

ENGLISH

CHAPTER 7: CHANDNI



CHANDNI

~Summary~

-by Zakir Husain Khan

The narrative of "**Chandni**," written by Zakir Husain Khan, revolves around a "**freedom fight**." Abbu Khan was an old man who resided in the city of **Almora**. He lived with his beloved pet goats, which were important to him because he lacked a family. He gave them amusing names and treated them as though they were his children. Abbu Khan would usually take his goats out for grazing during the day and tie them up with a string at night to keep them safe.

Despite Abbu Khan's best attempts, his goats fled from Abbu Khan's hut one by one during the night, wanting to travel up the hills, and were **murdered** by the hill wolf as a result. This upset Abbu Khan greatly since he knew that the **hill wolf** would have murdered the goats that had fled from Abbu Khan's hut. He decided not to keep any goats as pets after the loss of his goats. Abbu Khan, on the other hand, was terribly **lonely** without his goats. So he went out and bought a new young goat, Chandni.

Abbu Khan's life was once again made **happier** by Chandni. Abbu Khan **adored** her and was cautious about keeping her from climbing the hills. He never stopped telling Chandni about his previous goats and how the hill wolf had **killed** them. Chandni sat and listened to his stories with rapt attention. Years have gone by.

Chandni, like every hill goat, was drawn to the beauty of the hills as she grew older. Notwithstanding her yearning to travel to the hills, the rope around her neck kept her from **venturing** into the hills. As a result, she began **missing meals** and ignoring Abbu Khan's stories. For a long time, Abbu Khan was perplexed by Chandni's strange behaviour, and one day, Chandni revealed her desire to Abbu Khan.

Abbu was enraged by Chandni's request, knowing that allowing her to climb the hills would be dangerous. Abbu attempted to convince Chandni, but she was **adamant** about breathing her air of **freedom**, and so nothing worked out. He trapped her in a hut after all of his attempts failed but forgot to close the window. Chandni **escaped** through the hut's window on the same day and headed towards the hills.

Chandni finally made it to the hills. She was enthralled by the grandeur of the hills and spent hours playing on them. She then heard a **grunt** from the bushes nearby, which she **assumed** was a wolf's voice. She considered returning to Abbu's home, but her heart told her that "dying on an open field is more preferable to life in a small hut." And when the terrible wolf came in front of

Chandni, she bravely battled it in the hopes of **preserving** her freedom. The next morning, Chandni was found dead.

A group of birds that watched the fight started discussing among themselves who the winner was. While others proclaimed the big wolf as the victor, a wise bird declared Chandni as the **victor** since she valiantly battled for her freedom till the very last moment.

~Conclusion~

Though Chandni was young and healthy, she wasn't as powerful as the wolf. She nevertheless resolved to fight for her freedom. The two animals fought throughout the night but the morning in the hills saw Chandni lying on the ground with her white body soaked in blood. Though the Wolf had defeated the young goat, a wise old bird declared Chandni the winner because she had fought with courage for her freedom.

NCERT SOLUTIONS

Questions (Page No. 45) (Comprehension Check - I)

Question 1. Why did Abbu Khan's goats want to run away? What happened to them in the hills?

Answer: Abbu Khan's goats wanted to run away because they wanted freedom to go to the beautiful hills and enjoy eating the fresh green grass. A wolf used to kill and eat them in the hills.

Question 2. Abbu Khan said, "No more goats in my house ever again." Then he changed his mind. Why?

Answer: Abbu Khan said, "No more goats in my house ever again." Then he changed his mind because he felt very lonely.

Question 3. Why did he buy a young goat?

Answer: He bought a young goat with the thought that the young goat would stay with him for a longer time and would not leave him for freedom.

Questions (Page No. 49) (Comprehension Check - II)

Question 1. Why did Chandni hate the rope round her neck?

Answer: Chandni hated the rope around her neck because it pulled her back from going to the beautiful hills. She wanted to be free of it knowing the possible consequences.

Question 2. "Now Abbu Khan understood Chandni's problem..." What was Chandni's problem?

Answer: Chandni's problem was that knowing the consequences, she wanted to go to the hills. She chose freedom over life. She thought that it was better to face the wolf while being free than staying chained forever.

Question 3. Abbu Khan pushed Chandni into a small hut. This shows that he

- a. was cruel.
- b. loved her and wanted to save her life.
- c. was selfish.

Answer:

- b. loved her and wanted to save her life.

Questions (Page No. 54) (Comprehension Check - III)

Question 1. Why did Chandni refuse to join the group of wild goats?

Answer: Chandni refused to join the group of wild goats because she wanted to enjoy her freedom entirely.

Question 2. Chandni fought the wolf because she

- a. was stronger than the wolf.
- b. hated the wolf.
- c. had to retain her freedom at all costs.

Answer:

- c. had to retain her freedom at all costs.

Questions (Page No. 54) (Exercise)

Question 1. Why did the wise old bird say, "Chandni is the winner"?

Answer: The wise old bird said, “Chandni is the winner” because she faced her fear like a warrior. She did not stay chained just to be alive. On the contrary, she fought for her freedom. She did not lose her freedom.

Question 2. “Death in an open field is better than life in a small hut,” Chandni said to herself. Was it the right decision? Give reasons for your answer.

Answer: “Death in an open field is better than life in a small hut,” Chandni said to herself.

Although it was a tough and brave decision, I think that one’s own life should not be the cost one pays for one’s own freedom. Chandni could have listened to Abbu Khan and stayed with him happily.

Question 3. Freedom is life. Discuss this with reference to ‘Chandni’ and ‘I Want Something in a Cage’.

Answer: Freedom is life. In the lesson “I Want Something in a Cage”, the strange man frees two doves from the cage. They were set free to enjoy freedom. The strange man, who had spent ten years in jail, knew the value of freedom.

In the chapter “Chandni” too, the struggle is for freedom but it is at the cost of her own life.