

10th Standard - English

A Question of Trust Summary

Horace Danby's place in social circle

Horace Danby had a good reputation in the society. He was about fifty and unmarried. He made locks and had two helpers. He was well and happy. But he had attacks of hay fever in summer. But he was not completely honest. He had served his first and only sentence in a prison library. He had a passion for books. He loved rare and expensive books.

Danby as an unusual thief

Horace Danby robbed a safe every year. He stole enough to last for twelve months. He secretly bought the books he loved through an agent. He was now out on committing a robbery.

Planning before a theft

For two weeks Horace had studied the house of Shotover Grange. He had to burgle this house. It had fifteen thousand pounds worth of jewels in the Grange safe. He intended to buy three interesting books coming up for sale in the autumn. He had seen where the housekeeper hung the key. He had also studied everything of the house. These were the rooms, the electric wiring, paths and the garden before the theft.

Danby inside the house for stealing

Horace Danby entered the house. A small dog lay in the kitchen. He silenced it calling it by name. The safe was in the drawing room. There was a great bowl

of flowers on the table. He felt his nose tickle. He started sneezing. The safe was not hard to open. He went into the hall to cut the wire of the alarm bell.

Meets a young and pretty lady

Then he heard a voice. The voice told him that he could cure the sneeze. It was the voice of a woman. She stood in the doorway. She was young and pretty. She was dressed in the red. She said that she had come back in time. But she had not expected to meet a burglar.

Pleads her for going free

The young lady very confidently asked Horace what he was doing. His first thought was to run. The lady told him that she would telephone the police. She would tell it about him. Horace Danby told her to let him go and forget she ever saw him. But the lady laughed and he begged her. He promised her never to commit a burglary if she let him go.

Lady's condition for his freedom

The lady had by now impressed him that she was the landlady. She put one condition for letting Horace go. She had made up a false story to trick in Danby. She told him that she had promised her husband to take her jewels to their bank. She had, however, left them in the safe. She told him she wanted to wear the jewels in a party that night. She came down to get them. But she had forgotten the numbers to open the safe. Horace assured her that he would open the safe for her. So he opened the safe within an hour and gave the jewels to her.

Horace Danby arrested

On the third day, Horace thought of the books which he wanted. He would have to look for another safe. But he never got a chance to burgle another safe. By noon a policeman had arrested him for the jewel robbery at Shotover Grange.

The real thing is out

Danby's fingerprints were all over the room. He had opened the safe without gloves. He told the police that the landlady of the house had asked him to open that safe. But the landlady herself was a gray-haired woman of sixty. She said the story of Danby was nonsense.

Horace's regrets

Horace is now the assistant librarian in the prison. He often thinks of the charming and clever young lady. She was in his profession. She had simply tricked him. Danby gets angry when anyone talks about 'honour among thieves'.