

Chapter 3 : The Enemy

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Read and Find Out

1. Who was Dr Sadao? Where was his house?

Answer

Dr Sadao Hoki was an eminent Japanese surgeon and scientist. He had spent eight valuable years of his youth in America to learn all that could be learnt of surgery and medicine there. He was perfecting a discovery which would render wounds entirely clean. Dr Sadao's house was built on rocks well above a narrow beach that was outlined with bent pines. It was on a spot of the Japanese coast.

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1. Will Dr Sadao be arrested on the charge of harbouring an enemy?

Answer

Dr Sadao knew that they would be arrested if they sheltered a white man in their house. The wounded man was a prisoner of war who had escaped with a bullet on his back. Since Japan was at war with America, harbouring an enemy meant being a traitor to Japan. Dr Sadao could be arrested if anyone complained against him and accused him of harbouring an enemy.

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1. Will Hana help the wounded man and wash him herself?

Answer

The wounded American was in a very bad state and needed to be washed before being operated on. Hana did not want Dr Sadao to clean the dirty and unconscious prisoner, and so asked their servant, Yumi, to do so. However, Yumi defied her master's order and opted out of it. As a result, Hana had no other option but to wash him herself. Although this act was impulsive and dipped in a sense of superiority over her servant, Yumi, she did it with sincerity.

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1. What will Dr Sadao and his wife do with the man?

Answer

Dr Sadao and Hana found an unconscious wounded war prisoner who posed a huge threat to their own safety. However, Dr Sadao decided to go with his gut feeling and operate on him. He saved his life even though it was for the time being. Though half heartedly, both took good care of the patient's health and other needs. Hana even washed and fed him with her own hands. Although they knew that they would have to hand him over to the army sooner or later, they did their best to help the injured man.

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1. Will Dr Sadao be arrested on the charge of harbouring an enemy?

Answer

Dr Sadao, on humanitarian grounds as well as professional grounds, tended a wounded war prisoner which was officially a serious crime. However, he did not get punished for this offence as it was never revealed to anyone, except his wife, loyal but timid servants, and a General who was too self-obsessed with his own treatment that he would never let the doctor leave him.

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1. What will Dr Sadao do to get rid of the man?

Answer

With the injured American's health gradually improving, Dr Sadao and Hana were in a fix as to what should be done with him. Their loyal servants had left them and keeping him in their house could pose a threat to their lives. As Hana's impatience and distress grew, Dr Sadao revealed the matter to the General who decided to send assassins to kill the young American in his sleep. Keen on getting rid of the escaped war prisoner, Dr Sadao agreed. However, the matter could not be resolved because the assassins never came.

Dr Sadao then planned another way to get rid of him which was overpowered with sympathy and a distant gratitude towards the people he had been linked to in America. He decided to save his patient one more time. He secretly sent him to an isolated island with food, bottled water, clothes, blanket and his own flashlight on a boat from where he boarded a Korean ship to freedom and safety.

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Reading with Insight

1. There are moments in life when we have to make hard choices between our roles as private individuals and as citizens with a sense of national loyalty. Discuss with reference to the story you have just read.

Answer

Dr. Sadao encounters with the dilemma-to live as private individual whose moral and ethical responsibility is to save the soldier & second is a Japanese to make the soldier arrest.

So as a doctor and as an individual his first job is to save man-takes ethical responsibility, he risks his life, fame and social status- takes him to his house and makes efforts to save him.

But his other side-sense of patriotism as well as nationalism also involves a report to police, takes the general in confidence and plans to make him killed but later on again helps the soldier in escaping off. Thus Dr. Sadao personality is displayed.

2. Dr Sadao was compelled by duty as a doctor to help the enemy soldier. What made Hana, his wife, sympathetic to him in the face of open defiance from the domestic staff?

Answer

Dr Sadao and Hana knew that their decision to save the enemy soldier would be questioned by everyone. However, they firmly followed their sense of duty. For Dr Sadao this sense of duty came from the profession he was in; but for Hana, the duty was purely humanitarian. From bearing the unrest in her domestic staff to being forced to do all the chores of house-hold herself, she does all with grace and dignity. Hana's loving, considerate and sympathetic nature shines out. She washed and fed the soldier although it was not her job. Her care helped recuperate the soldier fast. It is also apparent from the story that she respected her husband, and as a sense of duty towards him, did the needful. This explains why she, even after feeling sick, comes back to the room and readily does whatever is told by her husband during the operation.

3. How would you explain the reluctance of the soldier to leave the shelter of the doctor's home even when he knew he couldn't stay there without risk to the doctor and himself ?

Answer

When the American war prisoner came to consciousness and realized that he was saved by a Japanese family, he feared that he will be soon handed over to the army. However, as he noticed the amount of concern and care given to him by the family, he understood that he was in safe hands. He knew that although he was a threat to the doctor's family, his own life might be saved there. Burdened with gratitude towards the family, he ultimately decides to comply with what the doctor planned for him - the escape.

4. What explains the attitude of the General in the matter of the enemy soldier? Was it human consideration, lack of national loyalty, dereliction of duty or simply self absorption?

Answer

The General was totally governed by self absorption. He was a patient of Dr Sadao and did not trust anyone except him when it came to his health. He could not take the risk of living unprotected if the doctor was executed for treachery. He had personal assassins whom he promised to use for killing the injured soldier. But ironically, he 'forgot' his promise to help the doctor. Human consideration was not his cup of tea.

5. While hatred against a member of the enemy race is justifiable, especially during war time, what makes a human being rise above narrow prejudices?

Answer

News of war is fast becoming a way of life. The moment one picks up a newspaper, one is bombarded with news of wars between different

countries, directly or indirectly. It is obvious that the countries at war are enemies and hatred is a part of this enmity. However the success of humanity comes when we rise above this enmity and show our love towards the civilization as a whole. Dr Sadao did the same. He did whatever he could to save the life of a man whom he knew was a war prisoner. The instant he saw the injured man, he was filled with concern. Ignoring the fact that he was the enemy of his country and must have killed so many Japanese and may kill even more, if alive, he saved him.

6. Do you think the doctor's final solution to the problem was the best possible one in the circumstances?

Answer

The doctor tried his best to save the injured soldier as a part of his duty. But the ultimate question was what to do next. It cannot be said that he betrayed his country as he told the truth to the General. However when he noticed that the soldier was to be killed not for the benefit of the country but only to save the doctor's life, he decided to help him flee. In such a situation, the doctor's final solution to the problem was the best possible one.

7. Does the story remind you of 'Birth' by A. J. Cronin that you read in Snapshots last year? What are the similarities?

Answer

The story definitely reminds one of "Birth" by A. J. Cronin. There is a striking similarity between both the stories. Both revolve around doctors who try their level best to save the lives of nearly dead human beings. In

the story 'Birth', Dr Andrew saves the life of an almost still born baby boy with lot of effort, while 'The Enemy' deals with the story of Dr Sadao who saves an American soldier from the enemy troops during the times of war. Both the stories deal with humanity, love, affection, selflessness and a strong sense of duty.

8. Is there any film you have seen or novel you have read with a similar theme?

Answer

The story 'The Enemy' is built on the pillars of selflessness, sense of duty, kindness and generosity. There have been many films and novels based on this theme. One such example is the film 'My Name is Khan', where the protagonist, with a sense of duty and generosity, goes to the flooded Georgia to save the lives of his friends, Mama Jenny, Joel and other natives. He selflessly works to save the town without thinking twice about the possible dangers to his own life.