

9th Standard English

The Happy Prince Summary

Statue of the Happy Prince

There stood the statue of the Happy Prince on a tall column in the city. He was gilded all over. He had thin leaves of fine gold. He had two bright sapphires for eyes. A large ruby glowed on his sword hilt.

A little swallow sits on the statue

A little swallow came and sat on the statue. He decided to spend the night on it. But as he was going to sleep, a large drop of water fell on him. The swallow was amazed. There was no cloud, yet it rained. The second drop of water made the swallow decide to fly off. The third drop of water made him to look at the statue. It was weeping.

The statue speaks out

The statue spoke to the swallow. It said that when it was alive it had not known what tears were. His courtiers called him a Happy Prince. Now he sat very high. He saw the miseries of the city.

The swallow is sent to help a woman

The Happy Prince told the swallow that there lived a woman far away. She was a seamstress. She was embroidering flowers on the satin gown of the Queen's maid of honour. The maid was to wear it at the next Court ball. In the bed, there lay ill her little boy. He was suffering from fever. The Happy Prince

asked the swallow to pick the ruby from his sword hilt. He should give that to the woman.

The swallow helps the woman

First the swallow said that his friends had gone to Egypt. He was waited for in Egypt. But the happy Prince requested him to stay one night. The swallow agreed. He picked up the ruby and flew to the woman's house. He put the ruby near the woman's thimble. He also fanned the boy's forehead. The boy felt a bit better. He sank into a deep slumber.

The swallow is asked again to help a play-wright

The swallow flew back to the Happy Prince. He felt warmer though it was cold. The Happy Prince told him that it was because he had done a good act. The swallow wanted to fly to Egypt. But the Happy Prince told him to stay there one more night. He told the swallow that he saw a playwright in a little room. He was trying to finish a play for the Director of the Theatre. But he was too cold to write. He was hungry also. He asked the swallow to pluck one sapphire from his eye and give that to the playwright.

The swallow returns to the Happy Prince

The playwright saw the sapphire. He was happy. Now he hoped to finish the play. The swallow went to the Happy Prince. He told him that he had come to bid him goodbye. But the Happy Prince asked him to stay one more night.

The swallow is sent to help the matchgirl

The Happy Prince told the swallow that there was a little matchgirl in the square below. All her matches had fallen in the gutter. Her father would beat

her if she didn't bring home some money. She was crying. He asked the swallow to pluck out the sapphire from his other eye and give that to her. The swallow flew with the sapphire. He put the sapphire into the little girl's hand.

The swallow decides to live with the Happy Prince

The swallow flew back to the Happy Prince. He told the Prince that he would stay with him as he had gone blind. The Happy Prince asked him to fly over the city and tell him what he saw. He also told the swallow that the most marvellous thing was human suffering. And human misery was the greatest mystery.

The swallow reports what he sees

The swallow flew over the city. He saw hungry children. He also saw many poor people. The Happy Prince asked him to take leaf after leaf of the fine gold over his body and give to them. The poor now laughed and the children played.

Winter sets in

Then there came the snow and then frost. Everything looked white. The poor little swallow grew colder and colder. But he didn't leave the Happy Prince. However, he could no longer keep himself alive. He at last knew that he was going to die. The swallow asked the Prince to let him kiss his hand. The Prince told him that he was happy he was going to Egypt. So he told him to kiss him on the lips. But the swallow told him that he was not going to Egypt. He was going to the house of Death. And he fell down dead.

The statue breaks and is melted

At that moment there appeared a crack in-side the statue. The heart of the Happy Prince broke into two. The dead swallow lay at its feet. The next morning the Mayor and the Town Councillors came that way. They looked at the statue. They declared that the Happy Prince was no longer beautiful. So he was no longer useful. Then they melted the statue in a furnace. But the broken heart didn't melt. It was thrown away.

God asks for two most precious things

God asked one of His Angels to bring Him the two most precious things in the city. The Angel brought Him the leaden heart of the Happy Prince and the dead bird. God told that in the garden of Paradise the little bird would sing forever. The Happy Prince would praise Him forever in His city of gold.