

**“We’re Not Afraid To Die .....  
If We Can All Be Together”**

Q.01 What difference did you notice between the reaction of the adults and the children when faced with danger?

Ans : - There is a lot of difference between the way in which the adults and children reacted when faced with danger. The adults faced felt the stress of the circumstances but prepared themselves to face the dangers. They took sufficient precautions to protect the ship when the rough weather began. They equipped everyone with lifelines, water proof clothes, and life jackets. Larry and Herb worked cheerfully and optimistically for three days continuously to pump out water from the ship. Mary replaced the narrator at the wheel when the deck was smashed, and steered the ship. She also served them meal after two days of struggle against odds. The narrator performed his role as captain with courage, determination, resourcefulness and full responsibility. He undertook repair work and provided apparatus and directions needed to protect the ship. He also helped in steering the ship towards the island. The children suffered silently and patiently. Sue did not want to bother her father with her troubles. Jon acted courageously. He was not afraid to die if all of them perished together.

Q.02 How does the story suggest the optimism helps to “endure the direst stress” ?

Ans:- The story suggests that optimism certainly helps to endure the direst stress. The behaviour of the four adults during crisis bears it out. Larry Vigil and Herb Seigler were two crewmen. As the mighty waves smashed the deck, water entered the ship through many holes and openings. Right from the evening of January 2, Larry and Herb started pumping out water. They worked continuously excitedly and feverishly for 36 hours. It was a result of their continuous pumping that they reached the last few centimeters dangerous situations. The narrator did not lose his courage, hope or presence of mind while facing problems. He did not worry about the loss of equipment. He used whatever was available there. His self confidence and practical knowledge help them to steer out of storm and reach the Ile Amstendam island. Mary stayed at the wheel for all those crucial hours. She did not lose hope or courage either.

Q.03 What lessons do we learn from such hazardous experiences when we are face to face with death?

Ans:- Hazardous experiences may bring us face to face with death, but they impart us many important lessons of conduct. Life is not always a bed of roses. We must react to dangers and risks with patience and fortitude. Adversity is the true test of character. The purity of gold is judged by putting it in fire. The hazardous experiences bring out the best in us. Coward person die many times before their death. Fear is an negative feeling and leads to inactivity and abject surrender to circumstances. Such sailors or soldiers lose the battle against the odds in life. One the other hand, persons with self confidence, courage, resourcefulness and presence of mind face all the dangers boldly and overcome all disasters.

Their sharing and caring attitude inspires others also to face the adverse circumstances boldly and tide over them.

Q.04 What impression do you form about the narrator on the basis of reading ‘We’re not Afraid to Die.... If we can All be Together’?

Ans:- The narrator, a 37 year old businessman was a lover of adventure. He had dreamt of going around the world sea voyage. He and his wife had spent all the leisure hours for 16 years developing and improving their skills about work or travel on sea. This shows his love for perfection and attention to details.

The narrator was practical in his approach. He engaged two crewmen to help them sail through the rough waters of the southern Indian Ocean. He had keen foresight. They made advance preparations to protect the ship and passengers against violent sea-storms. He did not lose hope, calm or courage in the face of difficulties. He had his priorities fixed. Repairing the

damaged ship was essential. Everything else including injuries could wait. He was resourceful also. He managed to steer the course with the help of whatever had been left with them. His presence of mind helped them to overcome troubles. He had a level head. He made exact calculations of their positions and that of the island. He fixed the course and speed. His self confidence and practical knowledge made him a good captain.

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### **Supplementary Reader: Snapshots** **LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS**

Q.01 Narrator the story "The summer of the Beautiful White Horse" in your own words.

Ans:- One summer morning 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. The narrator was surprised to see Mourad sitting on a beautiful white horse. Mourad asked him to be quick if he wanted to ride. The narrator, Aram, longed to ride and jumped down to the yard from the window and leaped up onto the horse behind his cousin Mourad. Since these Armenian families were quite poor, Aram concluded that Mourad must have stolen the horse.

They rode and Mourad sang. Then Mourad had a joy ride alone. It seemed he had a way with a horse, for when Aram tried to ride alone, the horse threw him off and ran away. Since it was broad day light, Mourad hid the horse in the barn of a deserted vineyard. That afternoon, farmer John Byro visited the narrator's house and related his plight. His white horse had been missing for over a month. Uncle Khosrove silenced him with his roaring commands. Aram reported everything to Mourad and requested him to keep the horse till he learnt to ride Mourad did not agree. A chance meeting with farmer John Byro after a fortnight firmed up his decision. John Byro had believed the boys since he knew their fathers and was fully aware of the fame of their family for honesty. Mourad returned the horse to its owner then next morning.

Q.02 Relate some of the humorous incidents in the story. Which incident do you find the most amusing and why?

Ans:- The incidents related to uncle Khosrove are quite amusing. The repetition of his pet catchword: "It is no harm; pay no attention to it" causes humour whenever it is used in an incongruous context. For example, his own son Arak ran eight blocks to the barber shop where Khosrove was having his moustache trimmed to tell him that their house was on fire. This was a serious matter. Instead of leaving the place, he roared: "It is no harm; pay no attention to it." When the barber explained that his son was saying that his house was on fire, Khosrove silenced him by roaring: "It is no harm".

At the end of the story, uncle Khosrove again became irritated and shouted at farmer John Byro to be quiet. He said, "Your horse has been returned. Pay no attention to it." The incongruity is obvious. The most amusing incident is the conversation between farmer John Byro and uncle Khosrove when the farmer sighed sadly and bewailed the stealth of his horse. Uncle Khosrove remarked, "It is no harm. What is the loss of a horse? What is this crying over a horse?" John Byro tried to explain that his surrey was useless without a horse. Pat came Khosrove's catch ward "Pay no attention to it." This phrase is repeated when the farmer complained that his left leg hurt him. When John Byro said that the horse had cost him sixty dollars, Khosrove remarked, "I spit on money." The incident ends as John Byro walked out angrily slamming the screen door.

Q.03 What impression do you form of cousin Mourad?

Ans:- Mourad is a young boy of thirteen. He belongs to the Garoghlanian family of Armenia. Their whole tribe was poverty stricken. In spite of abject poverty, their family was famous for honesty. Mourad was quite adventurous and had a crazy streak in him. He enjoyed being alive more than anybody else. Mourad loved horse riding. He had a way with a horse. He had tamed the horse by his affectionate behaviour and now the horse was no longer wild. It obeyed Mourad faithfully. His love for the horse is evident in the last scene. While parting, he put his arms around the horse, pressed his nose into the horse's nose and patted it. He also had a way with dogs. The dogs of

John Byro followed them around without making a sound. He was kind. He treated a young robin which had hurt its wing. He was worldly-wise and knew how to talk to farmers. Though he loved horse-riding he was averse of keeping the horse for a long time. He is proud of his family which is well known for their honesty and trust. In short, he is a lovable chap.

Q.04 Comment on the role of Aram, the narrator, in the story.

Ans:- Aram plays an important role in the story. Besides being the narrator, he is also a commentator. He not only narrates the various adventures, incidents and actions, but also provides useful information regarding the main characters and their behaviour. In fact, he is the fulcrum on which the whole story rests. He gives a graphic description of the Garoghlanian tribe, its members, their traits and economic features. Mourad's father Zorab is described as a practical person, whereas Mourad and uncle Khosrove represent the crazy streak in the tribe. Abject poverty of the family does not diminish his pride in his family which is famous for honesty. He says, "No member of the Garoghlanian family could be a thief." He makes a fine distinction between stealing a horse for a ride and stealing a horse to sell it off. He gives a fine description of the horse ride and country side with its vineyards, orchards, irrigation ditches and country roads.

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