
Chapter - 5

Should Wizard Hit Mommy?

By John Updike

Gist of the Lesson -

The chapter captures a very sensitive reaction of a small girl to an important aspect of the story that her father narrates to her. The story reveals the worldview of a little child to a difficult moral question that shows her mental or psychological richness. Jo is a little girl of four years. She is engaged in a story session with her father. Jack, the father used to tell her a story every evening and especially for Saturday naps. Jo feels herself involved with the characters and the happenings. The story always had an animal with a problem.

The old owl advises him to visit the wizard who would solve the problem. Skunk's problem- he smelt bad, visited the wizard who changed it to the smell of roses. Skunk's mother was unhappy with it and took him back to the wizard. She hit the wizard and asked him to restore the original smell. She wanted her son to keep his identity of a skunk and wanted his friends to accept him for himself. So the wizard changes him back to smell like a skunk. After hearing the story of Roger Skunk Jo was not happy with the ending.

She wants her father to change the ending. She wants the wizard to hit the mother back and let Roger be which her father was not ready to do to establish his authority. This raises a difficult moral question whether parents possess the right to impose their will on their children. Her father finds it difficult to answer her question.
