

► By O. Henry

### Summary

The writer was travelling to Pittsburgh on business. In the compartment, most of the men and women were sitting in their chair-cars, idly gazing here and there. The gentleman sitting in chair No 9, appeared quite familiar and when he turned around, the writer discovered to his delight, that he was an old friend, John A Pescud. Pescud was a travelling salesman for a plate-glass company and the writer had not met him for the last two years.

Pescud was of small built, having a wide smile and he believed that plate-glass was the most important commodity in the world. He told the writer that business was doing well and he was going to get off at Coketown. Pescud was reading the latest bestseller, "The Rose Lady and Trevelyan". Pointing towards the book, Pescud said that the novel dealt with an American hero who falls in love with a royal princess from Europe. He believed that such romances only happened in novels because in real life, any sensible fellow will pick out a girl from the same kind of status and family.

After mocking the imaginative content of the novel, talk veers around Pescud's personal life. Pescud informs the writer that professionally, he was prospering and he had also invested in real estate. On being asked regarding his love-interest, Pescud relates his personal experience. He was going to Cincinnati, when he came across a very beautiful girl, whom he wished to marry. He chased her wherever she went, crossing many stations and finally reached Virginia. She was escorted to a palatial mansion by a tall old man. Pescud stayed back in the village and discovered that she was the daughter of Colonel Allyn, who was the biggest and finest man in Virginia. He met the beautiful girl next day and tried to converse with her. He discovers that her name was Jessie and her father was the royal descendant of a renowned British family. She had been aware all along that Pescud was following her and warned him that her father would feed him to the hounds, if Pescud ever thought of a proposal. Nevertheless, nothing seemed to deter Pescud and with due ceremony, he arrives at the mansion. He was surprised to see that the inside of the palace was very impoverished with very old furniture. Colonel Allyn arrived in great style, despite his shabby clothes. Amidst talking of anecdotes and humorous occurrences, Pescud frankly put forth his proposal, giving all details of his business and family. He is accepted by Jessie and her family and the marriage had taken place a year ago. Pescud had built a house in East

End and the Colonel was also residing with him. He waited daily at the gate for Pescud to hear a new story. By this time, the train was nearing Coketown. It appeared to be a dull and dreary place and the writer questioned Pescud regarding his purpose of getting down at Coketown. Pescud told the writer that he was halting there to get some Petunias which Jessie had seen in one of the houses. Pescud invites the writer to pay a visit and gets down at the station. The train moves forward and the writer discovers that Pescud had left his bestseller behind. He picked it up and smiled to himself because Pescud's own story was no less than a bestseller.

### सारांश

लेखक व्यापार के सिलसिले में पिट्सबर्ग जा रहा था। ट्रेन के डिब्बे में ज्यादातर स्त्री और पुरुष कुर्सियों पर बैठे हुए इधर-उधर देख रहे थे। कुर्सी नं. 9 का यात्री लेखक को जाना-पहचाना लगा और जब वह मुड़ा तो लेखक उसे देखकर बहुत खुश हुआ। वह उसका एक पुराना मित्र, जॉन ए पैसकुड था। पैसकुड एक प्लेट-ग्लास विक्रेता था और पिछले दो सालों से लेखक से नहीं मिला था। पैसकुड एक छोटे कद का व्यक्ति था, वह हमेशा मुस्कराता रहता था और अपने कार्य को वह दुनिया का सबसे श्रेष्ठ कार्य समझता था। उसने लेखक को बताया कि उसका व्यापार बहुत अच्छा चल रहा है और वह कोकटाउन जा रहा है। वह एक लोकप्रिय उपन्यास "द रोज लेडी और ट्रेवेलियन" पढ़ रहा है जिसमें एक अमरीकन हीरो एक यूरोप की राजकुमारी से प्रेम करने लगता है। पैसकुड के विचार से यह केवल एक उपन्यास में ही हो सकता है क्योंकि असल जीवन में एक समझदार व्यक्ति अपनी ही श्रेणी व घर की लड़की को ढूँढता है।

उपन्यास का उपहास करने के बाद बातचीत पैसकुड की ओर मुड़ जाती है। पैसकुड लेखक को बताता है कि उसका काम बहुत उन्नति कर रहा है और उन्होंने अचल सम्पत्ति में भी निवेश किया है। पैसकुड ने अपनी निजी अनुभव की कहानी सुनाते हुए कहा कि वह एक दिन सिनसिनाटी जा रहा था जब उसकी मुलाकात एक अत्यन्त सुंदर लड़की से हुई जिससे वह विवाह करना चाहता था। उसका पीछा करते हुए वह वर्जीनिया पहुँच गया। वहाँ एक बड़ी और ऊँची हवेली में उस लड़की को एक लम्बे, वृद्ध पुरुष अपने साथ ले गए। पैसकुड को पता चला कि वह लड़की एक बहुत ही सभ्य पुरुष कर्नल ऐलन की सुपुत्री है जो वर्जीनिया में मशहूर है। वह दूसरे दिन उस सुन्दरी से मिला और उससे बातचीत करनी चाही। पैसकुड को पता चला कि लड़की का नाम जेस्सी है और वह एक अंग्रेज के

शाही खानदान से है। लड़की को पता था कि पैसकुड उसका पीछा कर रहा है और उसने पैसकुड को चेतावनी दी कि उसका पिता उसे अपने कुत्तों के आगे डाल देगा। पैसकुड चेतावनी से हताश नहीं होता है और जेस्सी के पिता से मिलने महल में जाता है। उसे यह देखकर आश्चर्य हुआ कि महल पुराने फर्नीचर से भरा हुआ था और बहुत गरीबी की हालत में लग रहा था। कर्नल ऐलन शान से मामूली पुराने कपड़ों में उससे मिलते हैं और बहुत सी हँसी-मजाक के बाद पैसकुड जेस्सी से शादी का प्रस्ताव रखता है जिसे जेस्सी के पिता मान जाते हैं और दोनों की शादी हो जाती है। उनकी शादी को एक साल हो गया है और आजकल जेस्सी के पिता उनके साथ ईस्ट एण्ड में रहते हैं जहाँ पैसकुड ने अपना एक मकान बनाया है। गाड़ी अब कोकटाउन पहुँच रही थी जो कि एक छोटा, नीरस और सुनसान शहर लग रहा था। लेखक के पूछने पर पैसकुड ने बताया कि वह कोकटाउन में जेस्सी के लिए पिट्टूनिया नाम के फूल खरीदने के लिए रुक रहा है। जेस्सी ने उन्हें एक घर में देखा था। पैसकुड लेखक को अपने घर आने का न्योता देकर उतर जाता है। जब ट्रेन

चल पड़ती है तो लेखक को पता चलता है कि पैसकुड अपना लोकप्रिय उपन्यास “द रोज़ लेडी और ट्रेवेलियन’ गाड़ी में ही छोड़ गया है। लेखक ने पुस्तक उठा ली और उस पर यह सोचकर मुस्कराया कि पैसकुड की अपनी कहानी इस उपन्यास में दी उस कहानी से कम नहीं थी।

### Word-Meaning

- **Veil** – a thin material worn to hide the face
- **Tepidest** – less enthusiastic
- **Law abiding** – obeying the law
- **Alias** – false name
- **Consistent** – compatible
- **Clamdiggers** – people who hunt for edible shell fish
- **Aristocracy** – people of high social class
- **Jibe** – to taunt
- **Capers** – light-hearted or dishonest activity
- **Affinity** – relationship
- **Ostensible** – appearing to be true
- **Lineal** – hereditary
- **Slag** – waste separated from a metal by heating it
- **Torrents** – violent rushing streams
- **Rills** – small streams
- **Wand** – long, thin rod used specially for performing magic or tricks.

## SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

### TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

**1. Based on your reading of the story, answer the following questions by choosing the correct option.**

(a) *The narrator says that John was “\_\_\_\_\_ of the stuff that heroes are not often lucky enough to be made of.” His tone is sarcastic because \_\_\_\_\_*

- (i) he hated John.
- (ii) he felt that John was a threat to him.
- (iii) John was not particularly good-looking.
- (iv) nobody liked John.

**Ans :** (iii) John was not particularly good-looking.

(b) *Pescud felt that best-sellers were not realistic as \_\_\_\_\_*

- (i) American farmers had nothing in common with European princesses.
- (ii) men generally married girls from a similar background.
- (iii) American men married girls who studied in America.
- (iv) American men did not know fencing and were beaten by the Swiss guards.

**Ans :** (ii) men generally married girls from a similar background.

(c) *“Bully”, said Pescud brightening at once. He means to say that \_\_\_\_\_*

- (i) he is a bully.
- (ii) his manager was a bully.
- (iii) he was being bullied by his co-workers.

(iv) he was doing very well at his job.

**Ans :** (iv) he was doing very well at his job.

(d) *The narrator says that life has no geographical bounds implying that \_\_\_\_\_*

- (i) human beings are essentially the same everywhere.
- (ii) boundaries exist only on maps.
- (iii) one should work towards the good of mankind.
- (iv) he was happy to travel to other countries.

**Ans :** (i) human beings are essentially the same everywhere.

**2. Answer the following questions briefly.**

(a) *One day last summer the author was travelling to Pittsburg by chair car. What does he say of his co-passengers?*

**Ans :** The compartment was full of affluent people, men and women, sitting in their chair-cars. Women were fashionably dressed in brown silk dresses with laces and veils. Men appeared to be travelling on account of business.

(b) *Who was the passenger of chair no. 9? What did he suddenly do?*

**Ans :** The passenger in chair no. 9 appeared to be very familiar and when he turned and dropped his book, it was confirmed that he was an old friend of the writer, named as John A. Pescud of Pittsburg.

(c) What was John Pescud's opinion about best-sellers?

**Ans :** Pescud believed that the stories about best-sellers were not realistic. The themes revolved around romances between royals and commoners, fencing, imaginative encounters and all the stuff that never happens in real life. In real life, one would always select a prospective bride from a similar background.

(d) What does John say about himself since his last meeting with the author?

**Ans :** John had prospered a lot. His salary was double, he had got commission and he had also invested in real estate. Shortly he was also going to acquire some shares of his company.

(e) How did John's first meeting with Jessie's father go?

**Ans :** John's first meeting with Jessie's father was successful, since it set the tone for a possible alliance in future. John not only made his proposal, stated his intentions in clear terms, but also made Jessie's father laugh with his anecdotes and stories.

(f) Why did John get off at Coketown?

**Ans :** Jessie had fancied some petunias in one of the windows and she wanted to plant them in her new house. So Pescud thought of dropping at Coketown to dig or get some cuttings of flowers for her.

(g) John is a hypocrite. Substantiate this statement. Do you agree?

**Ans :** Yes, John does come across as a hypocrite. He criticises and mocks the stories of best-sellers calling them melodramatic and unrealistic. In real life, he behaves like the hero of a bestseller, chasing his girl, across various towns and stations, and proposes to her despite her royal connections.

(h) Describe John A. Pescud with reference to the following points.

- Ans :**
- Physical appearance : short stature, wide-smile
  - Philosophy on behaviour : decent, law-abiding, rational
  - His profession : travelling salesman for a plate-glass company
  - His first impression of his life : finest looking, homely, fit for matrimony.
  - His success : earned good salary, got a commission, bought real estate, dealing in shares and stocks.

**3. Complete the flow chart in the correct sequence as it happens in the story.**

*Hint: It begins from the time John Pescud first saw Jessie till the time they marry.*

Jessie takes a sleeper to Louisville.

Pescud sees a girl (Jessie) reading a book in the train.

Pescud speaks to the girl (Jessie) for the first time.

Pescud follows her but finds it difficult to keep up.

Pescud goes to the village to find out about the mansion.

Jessie arrives at Virginia.

Pescud meets Jessie's father.

They get married a year later.

Pescud instantly gets attracted to the girl (Jessie)

Jessie informs Pescud that her father would not approve of them meeting.

They meet alone two days later.

**Ans :** The correct sequence is as follows :

Pescud sees a girl (Jessie) reading a book in the train.

Pescud instantly gets attracted to the girl (Jessie).

Pescud follows her but finds it difficult to keep up.

Jessie takes a sleeper to Louisville.

Jessie arrives at Virginia.

Pescud goes to the village to find out about the mansion.

Pescud speaks to the girl (Jessie) for the first time.

Jessie informs Pescud that her father would not approve of their meeting.

Pescud meets Jessie's father.

They meet alone two days later.

They get married a year later.

**4. Irony refers to the use of words to convey a meaning that is the opposite of their literal meaning. Working in pairs, bring out the irony in the following :**

(a) The title of the story, "The Bestseller".

**Ans :** The Best Seller is supposed to be most popular and likeable. But John Pescud throws the best seller "The Rose Lady and Trevelyan" to the floor of the chair car. He later says that all bestsellers have the same unrealistic romantic stories.

(b) Pescud's claim, "When people in real life marry, they generally hunt up somebody in their own status. A fellow usually picks out a girl who went to the same high school and belonged to the same kind of society that he did."

**Ans :** Pescud told the author that unlike the stories of the bestsellers, in real life people marry somebody in their own place. A fellow usually picks out a girl who went to the same high school and belonged to the same kind of

society. But the irony is that he himself marries a girl unknown to him who lived at a far off place, and belonged to a completely different background.

(c) *The name Trevelyan.*

**Ans :** Trevelyan is the hero of the bestseller novel "The Rose Lady and Trevelyan." Pescud condemns such best sellers and makes fun of its unrealistic characters. But at the end of the story, the author calls Pescud a Trevelyan because he had behaved almost like the hero of the bestseller.

## MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

Read the extracts and answer the questions that follow by choosing the option you consider the most appropriate.

1. "Say," said Pescud, stirring his discarded book with the hand, "did you ever read one of these bestsellers?"

- (a) Who is Pescud talking to?  
 (i) Ladies in the chair-car  
 (ii) The narrator  
 (iii) The Colonel (iv) Jessie

- (b) What is the bestseller about?  
 (i) College students (ii) Business trips  
 (iii) A romantic story (iv) A ghostly story

- (c) The name of the bestseller is  
 (i) Trevelyan and the Rose Lady  
 (ii) The Rose Lady and Trevelyan  
 (iii) Trevelyan (iv) The Rose Lady

**Ans :** (a) (ii) (b) (iii) (c) (ii)

2. "Oh, I'm on the line of General Prosperity".

- (a) Who is 'I' referred to here?  
 (i) The narrator (ii) Jessie  
 (iii) Pescud (iv) The colonel
- (b) 'General Prosperity' here relates to  
 (i) Hike in salary, shares and property  
 (ii) Good health  
 (iii) Happy married life  
 (iv) Excellence in education

(c) What does the person with whom 'I' is talking asks him next?

- (i) "Met your affinity yet?"  
 (ii) "Getting along all right with the Company?"  
 (iii) "Oh, I didn't tell you about that, did I?"  
 (iv) Would I aspire?

**Ans :** (a) (iii) (b) (i) (c) (i)

## NON-MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

1. "The next morning at eleven sharp, I rang the doorbell of that World's Fair main building."

- (a) Who had Pescud come to meet ?  
**Ans.** Pescud had come to meet Jessie's father.

- (b) What was the purpose of his visit ?  
**Ans.** He had come there to talk to Jessie's father and to disclose his liking for her.

(c) Why was he surprised to see the inside of the big building ?

**Ans.** He was surprised because the inside of the building was impoverished and had very old furniture.

2. "For about nine seconds, he had me rattled, and I came mighty near getting cold feet and trying to sell him some plate-glass."

- (a) The speaker is talking about  
**Ans.** He is talking about his meeting with Colonel Allyn, Jessie's father.

(b) What does the word 'rattle' mean here ?  
**Ans.** It means shaking vigorously, confused and nervous.

(c) What did the speaker do after these 'nine seconds' ?

**Ans.** After these nine seconds, he got over his nervousness, gained confidence and talked about his liking for Jessie.

3. "Good-luck to you, Trevelyan," "And may you get the petunias for your princess!" [CBSE 2011 (Term II)]

- (a) By whom have these words been spoken ?  
**Ans.** These words have been spoken by the narrator to Pescud.

(b) 'Trevelyan' was the hero of \_\_\_\_\_.  
**Ans.** Trevelyan was the hero of the best seller 'The Rose Lady and Trevelyan'.

(c) Who is the 'princess' mentioned here ?  
**Ans.** Princess here refers to Jessie, Pescud's wife.

## SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

Answer the following briefly.

**1. “This fellow chases the royal chair-warmer home as I said, and finds out who she is”**

(i) Who is the ‘fellow’? Who is the ‘royal chair-warmer’?

(ii) Discuss the context of the above remark.

**Ans.** (i) The ‘fellow’ refers to the hero of the Bestseller. He is an American who belongs to the upper class and is fashionably dressed.

The ‘royal chair-warmer’ refers to the royal princess from Europe with whom he has fallen in love, and so chases her to find out who she is.

(ii) The above remark is made in context of the Bestseller which was thrown on the floor of the chair-car by John A. Pescud. The narrator who was also sitting in the same chair-car recognized Pescud and they had conversation on issues like life, romance, literature and ethics. During that conversation only, Pescud talks to the narrator about the story of the bestseller he had thrown on the floor. The above mentioned remark is made by him for the hero of the novel and the royal princess whom he had chased to marry her.

**2. “You don’t see or hear of any such capers in real life”**

(i) Who is the speaker and who is the listener?

(ii) What is the purpose of the above comparison?

**Ans.** (i) The speaker is John A. Pescud and the listener is the Narrator.

(ii) The purpose of the above comparison by Pescud is to draw the attention of the narrator to his own (Pescud’s) real-life story. By speaking so negatively about the romance in the Bestseller between an American and the royal princess from Europe, Pescud is successful in having the narrator ask him if he had met his ‘affinity’. Perhaps, ordinarily he would not have been able to tell the narrator (or anybody else) that his romance was also of a very ‘special’ kind – something different from the normal course. He had a broad grin on his face when he got the chance to tell the narrator about his romantic story. So, his purpose of making the above comparison was fulfilled.

**3. Pescud was obsessed with his plate-glass business but he let this business go to smash for a while. Why?**

**Ans.** Once when Pescud was going to Cincinnati, he happened to see in his chaircar a girl who he felt was the finest looking girl he had ever laid his eyes on. He was so impressed by her beauty that he started thinking of marrying her. At that moment, he forgot completely about his plate-glass business, of which he used to be so obsessed, and let it go to smash for a while. All the places

that she went to — from Cincinnati to Louisville, to Shelbyville, Frankford and Lexington — he followed her. He got down from the train at the last station that she got down at, ie., Virginia, but throughout he tried to keep himself out of her sight. After meeting her father and making a few more efforts, he was able to marry the girl. All this while, the thought of his plate-glass business did not even occur once to his mind.

**4. How did Jessie know that Pescud was following her?**

**Ans.** During their conversation, when Jessie came to know that Pescud was from Pittsburg, she told him that he was quite far from his home. At this, Pescud replied that he could easily go a thousand miles farther. Jessie then said, “Not if you hadn’t woken up when the train started in Shelbyville”, and then she started blushing. Later, she also reminded him that he was about to miss his train at Powhatan Junction also. This shows that she knew very well that Pescud was following her. When Pescud asked her how she knew that, she replied that she knew that he was present on every train which she was travelling in.

**5. “I thought you were going to speak to me and I am glad you didn’t.” Why does Jessie say so?**

**Ans.** Jessie says she is glad that he didn’t talk to her in the train because she knows that she would not have taken any interest in talking to him there. Perhaps if Pescud had expressed his liking for her in the train, she would have rejected him. It seems that now when Pescud is talking to her, after having made all the efforts to be near her, she has also started developing some sort of liking for him. Moreover, now she is also in a position to clearly show the status that her family has, and let Pescud decide upon his next step.

**6. Give two reasons to show that Jessie was very proud of her family.**

**Ans.** While talking to Pescud and telling him about her family, she referred to her family as ‘The Allyns’. She also said that hers was a proud family, and that her father was a lineal descendant of ‘belted earls’ — those who were invested with a sword by the king himself. She gave the amazing details of the big mansion that the Allyn family had lived in for the last hundred years. All these things show that she was proud of her family.

**7. Point out the significance of the last statement of the writer, “And may you get the petunias for your princess.”**

**Ans.** The writer and Pescud had started their discussion in the beginning on the bestseller, “The Rose Lady and Trevelyan”. Pescud had apparently projected that he was a critic of such marriages where the status of the

boy and girl were wide apart. Gradually when Pescud told his own story, it was no different from the story of the bestseller. So when Pescud gets down at Coketown to get Petunias for his wife, the writer speaks out this statement with an element of sarcasm, meaning that Pescud himself had married a princess, while he was condemning the marriage between Trevelyan and the princess.

**8. What was John Pescud's opinion about best-sellers? Why ?** [CBSE 2011 (Term II)]

Once, while travelling in a train, the writer chanced to meet Pescud, an old associate, who was reading a best seller 'Rose Lady and Trevelyan'. Pointing towards the book Pescud said that the novel revolved round the romance of an American Hero with a royal Princess from Europe. He believed that such type of romances only

happened in novels because in real life any sensible person will pick out a girl from the same kind of status and family. He criticises and mocks the stories of best sellers calling them melodramatic and unrealistic.

**9. In the lesson 'Bestseller' what did Pescud inform the speaker about his prosperity ?**

[CBSE 2011 (Term II)]

While travelling in a train, the writer met with an old friend John A Pescud who was a travelling salesman for a plate-glass company. During the conversation Pescud told the writer that he was quite satisfied with his work. He told that he was doing well and believed that plate-glass was the most important business in the world. He informed the writer that professionally he was prospering and he had also invested in real estate.

## LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

**1. Pescud is short and not the stuff heroes are made of. Yet he wins Jessie. What do you think were the main reasons that went in his favour?**

[CBSE 2011 (Term II)]

**Ans.** Pescud was short and ordinary looking, and not the stuff heroes are made of. But the fact is that it was not his physical appearance that had impressed Jessie. She had liked his honesty and the space he had given her and Colonel Allyn to just give him one chance. He had said. "If I couldn't make a hit with the little lady, I'd clear out, and not bother any more." More than his physical looks, it was his personality which had been in his favour. Like a perfect salesman, he had been successful in impressing the Colonel. He had understood that the Colonel could be easily flattered if he listened to his stories, anecdotes and humorous occurrences. All these things went in his favour and he was able to win Jessie.

**2. Give a short sketch of Colonel Allyn.**

**Ans.** Colonel Allyn was a tall old man, with a smooth face and white hair, and looked as proud as Julius Caesar. Although he wore shabby clothes, his personality was such that the writer feels that in his presence, the place seemed to light up. On the one hand he seemed to be very strict but talking to Pescud surprisingly, he (Colonel) took a great liking to him. He was very fond of telling stories to or listening to them. This is evident from the following statement made by him — "The relating of anecdotes and humorous occurrences has always seemed to me, Mr. Pescud, to be a particularly agreeable way of promoting and perpetuating amenities between friends." Thus he can be said to be a friendly person with a strict and proud look.

**3. Pescud appeared unassuming and none of his friends could ever associate him with any act of adventure. The writer could not get over Pescud's story. He writes a letter to a common friend, James**

**Cameroon, marvelling at the "surprise packet" – called Pescud. Write this letter for him.**

**Ans.**

Dear James

I have been busy with my business so I could not write. But there is something interesting I want to share with you. Do you remember we had a friend, John A. Pescud? Last summer while I was travelling to Pittsburgh for some business work, I happened to meet him in the train. He is working as a salesman for a plate-glass company, and I met him after a gap of two years. Do you remember how ordinary-looking he used to be? Not only that, he used to be so dull and unadventurous. During my acquaintance with him earlier, I had never known his views on life, romance, literature and ethics. During our meetings earlier, we used to just discuss matters of local topics and then part.

This time when I talked to him, I found him to be such a surprise packet. I was shocked to hear from him about his 'Adventurous' proposal to a girl, his courageous encounter with her father, and ultimately his marriage to her which took place a year ago. And do you know who is the girl is whom he has married? She belongs to a royal family and her father is a lineal descendant of belted earls. There is so much difference in their status —she is a princess whereas Pescud is just an ordinary American! Isn't it amazing that a person like him who is no hero, turned out to be such a 'surprise packet'? I'll tell you more about him when we meet.

How is everybody else at your home? Do reply soon.

Yours

O. Henry

**4. As Jessie write a letter to a friend on how you**

**met Pescud and why you decided to marry him. (about 125 words) [CBSE 2011 (Term II)]**

Dear friend, Sumedha

I am going to tell you about my chance meeting with Pescud.

While I was returning from Illinois, where I had gone to see my aunt, I noticed a man who followed me on each station that I got down at — whether it was Cincinnati or Shelbyville, Frankford or Lexington, and lastly Virginia — my city. He didn't know that I had noticed him. After three days, while I was walking in the front yard, down next to the paling fence, he came to me and asked about some Mr. Hinkle's address. I knew he did it just to start a conversation with me. I could instantly sense the feeling of deep affection he had for me. When I told him that he had come quite a long distance from Pittsburg, he said that he could have gone a thousand miles farther. Then he honestly told me about his liking for me and without imposing himself on me, he told me that he wanted me to develop a liking for him. I am amazed at his grit and perseverance, and the kind of attention he gave me. Nobody has ever talked to me like that. I am quite impressed by his earnestness and the honesty with which he told my father about his background and the business

he was pursuing. I have really developed a liking for him and have decided to marry him. I am sure that you will also appreciate my choice after you meet him. Rest in the next letter.

Your friend

Jessie

**5. Discuss the significance of the title, 'Bestseller'. What role does this play in the life of John Pescud ?**

Bestsellers are known to spin imaginative yarns bordering on fantasy and melodrama. The story revolves around incredible romance between a beautiful maiden from the most affluent royal family and a hero who is ordinary in terms of looks and family background but extraordinary in terms of his bravery and determination to win the lady. He has a heart to 'do and dare'. Pescud's story is no different. He sees her in a train. It is love at first sight. He follows her from Cincinnati to Louisville, forgetting the fact that he was on a business tour. When he comes to know that Jessie hailed from a royal family, like a bestseller hero, he is not disheartened. He proposes and wins the lady despite the gulf of differences in their family backgrounds. Pescud's story has all the elements of a best seller—romance, struggle, obstacles, suspense and finally the victory.

## FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

### (A) QUIZ

Complete the information given below, writing the names of the writers, in the blanks provided.

Book	Writers
1. Da Vinci Code	_____
2. Harry Potter Series	_____
3. Five Point Someone	_____
4. The Jungle Book	_____
5. Treasure Island	_____
6. Ignited Minds	_____
7. The Night before Easter	_____
8. The Graveyard Book	_____
9. Discover the Diamond in You	_____
10. The Angel Experiment	_____

### (B) WRITING / LISTENING

Write the story of the latest best-seller that you have read.

- Read the story in the class.

### (C) CLASS DISCUSSION

Have a class discussion on the topic, "Is fiction far removed from the realities of life?"

- Agree / disagree
- Share the outcome with others.