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RAJESH KUMAR GIRI WITH YOU ALWAYS

HAROUN AND SEA OF STORIES

BY-SALMAN RUSHDIE

Summary: -

- * **Introduction to Author: -** Salman Rushdie happens to be Indian-born Muslim novelist. He had to spend many years in hiding because Irani Mullah Khomeini issued a fatwa ordering his death over some passages in his book. 'The Satanic Verse.' He has an open mind. He calls upon the Muslims the world over to take Islam into the modern age, to reform it and to join the main stream. He also argues that the Koran should not be treated as perfect or 'infallible'
- * **The saddest City in Alifbay country: -** It stood by a gloomy sea full of glum fishes which were uneatable. The sad city had big factories in the north. Those factories also manufactured sadness in the form of dark smoke.
- * **Rashid Khalifa the popular story Teller: -** But in the old part of the city and ruined buildings lived a happy young fellow named Haroun (son). He was the only child of Rashid Khalifa who was well known for his cheery stories. He was a very popular figure. He could go on telling short and winding never-ending tales. This skill earned him two nicknames. His admirers called him the Ocean of Notions because he was stuffed with stories just as the sea was many hours deep. Rashid proved himself a good husband. He had laughter, while his wife Soraya had a sweet voice as she sang. Haroun was lucky to grow up in such a happy home.
- * **Trouble Approaching: -** But something went wrong, The family was infected by the poison of sadness, It also became as sad as the city, Soraya once stopped singing in between, Haroun (son) guessed that there was a trouble overtaking his family.
- * **Rashid-almost a magician: -** Rashid was so busy in making and telling stories and could not notice changes in his wife's behaviour. He was a busy and demanding man. He drew large crowds when on stage. Poor children, old men and even stray cows, monkeys and parrots showed interest in his tales. Haroun often thought of his father as a juggler.
- * **Haroun's query about the source of Rashid's Stories: -** Haroun (son) wondered where his father's stories came from. 'Rashid's (father) tales were a mixture of facts and fictions, processes, wicked



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uncles, ruffians, heroes and haunting tunes, Haroun (son) often questioned his father (Rashid Khalifa) about the source of his stories. But he never got a straight or satisfactory reply. Father (Rashid Khalifa) only turned his eyebrows and said that he got his tales from the great Story Sea. The stories flowed from an invisible tap of water.

* **A Happy Family:** The Rashid Khalifa as lived in the ground floor a small house with pink walls, green windows, blue balconies, looks like a cake. It was neither a high rise (rich) building for rich people nor the hut of a poor. So Haroun (son) was lucky, but luck did not last longer.

* **Haroun's (son's) second question:** - Haroun was the only child, he was inquisitive, He want to know why his parents didn't bring to the world more children?, the father gave no straight answer. Rashid Khalifa (The Father) never take short cut if there was a short cut available, he said that he had used up full quota of child stuff in making Haroun (son). So Haroun (son) was equal to four - five kiddies. But Soraya (Wife) gave a simpler reply. She admitted sadly that they did try to have more children but failed.

* **Issue less SenGupta Couple:** - Upstairs lived another SenGupta (neighbour) couples, Mr. SenGupta was a clerk at city corp. He was thin and miserly, his wife Mrs. SenGupta (Oneeta) was fat and generous, they were issueless, and as a result Oneeta (Mrs. SenGupta) showered her affection on Haroun. She brought him sweetmeats and hugged him. Haroun, however, didn't like the touch of loose flesh. Mr. SenGupta (Oneeta) ignored Haroun. He showed interest in Soraya. He used to criticise Rashid Khalifa, he always says "Life was not a story book or joke shop, so there was no use of making useless stories". Haroun began to hate Mr. SenGupta because he spoke against Rashid Khalifa.

* **Rashid in great demand at election:** - At election time leaders of various political parties approached Rashid to amuse the audience at their rallies with his sugary tales. People lost faith in political leaders, as liars. But people like Rashid Khalifa who never claimed that his stories were true. He admitted frankly that his stories were made up out of his own head.

* **Soraya Elopess with Mr. SenGupta:** - Once when Haroun was returning home from school, he was caught in the first downpour of the rainy season. He saw Mrs. Oneeta standing on her upstairs balcony and crying. Inside the house, Rashid's face was also wet tearing. Bad news was that Haroun's mother, Soraya had run off with Mr. SenGupta, at 11 a.m., she had sent Rashid to Haroun's room to search for some missing socks. That was a part of her plan to get away with SenGupta in a taxi. Before eloping, she left a note reporting nasty things, Mr. SenGupta used to say about Rashid. But she ended the letter expressing her affection for Haroun.



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*** Rashid loses his only talent of storytelling:** - Rashid looked so pathetic; Haroun (son) also accused him of wasting his time and energy in telling untrue stories. Rashid Khalifa (Father) wept and the boy felt sorry. He wanted to get his words back, but he couldn't do that. The charge hurt Rashid Khalifa so badly that he ran out of stories altogether Haroun blamed himself for his father's loss.

QUESTION AND ANSWERS

Q1. Haroun asks his father three questions, what are the questions?

ANS:-1. Haroun was curious to know where the fantastic stories came from. When Rashid, his father, told him that the stories came from the great story sea, Haroun wanted to know where his father kept the hot water from the great story sea. Another time Haroun wanted his father to tell him why he didn't have any sisters or brothers but Rashid did not give a straight answer and told him that since Haroun was as good as four or five children they could not have more. The third question that Haroun asks his father is when his mother Soraya runs away with Mr. SenGupta, their angrily asks his father. "What's the use of stories that aren't even true?"

Q2. From the answers Haroun got from his father, would you say that straight answers were beyond Rashid Khalifa?

ANS:-2. Rashid Khalifa is a storyteller and he is used to creating imaginary worlds. It is not surprising then that he does not give straight answers to any of Haroun's questions. Rashid is the Shah of Blah.

Q3. What was so terrible about the third question that Haroun 'wanted to get those words back..... Into his own mouth? Does it prove to be a terrible question after all?

ANS:-3. Haroun feels terrible after asking his father what use it was telling stories that were not true. He realizes that it is precisely what Soraya has written in the note that she has left for Rashid. Soraya has run away with Mr. SenGupta because she wanted to be with a man who was practical, not like Rashid whose head was full of make believes. As soon as he asks this question Haroun regrets hurting his father. After his Rashid loses his Powers and cannot tell fantastic tales.

Q-4. Why do you think Soraya runs away with Mr. SenGupta?

ANS:-4. Soraya is tired of her husband who lives in a make-believe world. May be she feels that her husband is not practical enough or neglecting her but there is a hint that she feels unhappy. During the early years of her marriage. She sings sweetly all the time but then one day she stops singing all of a sudden.

Q5. Are stories always lies? What is the difference between the stories that 'politics' tell and those that Rashid tells?

ANS:-5. Politicians pretends that they are telling the truth but the public could understand that they are lying. Rashid's stories interested people because he would insist that they were his creation and they trusted him.