

WELLAND GOULDSMITH SCHOOL- PATULI

CLASS – XI

SUBJECT- ENGLISH LITERATURE

CHAPTER- SHORT STORY: SALVATORE

THE STORY AT A GLANCE:

- **Salvatore** by **William Somerset Maugham** is a descriptive biography of a fisherman from the narrator's point of view.
- The narrator wonders if he can hold the attention of the readers for a few pages while he sketches the portrait of a man named Salvatore who lives on an Italian island of Ischia.
- The narrator has known Salvatore since the latter was a boy of fifteen. He is described as a person with a pleasant face, a laughing mouth and care-free eyes. His brown body is as thin as a rail. He never wears shoes except on Sundays when he goes to the Church.
- He has two younger brothers and is very protective of them.
- Salvatore falls in love with a girl who lives on the Grand Marina. They are soon engaged. However, he is obliged to complete his military service. Soon enough, he joins the navy of King Victor Emmanuel as a sailor.

- Salvatore is miserable during his tenure with the navy. He feels nostalgic, homesick and misses his fiancée the most. His tenure takes him to Spezzia, Venice, Bari and China.
- In China, he contracts rheumatism of some kind. It confines him to the hospital bed for several months. He is now considered unfit for further military service and has to return home.
- In spite of his lifelong illness, he is happy to return to his family and his lady love.
- When he returns home, he sees his family on the jetty waiting eagerly for his arrival. He does not see his fiancée.
- In the evening, Salvatore decides to go and see her in person. However, she refuses to marry a man suffering from a lifelong disease.
- On being rejected by the girl, he is heartbroken and weeps on his mother's bosom. He is terribly unhappy but he does not blame the girl. His inherent goodness and true love that he felt for her does not allow him to say 'a hard word of the girl he had loved so well'.
- A few months later, Salvatore's mother tells him that a girl named Assunta wanted to marry him. She was older than him but had a little money of her own to begin a married life with him.
- They are soon married.
- They settle down in a tiny white-washed house in the middle of a handsome vineyard.

- Salvatore becomes a big husky fellow, tall and broad. He still has those trusting, kindly eyes that he had as a boy.
 - Assunta grows into a woman with a grim-visage and looks older for her years. However, she is good at heart and is a doting wife.
 - Soon enough, they become parents to two boys.
 - Salvatore, despite his ill health, works very hard to earn his livelihood. Whenever rheumatism makes it painful to work, he lies about the beach smoking and being nice to strangers, notwithstanding the terrible pain.
 - The narrator concludes Salvatore's story with a description of his laughter and a statement about the similarity of the eyes of Salvatore and his child.
 - Thus as said by the narrator, Salvatore 'possessed nothing in the world except a quality which is the rarest, the most precious and the loveliest that anyone can have', i.e., goodness. It is this quality which gave him the inner strength to pick up the shattered dreams of his life and rebuild them again.
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LITERARY DEVICES/ FIGURES OF SPEECH

SIMILES:

- brown body as thin as a rail
 - eyes like forest pools
 - held herself like a daughter of the Caesars
 - wept like a child
 - as ugly as the devil
 - enormous hands like legs of mutton
 - laugh like the laughter of an angel
 - eyes as candid as his child's
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ASSIGNMENT

Q1. Discuss the theme of love and affection as depicted in the story 'Salvatore'.

Q2. How apt is the title of the story 'Salvatore'?
