

Chapter – 7

Chandni

Comprehension Check

Q1. Why did Abbu Khan's goats want to run away? What happened to them in the hills?

Answer. Abbu Khan's goats would run away because they hated being tied with strings and they loved their freedom. In the hills, they would be attacked and killed by an old wolf.

Q2. Abbu Khan said, "No more goats in my house ever again. "Then he changed his mind. Why?

Answer. He changed his mind because he was terribly lonely and could not do without his pets.

Q3. Why did he buy a young goat?

Answer. He bought a young goat as he thought it would stay with him much longer. It would begin to love him as well as the food he would give her everyday, and would never want to go to the hills.

Q4. Why did Chandni hate the rope round her neck?

Answer. Chandni hated the rope around her neck as it would not let her go any further. She wanted to run across the green fields towards the hills. However, the rope around her neck stopped her from doing so. It restricted her freedom.

Q5. "Now Abbu Khan understood Chandni's problem..." What was Chandni's problem?

Answer. Chandni wanted her freedom. She wished to go to the hills. She felt that if she stayed on in Abbu Khan's compound, she would die.

Q6. Abbu Khan pushed Chandni into a small hut. This shows that he

(i) was cruel.

(ii) loved her and wanted to save her life.

(iii) was selfish

Answer. This shows that he loved her and wanted to save her life.

Q7. Why did Chandni refuse to join the group of wild goats?

Answer. Chandni refused to join the group of wild goats because she wanted to enjoy her new freedom all by herself.

Q8. Chandni fought the wolf because she

(i) was stronger than the wolf.

(ii) hated the wolf.

(iii) had to retain her freedom at all costs.

Answer. Chandni fought the wolf because she had to retain her freedom at all costs.

Exercises

Q1. Why did the wise old bird say, “Chandni is the winner”?

Answer. The wise old bird said that Chandni was the winner because Chandni had the courage to face the wolf, and had fought on till the end. She could have run away at the slightest hint of the presence of the wolf. However, she decided to stay there and stood firm on her legs. According to the author, she looked like a brave soldier ready to fight a treacherous enemy. She put up a good fight, which went on all through the night. Even though she died at the end, she was truly the winner.

Q2. “Death in an open field is better than life in a small hut,” Chandni said to herself. Was it the right decision? Give reasons for your answer.

Answer. It was the right decision. Freedom involves taking a lot of risks. It requires one to be brave and to be ready to face any difficulty, any circumstance. On detecting the wolf, Chandni could have gone back to Abbu Khan. However, for her, freedom was more valuable than life. She decided to fight the wolf to retain her freedom, telling herself that success or failure was a matter of chance, and that one must put up a good fight. She fought with all her strength, and even though she did not win the fight, she was the true winner. If she had remained with Abbu Khan, she would have always been tied up. There, she might have lived longer, but would have ultimately died in bondage.

Q3. Freedom is life. Discuss this with reference to ‘Chandni’ and ‘I Want Something in a Cage’.

Answer. Freedom is life. Living in bondage is as good as being dead. Everyone craves for his/her freedom—humans, birds and animals. The value of freedom is the theme of the stories ‘I Want Something in a Cage’ and ‘Chandni’. In the former, the man, who had been a prisoner for ten years, freed the doves because he could identify with the birds in the cage and their desire to fly. In the latter, the goats left Abbu Khan one by one because their desire to roam freely in the hills was stronger than their fear of the wolf that lived in those hills. Chandni’s decision to fight the wolf instead of going back to the safety of Abbu Khan’s compound showed that she considered freedom to be invaluable. For her death in an open field was far better than life in a small hut. This story shows that freedom requires one to be brave, and to be ready to face any difficulty, any circumstance. Even if the free life is short lived, it is better than a long life in captivity.