

## **THE ENEMY**

**Pearl S. Buck**

The story is written with the backdrop of the Second World War. It brings out the sad plight of a prisoner of war from America who makes the reader think of the brutality of war. The story also deals with the conflict that a doctor couple faces because of sheltering an enemy.

### **Notes**

- ❖ Dr. Sadao, a Japanese with professional Education, from America
  - Sadao's childhood was spent in Japan. His father a quiet man and true Japanese who considered islands to be stepping stones for Japan's future. Sadao's education was his chief concern for which he had sent him to America to study surgery and medicine.
- ❖ Sadao's Expertise
  - Sadao was an expert surgeon and a scientist. He had earned great fame in his profession. He was doing research on a discovery to render wounds clean. Thus, he was not sent with the troops during war. Also the general too was unwell and could need his services any time.
- ❖ Sadao, in American, Meeting with Hana
  - Sadao had taken his professional education in America where he had a chance meeting with Hana who was to become his wife. He had lived in prof. Harley's house where he had nearly decided not to go because of bad food, dirty lodgings and an extremely talkative wife of the Professor. Sadao had made sure that Hana was a Japanese and then they had waited to return to Japan to get married according to the rites of their land. Happily married, they had two children and a successful career.
- ❖ American Prisoner of War
  - An American P.O.W was washed ashore on the coast near Sadao's house. He was wounded, bleeding and had been cut by the rocks. He was an enemy soldier on the run and had been shot at while escaping. Hana and Sadao wanted to throw him back into the sea but neither could do so.
- ❖ Sadao and Hana in dilemma
  - If they shelter the POW, they will be considered as traitors.
  - If they hand him over to the police, the man would die.
  - They could not throw him into the sea.
  - They feared the servants that might report the matter.
  - The servants were frightened and were opposed their master's gesture of helping the P.O.W. The old gardener feared that the sea would take revenge from his master. Yumi, the maid servant was worried about the children.
- ❖ Lesson Learnt by Sadao in America
  - The professor of Anatomy had taught his students.
    - Ignorance of human anatomy by a surgeon is a cardinal sin.
    - Operating without full knowledge of human anatomy is no less than murder.
    - This Sadao had imbibed and was perfect in surgeries.
  - Sadao performed surgery on the P.O.W and was successful in taking out the lodged bullet. Gradually the American Naval man started recovering.
- ❖ Problems Aggravate for Sadao and Hana
  - The servants, not able to take in any more deserted their master and mistress. In the meantime, Sadao types a letter to the chief of police stating the truth but leaves it half way in the drawer. Sadao is called by the general as the latter is in pain. The doctor confides to him who in turn offers to send his assassins to kill the P.O.W and to remove his body without Hana knowing anything.
- ❖ General's Promise Forgotten, Sadao's Help
  - It so happened that the general forgot about his promise leaving the doctor felt restless night after night till finally he decided to help the prisoner escape.
- ❖ Arrangements for Tom's Escape
  - Tom was told to row to a little island close by from where if he was lucky, he could escape on a Korean boat.
  - Sadao gave him a flashlight (torch) to flash it once only and when told to do so.
  - He was provided with food, water, Kimono and a black cloth to cover his head.
- ❖ Sadao's Wonder/Amazement
  - Sadao recalled his time spent in America, the people he met, the teacher who taught him, Miss Harley who hated him yet was kind to him, the Americans with all their prejudices. He wondered why he could not kill Tom, the American prisoner of war.