is a story of a boy named Velan who left his home when he was 18 because his father slapped him in front of village people. He reaches Malgudi where a gardener puts him as his assistant. When he was a child, an astrologer had predicted about him that he would live in a three storeyed house but people made a fun of him. He assisted the old gardener in his idea of a big garden, it was a very big garden in acres of land and a big house too was being built. Finally a three storeyed house surrounded by a big garden was ready. In the meantime, gardener had suddenly fallen ill and he becomes the chief gardener. He enjoys his position and looks after the garden. He was happy and contented with his life now. The owner of the house was weak and leaned on the staff and his wife was an invalid. One day he came to know that the owner of the house had passed away. The sons were no good. They quarreled among themselves and began to live in another house. A tenant settled in the house but he had no regard for the garden and spoiled the plants but his fortune favoured him, the tenant leaves the home and the house is left abandoned. The sons came occasionally to check the house. They left the key of the house with him. It remained unoccupied for a very long time and began to be called a ghost house. He had become old by now. Since his hut was leaking, he began to live in the front verandah. Occasionally, he opened the house and swept it but since he had become weak, he left it altogether. One day a party comes and carefully examines the house and leaves. Very soon, one of the sons tells him to leave the house because the house was sold to a company and they will pull down the house and raze the garden. Velan had to retire to his old hut. The house began to be pulled down and started felling of the trees. One day he saw his beloved margosa tree being cut. He had planted this tree with his hands. He requested the workers not to cut the tree but they said it was company's order. Then he decides to leave the place and requests the workers to cut the trees when he has gone far away.

III. Our Teacher

1) Briefly describe the spat between Lakshmi and her friend on their way to school.

Lakshmi just sat there, crying, because she had lost all her balapa sticks. Her friend had not cheated. She lost them because she did not know how to play. Though her friend begged her to get up, but she kept wailing, "My sticks, my balapa sticks." Her friend tried to reason with her. But she had no sense of fair play at all. She only knew that the chalk pieces were hers. Fed up with her crying, gave back all the pieces her friend had won and tried to coax her into going with me. But she continued to stand there, asking for the chalk pieces. She would not listen when I told her Her friend had given all her pieces back. "You have some more in your pocket," she said. Those are mine," I protested, it was no use. Finally, her friend handed her all the pieces. She would not have come to school otherwise.

2) Contrast the characters of Gowri and Saraswathi.

Saraswathi was proud that there was nothing wrong with her nose and eyes, and she made fun of Gowri's squint. There was nothing wrong with my nose and eyes either, nor with Lakshmi's. Most people are like us. Yet Saraswathi was vain. It seems girls are like that. They think that a straight nose and proper eyes are all that they need. Their only desire is to please men. So, whatever is required to do that, is enough for everything else.

3) Comment on any two humorous situations in the story.

The turban had come undone. The Inspector was furious. Not one girl in the class had learnt her lessons. Teacher was afraid he would lose his job if the Inspector began to ask the girls any questions. Moreover, there was his wife, sitting in the classroom. What would happen if the Inspector noticed her presence? What answer would he give, if the Inspector pointed to her and asked who she was? Teacher's mind was in a turmoil. I cannot describe his agony. You can only imagine it.

4) Write a note on the village school teacher.

Teacher recite the Raghuvamsha and expound on philosophical matters. His heart was free from malice. Teacher had the heart of a child. Pure and guileless. He could not bear to see anyone suffering. That was why he often had no money for salt. There was no cunning whatsoever in him. Once he saw a cobra approaching a group of children, who were playing on the street. He knew the scriptures against killing a cobra but he ignored them. He knew that if it attacked him, he was sure to die. But he put his fears aside and killed it. Even as the people who had gathered around praised this brahmin's courage, he took out his snuff box and placed a big-sized pinch of snuff on the head of the cobra. You probably know that there is a belief that a snake-catcher puts a pinch of snuff in a snake's mouth when he catches it. The snuff makes the snake giddy and it falls senseless. Then he pulls out its fangs. Teacher had the same intention, perhaps.

IV. After twenty years.

1. What happened to the two friends after the leave?

After a year or two they lost track of each other. The West is a pretty big proposition, and Bob kept hustling around over it pretty lively. But he thinks that Jimmy will meet him here if he's alive, for he always was the truest, staunchest old chap in the world. He'll never forget.

2. What is the agreement between the two friends?

The two friends agreed that they would meet again exactly twenty years from that date and time, no matter what our conditions might be or from what distance we might have to come.

3. What is the content of the note?

The man from the West unfolded the little piece of paper handed him. His hand was steady when he began to read, but it trembled a little by the time he had finished. The note was rather short.

Bob: I was at the appointed place on time. When you struck the match to light your cigar I saw it was the face of the man wanted in Chicago. Somehow, I couldn't do it myself, so I went around and got a plain clothes man to do the job.

V. THREE GREAT HEARTS RESOLVE A PROBLEM

1. Why did the temple start offering ‘*mudal marayadai*’ to Kalam’s great-great grandfather?

The story went that on a certain festival day, the *vigraha*, or idol, would be taken out of the *sanctum sanctorum* and carried in a procession around the temple precincts. The temple has a number of tanks dotting it, and the idol was taken around the periphery of these tanks too. During one such procession, in a sequence of events no one remembers clearly any more, the *vigraha* fell into the tank. What a calamity that was! People stood rooted in horror, imagining the wrath of the gods falling upon them very soon. One person, however, did not lose his presence of mind—my great great grandfather. He leapt into the tank and retrieved the idol in no time. The gratitude of the priests and other temple officials was overwhelming. Yes, he was a Muslim. And yes, caste and religious purists would be horrified at the most sacred element of the temple being handled by someone not authorized to do so, but none of these feelings were articulated. Instead, my great great grandfather was treated like a hero. The temple also made a proclamation that from now on, at the festival, the temple would give *mudal marayadai* to him.

2. Describe the three great hearts of Rameswaram.

APJ’s father was the imam of the Rameswaram mosque. He was a deeply devout man with complete and utter faith in the Koran. He inculcated all the habits of a good Muslim in his children and indeed in his entire family. For the people of the town, he was a philosopher and guide—someone they could turn to with their problems, whether spiritual or otherwise.

The priest of the Ramanathaswamy Temple, Pakshi Lakshmana Sastry. Sastrygal was not only the priest but also a very learned man, well versed in Vedic knowledge. He was always dressed in the traditional attire of a temple priest, in his dhoti and angavastram. On his head he sported the mandatory tuft of the Brahmins, the *kudumi*. He was one of the kindest, the most gentlemen.

There was a third person who was as important in the spiritual life of our little community and that was Father Bodal, the priest of the lone church in the town. He was as involved in the welfare of the churchgoers of Rameswaram as my father and Sastrygal, and as concerned about the need for harmony and peace in Rameswaram. The memory of these three learned men is still etched in APJ’s mind.

3. How did the three men manage to maintain harmony in Rameswaram?

The three great figures of Rameswaram met every Friday evening, at around four-thirty, and discussed matters of religion and the happenings of the town. Sometimes people came to visit them at that time with specific issues to be resolved, or the three men kept each other apprised of anything that could potentially threaten the peace among the people and together, they tried to work out ways of clearing miscommunication or scotching rumours before they assumed dangerous proportions. The fundamental requirement for peace—effective communication among sections of the people—was always kept alive by these three

patriarchs. Their discussions ranged over a number of topics—the Freedom Movement that was taking the country in an entirely new direction, the attitude of the British government to the calls of the nationalists and how all this affected us, concerned them deeply. They quietly soothed the society around them, making it a harmonious whole where everyone could have an opportunity to speak freely to them.

4. What did the teacher do in class that hurt Kalam and his friend?

The teacher walked to the front of the class and the first people his eyes settled on were Ramanadhan and Kalam. The star pupils of the class, always eager to learn and participate, and sat right in front. His eyes lingered on Kalam's cap and on Ramanadhan's tuft. A look of annoyance, even disbelief, washed over his face. Without giving any reason, he demanded to know Kalam's name. When he told him, Kalam was peremptorily told to gather his things and move to the back row, for reasons known only to him.

5. Why did the three men summon the teacher? How did they resolve the situation?

The next Friday, when dusk was falling, the three great figures of Rameswharam met as usual. Father Bodal was present too. The teacher had been summoned, and presented himself. In the gathering darkness, as day turned into night, Kalam's father and Sastrygal told him in no uncertain terms that the scourge of religious divisions, which was disturbing India's fabric in other parts of the country, would not be allowed to grow here. They would not allow children to be segregated; they would certainly not tolerate anyone who made religion a divisive factor instead of being inclusive; and they would never let this infect the minds of the youngest members of the society. All of this was conveyed to our teacher with dignity and courtesy. Would he want to see himself as a man of knowledge to whom the future of the country could be entrusted, he was asked. Our teacher stood silent, thinking. Then finally he spoke. Yes, he acknowledged, he had tried to separate the two boys. And no, he had not bothered to think through the consequences of his actions when he did so. This was the way he had seen society being structured around him always, and he was just blindly following the rules. No one had ever taught him otherwise, or made him see the futility of such divisions. He promised to rectify the wrong he had done the very next day. And he did do so.