NCERT Solutions for Class 12 English Vistas Chapter 4

Question 1.
There are moments in life when we have to make hard choices between our roles as private individuals and citizens with a sense of national loyalty. Discuss with reference to the story you have just read.
Answer:
A conflict of interest arises in a situation when someone in a position of trust, such as a doctor, has competing interests. Such competing interests can make it difficult to fulfil his or her duties impartially. A conflict of interest can create a situation of conflict, like in the story when a white American soldier falls into the hands of a Japanese physician, in enemy territory during the Second World War. The Japanese physician, Sadao, disliked the whites, and struggled with issues of loyalty, duty, and racism. As a Japanese national, it was his duty to hand over the escaped prisoner to the police, while as a doctor, it was his duty to save his life.

Sadao risked his safety and saved an enemy. He feared the consequences of harbouring an enemy. Subconsciously, he overcame his dislike for Americans and addressed the soldier as “my friend”. He, then, helped the soldier escape.

The character of Sadao can be aligned to that of a hero for his qualities of bravery, helpfulness, and professional competence. He, like a real hero, stood up for what he believed and cared less for repercussions. One definitely admires him for saving the soldier’s life like a true hero.

Question 2.
Dr Sadao was compelled by his 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:
When Sadao and Hana saw the prisoner of war, they were confronted with a dilemma, but the doctor in Sadao knew he had to save him. Hana, too, knew that if they left the American there, he would certainly die. She could not put him back in the sea. In the bedroom, Hana covered him with a flowered silk quilt and also washed him when Yumi refused. She also helped Sadao operate on the American. She was afraid lest the servants report them, yet she had the courage to assist her husband in saving the American’s life. When the soldier regained consciousness, he w as terrified, but Hana reassured him.

Hana’s pride and self-respect held her back even when her servants deserted her. The servants felt, that their master’s stay in America had tempered his attitude towards the Americans. Though Hana comes across as patriotic, advising her husband to give up

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the prisoner, her sympathy and humanity towards the wounded ‘enemy’ raises her beyond petty parochialism.

Question 3.
How would you explain the reluctance of the solider to leave the shelter of the doctor’s home even when he couldn’t stay there without risk to the doctor and to himself?
Answer:
As the American, Tom, recovered from his wound, he was weak and trusted Sadao to save his life. Though Sadao does not gracefully accept the gratitude the wounded soldier offered him, he was attentive as a doctor and eager for his patient to recover. However, Sadao was also concerned for his safety, and asked Tom to leave at his earliest. Though Sadao was momentarily tempted by the General’s offer to arrange for the prisoner to be secretly assassinated, the doctor showed unrest and finally arranged for the prisoner to escape.

Tom understood that he posed a risk to the doctor’s family and his own self, but he was reluctant to leave. He felt safe at the doctor’s and admitted that he was the finest Japanese he came across. Fear of arrest and death led him to seek shelter with Sadao and his family. In this story, Tom bonds with the Japanese family as fellow humans, who have looked after him, and looked up to them as his saviour. The mutual hatred, that their respective country festered in them, fell away at the time of crisis.

Question 4.
What explains the attitude of the ruthless 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 a highly self-absorbed man. He had kept the doctor in the country primarily because he needed medical attention. He decided to get rid of the soldier, quietly, to save the doctor from facing the consequences. When Sadao told him about the successful operation of the American, the General was happy because that was a reassurance of Sadao’s professional skill. His self-absorption came to the forefront when he wondered aloud what would happen if Sadao were condemned to death when he required his medical attention. He conspired to get the soldier killed by his private assassins, to ensure his own safety, rather than Sadao’s.

Later, when Sadao informed the General about Tom’s escape, a week after his emergency operation, the General admitted that he had promised to get him killed but during his suffering, he “thought of nothing but myself (himself), and forgot my (his) promise”. He was only concerned about if the matter was publicised and required assurance from the doctor that he would certify for his honesty.

Question 5.
While hatred against the enemy race is justifiable, especially during wartime, what

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makes a human being rise above narrow prejudices?
Answer:
Sadao had grown up believing that the Japanese were a superior race. He also disliked Americans as his own experience in America had not been pleasant. He had faced racial bias. He thought Americans were full of prejudice. Despite this, he couldn't let the young American soldier bleed to death. While his logic and reasoning revolted against saving his 'enemy', his inherent humanity won over. Humanity and compassion often tide over hatred and prejudice.

Sadao was a fine example of how his patriotic and parochial attitude acted as a constant voice of conscience. He, however, was led by the superior feelings of compassion and humanity. As a doctor, he valued his promise to help any fellow human and he failed to compromise on his personal and professional ethics.

Question 6.
Do you think that the doctor's final solution to the problem was the best possible one in the circumstances?
Answer:
Yes, it was.

- He was duty bound as a doctor to save lives.
- Political enemies are not personal enemies.
- Tom was a young soldier who was merely doing his duty.
- Compassion is a natural instinct.

OR

No, it wasn't.

- The foremost duty is towards one's motherland.
- The soldier would have recovered and continued his job of killing Sadao's people.
- Harbouring an enemy soldier is an offence.
- After doing his duty as a doctor, he could have easily handed over the soldier to the authorities.

Question 7.
Does the story remind you of "Birth" by A J Cronin that you read in the Snapshots last year? What are the similarities?
Answer:
"The Enemy" is about an American-trained Japanese surgeon, working in Japan during Second World War, who saves an American POW first by operating on him and then by helping him escape. Sadao realized that the white man in the US navy uniform had a bullet wound. He was in a dilemma for a moment but the doctor in him took over and he treated the bullet wound and saved the soldier.

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In “Birth”, A J Cronin deals with medical ethics through the protagonist, Andrew Manson. It brings out that medicine is not merely a business whose goal is to enrich its practitioners materially, the essence of being a doctor is the use of one’s senses, knowledge, and experience to reduce suffering and improve people’s lives. Manson overlooks the disappointment caused to him by his relationship, and seeks tremendous satisfaction in saving a mother and child.

Both the stories underline the medical ethics—a doctor’s responsibility to the patient is of the greatest importance. In light of this, both Sadao and Andrew are true to their profession and their duty as doctors.

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