

## Class 12 - Vistas

### Ch. 4 - The Enemy

Yes, it was a white man. The wet cap fell away and there was his wet yellow hair, long, as though for many weeks it had not been cut, and upon his young and tortured face was a rough yellow beard. He was unconscious and knew nothing that they did for him.

*The injured man was an American. As his cap fell off, they saw his wet, yellow – coloured hair which had not been cut for a long time. He was young, his face had such marks which indicated that he had been tortured. He had a rough, unkept yellow – coloured beard. As he had fainted, he did not know of the presence of Sadao and Hana.*

Now Sadao remembered the wound, and with his expert fingers he began to search for it. Blood flowed freshly at his touch. On the right side of his lower back Sadao saw that a gun wound had been reopened. The flesh was blackened with powder. Sometime, not many days ago, the man had been shot and had not been tended. It was bad chance that the rock had struck the wound.

Tended: cared for, looked after

*Sadao was reminded that the man was wounded as he had seen blood stains on the sand. As he was a doctor, he moved his trained fingers around the man's back to search for the wound. He felt blood oozing out of a wound in the lower part of his back. It was a gun shot. The man had been injured a few days ago. He had not got any medical help to treat the wound as he had himself used some black – coloured powdery substance on it. The sharp rocks on the shore had pierced it and so, it was bleeding.*

“Oh, how he is bleeding!” Hana whispered again in a solemn voice. The mists screened them now completely, and at this time of day no one came by. The fishermen had gone home and even the chance beachcombers would have considered the day at an end.

Solemn: serious and concerned

Beachcomber: a vagrant who makes a living by searching beaches for articles of value and selling them

*Hana was concerned that the man was injured and said in a low voice that he was bleeding. The mist had intensified now. The three of them could not be spotted by anyone. Moreover, the fishermen and the ragpickers did not visit the place at that time of the day.*

“What shall we do with this man?” Sadao muttered. But his trained hands seemed of their own will to be doing what they could to stanch the fearful bleeding. He packed the wound with

the sea moss that strewed the beach. The man moaned with pain in his stupor but he did not awaken.

Muttered: speak in a low voice



Stanch: stop or restrict (a flow of blood) from a wound.

Sea moss: a kind of seaweed

Strewed: to be scattered untidily over a place or area

Moaned: a low cry in pain

Stupor: a state of unconsciousness

“The best thing that we could do would be to put him back in the sea,” Sadao said, answering himself.

Now that the bleeding was stopped for the moment he stood up and dusted the sand from his hands.

“Yes, undoubtedly that would be best,” Hana said steadily. But she continued to stare down at the motionless man.

“If we sheltered a white man in our house we should be arrested and if we turned him over as a prisoner, he would certainly die,” Sadao said.

“The kindest thing would be to put him back into the sea,” Hana said. But neither of them moved. They were staring with a curious repulsion upon the inert figure.

Repulsion: a strong dislike

Inert: motionless

*Sadao answered to himself and said that the best thing was to put the man back into the sea. As the bleeding stopped, he stood up and removed the dust from his hands. Hana supported his opinion but looked intently at the man as he lay still. Sadao said that if they gave him shelter, they would be arrested for sheltering an enemy. If they handed him over to the Japanese army as a prisoner, then he would die in the prison. As he thought that both the options were not favourable, so the best option was to put him back into the sea. Hana added that the kindest act for them was to put him back into the sea. Both of them did not move ahead to do so, rather they stared at the motionless figure with dislike. They disliked him because he was an enemy – an American.*