

## ***Life of Pi***

***Written by Yann Martel***

### **Summary:**

The existence of Piscine Molitor Patel is the pivot of Yann Martel's *Life of Pi* whose viability was fading away as he was left alone in a harrowing shipwreck and survives with a Bengal tiger named Richard Parker in a life boat for months. The emergence of the novel covers his life when he was younger and he's trying to change his name from Piscine to Pi for he was constantly teased about his name (Pissing Patel)

Pi's family is considered to be an affluent one because they own and runs a zoo in the South Indian of Pondicherry, India. Early in Pi's life, his father, Santosh Patel, teaches him not only to care and control the wild animals but to fear them.

For his entire life, he was a devout follower of his religions- Hinduism, Catholicism and Islam. His religious leaders do not accept Pi's religions but his family accepts it and come up to an idea to sell the zoo and head up for a new life in Canada. On a cargo ship named *Tsintsum*.

Whilst on the boat, a terrible storm occurs during the voyage, making the ship sink and leaving Pi as the lone survivor along with the animals in the zoo including a vicious hyena, badly injured zebra and a matronly orangutan named Orange Juice.

The savage hyena wounds and eats the zebra and puts up a good fight with the orangutan but the hyena kills her first. Richard Parker, who hides out of sight, makes himself known as he kills the hyena.

Piscine, along with the Bengal tiger, survived the months in the Pacific Ocean. With his eagerness to find something perishable, he discovered provisions stored in a life boat. With the help of the surviving tools, he builds a raft because he concluded that he must tame the tiger in order for him to survive. He was able to subdue him and have a territory on a life boat.

In the long run, Richard Parker and Pi find an island but Pi makes a horrible discovery that made them to leave, the island is a carnivorous one that consumes everything on it. Unfortunately, Pi was left deeply hurtful as Richard Parker immediately runs off into the jungle without acknowledging Pi. Piscine was brought into the custody, providing him all that he needs and was questioned by Mr. Okamoto and Mr. Chiba, both from Maritime Department in the Japanese Ministry of Transport. They refused to believe in Pi's stories of what had happened to him so he offers them another one then he asked the two Japanese on which story they prefer and they both agreed that the first one is better. After his recovery, he went to Canada, and he spent a year finishing high school and studied Religion and Zoology at the University of Toronto, he got married to Meena Patel, and bore 2 children.

## **Introduction:**

The book Life of Pi is another influential story from the American Literature as it brings us to the life of the main character Piscine Molitor " Pi " Patel , a Tamil boy from Pondicherry who came from a zookeeping family and he wants to unzip the issues of the church and the truth about life at his young age. The author makes us visualize how hard Pi struggled to survive the 227 days after the shipwreck while stranded on a lifeboat that is tossed by the waves of the Pacific Ocean accompanied by the Bengal Tiger named Richard Parker.

The Life of Pi is a Canadian fictional fantasy adventure from the imaginative mind of Yann Martel , a dedicated writer who wants to shake the world through his obra maestras. He had already published two books but failed to shake the world

The Life of Pi , which has sold more than ten million copies worldwide was been rejected by five publishing houses in London and finally found it's home at Knopf Canada who published it in September 2001.

This novel is an award winning novel . It's United King Edition nabs the Man Booker Prize for fiction , the following year. It was also picked for the CBC Radio's Canada Read 2003 and claimed the title by author Nancy Lee.

It was also translated in French , L'Histoire de Pi and was chosen in the French CBC version of the contest Le Combat de Lives , where it was championed by the author Louise Forestier. The novel won several more awards. In 2003 , the Boeke Prize a South African Novel Award. In 2004 , the Asian/Pacific America Award for literature in Best Adult or Fiction for years 2001-2003 . In 2012 , it was put into the big screen a theatrical feature film directed by ang Lee with a screenplay by David Magee.

## **Body:**

### **Themes:**

There are different themes floated as I read the novel . First is that " LIFE IS A STORY " You can choose your own story , you can make your memories that will last forever . Let us take note that all the events happened , happening and may happen in our lives are written in our own book of life. But for me the best story is the story with GOD.

Another theme is " THAT ALL LIFE IS INTERDEPENDENT " We need others in order for us to live a happy and complete life . I believe in the old quotation that " NO MAN IS AN ISLAND " There will always be interactions with other living things in our journey . Just like Pi who was accompanied by Robert Parker all throughout his journey in the Pacific Ocean.

**Character:**

Piscine Molitor Patel is one of a kind fictional character. As he goes along with his journey, surely, you'll fall in love with his attitude on how he faced the obstacles that God has given him. He inspires us to believe in a loving higher power and he shows us that there will always be a beacon of hope in the midst of the sufferings. His burgeoning need for connection with God deepens while at sea to the point that he realizes that the fact he is still alive means a blessing from God and He is with him.

Describing Richard Parker was not that easy, but one thing is for sure. He is quite fearsome but his presence was a big help for Pi to stay alive by keeping him busy by caring for him as time passes by. We believe that without Richard Parker, Pi might have given up his life.

**Conclusion:**

Therefore, we believe that "It is true that those we meet can change us, sometimes so profoundly that we are not the same afterwards, even unto our names." Life of Pi. It is such an extraordinary story because it covers so many enthralling subjects. The author provides stories of animal behavior, survival at sea, the limits of reason, and an adventurous young boy. The novel is a work of spiritual vocation, adventurism, an expression of awareness about the truth in life, and a very imaginative and versatile mind of Yann Martel. During Pi's long stay in the lifeboat with the tiger, Pi notes: "My greatest wish — other than salvation — was to have a book. A long book with a never-ending story. One I could read again and again, with new eyes and a fresh understanding each time. Alas, there was no scripture in the lifeboat."

"I was giving up. I would have given up - if a voice hadn't made itself heard in my heart. The voice said "I will not die. I refuse it. I will make it through this nightmare. I will beat the odds, as great as they are. I have survived so far, miraculously. Now I will turn miracle into routine. The amazing will be seen everyday. I will put in all the hard work necessary. Yes, so long as God is with me, I will not die. Amen." - Life of Pi. As we walk our path to our success there will always be a hindrance that may stop us aiming for it. But let us not forget that these circumstances should not stop us thus, this should be our motivation for us to succeed. " When you feel tired just rest, do not quit! " Let us always remember that God is there for us! " Philippians 4:13(NKJV) I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. " Amen.

**Recommendation:**

We would like to recommend this book for it contains the essence of an exceptionally good novel. It will take you to different place as you imagine the circumstances that Piscine encounters, you'll be like a director of this book and it will gradually increase your imagination for the plot is well written and full of surprising amount of action and suspense. Unlike any other novel, this book does not just have conflict with other people. In fact, the story shows how Pi persevered the shipwreck alone and

how the animals with distinct personalities affects him. As we continue to read this story, we can say that his day to day survival is one of the continued source of suspense. Aside from that, Life of Pi is a kind of an easy to read philosophical book that will make you think about the themes, humanity, religion and society for it is a thought provoking one. And the last but not the least reason to read this novel is that you are going to love this book as much as we love it. It is indeed a story that will make you believe in God as Pi shows how his faith in Him and how he hope for the best, that he will survive the happenings in his life despite the fact that he was left alone with a Bengal tiger, will eventually save him. This book will give you another perspective in life as read the ending of this story.

### **Reflection:**

This book is very essential as it motivates us to do good things in the midst of sufferings. It taught us how to remain grateful and hopeful no matter what circumstances may come our way as it is just a reminder that we are alive and breathing. We can look at Piscine and the Filipino Haiyan survivors closely in order to see what is similar about them. Just like Pi, Filipino managed to break the chains that are surrounding them it is because they see it as another opportunity, a problem that will only get them stronger and bolder. Aside from they both acquire a new perspective towards the inhibitions in life, Pi and the Filipinos treasure every second in their life. As Pi once said, "I did not count the days or the weeks or the months. Time is an illusion that only makes us pant. I survived because I forgot even the very notion of time." It is only a reminder that we should consider the challenges as another chance for us to make memories and enjoy every second of with God.

Pi and the Filipinos have the steadfast belief and trust in God. We believe that in the midpoint of our obstacles, God is only testing our faith. Just like Pi, it is undeniable that many of the survivors in the Typhoon Yolanda lost their loved ones during the voyage. In the end, there is nothing you can hold on to, but to have faith. I have seen many Filipinos takes those challenges as a chance to have a better relationship with God. In the end of the novel, Pi gives himself to God for he is just a vessel of the Lord and he is willing to take everything that might come.

As Pi aforementioned, "Faith is a house with may rooms but no rooms for doubt. Oh plenty one every floor. Doubt is useful, it keeps faith a living thing. After all, you cannot know the strength of your faith until it is tested."