

UNIT-7B

Explanation:

In the second part of the lesson, the narrator tells us that Akkayya had been keen in studying from the very start. But as she was not skilful in oral arithmetic, her father discontinued her studies. The narrator's father believed there was no use of a girl studying and thus focussed on her brother's education. Akkayya was married to a man from village and she had to look after the cattle, keep the stove clean, draw water from the well, etc. Her mother was extremely upset to see Akkayya working so hard. The narrator realizing that Akkayya was upset thinking about her past life, the narrator led her to the balcony outside to divert her mind.

Akkayya then was surprised to see the turayi and pomegranate trees in the flowerpots. She couldn't believe how huge trees can be grown in flower pots rather than growing them up in the backyard. Then the narrator explained Akkayya the art of Bonsai. But Akkayya was not convinced or impressed of whatever the narrator said. They were conversing only, when there was a sudden dust storm. Akkayya was shocked to see the change in weather. Soon after that it started raining and the narrator had to pull the bonsai plants under the canopy.

Akkayya was staring at the tree far in the street under which many people had taken shelter. She was telling the narrator about how a tree can give shelter to others. Akkayya further said that a bonsai life is that of a housewife whose interests are chopped off like that of the roots of a bonsai and is not allowed to grow freely, and thus, they cannot give shelter to anyone as they themselves are dependent on someone else. Hearing this, the narrator's heart was moved and thus she felt the urge to free the bonsai trees from their flower pots.

We see, how the author very beautifully compares the life of a bonsai with that of a housewife. In this lesson, the author emphasises women's education and empowerment. The author further tells us how important it is for a woman to have education and an earning in order to have a dignified life else her life will be like a 'Scorpion under a slipper.'

