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## Reading Selection 1.3

### Lesson No. 3

### The Blades of Grass

گھاس کے تنکے

Steyfien Crane

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In Heaven

Some little blades of grass

Stood before God.

"What did you do?"

Then all save one of the little blades

Began eagerly to relate

Impatiently narrate

The merits of their lives.

This one stayed a small way behind,

Ashamed.

جنت میں،

چند چھوٹے گھاس کے تئکے

خدا کے حضور میں کھڑے ہو گئے۔

"تم نے کیا کیا؟" (یعنی دنیا میں تم نے کیا کیا اعمال کیے؟)

پھر تمام نے ایک چھوٹے کے علاوہ

بے قراری کے ساتھ بتانا شروع کر دیا۔

اپنی زندگیوں کی خوبیوں کو۔

Presently, God said,

"And what did you do?"

The little blade answered, "Oh, my Lord, Memory is bitter to me,

For, if I did good deeds,

I know not of them."

Then God, in all His splendor,

grandeur; brilliance

Arose from His throne.

"Oh, best little blade of grass!" He said.

اسی اثناء میں خدا نے کہا،

"اور تم نے اپنی زندگی میں کیا کیا؟"

جھوٹے گھاس کے تنکے نے جواب دیا، اے میرے آقا!

میری یادیں میرے لیے تلخ ہیں،

کیونکہ اگر میں نے کچھ اچھے کام کیے ہیں تو مجھے وہ یاد نہیں۔

پھر خدا اپنی عظمت و وقار کے ساتھ۔

اپنے تخت سے اٹھا

اور فرمایا "آہ تم سب سے بہترین گھاس کے چھوٹے تنکے ہو۔"

### About the Poet

Stephen Crane (1871-1900) was born in New Jersey, USA. He worked as a journalist in New York before attempting to publish his first novel which was too grim to find a readership. However, his next novel, The Red Badge of Courage (1895) was hailed as a masterpiece. He came to England in 1897 where his novel was more warmly received. His other works include two volumes of poetry and short stories. He died of tuberculosis in 1900.

### SUMMARY OF THE POEM

#### "TIM BLADES OF GRASS"

#### BY STEPHEN CRANE

The moral message of the poem "the Blades of grass" is the God who told us that when we doing something good like helping each other and pray we shouldn't be show off to the people around us and show the others how kind hearted we are. At the beginning of the poem, Mr. Crane told us that all the blades of grass were doing something that God told us not to, and in the middle of the poem, the humble blade of grass founded and already did the good things without counted it out, because he can't remember it because he did them sincerely.

This poem, by Stephen Crane narrates that some blades of grass were standing before the Lord on the day of judgement. God demanded from them

an account of all their actions done in the world. They responded that they had done meritorious deeds in the world. One little blade of grass stood silently and ashamed. God asked him the same question to tell about his good deeds. The blade of grass answered that he did not know about his good actions. He had forgotten all his good deeds. God was much pleased with this answer. He stood up from his throne and blessed and rewarded this little blade for his humbleness. The poet actually wants to say that one should not feel pride on what he had done. One should be humble and prideless. One should do good deeds without a thought of reward.

## STUDY QUESTIONS

### Understanding the Poem

1. Stephen Crane, in "The Blades of Grass" uses an interesting personification to express the idea that the best deeds are those done without a thought of reward: "Truly virtuous are those who are virtuous, not for fear of punishment or hope of reward, but for the love of virtue." This poem has the structure of a narrative with a dialogue between God and blades of grass. The setting is Heaven.

- **Read the first stanza. What does God ask the little blades of grass? What do the blades of grass say in response?**

Ans: God asked the little blades of Grass that what they did in their lives. And they began to narrate their deeds one by one in a boastful way.

- **Read the second stanza. What does the little blade of grass say when it is addressed by God? Why was God moved by the blade's answer?**

Ans: The little blade of Grass answered that he did not know about his good actions. His way of response was full of humbleness and thus God was moved by his answer.

1. This poem uses a personification. Personification is talking about inanimate and abstract objects as if they were human.

**Why does the poet use blade of grass to communicate such a fundamental idea? Why didn't he use man to convey his idea?**

Ans: Giving human qualities to nonliving things is called personification. The poet uses blades of Grass to communicate his idea because he wants to convey his message in an effective and moving manner. He wants to tell human man to know that even a small blade of Grass knows how to respond and show humbleness before God.

### **Writing**

2. Now that you have understood the poem, write a paraphrase / explanation of the poem in your own words.

Ans: Stanza No. 1

In Heaven,  
Some little blades of grass  
Stood before God.

"What did you do?"  
Then all save one of the little blades  
Began eagerly to relate  
The merits of their lives.

This one stayed a small way behind,  
Ashamed.

**Paraphrase:**

Some little blades of grass were standing in the court of God on the day of Judgment in the Heaven. He asked them about their deeds and actions on earth when they were alive. They all started to relate about their deeds and actions impatiently and excitedly but one little blade of grass kept quiet and stood behind others because of shame.

**Reference to Context:**

These lines have been taken from poem "The Blades of Grass" written by "Stephen Crane"

This poem is in the narrative form with a dialogue between God and blades of Grass in Heaven on the Day of Judgment. God said good are those amongst you who have done good deeds and don't feel proud on their good deeds. Allah pleased only with that little blade of grass who stood aside because she was ashamed of her actions. Allah said with all His majesty, you are the best amongst all.

**Explanation:**

In these lines, the poet says that all the creatures of God have been given wisdom to differentiate between good and bad deeds. They will be answerable to God for their good or bad deeds. Evil doers will be punished harshly and those who have done good deeds will be rewarded. Those who have done

good deeds should not feel proud. One should be humble and repentant. That is why the poet says that all the blades of grass started relating their good deeds while one blade of grass stood aside and felt ashamed of what he had done in this world.

Allah was pleased with that little blade of grass. The poet wants to impress upon our minds that God likes humbleness and repentance.

**(OR)**

**Meanings:**

Eagerly to relate (impatiently narrate) eager (very interested and excited by one thing that's happen or concerning one thing you wish to do) relate (to show or create an affiliation between 2 or additional thing) merit (the quality of being sensible and of a meriting praise)

**Paraphrase:**

Some very little blades of grass were standing before God on day of judgment. He asked them concerning their deeds and their action on earth after they were alive. All of them spoke of their sensible deeds, however one very little blades of grass unbroken quiet and stood behind others out of shame.

**Reference to the context:**

This textual matter of the most effective poet Best Stephen Crane's Poetry authority verse form "The blade of grass" wrote by the Poet Stephen Crane's. The author tells concerning the structure of a narrative with a dialogue between God and therefore the blade of grass on the Day of Judgment.

**Explanation:**

All the creatures are given knowledge to differentiate right from wrong. They'll be answerable to God for his or her sensible or unhealthy deeds. Evil-doers are going to be punished and people, UN agency have done sensible deeds in its



worlds, are going to be rewarded. But those, UN agency have done sensible deeds, mustn't feel proud and will not boast of their sensible deeds. Supreme Being doesn't am fond of it. One ought to humble and sorry. That's why the author says that each one the blades of grass started relating their sensible deeds whereas one blade created a confession of his sins and felt ashamed of what he had exhausted this world. Supreme Being was happy thereupon very little blades of grass, the author desires to impress upon our minds that God likes humbleness and compunction.

## **Stanza No. 2**

**Presently, God said,**

**"And what did you do?"**

**The little blade answered, "Oh, my Lord,**

**Memory is bitter to me,**

**For, if I did good deeds,**

**I know not of them."**

**Then God, in all His splendor.**

**Arose from His throne.**

**"Oh, best little blade of grass!" He said.**

## **Paraphrase:**

God asked without any delay from the little blade of grass about his good and bad deeds that he had done when he was alive. The little blade of grass replied that he did not remember if he had done any good deed. God was pleased with His answer and God in all His Majesty stood up from His throne and blessed him.

**Reference to Context:**

These lines have been taken from poem "The Blades of Grass" written by "Stephen Crane"

This poem is in the narrative form with a dialogue between God and blades of Grass in Heaven on the Day of Judgment. God said good are those amongst you who have done good deeds and don't feel proud on their good deeds. Allah pleased only with that little blade of grass who stood aside because she was ashamed of her actions. Allah said with all His majesty, you are the best amongst all.

**Explanation:**

In these lines, the poet narrates an imaginary case of blades of grass in the court of God on the Day of Judgment. After listening to proud full blades of grass, God asked the little blade of grass, who was standing little behind from others and was very ashamed for what he had to say about his deeds before God. The little one replied that he had forgotten all about his good deeds. On the contrary, he had a bitter memory of his bad deeds only. He made a very bold confession of his conscience. He felt extremely sorry for what he had done in the world. God was very much pleased of his bold confession and repentance. God stood up from His throne with all His majesty and rewarded that little blade of grass.

God said you are best amongst all.

(OR)

**Meanings:**

Presently (at once; while not delay) deeds (actions) splendor (grandeur, brilliance) He (God)

**Paraphrase:**

With delay God asked the small blade of grass concerning his sensible and unhealthy deeds that he had exhausted the planet. the small blade replied that he failed to bear in mind if he had done any sensible deed. God was happy along with his answer. altogether his grandness. He stood up from his throne and blessed him.

**Reference to the context:**

These lines are taken from the most effective author poet Best Stephen Crane's Poetry verse form "The blade of grass". This verse form has the structure of a narrative with a dialogue between God and therefore the Made of grass on the Day of Judgment.

**Explanation:**

In this textual matter the author narrates associate fanciful of the blade of grass within the court of God of judgment. Once being attentive to the jactitation of the blade of grass. He asked the small blade of grass, UN agency was standing behind the others and was terribly back for what he had to mention concerning his deeds the small one replied humbly that he had forgotten all concerning his deeds. He had bitter memory of had unhealthy deeds solely. He created a daring confession of his conscience-packing. He felt extraordinarily compassionate what he had exhausted the planet. God was a lot of happy along with his confession and compunction. He stood up from His throne with all His grandness and blessed and rewarded him.

**Language Study (Grammar)**

**Noun Clauses**

Examine the groups of words in *italics* in the following sentences:

1. I expect to get a prize. [Expect what?]

2. I expect that I shall get a prize. [Expect what?]

The first group of words, to get a prize, does not contain a subject and a Predicate of its own. It is therefore a phrase. This phrase is object of the verb expect and hence does the work of a Noun. It is therefore a Noun Phrase.

The second group of words, that I shall get a prize, contains a subject and a Predicate of its own. It is therefore a clause. This Clause is the object of the verb expect and so does the work of a Noun. We therefore call it a Noun Clause.

Now examine the sentence,

- That you have come please me.

Here the Clause, that you have come, is the Subject of the verb please.

It therefore does the work of a Noun, and it is what we call a Noun Clause

**Def.-** A Noun Clause is a group of words which contains a Subject, had a Predicate of its own, and does the work of a Noun.

### EXERCISE (1)

**Point out the Noun Clauses in the following sentences:**

1. I often wonder how you are getting on.

**Ans:** how you are getting on.

2. I fear that I shall fail.

**Ans:** that I shall fail

3. He replied that he would come.

**Ans:** that he would come

4. Do you deny that you stole the watch?

**Ans:** that you stole the watch

5. **I thought that it would be a fine day.**

Ans: that it would be a fine day

6. **That you should cheat me hurts me**

Ans: That you should cheat me

7. **No one knows who he is.**

Ans: who he is

8. **He saw that the clock had stopped.**

Ans: that the clock had stopped

9. **That you should say this is very strange.**

Ans: That you should say this

10. **I don't see how you can get out of this mess.**

Ans: how you can get out of this mess

11. **I earn whatever I can.**

Ans: whatever I can

12. **I do not know what he wants.**

Ans: what he wants

13. **There were no complaints except that the day was too hot.**

Ans: that the day was hot

14. **I went to see what had happened.**

Ans: what had happened

15. **I do not understand how it all happened.**

Ans: how it all happened

16. **Pay careful attention to what I am going to say.**

**Ans:** what I am going to say

**17. It grieved me to hear that she was ill.**

**Ans:** that she was ill

**18. I want to know how far it is from here.**

**Ans:** how far it is from here

**19. Where we were to lodge that night was the problem.**

**Ans:** Where we were to lodge that night

**20. He begged that his life might be spared.**

**Ans:** that his life might be spared

**21. I think you have made a mistake.**

**Ans:** (that) you have made a mistake

**22. Can you guess what I want?**

**Ans:** what I want

**23. How the burglar got in is mystery.**

**Ans:** How the burglar got in

**24. It is uncertain whether he will come.**

**Ans:** whether he will come

**25. I do know what he will do.**

**Ans:** what he will do

### **EXERCISE (2)**

**Complete by adding suitable Noun Clauses.**

**1. I cannot understand \_\_\_\_\_**

**Ans:** I cannot understand why she is angry with me. OR

I cannot understand why he robbed his friend.

2. They all said \_\_\_\_\_

**Ans:** They all said that they would accept the offer. OR

They all said that they wished to go for a picnic.

3. I think \_\_\_\_\_

**Ans:** I think that he is a European.

4. This is just \_\_\_\_\_

**Ans:** This is just what i want to say you. OR

This is just what i wanted.

5. He told me \_\_\_\_\_

**Ans:** He told me that he would come. OR

He told me that they had deceived him.

6. \_\_\_\_\_ is a well known fact.

**Ans:** That she is a good girl is a well known fact? OR

That he is a smuggler, is a well known fact?

7. Do you know \_\_\_\_\_?

**Ans:** Do you know where he lives? OR

Do you know that Zain has a versatile pen?

8. I wonder \_\_\_\_\_

**Ans:** I wonder why Tai Mahal is so beautiful. OR

I wonder what she wants.

9. I do not know \_\_\_\_\_

**Ans:** I do not know where Mr. Shazaib lives.

I do not know who he is?

10. Please show me \_\_\_\_\_

**Ans:** Please show me what is in your hand? Please show me how the machine operates?

11. \_\_\_\_\_ is quite certain.

**Ans:** That she will arrive is quite certain?

That we shall win the match is quite certain?

12. I feel certain \_\_\_\_\_

**Ans:** I feel certain that you will win the scholarship.

13. Tell him \_\_\_\_\_

**Ans:** Tell him that Nadia is in great danger.

Tell him that I'm busy.

14. Will you tell me \_\_\_\_\_?

**Ans:** Will you tell me where she is going?

Will you tell me when the next train will arrive?

15. His father was anxious \_\_\_\_\_.

**Ans:** His father was anxious that his son should study medicine.

16. You got \_\_\_\_\_.

**Ans:** You got that you owe me Rs. 10,000.

17. It is certain \_\_\_\_\_

**Ans:** It is certain that he will succeed.



It is certain that he will get a first class.

18. Have you heard \_\_\_\_\_?

**Ans:** Have you heard that he is going to the United Kingdom.

19. \_\_\_\_\_ do with your might.

**Ans:** Whatever you do with your might.

20. He was pleased with \_\_\_\_\_

**Ans:** He was pleased with what I had done.

### More about Noun Clauses

◆ We have seen that there are three kinds of Subordinate Clauses:

The Noun Clause, the adjective Clause and the Adverb Clause.

We have also seen that a Noun Clause is subordinate clause which does the work of a noun in a complex sentence.

Since a Noun Clause does the work of a Noun in a complex sentence, it can be:

1. The subject of a verb.
2. The Object of a transitive verb.
3. The Object of a preposition.
4. In Apposition to a Noun or Pronoun.
5. The Complement of a verb of incomplete predication.

• In each of the following Complex sentences, the Noun Clause is the subject of a verb.

- That you should say so surprises me.
- That it would rain seemed likely.

- What he said was true.
- When I shall return is uncertain.
- Now he could assist his friend was his chief concern.
- Why he left is a mystery.
- Whether we can start tomorrow seems uncertain.
- In each of the following Complex sentences, the Noun Clause is the Object of a transitive verb'

- He says that he won't go.
- I hoped that it was true.
- She denied that she had written the letter.
- I cannot tell what has become of him.
- I do not know when I shall return."
- I asked the boy how old he was.
- Tell me why you did this.
- Tell me where you live.
- No one knows who he is.
- I earn whatever I can. Ask if he is at home.
- In each of the following Complex sentences, the Noun Clause is the object of a preposition:

- Pay careful attention to what I am going to say.
- There is no meaning in what you say.
- There were no complaints except that the day was too hot.
- In each of the following Complex sentences, the Noun Clause is in **Apposition to a Noun or Pronoun:**

- Your statement' that you found the money in the street will be believed.
- His belief that someday he would succeed cheered him through many points.
- You must never forget this that honesty is the best policy.
- It is feared that he will not come.
- It was unfortunate that you were absent.
- In each of the following Complex sentences, the Noun Clause is used as the Complement of a verb of incomplete prediction:

- My belief is that he will not come.
- Her constant prayer was that the child might live.
- His great fear is that he may fail.
- My wish is that I may please you.
- Their request will be that they may be allowed to resign.
- Life is what we make it.
- This is where I live.
- A Clause coming after a construction consisting of an interactive verb (particularly the verb to be) and an adjective does the work of a noun and is, therefore, treated as a Noun Clause.

In each of the following Complex sentences, the Noun Clause comes after an intransitive verb construction.

- The child was afraid that he would fall down.
- All of us are keen that you should succeed.
- They felt sorry that they lost the match.
- The patient was sure that he would recover

- She did not seem hopeful that he would arrive.

It will be seen that the preposition of, about or for necessary to connect the intransitive verb construction to the succeeding Noun Clause in each of the above sentences is omitted. If we put a noun or gerund instead of the Clause, we would say afraid of, keen about, sorry for, sure, helpful of, and the noun or gerund would be the object of the preposition in each case. The Noun Clause in each of the complex sentences may also be regarded as the object of the missing preposition after the intransitive verb construction. However, such Noun Clauses are often said to be used adverbially.

Note: From the above examples it will be seen that a Noun Clause is generally introduced by the subordinating Conjunction that. Sometimes, however, the Conjunction that is omitted; as, I know (that) he did it.

### EXERCISE (3)

**Write down a dozen Complex sentences, each containing a Noun Clause. Make the Noun Clause a subject in the first three, an object in the next three and in opposition to a Noun or Pronoun in the next three. Use the Noun Clause predicatively in the last three.**

**Ans:**

**(i) As subject of a verb:**

Whether he will come at all is doubtful.

What she said may be true.

Whoever finishes first gets a prize.

**(ii) As object of a verb:**

He said that he had not heard the news.

I don't know where he has gone.

I doubt whether he will accept the offer.

**(iii) In opposition to a noun or pronoun:**

We must allow for the fact that she doesn't hear well.

Never forget this, that a stitch in time saves nine.

It is unfortunate that you have lost your purse.

**(iv) As complement of a verb:**

My belief is that he is innocent.

The truth is that they are married.

My request is that I may be allowed to go now.

**EXERCISE (4)**

**Point out the noun clause and say whether it is the object of some verb or the Complement of some verb, or in apposition to some noun or pronoun, or the object of some preposition:**

**1. Tell me how you found that out.**

**Ans:** how you found that out —object of the verb 'tell'

**2. That he will succeed is certain.**

**Ans:** That he will succeed—subject of the verb 'is'

**3. I think you have made a mistake.**

**Ans:** (that) you have made a mistake—object of the verb 'think'

**4. She says her mother is ill.**

**Ans:** (that) her mother is ill—object of the verb 'says'

5. **How long I shall stay here is doubtful.**

**Ans:** How long I shall stay here—subject of the verb 'it'

6. **I did not know that he had come.**

**Ans:** that he had come—object of the verb 'did (not) know'

7. **It is clear that he was guilty.**

**Ans:** that he was guilty—put in apposition to the pronoun 'It'

8. **I do not understand how it all happened.**

**Ans:** how it all happened—object of the verb 'do (not) understand'

9. **Can you tell who wrote Shakuntala?**

**Ans:** who wrote Shakuntala—object of the verb 'can tell'

10. **All depend on how it is done.**

**Ans:** how it is done—object of the preposition 'on'

11. **Do you deny that you stole the purse?**

**Ans:** that you stole the purse—object of the verb 'do deny'

12. **The law will punish whosoever is guilty.**

**Ans:** whosoever is guilty—object of the verb 'will punish'

13. **I think I know your face.**

**Ans:** (that) I know your face—object of the verb 'think'

14. **Ask if dinner is ready.**

**Ans:** if dinner is ready—object of the verb 'ask'

15. **The report that he was killed is untrue.**

**Ans:** that he was killed—put in apposition to the noun 'report'

16. **He was very hopeful that he would succeed.**

**Ans:** that he would succeed —connected with the adjective 'hopeful'

**17. Do whatever you think is right.**

**Ans:** whatever you think right—object of the verb 'do'

**18. I don't see how you can get out of this mess.**

**Ans:** how can you get out of this mess—object of the verb 'don't see'

**19. Do you know when the train will arrive?**

**Ans:** when the train will arrive—object of the verb 'Do know'

**20. Whoever came was made welcome.**

**Ans:** whoever came—subject of the verb 'was'

**21. I understand you know the situation.**

**Ans:** (that) you want a situation—object of the verb 'understand'

**22. My verdict is that the prisoners shall die.**

**Ans:** that the prisoners shall die— complement of the verb 'is'

**23. I cannot express how sorry I'm.**

**Ans:** how sorry I am—object of the verb 'cannot express'

**24. They guessed what he meant.**

**Ans:** what he meant—object of the verb 'guessed'

**25. I am afraid that she will be angry.**

**Ans:** that she will be angry—connected with the adjective 'afraid'

**26. Will you explain why you behaved so?**

**Ans:** why you behaved so—object of the verb 'will explain'

**27. No one can tell how this will end.**

**Ans:** how this will end—object of the verb 'can tell'

**28. The truth is that we have been deceived.**

**Ans:** that we have been deceived—complement of the verb 'is'

**29. It is not clear who has done this.**

**Ans:** who has done this—put in apposition to the pronoun 'It'

**30. I do not know how I can deal with this rascal.**

**Ans:** how I can deal with this rascal—object of the verb 'do (not) know'

**31. I did not know whether I should laugh or cry.**

**Ans:** whether I should laugh or cry—object of the verb 'did (not) know'

**32. We are desirous that you should succeed.**

**Ans:** that you should succeed—connected with the adjective 'desirous'

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Sometimes, instead of a Noun Clause introduced by that, the Accusative with the Infinitive is used.

1. (a) He thought that he was safe there.

(b) He thought himself to be safe there.

2. (a) I believed that he was a true friend.

(b) I believed him to be a true friend.

3. (a) This proved that the man had stolen the horse.

(b) This proved the man to have stolen the horse.

4. (a) We know that Rabia is alive.

(b) We know Rabia to be alive.