

Class - 12th ; Vistas

Ch. 4 - The Enemy

“What is he?” Hana whispered.

“There is something about him that looks American,” Sadao said. He took up the battered cap. Yes, there, almost gone, was the faint lettering. “A sailor,” he said, “from an American warship.” He spelled it out: “U.S. Navy.” The man was a prisoner of war!

Battered: torn and worn out

Hana was inquisitive as she asked about the man’s identity. Sadao replied that he appeared to be an American. He picked up the torn cap and read the words written on it which were slightly visible. He said that the man was a sailor from an American warship and read out the words – “U.S. Navy” written on the cap. They concluded that the man had been taken into captivity during the war.

“He has escaped.” Hana cried softly, “and that is why he is wounded.”

“In the back,” Sadao agreed.

Sadao and Hana discussed that the man had tried to escape from the prison and had been shot in the back.

They hesitated, looking at each other. Then Hana said with resolution:

“Come, are we able to put him back into the sea?”

They were not able to gather the courage to throw him into the sea. Hana called upon Sadao with firmness. She asked him if he was ready to put him into the sea.

“If I am able, are you?” Sadao asked.

“No,” Hana said, “But if you can do it alone...”

Sadao told her that he was able to do so and asked that did Hana have the courage for it. Hana replied in the negative and added that if he could not do it by himself, then she had to help him.

Sadao hesitated again. "The strange thing is," he said, "that if the man were whole I could turn him over to the police without difficulty. I care nothing for him. He is my enemy. All Americans are my enemy. And he is only a common fellow. You see how foolish his face is. But since he is wounded..."

Sadao was reluctant in throwing the man into the sea. He reasoned that if the man was well, he would hand him over to the police without any hesitation. He added that he was not concerned about the man and considered him to be an enemy as he was an American. He commented that the injured man was a common man as his face looked as if he was a foolish person. He wanted to say that he was not bothered about the injured man but his only concern was that he was wounded.

"You also cannot throw him back to the sea," Hana said. "Then there is only one thing to do. We must carry him into the house."

Hana said that if he could not throw him into the sea, then the second option was to carry him home.

"But the servants?" Sadao inquired.

Sadao was concerned that the servants would object as they would shelter an enemy.

"We must simply tell them that we intend to give him to the police — as indeed we must, Sadao. We must think of the children and your position. It would endanger all of us if we did not give this man over as a prisoner of war." "Certainly," Sadao agreed. "I would not think of doing anything else."

Hana said that they would tell them that they intended to hand him over to the police once he recovered. She told him that they must do that. She added that they must consider their children's future and Sadao's position. If they did not hand over a prisoner of war to the police, they would be in danger. Sadao replied that certainly he would do so and he did not think of doing anything else.

Thus agreed, together they lifted the man. He was very light, like a fowl that had been half-starved for a long time until it is only feathers and skeleton. So, his arms hanging, they carried him up the steps and into the side door of the house. This door opened into a passage, and down the passage they carried the man towards an empty bedroom.



Fowl: cock, hen

Sadao and Hana lifted the injured man into the house. He was very light. The writer compares his weight to that of a hen that has not been fed for a long time and its body loses flesh and reduces into mere feathers and skeleton. The man's arms were hanging and the duo carried him up the steps into the side door of the house. The door opened into a passage and they went down the passage towards an empty bedroom.