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PROSE

The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse

–William Saroyan



Two teenage boys, Aram and Mourad, belonging to the honest Garoghlanian family, are the focus of this story. Mourad steals a horse and rides it for a month before involving his cousin, Aram. Aram initially hesitates but assumes Mourad only borrowed the horse. The horse's owner, John Byro, catches them, but recognising the family's reputation, he examines the horse and believes it to be its twin. Without suspecting theft, the boys return the horse to John Byro's vineyard the next morning, leaving it in the barn.

Topic Notes

-  Characters in Brief
-  Chapter in Detail
-  Significant Morals
-  Dictionary





Characters in Brief

Aram (the narrator)– He is a 9 year old Armenian boy who belongs to the Garoghlanian tribe. He has an intense longing for horse riding.

Mourad– He is a 13 year old cousin of Aram. He has a way with animals and is believed to have inherited the family's "crazy streak."

Uncle Khosrove– He is the narrator's uncle who is considered to be a crazy man. He is well - known for his fiery temper and irritability.

John Byro– He is an Assyrian farmer whose horse had been stolen by Mourad. He is sad over the sudden missing of his horse a few weeks ago.



Chapter in Detail

Aram's Childhood Experience

Aram remembers an experience when he was 9 years old. At that time, the world seemed delightful and joyful to Aram. One day, Mourad, whom everybody considered crazy, came at four in the morning and woke up Aram by tapping on the window of his room. It was summer, with daybreak just around the corner. Aram jumped out of his bed and could not believe what he saw out of the window. Mourad was sitting on a beautiful white horse. He asked him to make it quick, if he wanted to ride the horse. Aram had always longed to ride a horse, but his family couldn't afford to buy one for him as they were poor.



Character's Mood

→ Happy; exhilarated

The Garoghlanian Family

The Garoghlanian family was poor and had no money. Although, the tribe was poverty-stricken, they were known for their honesty for eleven centuries. They had built up a reputation for being proud and honest. They would never even take advantage of anyone in the world.

Aram's Explanation About the White Horse

It was hard for Aram to believe that Mourad or anyone in his family could afford a horse. So, he asked Mourad if he had stolen the horse. Mourad replied if he wants a ride, he must jump out of the window. Aram was sure that the horse was stolen. To convince himself, Aram thought that stealing a horse for a ride was not the same as stealing money as they both were crazy about riding a horse. It wouldn't be called stealing until they offered to sell the horse which they would never do.



Character's Mood

→ Confident

Example 1. Extract Based:

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

This was the wonderful part. In the second place, we were poor. This was the part that wouldn't permit

me to believe what I saw. We were poor. We had no money. Our whole tribe was poverty-stricken. Every branch of the Garoghlanian family was living in the most amazing and comical poverty in the world. Nobody could understand where we ever got money enough to keep us with food in our bellies, not even the old men of the family.

(A) "This was the wonderful part."

Here, 'this' refers to:

- (a) Aram's cousin sneaking in his house.
- (b) Aram's desire to own a horse getting fulfilled.
- (c) Aram's cousin, Mourad with a horse.
- (d) Aram's desire to ride a horse getting fulfilled.

(B) 'Nobody could understand where we ever got money enough to keep us with food in our belly, not even the old men of the family.'

In the above line, what is indicated about the profession of the members of the tribe?

(C) Fill in the blank with an appropriate answer. When the narrator of the given lines says, that 'Garoghlanian family was living in the most amazing and comical poverty in the world', his tone is

(D) Why couldn't the narrator believe what he had seen?

(E) Who is the speaker of the above lines?

Ans. (A) (d) Aram's desire to ride a horse getting fulfilled.

Explanation: In the story, 'The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse', Aram was really fond of horses but his family could not afford one as they were poor. One morning, Aram was awakened by his elder cousin, Mourad, who is known for his crazy nature. He was sitting on a white horse and invited Aram for a ride. Aram's earliest memory was of horses and he always wanted to ride one. This was the wonderful part that he was actually going to ride a horse for real. They fulfilled their desire by riding the horse in the little town. Hence, (d) is correct.

- (B) Aram belonged to the Garoghlanian family. They were poor and can hardly earn money for food.

Aram wanted to convey the abject poverty in which the people of his tribe had been living. Even the older members of the clan could not fully explain how they were able to find enough food to feed themselves and stay alive.

- (C) ironic

Explanation: The tone is 'ironic' in the given statement. The Garoghlanians were honest, but very poor and poverty-stricken; still, they never resorted to any unfair deeds to earn money or food.

Their neighbors were amazed at how they managed with their living without anybody caring for them or without any resources. The lines are an ironical description about their struggle to cope up with their poverty.

- (D) The narrator saw his cousin Mourad sitting on a beautiful white horse. It was unbelievable, for they belonged to poor families, and buying such a beautiful horse was beyond their means.

- (E) The speaker of the above lines is Aram, a nine-year-old boy who belonged to the Garoghlanian tribe.

Aram Could Not Resist the Offer

Aram got ready and jumped down to his yard from his room's window. He lived at the edge of the town on Walnut Avenue, there was a vast countryside full of orchards, vineyards, and irrigation ditches nearby. They were in Olive Avenue within three minutes and were having a wonderful time riding the horse. Mourad started singing out of excitement and enjoyment.



Character's Mood

↪ *Happy, content*

The Family's Crazy Streak

Mourad was considered one natural descendant of the crazy streak in their tribe. Before Mourad, Uncle Khosrove was considered as crazy in the family. He was a huge man with a powerful head of black hair and the largest moustache in the San Joaquin Valley. He had an energetic temper and was sometimes impatient which was irritating. He used to make anyone stop talking by roaring and say, 'It is no harm, pay no attention to it'. Mourad was considered to be a natural descendant of this man but he was not his son. His father was Zorab, who was a practical person.

Aram Rode the Horse Alone

After enjoying the horse ride together, Mourad wanted to ride the horse alone. He kicked his heels in the horse and it started running. After five minutes, the ride stopped. Now, Aram also wanted to ride the horse alone. Mourad got off and he tried to guide Aram by saying that he should try to kick into his muscles.

He kicked into the muscles of the horse, and it began running. Instead of running across the field, the horse started going towards the road that leads to the vineyard of Dikran Halabian. It began to leap over vines and Aram fell down. Mourad came running as he was worried about the horse. He wanted to get hold of the horse and take it back before anyone could see. Both of them searched for the horse in different directions.

Example 2. Mourad was an absolute role model for Aram. Illustrate with examples from the story.
[Diksha]

Ans. Aram had a viewpoint that his cousin, Mourad was quite adventurous and had a crazy streak in him. He was full of life and daring. Aram was amazed when he saw Mourad skillfully riding the horse. He couldn't wait for his turn to ride. Aram also admired Mourad's quality to wriggle out of tough situations. He never worried about the consequences and enjoyed each moment of his life.

The Boys Decided to Hide the Horse

It was morning and Mourad was thinking either to take the horse back or hide it until the next morning. Aram concluded that Mourad was going to hide it. Mourad told him about a place he knew which would be perfect as a hidden spot. It appeared to him that Mourad had been taking the horse for morning rides for quite some time and he showed up this morning to ask him to ride along because he knew he was longing to ride one.

He asked Mourad if he had stolen the horse, but Mourad avoided answering the question.

He told Aram that if anyone asked him, he should say that they started riding the horse that very morning. They took the horse to the barn of a deserted vineyard owned by a farmer named Fetvajian and hid it there.

John Byro's Sadness over his Missing Horse

In the afternoon, uncle Khosrove came to Aram's house for coffee and cigarettes. Then another visitor arrived, a farmer named John Byro. He told everyone about his missing white horse which was stolen last month and that he was still not able to find it. He also explained that his carriage was of no use without his horse and he had to walk ten miles to reach there.





Character's Mood

↪ Dejected

Aram Informed Mourad About John Byro

Aram went to Mourad and informed him about John Byro's visit. He further asked him not to return the horse until he learns to ride it. Mourad replied that it would take him a year to learn and they could not keep a horse for one year, as it would be called stealing.

Finally, they decided to return it in six months to its real owner. Every morning for two weeks, they rode the horse. Every time the horse threw Aram away, and ran away. Aram kept his hope alive and hoped to ride the horse the way Mourad did. One morning, when they were on their way to the vineyard to hide the horse again, they came across John Byro. He inquired about the name of the horse after observing it carefully. Mourad said that its name is 'My Heart'. John Byro kept observing the horse very keenly.

The Boys Decided to Return the Horse

The farmer looked into the horse's mouth. After looking from tooth to tooth, he said that he could swear that the horse was his, if he didn't know their parents and the reputation of their family for honesty. He further said that the horse was a twin of his horse.

The next morning, the boys took the horse to John Byro's vineyard and left it in his barn. The dogs followed them silently. Aram thought they would bark. Mourad said that they would not bark at them since he had a way with dogs. That same afternoon, John Byro visited Aram's house. He was very happy and thanked God as his horse had returned. His horse



Character's Mood

↪ Elated

Example 3. Did the boys return the horse because they were conscience-stricken or because they were afraid? [NCERT]

Ans. In the story, the two cousins, Aram and Mourad, were characterized as fearless individuals. Mourad, in order to fulfil his desire to ride a horse, stole a horse from John Byro's farm. At first, they did not think that they were doing anything wrong. According to Aram, their act could not be considered stealing until they decided to sell it. They simply wanted to enjoy the horse for a few months. However, when one day John Byro saw the boys with a horse, he was shocked. After careful evaluation, he recognized that it was his horse but refused to believe that the two cousins had stolen it as the members of their tribe were known for their honesty. Seeing Byro's expression, their consciences pricked, and they decided to return the horse. They didn't want to bring shame to their family, which is known for its good reputation.

Example 4. What consideration did the boys have in making a choice of the place to hide the stolen horse? [Delhi Gov. QB 2022]

Ans. Mourad knew a best place to hide the horse. Both Aram and Mourad decided to hide the horse in a barn of a deserted vineyard which at one time, belonged to a farmer named Fetvajian.



Significant Morals

- (1) Compassion in the midst of conflict allows for both growth and fair compromise.
- (2) Man should be known for the virtues of honesty, trust, and ownership of one's mistake.
- (3) Despite social or economic challenges, a truth that is absolute should be practised in all conditions.
- (4) The lure of desire in the face of poverty and bonds of tradition affect people the most.
- (5) The conflict and triumph are one of the highlights of the story.
- (6) We should be rising above personal desire to make a mature decision.
- (7) The basic morality is that one should never steal.



Dictionary

| Word | Meaning | Synonym | Antonym |
|--------------|-------------------------|----------|----------|
| Magnificence | greatness, excellence | grandeur | dullness |
| Whispered | to speak in a low voice | murmur | shout |



| | | | |
|-------------------|--|-----------------|--------------|
| <i>Suspicious</i> | feeling that somebody has done something wrong | doubtful | to believe |
| <i>Imaginable</i> | which could be thought of | conceivable | unimaginable |
| <i>Fury</i> | very great anger | rage | calm |
| <i>Vagrant</i> | not fixed | unsettled | fixed |
| <i>Capricious</i> | impulsive, unpredictable behaviour | erratic | stable |
| <i>Irritable</i> | easily annoyed | short tempered | easy going |
| <i>Furious</i> | very angry | annoyed | peaceful |
| <i>Edge</i> | border or boundary | corner | middle |
| <i>Comical</i> | funny | light - hearted | serious |

OBJECTIVE Type Questions

[1 mark]

1. When did the Armenian boys return the horse?

- (a) After 6 months
- (b) After they met John Byro
- (c) After a year
- (d) After Aram learned to ride it

Ans. (b) After they met John Byro

Explanation: The boys returned the horse after they ran into John Byro. When John Byro met the boys, the stolen horse was with them. John Byro recognized his horse but refused to believe that Mourad and Aram had stolen it as their family were famous for their honesty. This was the juncture when the conscience stricken boys decided to return the horse. Hence, (b) is correct.

2. The Garoghlanian family was known for its:

- (a) wealth
- (b) style
- (c) honesty
- (d) house

Ans. (c) honesty

Explanation: The Garoghlanian family though poor, were famous for their honesty for eleven centuries. They were proud of their honesty and trust - worthy nature. They believed in right and wrong. None of them would take advantage of anybody in the world. They would not steal. No member of the Garoghlanian family could ever be a thief. Hence, (c) is correct.

3. Uncle Khosrove was:

- (a) irritable
- (b) impatient
- (c) short-tempered
- (d) all of these

Ans. (d) all of these

Explanation: Uncle Khosrove is the uncle of the protagonist, Aram. He is a big man with

a loud voice. He is well - known for his bad temper. He is highly impatient and sets aside any problem without even listening to the details. When his son reported that their house was on fire, he shouted the same: 'It's no harm, pay no attention to it'. Hence, (d) is correct.

4. Mourad had been hiding the horse:

- (a) in a stable.
- (b) at a secret place.
- (c) in the barn of a vineyard.
- (d) behind Aram's house.

Ans. (c) in the barn of a vineyard

Explanation: Mourad had been hiding the horse in the barn of a deserted vineyard which was owned by a farmer named Fetvajian. Hence, (c) is correct.

5. What sort of understanding did Mourad mention with the horse?

- (a) Complicated
- (b) Mature
- (c) Sympathetic
- (d) Clear and honest

Ans: (d) Clear and honest

Explanation: Mourad had a way with animals. He used to carefully learn about their behaviour and thus, was able to bring about an understanding with them which was clear and honest. This is why the horse remained calm around him. Hence, (d) is correct.

6. Aram thought that stealing a horse for a ride was not stealing because:

- (a) he didn't care about his family's reputation.

- (b) it was not the same as stealing money.
- (c) Mourad had stolen it.
- (d) he didn't like horses. [Diksha]

Ans. (b) it was not the same as stealing money.

Explanation: When Mourad came outside Aram's window one morning, Aram was extremely shocked. He knew that Mourad had stolen the horse but he justified Mourad's action by saying that stealing a horse is not the same as stealing money unless, they decide to sell it.

7. John Byro learned to speak Armenian out of:

- (a) necessity (b) fun
- (c) eagerness (d) loneliness

[Delhi Gov. QB 2022]

Ans. (d) loneliness

Explanation: John Byro had learned to speak Armenian Language out of loneliness so that he could talk to his neighbours.

Extract Based Questions

8. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

Before him was our uncle Khosrove, an enormous man with a powerful head of black hair and the largest moustache in the San Joaquin Valley 2, a man so furious in temper, so irritable, so impatient that he stopped anyone from talking by roaring, It is no harm; pay no attention to it. That was all, no matter what anybody happened to be talking about. Once, it was his own son, Arak, running eight blocks to the barber's shop where his father was having his moustache trimmed to tell him their house was on fire.

(A) What according to you, is the writer's purpose in the following extract?

(B) In the extract, the word 'roaring' means

(C) Choose the correct option with reference to the two statements given below:

Statement 1: The reference to Khosrove is to highlight Mourad's personality.

Statement 2: Mourad inherited his crazy and carefree nature from uncle Khosrove.

Choose the correct option:

- (a) Statement 1 is true, but statement 2 is false.
- (b) Statement 1 is false, but statement 2 is true.
- (c) Both statement 1, and 2 cannot be inferred.

(d) Both statement 1, and 2 can be inferred

(D) Which traits of the tribe are highlighted in the story 'The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse'?

Ans. (A) The author wants to highlight the crazy streak that runs in the family. Mourad was considered as natural descendant of uncle Khosrove as far as the crazy streak was concerned. Mourad's father, Zorab, was practical in nature, but Mourad was his son only in flesh; in spirit, he was similar to Uncle Khosrove.

(B) Speaking loudly in an angry tone.

Explanation: In the extract, the word 'roaring' means that the person is speaking loudly in an angry tone. Uncle Khosrove had an energetic temper and was highly impatient by nature. He used to make anyone stop talking by roaring and would say, 'it is no harm, pay no attention to it'

(C) (d) Both statement 1 and 2 can be inferred

Explanation: Mourad was considered the natural descendant of uncle Khosrove as far as the crazy streak was concerned. He was not Khosrove's son but was considered his descendant in terms of spirit and insanity. The two were considered as the unusual members of the family who didn't care about anything that was happening around them. He was quite crazy about horses. Everyone thought that his behavior was an inheritance from his uncle Khosrove because his father, Zorab, was a practical human. Hence, (d) is correct.

(D) Mourad and Aram belonged to the Garoghlanian tribe. The Garoghlanians were extremely poor, but they were known for honesty for centuries. They were proud of their family first, honesty next, and believed in doing the right deeds. No one in their tribe would ever steal. Everyone trusted them.

9. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

A lovely name, John Byro said, for a lovely horse. I could swear it is the horse that was stolen from me many weeks ago. May I look into his mouth? Of course, Mourad said. The farmer looked into the mouth of the horse. Tooth for tooth, he said. I would swear it is my horse if I didn't know your parents. The fame of your family for honesty is well known to me. Yet the horse is the twin of my horse. A suspicious man would believe his eyes instead of his heart. Good day, my young friends.

- (A) What is the name of the horse?
 (a) Beauty (b) My Heart
 (c) Lovely (d) White Heart
- (B) Why did the horse's owner refuse to believe that the two boys had stolen his horse?
- (C) After reading the extract, one can infer that the boys return the horse because
- (D) John Byro said 'A suspicious man would believe his eyes instead of his heart'. what does this comment tell about his personality?

Ans. (A) (b) My Heart

Explanation: When Byro asked Mourad the name of the horse, he said, 'My Heart' in Armenian language. Byro complimented that it was a lovely name for a lovely horse. Hence, (b) is correct.

- (B) After looking from tooth to tooth, John Byro knew that it was his horse. However, he refused to believe that Mourad and Aram had stolen the horse because their family was known for their honesty and integrity.
- (C) of their conscience.

Explanation: After reading the extract, one can infer that the boys returned the horse not because they were afraid but because their conscience pricked them after seeing the expressions of John Byro.

- (D) John Byro said, "A suspicious man would believe his eyes instead of his heart. One can conclude that John Byro was a person with pure and kind heart. He was very loyal and had complete trust on the Garoghlanian tribe.

SHORT ANSWER Type Questions (SA)

[2 marks]

Answer the following questions in about 40 - 50 words:

- 10. Why was it troublesome for Aram to believe the sight of his cousin Mourad with the attractive white horse? [Diksha]**

Ans. When Aram saw Mourad outside his window with an attractive white horse, he was astonished. The two boys belonged to Garoghlanian family. Their family was known for being honest at all times. Aram knew that Mourad could not have bought the horse as their family was poor. He couldn't expect him to steal a horse.

- 11. How did Aram conclude that Mourad had been riding the horse for quite a while? [Delhi Gov. SQP 2022]**

Ans. After returning from an enjoyable ride, Aram asked Mourad what they were planning to do with the horse. Mourad confidently replied that he knew a place where they can hide the horse. This made Aram conclude that Mourad had been riding the horse for quite a while.

- 12. Who were Aram and Mourad?**

Ans. Aram and Mourad were two Armenian boys. They were cousins. Aram was nine years old while Mourad was thirteen years. They belonged to the Garoghlanian tribe which was known for their honesty. Both of them had a strong desire to ride a horse but due to poverty, they couldn't afford one.

- 13. Who came to the narrator's house early morning? Why had he come there?**

Ans. One summer, the narrator's cousin, Mourad came to his house at four in the morning and woke him up by tapping on the window of his room. He had come there with a beautiful white horse to invite Aram for a horse ride.

- 14. What did the narrator tell us about the 'good old days'? Why did he remember those days?**

Ans. The narrator said that in the 'good old days', the world was full of every imaginable kind of magnificence. Life then seemed charming and was like a delightful and mysterious dream. The narrator wants to tell us that when we were kids, we did not have any worries. However, we have to face the harsh realities of life as we mature.

- 15. What did the narrator think when he saw Mourad with a beautiful white horse?**

Ans. When the narrator's cousin, Mourad, came to his house early morning, he couldn't believe his eyes. He saw Mourad riding a beautiful white horse. He rubbed his eyes to make sure that he wasn't dreaming. The narrator knew that his cousin couldn't have bought the horse. He was sure that Mourad must have stolen it.

- 16. Mourad was considered the natural descendant of Uncle Khosrove. Explain.**

Ans. According to Aram, every family has a crazy streak in it and in their family, Mourad was the

one. Mourad resembled his uncle Khosrove in many ways and that made him the natural descendant of Uncle Khosrove who also had a crazy element in him. He didn't care about anything around him and was impatient most of the times.

17. What does the narrator tell us about his tribe?

Ans. The narrator says that he belongs to an Armenian tribe known as Garoghlanian. They were poverty - stricken and had no money. Nobody could understand where they ever got money to provide food and other necessities for themselves. The Gargoghlanian was famous for its honesty and integrity for the last eleven centuries. They also knew how to differentiate between right and wrong. None of the member of the tribe would ever take anyone of anybody in the world.

18. How did Aram justify that his cousin didn't steal the horse?

Ans. When the narrator saw Mourad with the white horse, he was shocked. His mind was full of conflicting thoughts. He knew that Mourad had stolen the horse. He could not have possibly bought the horse, as they were poor. However, when Mourad invited him for a horse ride, he perceived the situation differently. He thought that stealing a horse for a ride was not the same thing as stealing something such a money. He thought that if someone was crazy about horses like they were, then it was not stealing. It would be considered theft only if they tried to sell the horse, which they would never do.

19. What happened when Aram rode the horse alone?

Ans. Aram was quite scared before riding the horse. He leaped on its back but the horse did not move at all. When he kicked the horse in its muscle, the horse reared and created a noisy sound. It suddenly began to run and Aram didn't know what do to. Instead of going towards the irrigation ditch, the horse ran down the road to the vineyard. It leaped over seven vines and soon, Aram fell off from the horse.

20. Who was uncle Khosrove?

Ans. Uncle Khosrove was a huge man with a powerful head of black hair and the largest moustache in the whole valley. He was a crazy person with an impatient and irritable nature. He was considered to be the true inheritor of the crazy streak of the Garoghlanian tribe. If he did not like anything, he would roar, 'It is no harm; pay no attention to it'.

21. How did uncle Khosrove react when his son told him that their house was on fire?

Ans. When Khosrove's son, Arak, informed him that their house was on fire, he was having his moustache trimmed. He became irritated and roared, 'It is no harm, pay no attention to it.'

22. Who was John Byro? Why did the narrator run to Mourad's house after Byro visited his house?

Ans. John Byro was a farmer whose horse had been stolen by Mourad. Aram ran to Mourad's house soon after Byro visited his house because he had come to know that Mourad had stolen the horse. Aram didn't want him to return the horse until he had learned riding the horse.

23. Though John Byro saw the boys with his stolen horse, he did not suspect them. Elaborate.

Ans. When John Byro saw the boys with his horse, he became very surprised. He started inspecting the horse and counted its teeth. The horse was undoubtedly his. Even then, he did not suspect that the boys could have committed the theft. Such was the reputation of their tribe. No one could ever think that anyone from the Gargholanian tribe could commit theft as they were famous for their honesty for the last eleven centuries.

24. What did the boys do with the stolen horse?

Ans. John Byro, the owner of the horse had already seen the boys with his horse. Though, he did not suspect them, the boys became alarmed. They left the horse at his farm.

25. Why was Aram surprised when he saw Mourad in the morning?

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Ans. Aram was surprised to see Mourad one summer morning because he was standing outside his window with a beautiful white horse. He knew that he would not have bought the horse as they were poor. He was sure that Mourad must have stolen the horse.

26. Why was John Byro happy in the end?

Ans. John Byro was a happy man in the end because his horse had returned after days of continuous searching. His horse was now much more stronger and better - tempered. Also, without the horse, his carriage was of no use and it troubled him a lot before.

27. Why was John Byro sad?

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Ans. John Byro was sad because his horse was stolen, and now he had to go on foot for long distances as his carriage was useless without a horse.