



INDIAN SCHOOL MUSCAT

SENIOR SECTION

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

CLASS IX

THE LAST LEAF - O. HENRY



DATE:

SUMMARY

Sue and Johnsy were two young artists. They lived together in a small flat situated on the third storey of an old house. Johnsy fell seriously ill with pneumonia in November. Sue was worried and sent for the doctor. He told Sue that Johnsy had lost the will to live. Medicines would not help her.

Sue tried her best to make Johnsy take interest in things around her. She talked about clothes, fashion and brought her drawing board into Johnsy's room and started painting. She also whistled while painting. Johnsy looked at an ivy creeper outside on the wall shedding its leaves. She started counting backwards from twelve. Sue asked what it was all about. Johnsy said that she would die with the falling of the last leaf. Sue told her that was all nonsense. But it had no effect on Johnsy.

Behrman, an old painter, lived on the ground floor. He had a dream that he would one day paint a masterpiece. Sue told Behrman about Johnsy's strange fancy. Both he and Sue went to Johnsy's room while she was sleeping. They saw the ivy creeper had only one leaf left on it. It was raining and seemed that the last leaf would fall anytime.

Johnsy awoke from her sleep and saw the last leaf. It was green and healthy. Johnsy looked at it every hour but it didn't fall even in the stormy evening. This revived Johnsy's will to live.

Johnsy admitted that she was a wicked girl. The last leaf had shown her that. It was a sin to want to die. She asked for a mirror and had lots of hot soup.

Next morning Sue told Johnsy about Behrman. He had been ill for only two days. The guard found him on his bed. His clothes and shoes were wet. He had been shivering in the stormy night. He had painted that last leaf on the wall that night. He caught pneumonia and died. The last leaf was his masterpiece. He painted it the night the last leaf fell.

I. Read the extra t given below and answer the questions that follow :

1. Johnsy, it seems, has made up her mind that she is not going to get well. If she doesn't want to live, medicines will not help her.
 - a) What was the doctor's belief?
 - b) What is Johnsy's illness ?
 - c) Name the writer.
 - d) Give the meaning of the idiom 'made up her mind'.

2. She talked about clothes and fashions, but Johnsy did not respond. Johnsy continued to lie still on her bed. She brought her drawing-board into Johnsy's room and started painting.
 - a) Why did Sue talk about clothes and fashion?
 - b) Why did Johnsy continue to lie still on her bed?
 - c) Why did Sue bring her drawing-board into Johnsy's room?
 - d) Which value of Sue's character is revealed through these lines?

3. He was a sixty-year-old painter. His lifelong dream was to paint a masterpiece but that had remained a dream. Sue poured out her worries to Behrman.
 - a) Who is being talked about here?
 - b) What was his lifelong dream? Why had it remained unfulfilled so far?
 - c) Why did Sue pour out her worries to Behrman?
 - d) Why do you think Behrman listened to Sue?

II. Answer the following questions in 30-40 words:

1. What kind of a friend was Sue to Johnsy?
2. How did Johnsy associate herself with the falling of leaves?
3. Who were Sue and Johnsy and how were they living?
4. What sacrifice did Behrman make for Johnsy?

III. Answer the following questions in 100-120 words :

1. How was the life of Johnsy saved from Pneumonia, depression and loneliness?
2. Do you think the feeling of depression Johnsy has is common among teenagers?