

**‘A Meeting in the Forest’**  
**- George Bernard Shaw**

**Introduction:** ‘A Meeting in the Forest’ is an excerpt from the play “Androcles and the Lion” written by George Bernard Shaw. Androcles and his wife Megaera leave their home to flee from the Roman Persecutors.

**The Humble Man:** Androcles is a thin, little man. He has very poor looks. He and his wife flee the Roman Empire and reach the middle of a dense jungle. He seems to be tired and hungry carrying a big bundle.

**The pampered Megaera :** The pampered Megaera is his wife who has pretty looks and is always in the comfort zone. She is well-fed, also very quarrelsome and quite disrespectful in her words. She is famous for her negative qualities. She walks with the help of a stick through the forest.

**Refusal and pleading:** Megaera throws her stick and refuses to go any further. Poor Androcles pleads her to keep walking to reach the nearby village before dark. He scares her about the lions in the forest. She calls him a cruel person for making her walk. She does not believe his words about lions and calls him selfish. She pulls down the bundle from his back.

**Kindness of Androcles:** He accepts all that he is blamed for by Megaera. He only shows his love and concern for her. He never complains anything in return, about her.

**The guilty Megaera:** She keeps on speaking that he has made her a slave and has made himself a laughing stock. People called her a shrew of a woman. She also blames him for being a soft spoken man and to have been misled by her. She does not like him being kind and fond of animals.

**The Calm and understanding Andy:** Androcles, in his quiet manner speaks to his wife. He says that he loves her and shows his concern for her. He also says that he is a pious Christian and is not selfish. He accepts his fault of being addicted to drink.

**Megaera retaliates:** She firmly states that she could even bear his addiction to drinks and not to animals. He had even grabbed the food for feeding the stray animals which he would bring home every day and she strongly suggests him to live with animals than a wife.

**The Responsible Andy:** Androcles explains to his wife that all their things had been sold and they had to starve or be thrown to the lions if they had to return home.

**The Encounter with the Beast:** As always Androcles cares for animals he is worried for the loud groan of a lion heard. He looks at the sleeping lion. He glares at the lion's eyes and talks to the lion, asking to spare his loving wife. To his astonishment, the lion holds up his paw and flaps it piteously before Androcles. Andy feels sad for the lion in pain, with the thorn in his paw. So he just rests down to pull out the frightful thorn, without the slightest pain. The beast bore all the pain, and understood the dear old friend Andy. He rejoices with the beast's paws in his hand.

**Conclusion:** Despite the true love of Androcles towards his wife and the innumerable sacrifices he had made for her, Megaera still had not realized till the end and the story concludes with further grumbling of hers regarding the Waltz and she complains that he has not danced with her.