



INDIAN SCHOOL AL WADI AL KABIR

Class: IX	Department: ENGLISH	2022-23
QUESTION BANK	IF I WERE YOU- Douglas James	PLAY

Summary

This is a melodrama written by Douglas James. In a very lucid, interesting, and humorous way, he presents two characters of the same build. The playwright, Douglas James, sustains interest, arouses curiosity, and maintains the suspense till the end. It is a sensational one-act play with a happy ending.

The main character of the play is Gerrard who lives alone in a lonely cottage in the wilds of Essex. An Intruder, who is a criminal, enters his cottage. He resembles Gerrard. He intends to murder Gerrard and impersonate him to escape from the police. Gerrard is very intelligent and he outwits the Intruder. He tells the Intruder that impersonating him will not help him as he himself is a criminal. He was expecting trouble any time and his bag was ready. He shows his disguise outfits containing false moustache, etc. to convince the Intruder. The Intruder was convinced.

The telephone bell rings. Gerrard tells the Intruder that it might be a call from the informer. He proposes the Intruder to leave the place in the car. He agrees. He opens the door which was, in fact, the door of a cupboard. The Intruder looks in to see what it was. Just then, Gerrard gives him a push. His revolver falls. Gerrard locks the door and picks up the revolver. Then he answers the phone call and tells his friend to send the sergeant to his place at once.

Here the reader comes to know that Gerrard was a playwright. Thus, the play has a happy ending

Answer the following questions

1. *“At last a sympathetic audience”*

(i) Who says this?

Ans: The speaker of the given lines is Gerrard

(ii) Why does he say it?

Ans: He says this as he is asked by the intruder to speak about himself

(iii). Is he sarcastic or serious?

Ans. He speaks the given lines sarcastically.

2. Why does the intruder choose Gerrard as the man whose identity he wants to take on?

Ans. The Intruder is similar to Gerrard in build. He looks like him. After killing Gerrard, he wanted to impersonate him and get rid of the police. So, he chose Gerrard as his target.

3. *“I said it with bullets.”*

(i) Who says this?

Ans. Gerrard says this.

(ii) What does it mean?

Ans: It means that when things went wrong, he had used his gun to shoot someone for his escape.

(iii) Is it the truth? What is the speaker’s reason for saying this?

Ans: No. it is not the truth. The speaker says this to save himself from getting shot by the intruder.

4. What is Gerrard's profession? Quote the parts of the play that support your answer.

Ans: Gerrard was a playwright. He says in the end of the play, "Sorry, I can't let you have the props in time for rehearsal. I think I'll put it in my next play."

5. "You'll soon stop being smart."

(i) Who says this?

Ans: The Intruder says this to Gerrard.

(ii) Why does the speaker say this?

Ans: The speaker says this because he thinks that Gerrard is trying to over-smart him.

(iii) What according to the speaker will stop Gerrard from being smart?

Ans: According to the Intruder, Gerrard would stop being smart when he knew that his intention was to kill him.

6. "They can't hang me twice."

(i) Who says this?

Ans: The Intruder says this.

(ii) Why does the speaker say it?

Ans: The Intruder told that he had already killed someone. If he is caught after murdering Gerrard, he would be hanged only once and not twice.

7. "A mystery I propose to explain." What is the mystery the speaker proposes to explain?

Ans: Gerrard tells the Intruder that he himself was in hiding and the police were after him. He was expecting the police to raid his house at any time, so he was about to leave that place soon.

8. "This is your big surprise."

(i) Where has this been said in the play?

Ans: Gerrard says this to the Intruder at the end of the play.

(ii) What is the surprise?

Ans: Gerrard was also a criminal who had murdered someone and the police were after him, which was a surprise for the Intruder.

Reference-to-Context Questions

Read the following extracts carefully and choose the correct option.

1. "That's a lie. You're not dealing with a fool. I'm as smart as you and smarter, and I know you run a car. Better be careful, wise guy!"

(a) "A fool" according to the speaker refers to

- (i) **himself** (ii) the listener
(iii) the police (iv) the man on the phone

(b) The figure of speech in "I'm as smart as you are" is

- (i) repetition (ii) metaphor
(iii) **simile** (iv) irony

(c) The words "wise guy" are uttered with a sense of

- (i) **irony** (ii) hatred
(iii) humour (iv) compliment

(d) The author of the play is

- (i) Deborah Cowley (ii) **Douglas James**
(iii) Vikram Seth (iv) Kenneth Anderson

(e) The statement "you run a car" means

- (i) **you own a car** (ii) you can drive a car
(iii) you have a garage (iv) you repair cars.

2. "You seem to have taken a considerable amount of trouble. Since you know so much about me, won't you say something about yourself. You have been so modest."

(a) Who is the speaker?

- (i) the author (ii) **Gerrard**
(iii) Intruder (iv) man on the phone

- (b) The phrase “a considerable amount of trouble” means the listener’s effort
- (i) to trespass his house **(ii) to collect information about him**
 (iii) to threaten him (iv) to plan to kill him
- (c) The speaker calls the listener modest. It is said with a touch of
- (i) sarcasm** (ii) bit of a compliment
 (iii) with love (iv) admiration
- (d) The word ‘considerable’ can be replaced with
- (i) some (ii) much
 (iii) more **(iv) substantial**
- (e) The title of the play is
- (i) If I were you** (ii) If you were I
 (iii) You and I (iv) You, I and the police
3. Gerrard: Your idea is to elude the police by killing me and taking on my identity?
 Intruder: Yes, I like the idea.
- (a) Pick the odd one out: The Intruder planned to kill Gerrard because
- (i) he looked like Gerrard
 (ii) he was a criminal
 (iii) he wanted to impersonate him and evade police
(iv) he liked to kill
- (b) The ultimate plan of the Intruder was
- (i) to call the police
(ii) to impersonate Gerrard after killing him
 (iii) to sell Gerrard’s cottage
 (iv) to run away in his car
- (c) The meaning of the word ‘elude’ is
- (i) escape** (ii) spoil
 (iii) confuse (iv) shame
- (d) What happened to the Intruder’s plan eventually?
- (i) he killed Gerrard **(ii) he was outwitted by Gerrard**
 (iii) Gerrard killed the intruder (iv) they both ran away in the car
- (e) The antonym of ‘modest’ would be
- (i) humble (ii) reserved
 (iii) shy **(iv) arrogant**
4. I have got a man posted on the main road. He’ll ring up if he sees the police, but I don’t want to leave
(telephone bell rings) Come on! They are after us. Through here straight to the garage.
- (a) The job of the man posted on the main road was to
- (i) keep Gerrard informed about the police**
 (ii) to keep calling Gerrard for help
 (iii) inform about the movement of their gang
 (iv) to book train tickets
- (b) Who are ‘they’ in “Come on! They’re after us”?
- (i) Gerrard’s gang (ii) Intruder’s men
(iii) the police (iv) detectives
- (c) Why does Gerrard take the Intruder to the garage?
- (i) he wanted to run away in his car
 (ii) he wanted to escape from there somehow
 (iii) he had to hand over his car to the intruder.
(iv) it was a ploy to trap the intruder.
- (d) How does the play end?
- (i) the intruder is fooled and caught**
 (ii) the intruder runs away
 (iii) the intruder kills Gerrard
 (iv) the intruder and Gerrard run away together

- (e) Gerrard used to stay alone in his cottage because
- (i) he was alone
 - (ii) he was a playwright
 - (iii) he liked being lonely
 - (iv) living away from the city must have helped his writing**

Short Answer Questions

1. Why does the intruder say, “They can’t hang me twice”?
Ans. The Intruder threatens Gerrard that he will murder him. Gerrard tells him that he should not do this because he would be arrested and hanged for that crime. The intruder remarks that he has already murdered someone and would be hanged for that crime. Since he can’t be hanged twice he is not afraid of killing Gerrard.
2. What did Gerrard tell the Intruder about his life?
Ans. Gerrard told the Intruder that he was not a Sunday School Teacher. He was a criminal who had murdered someone and the police were after him. It was a surprise for the Intruder who wanted to impersonate Gerrard and live a peaceful life.
3. What is Gerrard’s profession? How do you know it?
Ans. Gerrard is a playwright. He is working for some theatre group. He says at the end of the play, “Sorry, I can’t let you have the props in time for rehearsal. I think I will put it in the next play.”
4. A mystery I propose to explain. What is the mystery the speaker proposes to explain?
Ans. Gerrard says these words to the Intruder. He wants to tell him that he himself was a criminal and had murdered someone. He was in hiding and the police was after him. He was expecting the Police to raid his house at any time. So, he was about to leave that place very soon.
5. Why did the Intruder say, “I don’t think you’ll be pleased for long”?
Ans. The Intruder says that Gerrard will not be pleased for long because he has come there with an evil design. He wants to kill Gerrard so that he can impersonate him and live peacefully forever
6. Why was the police after the Intruder?
Ans. The Intruder was a criminal. He had murdered a policeman. He was being hunted by the police. This was the reason he intruded on Gerrard’s cottage. He wanted to kill Gerrard and take his place.
7. What made Gerrard ask the intruder, “Are you an American”?
Gerrard asked the intruder if he were an American as he had called him a ‘wise guy’. The guy is colloquial American expression for a man. Hence, the usage of this word by the intruder made Gerrard ask him this question.
8. How did Gerrard behave on seeing a gun-toting stranger in his cottage?
Gerrard kept his cool and remained absolutely unruffled when he saw the gun-toting stranger in his cottage. There was neither any panic nor any ring of tension in his voice. He remained his normal self and talked to him casually.
9. Why does the intruder call himself ‘a poor hunted rat’?
The intruder describes himself as ‘a poor hunted rat’ because he is being chased by the police and he has to keep dodging them. He has killed a cop and is trying to escape punishment by hiding like a rat being chased by a cat.

10. Why did the intruder choose Gerrard as the man whose identity he wanted to take on?

The intruder picked Gerrard because both of them were of the same physical structure. Moreover, as Gerrard lived alone, did not meet any people, and had irregular hours and habits, he thought it would be easy to kill him and assume his identity, and this way lead a life of peace. He will be away from the reach of the law.

11. Bring out the contrast between Gerrard and the intruder.

Coarse, crude, boastful and an irritable egoist, the intruder is overconfident and thinks that he is the smartest one around. Gerrard, on the other hand, is pleasant, cool-headed, refined, lively and very intelligent, but a modest and humble person. Although Gerrard does not brag, he proves to be much smarter and more intelligent than the intruder.

12. Why was Gerrard's schedule so irregular?

Having a theatrical background, Gerrard devoted time to writing, producing and directing the plays. He also supplied other theatrical companies with props and make-up items. Therefore, his schedule was irregular as it had to suit the requirements at the theatres.

Long Answer Questions

1. How did Gerrard get rid of the Intruder in the play 'If I Were You'? What would you have done if you were in his place? What is the central idea of the play?

Ans. Gerrard lived in a lonely cottage. He was a playwright. One day an intruder entered his cottage with the intention to kill him. The intruder looked like Gerrard. He wanted to impersonate Gerrard and escape from the law. But Gerrard was smarter. He understood his motive. Gerrard told him that he himself was a criminal and was expecting trouble that night itself. He convinced the intruder to escape from there. He offered his help to save the intruder from the police. He asked him to follow him towards the garage. While on the way to the garage, Gerrard pushed the intruder into a cupboard and locked him inside. Thus, he got rid of him. In such a condition, I would have acted in the same way. I also would have thought of such a plan. The play impresses upon us the need to be calm, composed and maintain presence of mind in times of trouble.

2. Imagine you are Gerrard. Tell your friend what happened when the intruder broke into your house. Do you agree that crime cannot escape the law?

Ans: One day an Intruder made a way into my cottage. He resembled me in appearance and physique. He was dressed in a detective's dress. He spoke with an American accent. He started a conversation with me and told me his intention to impersonate me. Initially, I was scared but I did not run out of ideas. I immediately made up a story and convinced him that I was also a criminal like him. I told him about my plan to leave that place as the police was after me. I was successful in trapping and handing him over to the police. It is rightly said that evil begets evil. I fully agree that crime does not pay for long. No criminal can escape from the hands of the law. A criminal is destined to face the punishment sooner or later.

3. Why did, according to you, the intruder want to know more about Gerrard? Cheating by impersonation, misappropriation of money, and blackmailing have become very common crimes nowadays. But soon the offenders are caught and punished. Tell this fact to your friend by writing a letter to him. Give the example of the intruder who tried to be smart.

Ans: Dear Friend,

I want to share with you an interesting incident. An intruder tried to impersonate me to escape punishment. He wanted to know more and more about me so that he might escape the punishment. But, I outwitted him and got him arrested. You know, cheating by impersonation, misappropriation of money, and blackmailing have become very common crimes these days. The portfolio of the criminals is different from what it used to be. Now we find professionals, students, and highly educated people

involved in crimes. But little do they realise that one day they would be caught and put behind the bars. We should never indulge in illegal activity. A rat race to make quick money should never be joined. There is no shortcut to success. Smartness and manipulation never pay in long run. It is our hard work and perseverance that go a long way.

4. Do you think that the intruder was smarter than Gerrard? Why/Why not? Which quality of Gerrard made him smarter than the intruder?

Ans: No, the intruder was not smarter than Gerrard. He tried to catch Gerrard's words but could not get more information from him. Gerrard told the intruder that if he was not hanged for his murder, he would be certainly hanged being Vincent Charles Gerrard. He used his presence of mind and outplayed the intruder. Gerrard was able to befool him and, finally, trapped him. Gerrard was cool and had patience, tolerance, and a sense of humour that proved him smarter than the intruder. I think these are the qualities that everybody should imbibe. Intruder, on the other hand, was impatient and short-sighted. He, in his hurry to escape the punishment, lost his reasoning and got trapped.

5. Gerrard says, "In most melodramas, the villain is foolish enough to delay his killing long enough to be frustrated. Does this statement hold good for the play 'If I Were You'?"

Ans: In most melodramas, the playwright wants to make the hero successful. The villain in the play wants to kill the hero. But he presented as someone who is foolish. He goes on delaying the killing for one reason or the other. In the end, his plans are frustrated and the hero is able to get the better of him. The same thing holds good of this play. In this play, the villain is the intruder. He resembles Gerrard. So he wants to kill Gerrard and live under his name. He has gathered a lot of information about Gerrard. But he does not know that Gerrard is a stage actor. He can act well. Gerrard poses to be pleased on seeing the intruder. He talks to him in a tactful way. He makes the intruder talk about himself. Thus he goes on delaying the killing. This gives Gerrard enough time to plan to get rid of him. In the end, the intruder's plan of killing Gerrard is frustrated and he is shut up in a cupboard.

6. Bring out Gerrard's intelligence, the presence of mind and sense of humour. How did these traits help him outwit the intruder?

Ans: Being an intelligent person, Gerrard did not show even the slightest of nervousness at the sight of the gun-toting criminal. He knew that his cool-headedness and presence of mind would not only help him to manage the crisis but would also contribute towards unnerving the intruder, who too must be having some fear lurking in his mind. Keeping the atmosphere light and lively with his sense of humour and funny remarks, Gerrard instantly cooked up a story about his criminal background. Convincing the intruder that the police would arrive any minute to nab them, he impressed upon the intruder that they would have to escape immediately. Cleverly, he made him peep into a cupboard, saying that it was an escape route. The moment the intruder leaned forward to inspect it, Gerrard pushed him into the cupboard and knocked the revolver out of his hand. He then closed and locked the door. Thus, his intelligence, sense of humour, and presence of mind turned the tables on the intruder.

7. The intruder's plan was clever but not feasible. Do you agree? Give reasons in support of your answer.

Ans: On the face of it, the intruder's plan to kill Gerrard and assume his identity appeared to be a very clever one. However, its execution was not a feasible one. In the first place, had Gerrard been killed, the disposal of his body would have created problems for the intruder and there are chances that his crime would have been detected and he would have been caught. If by chance, he could have managed to deal with this part of the drama, suspicions would have risen in the minds of his theatrical clients on being unable to contact Gerrard. They would have certainly sought help from the police in this regard and eventually, the intruder would have been arrested. Hence, the plan of the intruder, however perfect according to him, was not a feasible one. Theoretically, it appeared simple and fool-proof but it was far too complicated in reality to be carried out flawlessly.