

INDIAN SCHOOL AL WADI AL KABIR

	Department: ENGLISH CLASS : XI	Date of submission:
	Topic: THE BIRTH- AJ CRONIN	Note:

Summary -

The story is an extract from The Citadel. Moreover, it narrates how a medical fresher handles a case of child delivery. Also, in a secretive way, he gets back living in an apparently dead child. He applies all his medical knowledge and instincts for doing so. Further, the story states the excitement of the doctor and his team.

At the start, the story describes how Andrew Manson recently out from medical school, was returning home after a quarrel with her girlfriend, Christine. On reaching home, he finds Joe Morgan waiting for him to attend to his wife. Despite the night he agrees to attend her as she was expecting her first child in 20 years.

At Joe's house, he saw midwife attending the lady who was very serious. Andrew sees Mrs Morgan and took a pause as he could understand that it would take some time. While sitting his mind starts to wander in the thoughts of other people. Like Barnwell who foolishly devoted all his life to a woman who betrayed him. In addition, he remembers Edward page who married an ill-nature Bowden and was now living unhappily, separately from his wife. Meanwhile, Andrew had to go back to attend the patient.

After an hour-long and harsh struggle, a child was born towards the dawn but it was lifeless. On seeing the child Andrew shook with horror. Subsequently, he looks to the mother who needs immediate

attention. So, Andrew has to choose whom to attend: the mother or the child.

He gave the child to nurse and attend the mother first who was unconscious. Steadily, her heartbeat strengthens and Andrew could now attend the baby. Afterwards, Andrew inquired the midwife about the child whom she had put it under the bed among the soaked newspaper. So, Andrew pulls out the child who was perfectly formed. He couldn't recognise that it's a case of asphyxia due to lack of oxygen and excess of carbon dioxide in the blood. Moreover, he did not lose heart and starts to give the necessary treatment to the child. However, the midwife told him again and again that it is stillborn but he didn't listen. Also, he continues his treatment.

Near the conclusion, a wonder occurred, he rubbed the child with a towel crushed and relaxed the little chest with both his hands. He tries to fill breath into the limp body. After some time, the little chest gave a short difficult motion and the child starts turning around.

Eventually, Andrew flung a sigh of relief and handed the child to the nurse. Afterwards, he stated the whole story to Joe who was standing outside and walked down the street. He has a sense of deep satisfaction that he could achieve something great.

Conclusion of Birth Summary

Through birth summary, the writer highlights the efforts of doctors and wants to say that we should keep on trying.

RTC QUESTIONS

"Susan said not to give her the chloroform if it would harm the baby. She's awful set upon this child, Doctor, bach." Her old eyes warmed at a sudden thought. She added in a low tone: "Ay, we all are, I fancy." He collected himself with an effort. "It won't do any harm, the anaesthetic," he said kindly. "They'll be all right."

a) Who is 'She' in this extract?

- 1) Joe Morgan
- 2) Susan Morgan
- 3) Susan Morgan's mother
- 4) Andrew Manson

b) Why did Susan's mother not want chloroform to be given to her daughter?

- 1) For the baby could die
- 2) for it could harm her
- 3) For it could harm the baby
- 4) Both 2 and 3

c) What is anesthetic?

- 1) Drug that leads to sensibility
- 2) Drug that leads to insensibility
- 3) Drug that leads to mental disorder
- 4) Drug that numbs the whole head

d) Why were all the Morgans worried?

- 1) For they were expecting their first child after a long period
- 2) For they were expecting their second child after a long period
- 3) For they were expecting their third child after a long period
- 4) For they were expecting their fourth child after a long period

A. Short Answer Type Questions

Question 1:

Who was Joe.Morgan? Why had he been waiting for Dr Andrew Manson?

Answer:

Joe Morgan was a driller in Blaenelly, a mining town. He was a big, strong and heavy middle-aged person. Joe and his wife Susan, who had been married nearly twenty years, were expecting their first child. Joe was waiting for the doctor to help Susan in the delivery of the child.

Question 2:

Where did Joe lead Andrew? Why did he not go in with the doctor?

Answer: Joe Morgan led Andrew to his house, 12, Blaina Terrace. His wife was about to deliver her first child after being married for nearly twenty years. Joe was quite tensed. He refused to go inside the house. Even his voice showed signs of strain.

Question 3:

“Don’t fret, mother, I’ll not run away”. Why do you think Andrew say so?

Answer:

Mrs Morgan’s mother offered to make a cup of tea for the doctor. The experienced woman had realized that there must be a period of waiting. She was afraid that the doctor would leave^ the case saying that he would return later.

Question 4:

Why did Andrew decide to remain there until everything was over?

Answer:

Andrew had reached Bryngower at about midnight. He was very worried and upset. He needed some rest and sleep. He knew that he could not sleep even for an hour if he went home. Secondly, he knew that the case would demand all his attention. He felt lethargic and decided to remain there until everything was over.

Question 5:

What had Andrew been thinking about? How would you like to describe the state of his thoughts?

Answer:

Andrew had been thinking about the unsuccessful married lives of some persons he knew. Bramwell was foolishly devoted to a woman who deceived him immorally. Edward Page was bound to quarrelsome Blodwen. Denny was living unhappily apart from his wife. His thoughts were muddled (confused).

Question 6:

What was Andrew’s view of marriage? Why was he resentful and confused?

Answer:

For Andrew marriage was a peaceful and beautiful state. He loved Christine. The conflict between his steady mind and overflowing heart left him resentful and confused.

Question 7:

Why did Andrew feel surprised while sitting by kitchen fire?

Answer:

Andrew had been thinking about his beloved as he sat by the kitchen fire. He sat still and sadly for a long time. When the old woman sitting opposite him suddenly addressed him, Andrew felt surprised.

Question 8:

Why did a shiver of horror pass over Andrew?

Answer:

Andrew had struggled for more than an hour to help Mrs Susan Morgan in the safe delivery of her first child. At last, the child was born, but it was lifeless. As Andrew gazed at the still form of the baby, a shiver of horror passed over him.

Question 9:

What dilemma did Andrew face?

Answer:

His heart prompted him to resuscitate the stillborn child. His mind dictated him to attend to the mother who was laying in a hopeless state. Andrew faced the dilemma whom he should attend first.

Question 10:

What efforts did Andrew make to revive Susan Morgan?

Answer:

He smashed a glass ampule and injected the medicine. After this he flung down the hypodermic syringe. Then he worked quiet hard to restore the soft and weak woman. Her heart strengthened after a few minutes of feverish effort.

Question 11:

In what state did Andrew find the newborn child? What did he conclude?

Answer:

Andrew found the baby amongst wet newspapers under the bed. Its limp warm body was white and soft. Its head lolled on the thin neck. The limbs seemed boneless. The whiteness over the body meant suffocation caused by the lack of oxygen.

Question 12:

How did Andrew's practical experience come handy?

Answer:

Andrew had once seen a similar case in the Samaritan. He remembered the treatment that had been used. He at once decided to administer the hot and cold water therapy.

Question 13:

What efforts did Andrew make to revive the newborn baby?

Answer:

First, he laid the child upon a blanket and gave it artificial respiration. Then he dipped the child alternately in hot and cold water. After that he rubbed the slippery child with a rough towel. He pressed and released his chest till it began to breathe and gave a city.

Question 14:

How did Andrew react to the first glimpse of the success of his efforts to help the stillborn child come alive?

Answer:

As a result of Andrew's persistent efforts, the small chest of the baby heaved up. This short heave was followed by other heart beats. Andrew turned giddy. The sense of life, throbbing under his feelings almost made him faint.

Question 15:

What was the result of Andrew's feverish efforts after the child's chest gave a short, convulsive heave?

Answer:

Andrew redoubled his efforts. The child began to gasp deeper and deeper. A bubble of mucus came from a nostril. The limbs were no longer boneless. The pale skin turned pink. Then the child cried. It came alive.

Question 16:

What was the state of the room after the resuscitation of mother and child? .

Answer:

The room was littered with blankets, towels, basins and soiled instruments. The hypodermic syringe was impaled in the linoleum by its point. The ewer was knocked over. The kettle lay on its side in a puddle of water.

Question 17:

Why did Andrew say, "Fill fetch my bag later, nurse."?

Answer:

Andrew had worked hard single-handedly and constantly to save the mother as well as the stillborn child from the jaws of death. The constant efforts, tension, desperation caused by failure combined to make him weak and dazed. His throat was dry.

Question 18:

How did Andrew assess that night's work?

Answer:

As Andrew left driller's house he felt tired. He kept thinking of the work he had done that night. He realised that at last he had done something real. For him it was an achievement.

B. Long Answer Type Questions

Question 1:

"I have done something; oh, God! I've done something real at last." Why does Andrew say this? What does it mean?

Answer:

The young doctor Andrew Manson had done a commendable work. His exclamation is justified. He had not only helped the middle-aged lady in the safe delivery of a male child but also restored them to perfect health. Susan Morgan's strength was ebbing after the delivery. She was almost pulse less. Andrew gave her an injection and worked severely to strengthen her heart.

The major achievement of Andrew was to resuscitate the stillborn child. First, he laid the child of a blanket and began the special method of respiration. Then he tried the hot and cold water treatment dipping the baby alternately. He laboured in vain for half an hour. He then made another last effort. He rubbed the child with a rough towel. He went on pressing and releasing the baby's little chest with both his hands. At last the baby responded. His chest heaved. Andrew redoubled his efforts. The child was gasping now. A bubble of mucus came from his tiny nostril. The pale skin turned pink. His limbs became hard. Then came the child's cry.

Question 2:

'There lies a great difference between textbook medicine and the world of a practising physician.' Discuss.

Answer:

Normally, the medicines prescribed in the textbooks are used by the practising

physicians. However, in extreme cases of emergency, the physician's experience, resourcefulness and practical approach become far more important than the theoretical knowledge. For example, a victim of bum-injury, snakebite or suffocation through drowning needs immediate help. The nearest available doctor may not have all the facilities needed for the case. In such a situation first-aid is a must to save the patient's life before rushing him to the hospital for proper care. With limited resources at his command, the practising physician exercises all his practical experience to control the damage to the minimum and check the victim's state from further deterioration. A stitch in time does save nine in such cases. The practical help comes as a boon.

Question 3:

Why was Andrew Manson called in? How did he react to the call of duty?

Answer:

Andrew Manson had just begun his medical practice in the small Welsh mining town of Blaenelly. He was called in to attend to Susan Morgan, who was expecting her first child after being married for nearly twenty years. Her husband, Joe Morgan had been waiting for an hour outside the closed surgery. It was nearly midnight when Andrew reached there. As Joe acquainted Andrew with his wife's condition, Andrew forgot his own affairs. He went inside his house for his bag and immediately left for the driller's place.

Since his services were not immediately needed by the expecting mother, he decided to wait downstairs. He re-examined her after an hour. It was at 3:30 am when the nurse summoned him. He struggled for an hour before the child was born. Then he worked feverishly to revive the weak mother and the stillborn child. He had to use all his knowledge and experience in discharging his duty. He did not pay attention to his own physical tiredness or mental tension. Duty came first and he responded to it with single-minded devotion.

Question 4:

Give a brief account of the efforts made by Andrew to revive the stillborn baby.

Answer:

A shiver of horror passed over Andrew as he gazed at the still form of the newborn baby. Though it was a perfectly formed boy, its limp warm body was white. The whiteness meant suffocation caused by lack of oxygen. Andrew remembered the treatment given to such a case in the Samaritan. Before the hot and cold water came he had asked for, he laid the child upon a blanket and gave it artificial respiration. Then he dipped the child alternately in hot and cold water. Now, the child was quite slippery. He rubbed it with a rough towel. Then he pressed and released his chest till it heaved up. It was followed by other heaves. Andrew redoubled his efforts. The child started gasping. A bubble of mucus came from one tiny nostril. The pale skin turned pink. The limbs were no longer boneless. His head did not lie back spinelessly. The child gave a cry. It came alive.

Question 5:

Compare and contrast Andrew's emotional, mental and physical state at the beginning of the story and at the end.

Answer:

At the beginning of the story Andrew is physically tired and emotionally upset. He has just returned from a disappointing evening with Christine, the girl he loved. His thoughts are heavy and muddled. The episode he had witnessed at Cardiff station still filled his mind with sadness. Though he thought of marriage as a blissful state, he couldn't help remembering the miserable failure of many marriages.

At the end of the story, Andrew is physically exhausted but emotionally cheerful and mentally alert. His mind is filled with joy and self-satisfaction. He has performed an unusual feat, no less than a miracle. He calls upon God as witness that he has done something real at last. This sense of achievement helps him to overcome physical fatigue. His sense of duty towards his patients helps him to attend them wholeheartedly. He forgets his personal feelings and thinks only of reviving the patients.

Question 6:

What impression do you form of Andrew Manson on the basis of the story 'Birth'?

Answer:

Andrew Manson is a young man who has recently qualified as a doctor and started his medical practice as an assistant to Dr Edward Page in the small Welsh mining town of Blaenelly. He is in love with Christine and thinks of marriage as an idyllic state. His heart is overflowing with love. His steady mind and reason help him see the marriages of many persons as dismal failures.

Andrew is mature enough to keep his private and professional lives apart. Once confronted with his responsibility, he discharges his obligations to the utmost capacity. He is duty conscious. He is not a theorist only. He believes in practical approach. He is pragmatic and is not afraid to try unique methods.

Andrew has a tender heart. He is aware of the feelings of others. He knows how deeply Susan loved her coming baby. He has polite manners and reassuring tone. On the whole, Andrew impresses us as a dedicated doctor.

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