

This romantic life in Kashmir was drawing to its end after three glorious months. Miss Joan was leaving a week earlier than Mrs. Rhodes, and about two days before she left I took her alone to the hotel for dinner. We walked to the hotel in perfect silence, a silence so heavy that I could hardly breathe. The hotel seemed to be far away and yet not far enough. That night, as I served her at table the temptation to touch her was overpowering, and I had almost forgotten myself when I dropped her coffee cup, which made me pull myself together and realize my position and my caste. On the way home there was a bridge over the canal to be crossed. She stopped on the bridge without a word, so I stopped beside her looking on to the calm water of the canal shining between the gigantic chenar trees. In the distance a gramophone was playing and the music floated over the water. We stood for a long time without saying a word to each other. I think the parting was disturbing her. There was something which she could not have explained and which she was trying to express. It might have been just a fancy of her own, or it may have been the subconscious knowledge of the secret, consuming passion of her attendant that was affecting her on this calm and beautiful night as we tarried on the bridge. It seemed to me that we stood there for ages, as if neither of us dare break the magic spell of night and music. Our houseboat was only a few yards from the bridge, and the Goodnight was the only word that passed between us as we parted - everything then went into the darkness. The Mail lorry came up to the bridge to take her away from the romantic city of Srinagar and away from me. -After she had taken her seat I put awoollen rug over her knees to keep her warm on the journey, and she handed me a ten-rupee note as a parting gift and sweetly said Good-bye. I watched her wave her hand till the lorry was out of sight. Then I realized what I had lost, and lost for ever.

Questions

1. What was the matter with the attendant as he walked with Miss Joan to the hotel? Why did they not talk to each other?

Miss Joan left Kashmir a week earlier than Mrs. Rhodes. In fact, the attended did not take the latter to the hotel. In this way, they did not talk to each other.

2. After reading the passage can you give reasons to show what caste the attendant belonged to?

After reading the passage, it can be assumed that the attended belonged to Sub-caste of Hindu. During dinner, he dropped her coffee cup. This act made him realise about his caste. In short, if he had not belonged to lower caste, he would not have had any issue having dropped her coffee cup.

3. The author mentions the chenar trees of Kashmir. Give a brief but graphic description of these trees.

The chenar trees of Kashmir are very beautiful and charming. They have the potential to grab one's attention towards them. This phenomenon can be gauged by the incident when attended and his guest were returning from hotel, they remained there without saying a word for a long time because they were attracted towards them through and through.

4. "I think the parting was disturbing her." Was it the romantic atmosphere of the surroundings, the thought of having to leave Kashmir, the kindness of her attendant, or thoughts of home that were the cause of the disturbance?

The guest was disturbed at the time of departure. The reason is that she enjoyed all the charms of this beautiful land. Besides, it was difficult for her to leave her obedient attendant.

5. Why does the author call Srinagar a romantic city? Give the meaning of "romantic." Show how it may apply to Srinagar.

According to the author, Srinagar is the romantic city because it has all the charms of nature. In fact, they make this heavenly city more attractive. Where the meaning of romantic is concerned, it means a thing containing all the elements of nature.

6. Why did Miss Joan give the attendant a ten-rupee note? Do friends do such things?

Miss Joan did not give attendant a ten rupee note. In fact, Mrs. Rhodes did so. The purpose for that act was to give him the reward for his services to her. Friends do not do such things. They just give gifts either at their arrival or at their departure.