
Captains Courageous

by Rudyard Kipling

Chapter 1

Identity and Characterization

1. The first pages paint a word picture of what kind of boy?

Ans: Harvey Cheyne - rich, self centered, obnoxious, bold and useless.

2. Describe the most important characters.

Ans: Captain Disko Troop - captain of the schooner "We're Here," quiet, confident, expert in his work, not swayed or impressed by smart mouthed boy; Manuel Common - seaman whose dory was almost run down by the steam ship and who rescued Harvey.

Individual and Society

1. What did the German man mean by "the rope's end"?

Ans: He meant a useless person.

2. Do you think one of them might have "helped" Harvey fall over the side?

Ans: Yes. The men on board the ship despised the loud and boastful boy.

3. How is Harvey like many young people today?

Ans: He was useless, inexperienced in serious and productive matters, having too much money and disregarding of others.

Author's Technique

We sense that a person might plan a course of action but God has another plan for life. The author leads us to see how a man will continue with his useless and obnoxious course unless God intervenes and brings many unpleasant lessons that eventually produce good fruit.

1. How could Harvey's plight remind us of life itself?

Ans: The experience of being, very much against our wills, called to account before God's throne could be seen in the story.

2. What do you think the captain's booming voice was made to resemble?

Ans: It might have resembled the waking voice of God.

Vocabulary

frieze - overcoat with rough, shaggy nap

truck - junk

"sieve out his soul" - make him sick

Gloucester - pronounced *Glou ster*

Note: Many words and colloquialisms are spelled as in a local dialect.

Chapter 2

Identity and Characterization

1. What is Dan, the captain's son, trying to do in his conversation with Harvey?

Ans: He is trying to see if Harvey is telling the truth. His main concern is to clear up the accusation of there being a thief on board.

2. How does Dan refer to the strong discipline his father gives?

Ans: He speaks of his father's strength and strictness. He greatly admired his father and knew his discipline was needed.

Individual and Society

1. Does Harvey continue to resist the demands of the captain?

Ans: No, he does begin to work on deck, helping to gather in the fishing dories.

2. Does Harvey change in his attitudes?

Ans: Yes, he even notices the color and texture of the ocean. He notes how Dan can identify the fishermen and what they have caught.

3. How does Harvey respond to having to work?

Ans: By the end of the first day he feels personal pride in being part of a group of hard working men. Work brings its own reward when we enter into it willingly and with all our strength.

Author's Technique

The author writes in narrative form. The book is made up of conversations. Many words are spelled according to the local dialect and the colloquialisms.

Vocabulary

“spile” means spoil

“wan by wan” means one by one

Chapter 3

Identity and Characterization

1. Is Dan's careful and patient way the reason for Harvey's change and progress?

Ans: Yes, the boys work well together. Dan doesn't lord it over Harvey, but coaches him on the ways of fishing and life aboard the schooner.
