

“The Prison” Bernard Malamud

1. Consider Tommy’s character and the question of his plight: how much is man the master of his own fate?
2. People have said that as one grows older he finds that his life is not necessarily his own. Is this so?
3. What does Dom represent in Tommy’s life and why does he associate the memory of his uncle with the child who steals candy from his store?
4. Is Tommy’s situation wholly a reflection of his inability to communicate?
5. Just how much is told from the narrator’s point of view as an impartial observer and how much is told through Tommy’s eyes.
6. Does the amount of vagueness in “The Prison” add to or detract from the success of the story as a whole?