

The Cow of the Barricades

A. Choose the correct answer

1. Which of the following is not true about Gauri?

d. she was happy with the offerings as she did not have to worry about food.

2. Which of the following is not true about the Master?

a. he was happy with the workmen who were carrying weapons to fight against the government.

3. Which of the following does not remind us of the Mahatma?

d. her foolishness in jumping over the barricades facing the armed opponents.

4. Which of the following statements is not true?

d. Gauri sought to destroy the unity of the opponents

B. Answer the following questions in a sentence or two each

1. Why does the author say that Gauri was not a god-dedicated cow?

A: The author says Gauri was not a god-dedicated cow because she never took the liberty to eat grams from local shops or huddle in ponds.

2. What did Gauri do on appearing at the hermitage on Tuesdays?

A: On appearing at the hermitage on Tuesdays Gauri would stand close to the Master and nibble at his hair. The Master used to fondle and feed her to her great pleasure and gratitude and then she would disappear among the bushes.

3. What did the people do with their offerings untouched by Gauri?

A: People would give the food untouched by Gauri to the river and the fishes festively jumped to eat it. Astonishingly, crocodiles never appeared at this time, making fishes fearlessly gorge on the food.

4. What does the author say about the snake and the rat playing under the master's bed?

A: The author says that one fine morning the Master found the snake and the rat playing under his bed. He goes on to say that this was a moment of ultimate understanding and tolerance: when the seeker of truth finds harmony in everything, traditional animosities cease to exist.

5. Why were women and children taken to the camp by the fields?

A: Women and children were taken to the camp by the fields to save them from the imminent attack of the government army to capture the town.

6. What made the workmen furious?

A: The sight of Gauri approaching the barricade accompanied by a crowd infuriated the workmen. They very well knew that with a cow and a throng of men around, it was impossible to take on the enemy.

7. Why did the workmen lay down their arms?

A: Though initially irritated, the workmen were afraid to harm Gauri and the chant of ‘Vande Mataram’ moved them. All of them felt uplifted, felt that the cow would somehow protect them and laid down their arms.

8. What did Seth Jammalal Dwarak do after buying the two houses on either side of the barricades?

A: Following Gauri’s heroic sacrificial death, Seth Jammalal Dwarak bought two houses on either side of the barricade, cut a loop road through them and erected a metal statue of hers in the middle.

9. How did the carpenters make money after the death of Gauri?

A: It was by making and selling the statues of the deified Gauri that the carpenters made money after her death.

C. Answer the following questions in about 100 words each

1. Describe the march of Gauri to the barricades.

A: On learning that the army of the government was going to take the town, the workmen erected a barricade and braced themselves up for a fight, despite the master’s call to shun violence. At a night, when the war was about to begin, Gauri appeared and approached the barricade with an adoring crowd following her. They rang bells, burnt camphor and broke coconuts at her feet. The sight infuriated the workmen as they knew with a cow and a throng of men around, it was impossible to take on the enemy.

2. Describe the sacrifice of Gauri.

A: Immediately before the commencement of the battle between the government army and the town workmen, there appeared Gauri. She approached the barricade with an adoring crowd following her. The sight infuriated the workmen as they knew that with a cow and a throng of men around, it was impossible to take on the enemy. Though initially irritated, the workmen were afraid to harm Gauri and the chant of ‘Vande Mataram’ moved them. All of them felt uplifted, felt that the cow would somehow protect them and laid down their arms. The marching soldiers saw her atop the barricade and on noting her looks and tear, they hailed Mahatama Gandhi. But their chief fired a shot which passed through Gauri’s head, ending her sublime life.

3. How did the townsfolk honor Gauri after her heroic death?

A: Following Gauri’s heroic sacrificial death, she was elevated to the status of a god. Seth Jammalal Dwarak bought two houses on either side of the barricade, cut a loop road through them and erected a metal statue of hers in the middle. People began to offer her flowers, honey,

perfumed sweetmeat and the first green grass of spring. Children would jump over the railings and play between her legs. The carpenters made money after her death by making and selling the statues of the deified Gauri.

4. What made the master resign from the Presidentship?

A: On learning about the imminent attack of the government army, the workmen took women and children to the camp by the fields to save them. They secured houses and hoarded valuables. The workmen erected a barricade, collected arms and braced themselves up for the fight. But the Master was against violence but his appeals for peace fell on deaf ears. The men were bent on fighting and nothing could dissuade them. The turn of events drove him to disappointment and despair. So he resigned from the Presidentship and attempted to save the town from bloodshed through prayer and meditation.

5. Describe how the people prepared themselves for the battle.

A: On learning about the imminent attack of the government army, the workmen took women and children to the camp by the fields to save them. They secured houses and hoarded valuables. The workmen erected a barricade, collected arms such as scythes, picks, crowbars, swords and rifles and braced themselves up for the fight. But the Master was against violence but his appeals for peace fell on deaf ears. The men were bent on fighting and nothing could dissuade them. The turn of events drove him to disappointment, despair and resignation from the Presidentship.

6. How did the people respond to the mysterious appearance of Gauri?

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D. Answer the following question in about 300 words

1. Write an essay on the symbolism in ‘The Cow of the Barricades’

2. Which aspects of the Mahatma’s personality does Raja Rao highlight through the image of the holy cow?

A: The story ‘The Cow of the Barricades’ is a symbolic representation of the Indian struggle for independence under the inspiring leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. In the story, the Master is none

other than the Mahatma and the heroic sacrificial death of Gauri symbolizes the enduring source of energy that lies in his purity, peace, goodness and unselfishness.

Gauri was not a god-dedicated cow; she never took the liberty to eat grams from local shops or huddle in ponds. On appearing at the hermitage on Tuesdays Gauri would stand close to the Master and nibble at his hair. The Master used to fondle and feed her to her great pleasure and gratitude and then she would disappear among the bushes. Gauri would not accept food offered by others. People would give the food untouched by Gauri to the river and the fishes festively jumped to eat it. Astonishingly, crocodiles never appeared at this time, and the fishes were able to fearlessly gorge on the food.

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