

## The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse – Important Questions

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**Q. Why is the narrator moved when he begins the story, ‘The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse’?**

**Ans.** When the narrator begins the story, he is in mood of nostalgia. He was then nine years old. The world seemed to him full of every kind of splendour that he could imagine. Life appeared to him a delightful and mysterious dream.

**Q. What was the narrator’s immediate reaction when he saw his cousin Mourad sitting on a beautiful white horse?**

**Ans.** When the narrator saw his cousin Mourad sitting on a beautiful white horse, he could not believe it. He rubbed his eyes to make sure that he was not dreaming.

**Q. “This was the part that wouldn’t permit me to believe what I saw.” What part does the narrator hint at?**

**Ans.** The narrator refers to their poverty. They had no money. They lived in extreme poverty and it was difficult to understand how they got food to satisfy their hunger. He frankly admits that every branch of the Garoghlanian family was living in the most amazing and comical poverty in the world.

**Q. Which tribe did Aram belong to? What was the image of his tribe?**

**Ans.** Aram belonged to the Garoghlanian tribe who were the natives of Armenia. This tribe was once rich and prosperous and had their lands but due to war or some other reason they had to flee from their homeland and settled in Assyria where they lived in poverty. This tribe was famous for their trust and honesty. They believed in right and wrong. They knew the art of living as they were contented with their lot. They were hospitable and men of simple faith.

**Q. What are the unique traits of Garoghlanian tribe?**

**Ans.** The Garoghlanians were men of simple faith. They were contented with their guests with coffee and tobacco. They knew the art of living, which is the celebration of being alive. Though poor, they were famous for their trust and honesty. They were proud of their honesty. They believed in right and wrong. None of them could think of deceiving anybody in the world.

**Q. Why did Aram find it hard to believe that Mourad had stolen the horse?**

**Ans.** The narrator couldn't believe that his cousin Mourad had stolen horse because they belonged to the Garoghlanian tribe. The members of their tribe were famous for their honesty. They believed in right and wrong. None of them would deceive anybody in the world.

**Q. What two character traits of Mourad are hinted at by the narrator in the initial part of the story?**

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**Ans.** Mourad was considered crazy by everybody who knew him except the narrator. He was quite crazy about horses. Secondly, he enjoyed being alive more than anybody else.

**Q. What does the narrator mean when he says that the distribution of the various kinds of spirit of our tribe had been from the beginning capricious and vagrant? How does he illustrate his point?**

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**Ans.** The narrator means to say that in their tribe a child does not necessarily inherit this spirit from his father. He illustrates his points by giving the example of his cousin Mourad. Mourad's father was practical but Mourad was considered to be crazy. He seemed to have inherited his craziness from their uncle Khosrove.

**Q. Describe the incident which confirms that the narrator's uncle Khosrove was indeed crazy.**

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**Ans.** One day the narrator's uncle Khosrove was having his moustache trimmed at the barber's shop. His son Arak come running to tell him their house was on fire. Khosrove roared, "It is not harm; pay no attention to it." The barber repeated what the boy had said. Khosrove roared again, "Enough, it is no harm I say."

**Q. Give a short description of the narrator's uncle Khosrove.**

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**Ans.** The narrator's uncle Khosrove was considered crazy. He was an enormous man. He had a powerful head with black hair. He had large moustache. He was a man of furious temper and irritable nature. He was so impatient that he would stop anyone from talking by shouting, "It is no harm; pay no attention to it."

**Q. Give examples to show why cousin Mourad was considered as one of the craziest members of the narrator's family.**

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**Ans.** Cousin Mourad had a crazy streak. He was quite crazy about horses. He kept the stolen white horse for about six weeks, rode it, loved it, fed it well and hid it in a deserted yard. When he sang in the open countryside, it seemed as if he were roaring.

**Q. "It was true, then. He had stolen the horse. There was no question about it. He had come to invite me to ride or not, as I chose." How did the narrator convince himself to enjoy a horse ride with cousin Mourad?**

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**Ans.** It seemed to him that stealing a horse for a ride was not the same thing as stealing something else, such as money. Since, he and Mourad were quite crazy about horses, it wasn't thought to be stealing. He convinced himself with the thought that it would become stealing only when they offered to sell it.

**Q. Describe the narrator's experience when he rode the white horse alone.**

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**Ans.** The narrator had a frightful experience when he rode the white horse alone. He leapt on to the back of the horse but it did not move. As advised by Mourad, he kicked into the muscles of the horse. It reared and snorted. Then, it began to run. It ran down the road to a vineyard and began to leap over the vines. As it leaped over the seventh vine the narrator fell off. The horse continued running.

**Q. Give a brief account of Mourad's joy ride.**

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**Ans.** Mourad kicked his heels into the horse and shouted, "Vazire, run!" The horse stood on its hind legs, snorted and ran forward at full speed. Mourad raced the horse across a field of dry grass to an irrigation ditch. He crossed the ditch on the horse. When he returned five minutes later he was dripping wet.

**Q. Why did Mourad not look worried when the narrator asked where they would hide the horse?**

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**Ans.** Mourad had stolen the horse a month before. Since then, he had been enjoying early morning rides. Then he would hide the horse in the barn of a deserted vineyard. So, he did not look worried when the narrator asked where they would hide the horse.

**Q. Who was John Byro? What problem was he facing these days?**

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**Ans.** John Byro was an Assyrian farmer. He was a regular visitor to the narrator's family. His white horse had been stolen the previous month. His surrey was of no use without the horse. Now, he had to walk on foot if he wanted to go somewhere.

**Q. Why does the narrator mention uncle Khosrove? Which characteristic features of the man are highlighted?**

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**Ans.** Cousin Mourad seemed to inherit the crazy streak of uncle Khosrove. He was a big man with a powerful head of black hair and very large moustache. He was quite furious in his temper, very irritable and impatient. He would stop anyone from talking by roaring his phrase, 'it is no harm, pay no attention to it.'

**Q. How did uncle Khosrove react to John Byro's complaint about the stealing of his horse?**

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**Ans.** John Byro was sad that his white horse had been stolen last month and it was missing even then. Instead of showing any sympathy, uncle Khosrove became very irritated and shouted. "It's no harm. What is the loss of a horse? What is this crying over a horse?"

**Q. How did Mourad tend the young robin with a hurt wing? What aspect of his character is revealed in this incident?**

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**Ans.** Mourad repaired the hurt wing of the young robin and threw the bird into the air. After a few unsuccessful attempts, the robin flew away. This incident shows that Mourad was a great lover of birds and animals. He was a kind hearted boy.

**Q. How did the narrator know that his cousin Mourad couldn't have bought the horse?**

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**Ans.** The narrator knew that his cousin Mourad couldn't have bought the horse as they were afflicted with poverty. It was difficult for them to provide themselves with two square meals. He wondered how Mourad got the money to buy the horse.

**Q. What distinction does the narrator make between 'stealing a horse for a ride' and 'stealing money'?**

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**Ans.** According to the narrator, stealing a horse for a ride was something different from stealing money. If you were crazy about horses, it was not stealing at all. It would amount to stealing only if you intended to sell the horses.

**Q. What do you think induced the boys to return the horse to its owner?**

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**Ans.** One morning on the way to the deserted vineyard where they used to hide the horse, the boys ran into the farmer John Byro. He recognized his horse. But it was difficult for him to believe that the boys could have stolen his horse because their family was well-known for honesty. So, he went away saying that the horse must be the twin of his horse. The boys knew that he had become suspicious. So, the time had come to return the horse to its true owner.

**Q. How do you think, had Mourad developed an understanding with the horse and what was the result?**

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**Ans.** Mourad had been quite tender and affectionate towards the horse. He would put his arms around it, press his nose into the horse's nose and pat it. It was not easy to tame someone else's horse and get it to behave nicely. At first he wanted to run wild. Gradually, Mourad was able to control the horse and do what he wanted. Even John Byro, the rightful owner, admitted that the horse had become better tempered and stronger than ever.

**Q. Why did the narrator insist on keeping the stolen horse for a year? Why did Mourad oppose the idea?**

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**Ans.** The narrator didn't want to give the horse back to its owner until he learnt to ride. Mourad said that it would take him a year to learn to ride. The narrator insisted on keeping the horse for a year. But Mourad insisted that the horse must go back to its original owner. He did not want that a member of the Garoghlanian family should be accused of stealing.

**Q. Mourad was a kind hearted young boy who was emphatic in nature. Mention two instances to justify above statement ?**

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**Ans.** Two instances of Mourad's kindheartedness: (i) He did not allow Aram to ride the horse alone because Aram did not know about the horse's movement. (ii) Mourad knew how to treat animals with compassion so, he could train John Byro's horse.

**Q. Describe the narrator's experience of early morning ride with his cousin Mourad.**

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**Ans.** It was summer. Early one morning the narrator's cousin Mourad came to his house. He was sitting on a beautiful white horse. He invited the narrator to enjoy a ride. The narrator got ready and leaped onto the horse behind Mourad. In less than three minutes they were in the open. The horse began to snort. They let the horse run as long as it felt like running. Then, Mourad asked the narrator to get down as he wanted to ride alone. The narrator agreed on the condition that Mourad would let him also try to ride alone.

Mourad kicked his heels into the horse. The horse stood on its hind legs, snorted, and began to run. Mourad made the horse run across a field of dry grass to an irrigation ditch. He crossed the ditch on the horse. Five minutes later he returned. Now it was the narrator's turn to ride alone. When he got onto the back of the horse, it ran down the road to a vineyard instead of running across the field to the irrigation ditch. It began to leap over vines. It had hardly leaped over seven vines when the narrator fell off. The horse kept running, and then disappeared. It took Mourad half an hour to trace the horse and bring it back.

**Q. How did the narrator reach the conclusion that his cousin Mourad had stolen the horse? Why did he refuse to believe that Mourad could be a thief?**

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**Ans.** One summer morning the narrator's cousin Mourad came to his house. He was riding a beautiful white horse. The narrator wondered how Mourad managed to get the horse. They were living in poverty. They didn't have enough money to provide themselves with two square meals. So, there was no question of Mourad's having money to buy the horse. If he could not have brought the horse, he must have stolen it. When the narrator asked him, instead of giving any reply Mourad invited him to ride. The narrator concluded that Mourad had stolen the horse. But he refused to believe that Mourad could be a thief. In the first place, their tribe was famous for honesty and no member of their family could be a thief. Then, the narrator believed that stealing a horse for a ride was not stealing at all. It amounted to stealing only when you offered to sell the horse, which he knew Mourad would never do. So, the narrator believed that Mourad was not a thief, though he had stolen the horse.

**Q. Comment on the role of Aram, the narrator, in the story.**

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**Ans.** Aram, in the story 'The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse' being the narrator plays the role of a commentator also. He not only narrates the various adventures, incidents and actions but also provides useful information regarding the main characters and their behaviour. He seems to be the fulcrum on which the whole story rests. He gives a graphic description of the Garoghlanian tribe, its members, their traits and economic features.

Mourad and uncle Khosrove represent the crazy streak in the tribe. Abject poverty of the family does not diminish his pride in his family which is famous for honesty. He says, "no member of the Garoghlanian family could be a thief." He makes a fine distinction between stealing a horse for a ride and stealing a horse to sell it off. He gives a fine description of the horse ride and countryside with its vineyards, orchards, irrigation ditches and country roads.

### **Q. Compare and contrast uncle Khosrove and cousin Mourad.**

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**Ans.** Uncle Khosrove and cousin Mourad have one very important point in common—their craziness. Mourad was considered the natural descendant of uncle Khosrove in this respect. They both are dominating in nature. Both use pet words and phrases and roar aloud to quieten the hearer. While uncle Khosrove says, "It is no harm, pay no attention to it." Mourad boasts, "I have a way with birds/dogs/farmers." Khosrove shouts at his son Aram, the barber and farmer John Byro. The narrator is a patient listener to Mourad's assertions. They are different in their age and physical build up. Uncle Khosrove a middle-aged person is an enormous man with a powerful head of black hair and very large moustache. Mourad is an athletic young chap of thirteen. Khosrove is irritable impatient and furious in temper. Mourad is reasonable in conversation.

### **Q. Narrate the story 'The Summer of the Beautiful White Horse' in your own words.**

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**Ans.** One summer morning Aram's cousin Mourad came to his house. He woke him up by tapping on the window of his room. The narrator was surprised to see Mourad sitting on a beautiful white horse. Mourad asked him to be quick if he wanted to ride. The narrator longed to ride and jumped down to the yard from the window and leaped onto the horse behind his cousin Mourad. As these families were poor, Aram concluded that Mourad must have stolen the horse.

They rode and Mourad sang and enjoyed their ride in the fresh morning. Mourad had a joy ride alone. It seemed he had a way with a horse, for when Aram tried to ride alone the horse threw him off and ran away. It was a broad day light and Mourad hid the horse in the barn of a deserted vineyard.

That afternoon John Byro, the farmer visited Aram's house and related his plight. His white horse had been missing for a month. Uncle Khasrove silenced him with his roaring commands. Aram reported everything to Mourad and requested him to keep the horse till he learnt to ride. Mourad did not agree. After a fortnight they met with farmer John Byro



and decided to return the horse. John Byro had believed the boys as he knew their fathers and was fully aware about the fame of their family for honesty. Mourad returned the horse to its owner the next morning.

**Q. What impression do you form of cousin Mourad?**

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**Ans.** Mourad was a young boy of thirteen. He belonged to the Garoghlanian family of Armenia. Their whole tribe was poverty-stricken. In spite of abject poverty, their family was famous for honesty. Mourad was quite adventurous and had a crazy streak in him. He enjoyed being alive more than anybody else. Mourad loved horse riding. He had a way with a horse. He had tamed the horse by his affectionate behaviour and the horse was no longer wild. It obeyed Mourad faithfully. His love for the horse was evident in the last scene.

While parting, he put his arms around the horse and patted it. He also had a way with dogs. The dogs of John Byro followed him around without making a sound. He was kind too. He treated a young robin which had hurt its wing. He was proud of his family for honesty.