

Grade X Supplementary - 4

A Question of Trust

Main Points of the Story

- ❖ Horace Danby was fifty years old and unmarried.
- ❖ He was usually very well except for attacks of hay fever in summer.
- ❖ He made locks and was successful in his business.
- ❖ He robbed a safe every year.
- ❖ With that money, he bought rare and costly books.
- ❖ Horace Danby always made a lot of preparations before committing a theft.
- ❖ He made detailed preparations before committing his latest theft in a house at Grange.
- ❖ He studied the house, rooms, electric wiring, paths and gardens carefully.
- ❖ He noted that the two servants were out to movies and saw the housekeeper hang the key to the kitchen door.
- ❖ He was caught red-handed when a young lady in red appeared on the scene.
- ❖ The lady in red, played the role of the lady of the house in a very confident and convincing way.
- ❖ The lady acted with so much ease, confidence and authority that Horace mistook her as the lady of the house.
- ❖ The lady threatened to call the police if he tried to run away from there.
- ❖ The lady in red allowed Horace to go out on one condition.
- ❖ She made Horace to open the safe.
- ❖ Horace thought he was opening the safe for the owner and forgot to wear his gloves.
- ❖ Horace handed over all the jewels to her and went away happily.
- ❖ After two days, Horace was arrested by the police for committing a theft in a house at Shotover Grange, on the basis of the fingerprints found on the safe.
- ❖ Horace pleaded that the wife of the owner of the house had asked him to open the safe for her.
- ❖ The real lady of the house, a gray-haired sixty year old woman stated that the story of Horace was nonsense.
- ❖ Only in the end, it became clear that the real culprit was the lady in red, who was a thief and burglar like Horace

EXTRACT FOR COMPREHENSION

Extract-1

Yes, Horace Danby was good and respectable - but not completely honest.

Fifteen years ago, Horace had served his first and only sentence in a prison library. He loved rare, expensive books. So he robbed a safe every year. Each year he planned carefully just what he would do, stole enough to last for twelve months, and secretly bought the books he loved through an agent.

Questions:

- a. How does the narrator define Horace Danby?
- b. Why did Horace Danby rob a safe every year?

Answers

- a. The narrator agrees that Horace Danby was good and respectable. He was usually very well and happy. He made locks and did a good business. But he was not completely honest. He robbed a safe every year to buy rare and expensive books.
- b. Horace Danby loved rare and expensive books. To meet out this extra expenditure, he planned carefully to rob a safe every year. He stole enough to last for twelve months.

Extract-2

Now, walking in the bright July sunshine, he felt sure that this year's robbery was going to be as successful as all the others, for weeks he had been studying the house at Shotover Grange, looking at its rooms, its electric wiring, its paths and its garden. This afternoon the two servants, who remained in the Grange, while the family was in London, had gone to the movies. Horace saw them go, and he felt happy in spite of a little tickle of hay fever in his nose.

Questions:

- a. Why did Horace feel sure that this year's robbery was going to be as successful as all the other?
- b. Why did he happy inspite of a little tickle of hay fever in his nose?

Answers:

- a. Horace felt sure that his new robbery would be as successful as all the others. He had made an elaborate plan. He had been studying the house for two weeks. He had studied all its room, electric wiring, its paths and garden.

b. Horace suffered from a little tickle of hay fever but still he was happy. Two servants, who remained in the grange, had gone to the movies. The Family was in London. Horace was happy he could do his job without any disturbance and threat.

Extract-3

"Before we left for London, I promised my husband to take my jewels to our bank; but I left them here in the safe. I want to wear them to a party tonight, so I came down to get them, but ..."

Horace smiled. "You've forgotten the numbers to open the safe, haven't you?"

"Yes." replied the young lady.

"Just leave it to me and you'll have them within an hour. But I'll have to break your safe."

Questions:

- a. Who is the speaker and what does she want from Horace?
- b. What does Horace reply?

Answers:

- a. The speaker is a young and pretty lady in red. She presents herself as if she were the real lady of the house. She tells Horace that she promised her husband to take her jewels to her bank. All the jewels were in her safe. She wants Horace to help her in opening the safe as she has forgotten the numbers to open the safe.
- b. Horace replies like a gentleman that he will do the job for her. She will have her jewels within an hour. But he asks her permission to break her safe.

Extract-4

For two days he kept his promise to the king young lady. On the morning of the third day, however, he thought of the books he wanted and he knew he would have to look for another safe. But he never got the chance to begin his plan. By noon a policeman had arrested him for the jewel robbery at Shotover Grange.

Questions:

- a. How did Horace keep the promise to the king young lady?
- b. What happened to Horace before he could execute his plan?

Answers:

- a. Horace had promised the young lady in red never to steal again. He kept his promise given to the young lady for two days. He had to change his plan as he needed money to buy his books.

- b. Horace realised that he would have to look for another safe. But he never got a chance to execute his plan. He was arrested for the jewel robbery at Shotover Grange.

Extract-5

Horace is now the assistant librarian in the prison. He often thinks of the charming, clever young lady who was in the same profession as he was, and who tricked him. He gets very angry when anyone talks about 'honour among thieves'.

Questions:

- a. What does Horace think in the prison?
- b. Why does Horace get angry when anyone talks about 'honour among thieves'?

Answers:

- a. While in prison Horace often thinks of the charming clever young lady who was a thief like him. He often thinks how she outwitted and tricked him.
- b. It is believed that one thief never tricks another thief. But the young lady in red was a thief like Horace. She tricked Horace and was instrumental in sending him to prison. Horace really becomes angry when someone talks 'honour among thieves'.

Short Answer Type Questions

1. Who was Horace Danby?

Ans. Horace Danby was about fifty years old and unmarried. Everyone thought that he was a good and honest citizen. He lived with a housekeeper who worried about his health. He suffered from the attacks of hay fever in summer. He made locks and was successful at his business. But he was not completely honest. He robbed a safe once a year to buy rare and costly books.

2. Why was Horace Danby not completely honest?

Ans. Generally, people thought that Horace Danby was a good, honest and respectable citizen. However, he was not completely honest. He robbed a safe every year. This was done to get necessary money for the purchase of 'rare and expensive' books. The money he stole was enough to last a year. He secretly bought the books he loved through an agent.

3. What preparation did Horace make for 'this year's robbery' at Shot over Grange?

Ans. All the previous yearly robberies of Horace Danby were successful. He felt sure that this year's robbery at shot over Grange would also be successful. He had been studying the location of the house for two weeks. He studied its rooms, electric wiring, paths and garden. He found out that the two servants had gone to the movies. He had seen the housekeeper hang the key to the kitchen door on a hook outside.

4. How did Horace Danby enter the house?

Ans. Horace Danby had been preparing for the theft. He studied the house carefully for two weeks before committing the theft in the house at Shot over Grange. He studied its rooms, electric wiring, paths and its garden. He had seen the housekeeper hang the key to the kitchen door on a hook outside. He put on a pair of gloves, took the key and opened the door. Thus, he entered the house at Shot over Grange.

5. What precautions did Horace make before reading the safe? Name three of them.

Ans. Horace Danby took the following precautions before committing the theft:

- (i) He put on a pair of gloves as he was always careful not to leave any fingerprints.
- (ii) To tackle the house-dog, Sherry, he kept him quiet and friendly by calling him by his right name.
- (iii) He cut the wire of the burglar bell.

6. Why was it not hard to open the safe for Horace Danby?

Ans. It was not going to be hard to open the safe for Horace Danby. After all, he had 'lived with locks and safes all his life'. He made burglar alarm was poorly built and he cut the wires of the burglar alarm. He knew about the safe and the key, and it was not a difficult job for him to open it when no one was present in the house.

7. Whose voice was it that advised Horace about the special treatment of his hay fever?

Ans. When Horace was about to open the safe, he heard a female voice. She asked if he sneezing again and again. She told that he could cure the hay fever with a special treatment. He must find out what plant gave him that disease. She also advised Horace to see a doctor.

8. Describe the unexpected meeting of the young lady in red and Horace.

Ans. When a voice advised Horace to find a suitable treatment of his hay fever, he was surprised. It was a quiet, kindly voice but one with firmness in it.

A young woman, quite pretty and dressed in red was standing there. She walked to the fire place and straightened the ornaments. She said that she "didn't expect to meet a burglar".

9. Why did the women in red threaten to telephone the police?

Ans. Horace was caught red-handed. The women in red said that didn't expect to meet a burglar there. She added that she knew that it had been a great inconvenience for him to meet her. She also asked what he was thinking of running away. The ladies threatened that if he did so, she would telephone the police and tell them all about him. They would get him at once.

10. When and why did the woman in red say, "Society must be protected from men like you"? Doesn't it sound ironical?

Ans. Horace assured the woman in red that he would not hurt her. She must forget she ever met him. It made her angry. She couldn't let him go; otherwise he would rob someone else. Society must be protected for people like him. It sounds ironical because she herself was a thief and had come for the same purpose for which Horace was there in the house.

11. "I have always liked the wrong kind of people" said the woman in red. Comment.

Ans. It was ironical that the woman, who was being considered as the lady of the house and talking big things, was herself a thief. Horace requested her to let him go. He was desperate and afraid of going to prison. He promised never to do such a thing again. The lady pretended to be generous and stated that she "always liked the wrong kind of people".

12. Why did Horace mistake the young lady in red as the lady of the house?

Ans. The young woman in red was even smarter than Horace Danby. She was a thief and came with the same purpose as Horace to that house. Horace, she encountered Horace with an air of confidence and authority. She didn't allow him to doubt or think about her. She showed that the dog, Sherry, belonged to her. He told him that she returned 'home' just in time. Her manner of speaking, gestures and confidence mad Horace mistake her to be the lady of house.

13. Do you think that the young woman in red proved far smarter than Horace Danby?

Give reasons.

Ans. Definitely the young woman in red proved far smarter than Horace Danby. She played her part of being the lady of the house with complete perfection. She was an example of self-confidence. She didn't show any hesitation. She spoke and acted with an air of complete confidence and authority. Poor Horace became a puppet who couldn't take himself out of her spell. She threatened to telephone the police and made him open the safe, while Horace was later on caught and arrested. She decamped with the jewels.

14. Who is the culprit in the story, the young lady in red or Horace Danby? Comment.

Ans. Law of any land works on evidences. Horace Danby opened the safe without wearing his gloves. He didn't think it necessary to wear them as he thought he was working for 'the lady of the house'. so the police matched his fingerprints and he was arrested. The lady in the red was actually the real culprit. She made Horace open the safe for her. she was also a thief and decamped with the jewels. But in the eyes of the law, Horace was the real culprit because the evidence was against him.

15. Why didn't the dog bark when Horace Danby and the young lady in red entered to commit theft in house?

Ans. Both, Horace Danby and the young lady in red knew all the tricks of their trade. They knew all the real nature of dogs and how to be friendly with them. A small dog when made a noise, Horace called out "All right, Sherry," as he passed. Perhaps, the lady in red also knew like Horace that to keep dogs quiet, one must call them by their right names. Their trick worked and Sherry remained quiet.

16. Why did Horace Danby prefer books to collecting paintings?

Ans. Horace Danby had a passion for books. Collecting and buying rare and expensive books was his passionate hobby. He resorted to rob a safe every year to buy them. When the preference between collecting books and paintings came, he chose the former. Paintings took up too much space. In a small house like his, books were a better choice.

17. Why didn't Horace Danby never get any chance to look for another safe?

Ans. Horace got nothing from the house at Shot over Grange. The lady in red decamped with the jewels. For two days, he kept his promise given to the king, realised that he would have to look for another safe to buy books. But he never got that chance because the police arrested him for the jewel robbery at shot over Grange.

18. How can you say that Horace Danby was good and respectable but not completely honest?

Ans. Horace Danby was a good and respectable person. He had a flourishing business of locks. He lived a happy life and earned well. But he used to rob a safe every year for sustenance. It proves that he was not a completely honest person.

19. What was Horace Danby's hobby? How did he manage to fulfil it?

Ans. Horace Danby loved rare and expensive books. He managed to cultivate his hobby by robbing a safe every year. He carefully planned a robbery every year, stole enough to last for twelve months and secretly bought the loved through an agent.

20. How were flowers hindering Horace in his work?

Ans. There was bowl of flowers on the table. Horace sneezed loudly because of the smell of the flowers. Disturbed, he put down his bag. Thus, the smell of the flowers hindered Horace in his work.



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Long Answer Type Questions

1. How did the lady in red turn out to be much smarter and cleverer than Horace Danby?

How did one thief outwit and outmanoeuvre the other?

Or How did the lady in red manage to outsmart and outmanoeuvre the other thief, Horace Danby, by robbing the safe without leaving a single finger print?

Ans. The lady in red was also a thief. So was Horace Danby. But it was the lady in the red who outmanoeuvred and outwitted Horace. No doubt, Horace did his job quite professionally. He worked hard to find out the necessary details about the location of the house and the position of the key and the safe. But, Horace proved to be a novice in judging the young lady in red. The young lady acted with so much confidence and in such a convincing manner that she could easily pass off as the lady of the house. Horace Danby became a mere puppet who danced to the tune of the lady. When caught red-handed, he pleaded her to let him go. The young lady exploited his confusion and fear of going to prison fully. She made Horace was made to believe that he was working for the lady of the house. so he opened the safe without putting on his gloves. He gave the jewels to the lady leaving his fingerprints on the safe. So he was found out and arrested. Naturally. The young lady in red proved far smarter and outmanoeuvred Horace Danby.

2. Give a character-sketch of Horace Danby in your own words. How was he outmanoeuvred by the lady in red?

Ans. Horace Danby was about fifty years old and unmarried. Everyone thought him a good and honest citizen. He was otherwise very well and happy except for attacks of hay fever in summer. He made locks and was fairly successful at his business. Horace Danby was good and respectable- but not completely honest. He used to rob a safe every year. He did so because he needed money to buy books. Horace had a passion for buying rare and costly books. With that money, he secretly bought the books he loved through an agent.

Like a professional thief, he made a lot of preparations. He made it sure that every year's robbery was going to be as successful as all the others. He studied the location of the house at Shot over Grange-its rooms, its electric wiring, its paths and its gardens in details. He also came to know that the two servants of the house were out to the movies. He also knew where was the safe and its key. He befriended the little dog by calling his right name.

Inspite of all his professionalism, Horace Danby proved a novice in judging the lady in red. The lady in red behaved with so much confidence and authority that Horace became totally a puppet in her hands. Easily passing off as the lady of the house, she made Horace open the safe without wearing his gloves. While the lady in red decamped with the jewels, Horace was sent prison.

3. Give a character-sketch of the lady in red highlighting how she outwitted Horace

Danby?

Ans. We don't get any information regarding the past history of the lady in red as we know about Horace's past. Her whole personality remains wrapped in mystery till the end. Only when the identity of the real lady of the house is unfolded, we come to know that she is a thief. She is the real culprit. The lady in red comes there with the only purpose of committing a theft in the house like Horace. She cleverly decamps with the jewels while Horace is sent to prison. The lady in red is gifted with a rare personality. She is full of confidence. She acts like a perfect actress presenting herself as the lady of the house. Her gestures, confidence and convincing power are enough to convince Horace, he turns out quite a novice in understanding and judging the lady in red and her motive. She dominates the proceeding. Horace only proves a puppet in her hands. She exploits his open the safe without his gloves. She convinced him that she needs those jewels to wear them to a party that night. Horace willingly hands over the jewels and she decamps with them. Only when the grey-haired, sharp-tongued woman appears as the real lady of the house, we come to know that the lady in red was a professional and crafty thief much smarter than Horace.

4. How had Horace planned to loot the house at Shot over Grange?

Ans. Horace Danby never committed a theft in hurry. All his previous operations were completely successful. He robbed a safe every year. This money was enough to last for a year. Like all his previous robberies, he also planned his latest robbery in a house at Shot over Grange in all details. For two weeks, he had been studying the house, its rooms, electric wiring, paths and its garden. He also had a definite information that two servants working there had gone to movies. He saw them go. He came out from behind the garden wall. He had packed his tools carefully in a bag on his back. He had seen the housekeeper hang the key to the kitchen door on a hook outside. He put on a pair of gloves, took the key and opened the house. he always put on a

pair of gloves before committing a theft. A magazine article had described the house with all the rooms. It also mentioned that a painting hid a safe. He collected all these details and made all preparations to make his latest theft a complete success like the others.

5. How was Horace Danby arrested for the robbery of the jewels in a house at Shot over Grange? Do you think his own foolishness was responsible for his arrest? Give a reasoned answer.

Ans. Horace Danby never acted recklessly in a hurry while committing a theft. He robbed a safe every year. All his previous thefts had been completely successful. Even to commit a theft in a house at Shot over Grange, he made detailed and fool-proof preparations. However, he proved a novice in comparison to the young lady in red. She in a very confident and convincing way, made him believe that she was the lady of the house. She made him open the safe without the gloves and handover all the jewels to her. She decamped with the jewels and Horace was arrested.

By noon, a policeman arrested Horace for the jewel robbery at Shot over Grange. He had opened the safe without wearing his gloves. He did so believing that he was opening the safe for the lady of the house. He pleaded that the wife of the owner of the house had asked him to open the safe for her. The real lady of the house appeared on the scene. She was not the young lady in red but a gray-haired woman of sixty. She said that Horace's story was nonsense. Only then, Horace came to know that he was outwitted by the lady in red who was also a thief like him.

6. The lady in red was a more professional thief than Horace Danby. Do you agree? Give a reasoned answer.

Ans. Yes, it is true the lady in red was a more professional thief than Horace Danby. No doubt, Horace Danby was a meticulous thief but, he was outwitted by a lady in red wife of the owner of the house. Actually, she was also a thief. She told Danby that she had promised her husband to talk the jewels from the safe. But she had forgotten the numbers to open the safe. She wanted the jewels to wear them at a party. When Horace opened the safe, he left his finger prints on it. The lady took the jewels by fooling him.

Thus, we find that the lady in red was a more professional thief than Horace Danby.

SELF -ASSESSMENT

Short Answer Type Questions

1. Why was Horace Danby not completely honest?
2. Why did Horace Danby rob a safe every year?
3. What detailed preparations did Horace make to rob a house at Shotover Grange?
4. How did Horace and the lady in red befriended with the little dog at Shotover Grange?
5. Describe the first encounter of Horace with the lady of the house.
6. Why did the young lady in red threaten to telephone the police?
7. Why did the young lady say that society must be protected from men like Horace Danby?
8. On what condition did the young lady in red allowed Horace to go?
9. How did Horace open the safe? Why was it not a difficult job for him?
10. What was the greatest lapse on Horace Danby's part that led to his arrest?
11. How was Horace Danby arrested?
12. Who was the gray- haired woman and why did she say that Horace's story was a nonsense?
13. What and how was the young lady in red exposed?

Long Answer Type Questions

1. How did the lady in red make Horace act like her puppet and open the safe for her?
2. Give a brief character-sketch of Horace Danby highlighting the greatest lapse on his part during the robbery.
3. In spite of so much planning and preparations, why did Horace Danby fail in his mission?



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