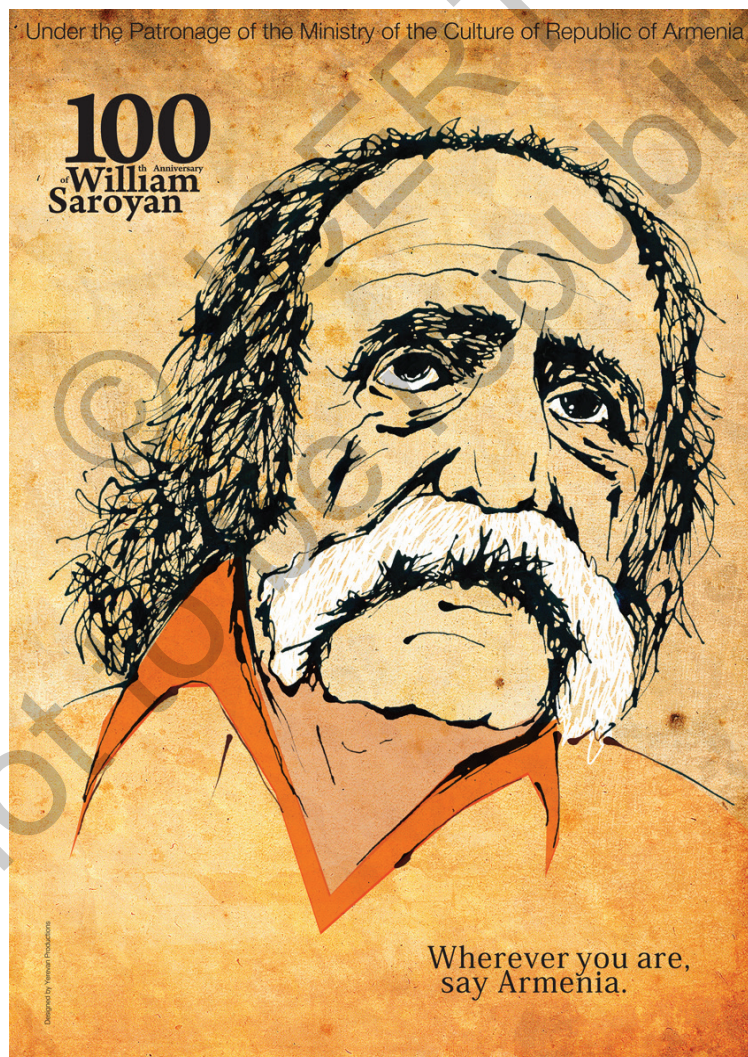


The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse

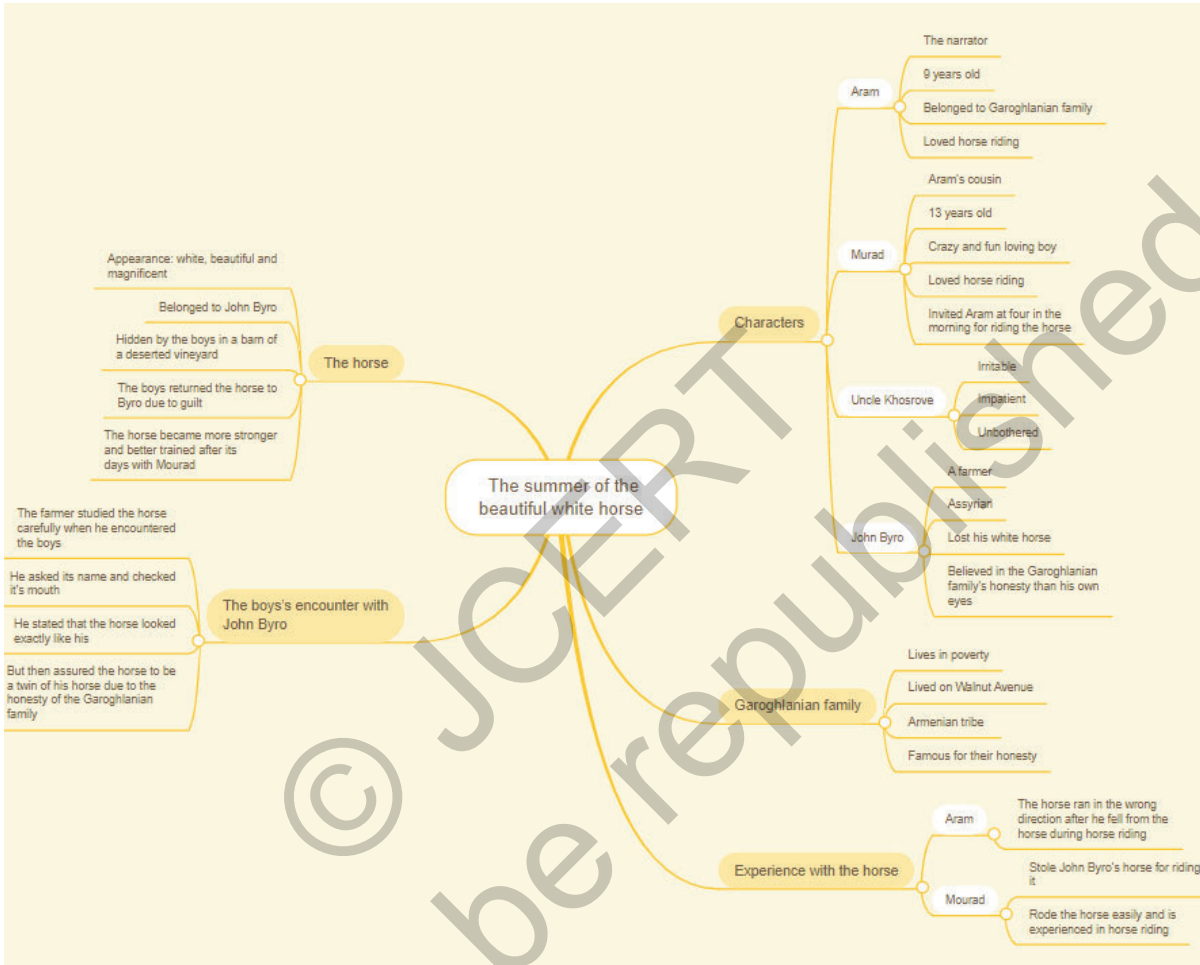


By William Saroyan

INTRODUCTION

“The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse” is a short story by William Saroyan. The story revolves around

two Armenian boys ‘Aram’ and ‘Murad’. Aram is nine years old and he is the narrator of the story. While Murad was thirteen and was Aram’s cousin. They belonged to the Garoghlanian tribe.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William Saroyan (August 31, 1908 – May 18, 1981) was an Armenian-American novelist, playwright, and short story writer. He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1940, and in 1943 won the Academy Award for Best Story for the film adaptation of his novel The Human Comedy.

MINDMAP

CHARACTERS

1. Aram

Aram is the narrator of the short story. He is a nine-year-old Armenian boy and a member of the Garoghlanian family, who live in the San Joaquin Valley in California. The Garoghlanians

are poor and he has dreamed of riding a horse his entire life.

2. Mourad

Mourad is Aram's thirteen-year-old cousin. His family believes that he is "crazy". Mourad "borrows" the horse from John Byro by himself and keeps it hidden in a barn for over a month.

3. Uncle Khosrove

Khosrove is Aram and Mourad's "crazy" uncle. It is believed that Mourad has inherited the "crazy streak" from his uncle Khosrove. He is a tall man who is always angry and impatient.

4. John Byro

John Byro is an Assyrian farmer and a friend of the Garoghlanian family. Byro is the owner of the white horse.

5. Narrator's mother

PLOT SUMMARY IN POINTS

The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse is narrated by a nine-year-old Armenian boy named Aram, a member of the Garoghlanian tribe, living among the lush fruit orchards and vineyards of the San Joaquin valley in California.

One morning Aram is awakened at four in the morning by his thirteen-year-old cousin Mourad, who everyone thinks is crazy.

Aram is astonished to see that Mourad is sitting on a beautiful white horse.

He cannot understand where Mourad got this beautiful horse when they do not have enough money to afford one.

In spite of being poor, the Garoghlanian tribe is noted for its honesty and trust. It is unthinkable that Mourad would have stolen the horse.

Mourad is a crazy child. Mourad's crazy behavior was considered to be of natural descent from their uncle Khosrov. Uncle Khosrove was an enormous man who was always furious and impatient.

Aram was invited to ride on the horse with Mourad. They enjoyed rides on the horse for a few hours. Mourad is determined to keep it, and they try their best to keep the horse a secret from others. They hid it from the rest of the world by keeping it in a barn of the deserted vineyard.

Aram came to know that the horse was stolen from John Byro. That afternoon John Byro came to Aram's house. He reported to Aram's mother that his white horse which had been stolen a month ago was still missing. Again uncle Khosrove became annoyed, he said, "It's no harm, don't cry over a horse."

Two weeks later, when they were going to take the horse back to its hiding place, they met Byro on the road. The farmer was extremely surprised. He recognized his horse but refused to believe that the boys had stolen it.

Later the boys return the horse. That afternoon John Byro came to Aram's

house to inform them that the stolen horse had been returned.

WORD MEANINGS

imaginable—that one can imagine.

mysterious—that cannot be explained.

longings—desires, wishes

hurry—make haste, be quick

impatient—rash, restless,

Awful—terrible

Deserted—lonely

Descendant—offspring

hurry—make haste, be quick

humour—the element of laughter

barn—place for storing grain

furious—full of anger, fierce,

SHORT ANSWERS TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1. How does the narrator describe the Garoghlanian family?

Ans. Garoghlanian family had the reputation for honesty that has been maintained by its family members for hundreds of years. Everyone trusted them. These people took pride in the fact that they were honest in spite of their poverty.

Q2. What did the narrator see when he looked out of the window? Why couldn't he believe his eyes?

Ans. The narrator heard a tap on the window of his room. When he

looked out, he saw his cousin Mourad sitting on a beautiful white horse. He could not believe his eyes because Mourad belonged to a poor family. He could not afford to buy such a lovely horse. Surely, he had stolen it.

Q3. Who was the real owner of the beautiful white horse? How did Aram come to know about him?

Ans. John Byro was the real owner of the white horse. He was a farmer. On a visit to Aram's house he complained of his loss to uncle Khosrove. This assured Aram that the horse had been stolen by Mourad.

Q4. What was Aram's experience when he rode the white horse alone?

Ans. Aram was keen to ride the white horse alone. He leaped to the horse-back and even kicked into its muscles. It snorted and began to run. It went out of control. It leaped over seven vines. Aram fell but the horse continued running.

Q5. What change did John Byro notice in his horse after it was returned to him?

Ans. John Byro was not only happy but also surprised when he got his missing horse back. He failed to understand how his horse had become stronger and better tempered than before. He thanked God for the change.

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1. Comment on the role of Mourad, the narrator, in the story.

Ans. Mourad, the son of Zorab, was the 13-year old cousin of Aram. He was considered as crazy as his uncle Khosrove. He was not as honest as his family or tribe. He did not hesitate to steal John Byro's horse. He was as fond of horse riding as his cousin. But he did not have the means to buy a horse. Very cleverly he hid the horse in a deserted barn and took it out at daybreak for a joy-ride. He loved adventure and singing. He had remarkable self-confidence. He said boastfully that he had a way with a horse, a dog and a farmer. He was not a thief. He returned the horse to its owner John Byro after about six weeks.

Q2. Compare and contrast the characters of Mourad and Aram.

Ans. Mourad and Aram were cousins thirteen and nine years old respectively. Both longed for a horse ride. But their family was too poor to buy a horse. Both were adventure-loving. Both knew that their family was well known for honesty and right conduct. But Mourad could not help stealing John Byro's horse. While he had a streak of craziness, Aram was honest and

simple-hearted. Mourad was more talented and bolder than Aram. He domesticated the wild horse of John Byro. He repaired the injured wing of a robin bird; he knew how to deal with a horse, a dog and a farmer. Comparatively, Aram was timid and low-lying.

MCQs

Q1. Who is the author of "The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse"?

- A. AJ Cronin
- B. William Wordsworth
- C. William Shakespeare
- D. William Saroyan

Ans D

Q2. What were the hallmarks of the Garoghlanian tribe?

- A. Trust
- B. Honesty
- C. Both (A) and (B)
- D. None of the above

Ans C

Q3. "The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse" is a story of two _____ boys.

- A. Armenian B. Arabian
- C. Assyrian D. African

Ans A

Q4. What according to Aram, was his first longing?

- A. To own a horse
- B. To become rich
- C. To ride a horse
- D. To visit a vineyard

Ans C

Q5. How does Aram describe the horse?

- A. Magnificent & lovely
- B. Beautiful white horse
- C. Both (A) and (B)
- D. None of the above

Ans C

Q6. No member of the Garoghlanian family could be _____.

- A. poor
- B. rich
- C. a thief
- D. crazy

Ans C

Q7. Mourad was considered the natural descendant of his _____.

- A. father
- B. uncle
- C. grandfather
- D. great-grandfather

Ans B

Q8. How would you describe uncle Khosrove?

- A. Hot tempered
- B. Irritable

- C. Impatient
- D. All of the above

Ans D

Q9. What did uncle Khosrove do to stop anyone from talking?

- A. By beating them
- B. By walking away
- C. By shouting at them
- D. By ignoring them

Ans C

Q10. What was uncle Khosrove's customary line?

- A. Ignore it; pay no attention.
- B. Forget it.
- C. It is harmless; ignore it.
- D. It is no harm; pay no attention to it.

Ans D

Q11. When Aram rode the horse alone, it ran down the road to the _____.

- A. vineyard
- B. irrigation ditch
- C. field
- D. countryside

Ans A

Q12. Mourad had been hiding the horse _____.

- A. in a stable
- B. in a barn of a vineyard
- C. at a secret place of his house
- D. None of the above

Ans B

Q13. Why did the horse's owner refuse to believe that the boys had stolen his horse?

- A. Because he didn't examine the horse carefully
- B. Because their family was known for honesty
- C. Because he had found his horse elsewhere
- D. Because his horse had a twin

Ans B

Q14. When did the boys return the horse?

- A. After Aram learned to ride it
- B. After an year

- C. After six months
- D. After they ran into John Byro

Ans D

Q15. Who is the narrator of the story "The Summer of a Beautiful White Horse"?

- A. William Saroyan
- B. Aram
- C. John Byro
- D. Mourad

Ans B

Q16. What idea/theme does "The Summer of a Beautiful White Horse" entail?

- A. Honesty
- B. Honour
- C. Trust
- D. All of the above

Ans D