Unit—I

THE GUIDE

(By R.K. Narayan)

LIFE AND WORKS OF R.K. NARAYAN

R.K. Narayan was born on October 10, 1906 at Yadavagiri in Mysore. He is one of the most popular Indian novelists writing in English. As per his own admission, R.K. Narayan was not a good student. He was distinctly backward in studies. He failed both in his High School and Intermediate examinations. He graduated only when he was twenty four from the Maharaja College, Mysore. These failures adversely affected his personality. It is said that he was at the tail of his class. His sluggish pace at school affected his personality. He became shy, introverted, and diffident. It is said that he even tried to commit suicide. He remained modest, unpretentious and unassuming till the end.

He gave up his job as a teacher in disgust and decided to devote all his time to writing. He simply decided to write novels and live off the joint family system. In those days, it was unthinkable for an Indian to become a writer in English. His father did not approve of the idea. But Narayan went ahead with great confidence and soon achieved success as a novelist and short story writer.

Narayan met his future wife Rajam in 1935. He was twenty eight and she was twenty, eight years his junior. It was a case of love at first sight. R.K. Narayan felt smitten by her classical features and tall and slim body. Her face had finish and perfection of a sculpture. She walked past him as in a dance. It was spring and Narayan was twenty eight.

Narayan was in love. Without loss of time, he went to Rajam's father, Nageshwar who was impressed by the young suitor's frankness and honesty. Their horoscopes did not tally. Narayan got an astrologer of his own for two rupees. At the sight of shining rupees, the astrologer went into ecstasies over the groom's horoscope. Rajam's parents agreed to the marriage. The marriage was exceptionally happy. Rajam did not know English but she doted on her gifted husband. They had an only child, Hema. But Narayan's domestic happiness was short-lived Narayan was disconsolate when Rajam died in 1939. Rajam's death was a shattering blow for Narayan. For six years after her death, he did not write any novel. It was a period of deep anguish and introspection. During this period, he edited only a journal, The Indian Thought and published three volumes of short stories—Malgudi Days, 1941, Dodu and Stories 1943, and Cyclone and Other Stories, 1944.

His next novel, The English Teacher was published in 1945. Since then, novels lowed from his pen—Mr. Sampath, The Financial Expert, Waiting for the Mahatma, Lawley Road, The Guide, Next Sunday, My Dateless Diary, The Man-Eater of Malgudi, Gods, Demons and Other Stories, The Vendor of Sweets, and A Horse and Two Goats. He brought out a version of the Ramayan based not on Valmiki who wrote in Sanskrit, but on the Tamil poet, Kamban. He led a quiet life in his home.

Narayan enjoyed good health till the age of eighty five. There was no decline in his creative powers. His, The Guide (prescribed for our study), received the Sahitya Akdemi Award for the year 1960. the novel was made into a film (starring Dev Anand and Wahida Rehman). He got several awards The Padma Bhushan was conferred on him in 1964. Leeds University conferred on him the honorary D. Litt in 1967. Delhi University followed suit.

He was awarded the A.C. Benson Award by the Royal Society of Literature. He was also made an Honorary Member of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. In 1989 he was made a member of the Rajya Sabha. Many of his stories and sketches have been broadcast by the B.B.C., a rare distinction. His works have been published both in England and the U.S.A. He enjoyed popularity in both these countries. In America, he is regarded next only to Faulkner and Graham Greene.

All Narayan's works are set in the fictional setting of Malgudi. This is a partly real and partly imaginary setting. Narayan does not go deep into the problems of man's relationship to God, politics, good and evil. He is not a social reformer. He portrays the peculiarities and ironies of daily life. His writing is marked by humour, irony and simplicity of style. Among his novels are : Swami and Friends, The Bachelor of Arts, The English Teacher, The Financial Expert (1952), **Waiting for the Mahatma, The Guide,** The Man-eater of Malgudi, The Painter of Signs. Among his later works may be mentioned Malgudi Days, Lawley Road, Next Sunday, Dateless Diary, The Vendor of Sweets and A Horse and Two Goats.

Narayan was invited by the Michigan State University as a Visiting Professor. He went to the Phillipines to write the biography of its President. He was awarded the honorary D.Litt. by the University of Leeds in 1967 and was honoured by the government of India with the title of 'Padma Bhushan' for his distinguished services to literature. Narayan has written a number of essays and short stories entitled Lawley Road and A Horse and Two Goats. He published abridged prose versions of the Indian epics, The Ramayana and The Mahabharata, and a memoir My Days. His 'Dateless Diary' written after his visit to America makes very interesting reading. In May 2001, Narayan was hospitalised. A few hours before he was to be put on a ventilator, he was planning on writing his next novel, a story about a grandfather. However, Narayan did not get better and never started the novel. He died on May 13, 2001 in Chennai at the age of 94. His works have been translated into several Indian languages.

R.K. Narayan is a man of letters, pure and simple. He is a very good story-teller. He does not have any educative or agitational purpose in his writings. He has touched a vast range of Indian life and thought, but political issues and social conflicts do

not figure in his stories except as general background. He has a keen eye for detail. His awareness of the Indian situation is also very keen and deep.

He writes in a simple and easy to understand English. He presents human nature with truth, humour and sympathy. Irony, the contrast between appearance and reality, is almost pervasive in his novels. He believes in the fundamental goodness of man.

R.K. Narayan is in some respects like Thomas Hardy, the English novelist. Hardy has created an unforgettable Wessex. R.K. Narayan has projected a small South Indian village called Malgudi in or around which all events take place. The descriptions are so suggestive that the reader comes to have a strong feeling for the identity of the place. We find an amusing mixture of the East and the West in R.K. Narayan's novels. Narayan himself had said that the mission of an Indian writer should be to express the way of life of the group of people with whose psychology and background he is most familiar.

R.K. NARAYAN AS AN ARTIST

As an artist R.K.Narayan is competent if not masterly in approach to his theme. He is a good teller of stories. He is a good artist, but not as great as E.M. Forster or Ernest Hemingway is from the point of view of symbolic interpretation of life. The depth of thought is none of his concern. The eminence of R.K. Narayan as an artist lies in the sound management of the narrative. He conceives the theme of *The Guide* on artistic lines; but he cannot be called a pure artist, because the social anxiety, mostly economic, tends to dilute the decorative onwardness of art and also its spirit. Yet, in this novel and in *The Man-eater of Malgudi* he is extremely engaging. His novels, nearly all of them, are engaging. It is perhaps due to the judicious distribution of the various interests over the events and plot-joints. The major strength of the artist lies in the progression of the novel, which is the triumph of his technique.

He is an artist of rare excellence. He carefully avoids propaganda. He is absolutely detached from what he writes. He does not feel anything personal in his writing. His writing does not reflect society. While writing, he imagines if it fits society. If it does not fit society, people still read it.

His readability by the public is the test of his art. He is an admirer of Graham Green, the novelist. He is a man of letters, pure and simple. His subjectivity and negative capability are found in all his novels. He reveals it through his unique creation Malgudi, his characterisation and his comic vision.

Malgudi is the setting of Narayan's imagination. There is no such town in an atlas, directory or almanac. Hardy's Wessex is a district more real than the present districts of England. In the same way, Malgudi is a reality charged with all that is intimate and poignant in human life. There is a Lalgudi in Tamil Nadu but it has nothing to do with R.K. Narayan's Malgudi. The similarity of two names is merely a coincidence. R.K. Narayan says that he woke up with the name Malgudi on Vijayadasami, the day on which the initiation of learning is celebrated. Narayan's

Malgudi is more than a mere fictional setting. It is a veritable world in microcosm. What is true of Malgudi is true in the whole world. Malgudi is an image of India and a metaphor of everywhere else. In Malgudi Narayan has created a delightful world of men and women, of life and manners within the restricted locale of Malgudi.

Malgudi, as depicted in his early novels, has some physical and well-marked features. In his first novel **Swami and Friends,** Malgudi has the Board High School, Malgudi Cricket Club, Albert Mission School and College, the busy railway station, the bustling market road, the rice mill, the Town Hall and the clock tower called Taluk Office gong. His next novel, **The Dark Room** draws a picture of middle class South Indian domesticity run by an irritable and whimsical husband. We move through important landmarks in Mr. Sampath. There is Central Cooperative Land Mortgage Bank in The Financial Expert.

We find judicial courts too in Malgudi. The adjournment lawyer figures in The Man -eater of Malgudi. The District Judge presides over the inauguration of the Sun Rise pictures in Mr. Sampath. **Sriram** in **Waiting for the Mahatma** and **Raju** in **The Guide** spend their time in the Malgudi Central Jail. Malgudi is not a static setting. It is a fast growing and developing town. After independence it had witnessed significant changes. Geographical changes are easily perceived. The Englandia Insurance Company, The Truth Printing Works, The Regal Haircutting Saloon, Anand Bhawan, The Central Co-operative Land Mortgage Bank, The Surprise Studio, Lawley Extension and many other modern institutions go to build up Malgudi.

Narayan's characters are the true children of Malgudi. He presents a considerable section of Indian society striving to live its daily life in a definite historical situation.

THE MAIN NOVELS OF R.K. NARAYAN

1. Swami and Friend

Swami and Friends was R.K.Narayan's first attempt at novel writing. Swami of the title is a young school boy. His jokes, pranks and exploits form the core of the novel. This book is not exactly a full-length. It is a novelette. The starting point of the novel is the quarrel in the school in which the headmaster has to mediate. The dispute relates to some of the derogatory remarks made by a fanatical Indian Christian about Hindu deities. Swami's friends form a cricket club with very well-known initials as M.C.C. which is based on M.C.C. (Marylebone Cricket Club). Here the initials M.C.C. stand for Malgudi Cricket Club in South India. This Malgudi becomes the locale of most of his novels and short stories. There is a crisis in the novel. This crisis arises from Swami's failure to come to the aid of his cricket team when an important match is to be played. Because of his failure to help, Swami loses his best friend, Rajam.

Swami and Friends became a popular book. It presented an authentic picture of India to the world.

In Swami and Friends, Narayan's peculiar charm, lucid style, enjoyabe narrative are displayed to the full. The same qulities are found in all the subsequent novels.

2. The Bachelor of Arts (1937)

This novel deals with the college days of young boys. Chandran is the hero of the novel. He is a good debater. His skill as a debater attracts the History professor and he is appointed Secretary of the Historical Association of the College. Chandran takes an active part in the co-curricular activities which take away a big chunk of his time. He however manages to qualify his degree examination. After his graduation, Chandran is worried about finding a suitable career for himself. He also falls in love with a girl called Malathi (Malati) whom he first sees on a river bank.

Malathi's parents are willing to marry their daughter to Chandran but there is a hindrance there. The horoscopes of the bride and the groom do not match.

There is an autobiographical touch in the novel because Narayan himself faced such a situation in his marriage with Rajam, Narayan managed to marry Rajam by bribing an astrologer but Chandran could not do so. As a result of his failure to get into double harness with Malathi, Chandran withdrew himself from life. After attempted initiation into sex, Chandran goes to a famous temple and becomes a sanyasi. After some time he gives us his experiences of the vagrant life of a sanyasi and then returns to his parents in Malguidi. There he gets a petty job and gets married to Susila. He forgets Malathi. He is happily married to Susila. He joins as a newspaper correspondent, Then he becomes the chief agent of 'The Daily Messenger'. He becomes prosperous. He explained to the people that they must marry for satisfaction of their sexual appetite and the management of the home otherwise there is no sanctity in the institution of marriage. In The Bachelor of Arts, Narayan continues to fill in his picture of Malgudi, a small town in South India. Narayan has created wonderfully memorable characters in The Bachelor of Arts.

3. The Dark Room (1938)

This is the third novel of R.K Narayan. It portrays the sufferings of a troubled wife. Ramani, the office secretary of Engladia Insurance Company is very domineering. His wife Savitri is a true symbol of traditional Indian womanhood. She is extremely beautiful and very devoted to her husband. Her husband Ramani does not respond to her sentiments. They have been married for fifteen years but his wife has not received anything except rebukes from him. Even his children get more of his rebukes.

All goes well for some time. Then there arrives one Shanta Bai. She has deserted her husband. She has joined Engladia Insurance Company. Ramani gets smitten by her alluring charms and coquettish ways. This upsets the peace and tranquillity of his domestic life. Savitri feels very much upset with his errant ways. She revolts against him and leaves her home to commit suicide.

She goes to the river and throws herself into it. Mari, the blacksmith, sees Savitri's body floating in the river and saves her life. She is persuaded by Mari's wife Ponni and goes to their village and starts living on her own by working. But she feels restless because of homesickness and separation from her own children. She returns home because she realises that it is not possible for her to snap her ties from the worldly life.

The story of the novel has been narrated in a convincing manner and the characters are nicely sketched.

4. The English Teacher

This novel was published in 1945. The novel describes the life of a lecturer in English in the Albert Mission College. The novel is a song of love in marriage. The main part of the novel focusses on the love between Krishnan and his wife Sushila. They have a baby girl. Both the husband and the wife concentrate on the baby. Krishnan did not have a good opinion of the system of education in which he had studied. He believed that the English system of education urged Indian students to mug up some lines from English poets and reproduce them in the examination. He had studied English literature and admired some of the poets like William Wordsworth and Byron. We get a peep into his life with his lovely wife but we also come to know that Krishnan did not approve of the system of education. The main part of the novel centres on the love between Krishnan and his wife. They were living a very happy life when his wife died of typhoid. After the death of his wife, Krishnan began to concentrate on bringing up his daughter Leela. Then the novel takes a mystic turn.

Krishnan started receiving messages from his wife through a medium, a cheerful gentleman of philosophic outlook. Every week he used to go to the gentleman for a sitting. Through medium, Krishnan received minute instructions of his house. These convinced him that the instructions came to him from his wife's spirit. He put up his daughter Leela in a school run by a devoted master. The master's unhappy life and his devotion to the school form a minor sub-plot of the novel.

5. Mr. Sampath

The novel is called Mr. Sampath but in the first 64 pages out of a total of 219, his name is not mentioned. The novel has been filmed both in Tamil and Hindi.

Mr. Sampath is a somewhat mysterious figure. He is the owner of a printing press. One of his clients is Srinivas whom Sampath persuades to write a film story for him. Sampath is to produce the film. His busines talents greatly help him to get the necessary things done. But Sampath falls in love with the heroine of the film, Shanti. This arouses rivalry between him and Ravi, an artist working in the film. The venture collapses or fails and this leads to financial ruin of Mr. Sampath. Mr. Sampath is one of the most memorable characters in Indo-Anglian fiction.

6. The Financial Expert (1952)

This is Narayan's sixth novel. This is his masterpiece. Margayya is the hero of the novel. He begins his career as a money-lender. He does his business. Margayya is Narayan's greatest single creation. The novel tells us about the rise and fall of Margayya. He has certain difficulties in carrying out his money-lendning business because of the stiff opposition of the secretary of a bank and his peon. Margayya suffers a great loss because of his transactions. Then he is again ruined because of his son Balu. The theme of the novel is lust for money, but Margayya is not greedy. There is run on his deposits. That leads to Margayya filing an insolvency petition.

7. Waiting for the Mahatma (1950)

This is not a political novel though the Mahatma figures in it quite frequently This novel narrates the love story of Sriram and Bharati against the backdrop of India's struggle for freedom and the Quit India Movement. It ends with the murder of Mahatma Gandhi at a prayer meeting in Birla House. Sriram is an orphan and Bharati is the daughter of a martyr who who died in the cause of freedom. She has been brought up on Gandhian principles.

Mahatma Gandhi is expected to visit Malgudi. Bharati is busy in collecting funds in this connection. She happens to meet Sriram. He joins the freedom movement out of his love for Bharati and follows the Mahatma in his tour of some villages in South India. He also takes part in the Quit India Movement. Later he comes across a terrorist and indulges in terrorist activities. He shifts his allegiance to Subhash Bose. He is captured and put behind the bars.

After his release, he goes to meet Bharati. He gets Gandhi's consent for his marriage with Bharati. The couple accompany the Mahatma in a prayer meeting. Mahatma Gandhi is shot dead there. Waiting for Mahatma is Narayan's only novel dealing with Gandhiji's fight for India's freedom. The Quit India Movement figures prominently in this novel.

8. The Guide 1958

The Guide is Narayan's most popular novel. It won the Sahitya Academy Award for 1960. It has also been made into a film. The film had always drawn packed houses though Narayna did not approve of the filmed version.

The novel tells the adventures of a railway guide, popularly known as 'Railway Raju'. As a tourist guide, he is widely popular because he knows the length and breadth of the region called Malgudi. He knows the area like the palm of his hand. His work as a guide brings him in contact with Marco and his beautiful wife Nalini

(Rosie). The husband is busy in his archaeological studies. Raju seduces his wife and has a ripping time in the young lady's company. Ultimately, the husband comes to know about the affair between his wife and the guide. He deserts Rosie and goes away to Madras leaving Rosie behind. Rosie comes and stays with Raju in his one-room tenement. Raju's mother tolerates Rosie for some time. But then she vows to live with her brother leaving Rosie and Raju.

Rosie is a consummate dancer. She practises regularly. Raju finds an opportunity for rising in life. Rosie begins to get dancing assignments. In her very first appearance, she proves to be a grand success. Soon her demand for public appearances grows and their income also grows. Raju begins to live lavishly. He entertains a large number of friends with whom he drinks and gambles. Everything goes on in a smooth manner. Unluckily, in his lust for more and more money, Raju forges Rosie's signature to get expensive jewellery lying with her husband. This dishonest action of Raju lands him in jail. Rosie leaves Malgudi and goes away to her home town Madras. She continues with her dancing performances without the help and management of Raju.

On his release from jail, Raju takes shelter in a deserted temple on the bank of the river Sarayu. It was close to the village Mangala. The simple villagers take him to be a Mahatma and begin to worship him. They bring him a lot of eatables as presents. Raju is quite at ease in performing his new role as a Swami. He gives a good account of himself is this role. A problem cropped up. The villagers around him got into the grip of a severe famine and drought. They requested Raju to undertake a fast to bring down rain. In his heart of hearts he feels that he has no merit to bring rain by undertaking a fast. But at the pressure exerted by the villagers and his devotee, Velan, he undertook the fast. His fast attracted much attention in the area. People came to have a darshan of this Mahatma from far and wide. On the 12th day of the fast, Raju fell down exhausted just as there are signs of rain on the distant horizon. It is not certain whether he is actually dead or he has merely swooned or fainted. Thus the novel ends on a note of ambiguity.

9. The Vendor of Sweets (1967)

It is R.K.Narayan's ninth novel. This novel take up the story of Jagan or Jagannath, the seller of sweets.

Jagan is a rich widower. The main object of his life is to educate his motherless son, Mali properly. But the son has his own ideas. He decides to leave college and be a writer. He also declares that he is writing a story for a story competition advertised by a popular magazine. Poor Jagan feels proud of his son and looks forward to a big prize and fame.

There is hardly any communication between father and son. After some months he finds that his son has written nothing so far. Jagan's cousin who is not actually his cousin advises him to let the boy have his way. Later on, Mali goes to U.S.A for higher studies.

From U.S.A. Mali writes short letters to his father. Jagan moves about Malgudi telling everyone about the progress of his son in America. Later on we learn that these letters were written by Mali's half-American, half-Korean wife, Grace.

Mali comes back to Malgudi with his wife Grace. He wants to manufacture novel writing machines. He needs capital from his father. But Jagan has now changed his attitude to his son and keeps himself aloof. Before he leaves Malgudi, he learns that his son has been arrested under the prohibition laws.

He decides not to get involved. He goes to the forest to lead the life of a sanyasi.

10. The Man-eater of Malgudi (1962)

This novel is an allegory. It shows that evil is self-destructive. The title of the novel is ironic. The man-eater in the novel is not a tiger but a powerful man. His name is Vasu. He kills a large number of wild animals in Mempi forests. He can also kill a man with a single blow of his hammer fist. The taxidermist Vasu is strong, unscrupulous cruel. He kills animals, stuffs their skin to look like living animals and sells them to people. He goes to Malgudi in search of some big animals to sell them to people. When he goes to the nearby forest, Vasu meets a poet whom he bullies.

Vasu also takes a fancy to a dancing girl. He starts living with her. He now plans to shoot a temple elephant. The matter is reported to the police. But the authorities decline to take any action against Vasu until the crime has actually been committed. However, Vasu himself dies before he can give a practical shape to his plan.

11. The Painter of Signs (1977)

This novel deals with Raman, the young painter of signboards in Malgudi. His customers were shop-keepers, lawyers, bangle-sellers and others who haggled with him about his work or his payments.

Raman was proud of his skill as a painter. Once he got an order for a signboard from the family planning officer. His work was appreciated by Daisy who was incharge of the family planning mission of Malgudi. Raman finds himself touring the nearby villages in the company of Daisy. She is a tyrant and she tries to boss over everybody including Raman. Once they go to a mountain village and Daisy lectures. But the village priest of a temple does not allow Daisy and Raman to paint a birth control slogan on the wall of the shrine.

Going back from the village becomes a trial. The bus to Malgudi fails to come. Raman and Daisy have to hire a bullock-cart to complete a part of the journey. The driver of the bullock-cart mistakes them a newly married couple. Raman enjoys his misunderstanding because he was desperately in love with Daisy. The ride in the cart gives him proximity for which he had been longing. On the way the bullock stumbles and its leg is hurt. The cartman goes to a nearby village to get another bullock and Daisy and Raman had to spend the night under a tree. Raman had to sleep under the cart and Daisy sleeping in the cart. Raman had so many ideas in his mind about expressing his love for Daisy. But Daisy had foreseen all this beforehand. When it was absolutely quiet, Raman climbed into the cart to make love with Daisy. But Daisy had already slipped away from the cart. In the morning the cart driver brought another bullock. Daisy told Raman that she was not the marrying kind. She did not want to be cumbered with children. Raman wanted to get a promise that they will get married but Daisy did not agree. Poor Raman was disappointed.

He had made several alterations in his house just to live with Daisy as his wife. He had even removed all gods' idols and pictures from a room just to please Daisy. But Daisy told him in so many words that she would not like to lead a married life. In a business-like tone, Daisy told Raman that it was the end of their affair. She bluntly said that she was not cut out for married life. She said that she could not live except alone. She was leaving for Malgudi and she wanted Raman to forget her for ever. She left Raman to take his bicycle and start his neglected job as a painter of signs again.

R.K.Narayan has written more than 150 short stories. Some of them are Golden Belt, A Career, The Snake Song, Man Hunt, Atticam's End of Troubles, A Willing Slave. They are written for the magazines and the newspapers. He believes in brevity and completeness. He takes mostly funny incidents in the lives of common people.

The Guide

Introduction to the Novel

R.K. Narayan's novel, The Guide was published in 1958. With its publication, R.K. Narayan shot into fame and he became a very popular novelist. The book found a wide acceptance in both India and abroad. Narayan was conferred the prestigious Sahitya Academy Award in 1960 for his contribution to Indian Writing in English. It narrates the adventures of a railway tourist guide who has just been released from jail. He had been jailed on a charge of forgery. After release from the jail, he takes refuge in a deserted temple on the banks of the river Sarayu. Velan, an illiterate peasant, from a nearby village Mangala takes him for a priest-cum-sanyasi and takes his advice on a domestic matter. Raju helps Velan in finding a solution to a domestic problem and soon becomes well-known in the villages around for a holy man. The area around is in the grip of a famine and drought. The peasants turn to Raju for help. He is requested and pressed by the villagers and peasants to undertake a fast to win the rain gods. Raju is in a fix. He does not know how to convince Velan that he does not have any merit of a holy man. He tells Velan that he is an impostor. He tells Velan the story of his life as a railway guide, his love for Rosie, the wife of an archaeologist Marco, the rise and fall in his fortunes as guide, lover and manager of a dancer's engagements.

The Guide is the story of a middle class hero who has not even completed his school education. Narayan tells us about his life as a railway tourist guide, the rise in his fortunes, his rise from poverty to prosperity. The story of The Guide is thoroughly Indian, not only in its characters but also in its theme, ideas, imagery and sensibility. It tells us about little ironies of life. It is a blend of comedy and seriousness. It is a story of adultery and there is absolutely no didactic aim or intention in this story.

The plot of the novel moves on two planes—the past and the present. Raju recalls his past as he is firmly settled as a sanyasi or a holy man. He recollects his early childhood. The most important part of his recollections relates to Rosie and Marco who come to Malgudi. Marco is an archaeologist and his wife belongs to a family of temple dancers, known as Devadasis. Both of them are totally dedicated to their

own calling—Marco to archaeology and Rosie to dancing. Both seem to be indifferent to each other. Raju feels attracted to Rosie and she acts as his mistress. Marco comes to know about the affair between Raju and Rosie. So he disowns her. Rosie comes to live with Raju. Raju tries his level best to groom Rosie as a first class dancer. Under Raju's guidance, Rosie starts giving dance performances. She proves to be very successful. She begins to be known as Nalini, the dancer. Raju starts drinking and gambling with the money that Nalini earns. Marco sends her court papers to dispose of a box of jewellery. Raju forges Nalini's signature and lands himself in jail on a charge of forgery. Thus we see that the narrative of the novel commences after Raju's release from the jail.

Raju has to begin his life anew as he cannot go back to Rosie. Rosie does not want to have anything to do with Raju. Raju also cannot go back to Malgudi and start living there as an ex-convict. During his wanderings he comes to an old deserted temple. He is taken for a holy man by the people of a nearby village. He is forced to act as a sanyasi or a holy man. He is pressed to go on a fast until death to propitiate the rain gods by the villagers whose area is hit by drought and famine. His holiness has created for him a situation out of which he cannot wriggle. His followers, Velan and other peasants, expect him to perform a miracle to bring rain to the region. On the 12th day of his fast, clouds appear in the sky.

The novel was made into a film. Dev Anand as Raju gave a superb performance. Wahida Rehman played the role of Rosie and Kishore Sahu acted as Marco. R.K. Narayan did not approve of the film version.

Introduction to the Novel in Punjabi

The Guide R.K. Narayan ਦਾ 1958 ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਨਾਵਲ ਹੈ । ਇਸ ਨਾਵਲ ਨੂੰ ਲਿਖਣ ਤੇ Narayan ਨੂੰ ਬਹੁਤ ਪ੍ਰਸਿੱਧੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋਈ ਅਤੇ 1960 ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਹਿਤ Academy Award ਮਿਲਿਆ । Narayan ਨੇ ਇਹ ਨਾਵਲ Present-Past ਦੀ ਤਕਨੀਕ ਤੇ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ । ਰਾਜੂ ਇਸਦਾ ਨਾਇਕ ਹੈ । ਇਸ ਨਾਵਲ ਤੇ ਇਕ film ਵੀ ਬਣੀ ਸੀ ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਦੇਵਾਨੰਦ ਅਤੇ ਵਾਹੀਦਾ ਰਹਿਮਾਨ ਨੇ Hero ਅਤੇ Heroine ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਕੀਤਾ ਸੀ ।

ਅਤੀਤ ਵਿਚ ਰਾਜੂ Tourist Guide ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਦਾ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਉਹ ਰੇਲਵੇ ਰਾਜੂ ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਜਾਇਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ । ਉਸਨੂੰ ਧੋਖਾਧੜੀ ਦੇ case ਵਿਚ ਜੇਲ੍ਹ ਹੋ ਗਈ ਸੀ । ਰਾਜੂ ਜੇਲ੍ਹ ਤੋਂ ਛੁੱਟ ਕੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਘਰ ਜਾਂ ਮਾਲਗੁਡੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਸੀ । ਉਹ ਇਕ ਨਦੀ ਦੇ ਕਿਨਾਰੇ ਟੁੱਟੇ-ਫੁੱਟੇ ਮੰਦਰ ਵਿਚ ਠਹਿਰਦਾ ਹੈ । ਉੱਥੇ ਬੁੱਢੀਆਂ ਔਰਤਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਪੁਰਸ਼ਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪੜਾਉਣਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ । Velan ਨਾਲ ਉਸਦੀ ਮੁਲਾਕਾਤ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ । ਉਹ Velan ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਸਮਝਦਾਰ ਗੱਲ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵਿਤ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ । Velan ਸੋਚਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਇੱਕ ਵੱਡਾ ਸਵਾਮੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਭਲਾ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਘਰੇਲੂ ਸਮੱਸਿਆਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਲਝਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ । Velan ਸਮਝਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਰਾਜੂ ਇਕ ਸੰਨਿਆਸੀ ਹੈ । ਉਹ ਪੁਰਖਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਔਰਤਾਂ ਲਈ ਇਕ ਸਕੂਲ ਵੀ ਚਲਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ । Velan ਦੀ ਮੱਤਰਈ ਭੈਣ ਕੁਝ ਬਿਗੜੀ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ । ਉਹ ਉਸ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਨਾਲ ਵਿਆਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੀ ਸੀ ਜਿਸਨੂੰ Velan ਨੇ ਚੁਣਿਆ ਸੀ । Velan ਆਪਣੀ ਭੈਣ ਨੂੰ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਸੰਨਿਆਸੀ ਦੇ ਕੋਲ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ । ਸੰਨਿਆਸੀ ਦੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਭਰੇ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਤੋਂ Velan ਦੀ ਭੈਣ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵਿਤ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਉਹ Velan ਦੁਆਰਾ ਚੁਣੇ ਗਏ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਨਾਲ ਵਿਆਹ ਕਰਣ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ । ਉਹ Velan ਤੋਂ ਮਾਫ਼ੀ ਵੀ ਮੰਗ ਲੈਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਉਸਦੇ ਵਿਵਹਾਰ ਨੇ Velan ਨੂੰ ਬਹੁਤ ਪਰੇਸ਼ਾਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਸੀ । Velan ਦੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਮੰਗਲਾ ਵਿਚ ਸੰਨਿਆਸੀ ਨੂੰ ਸਭ ਆਦਰਯੋਗ ਸਮਝਦੇ ਹਨ । ਅਚਾਨਕ ਉਸ ਖ਼ੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਸੋਕਾ ਪੈ ਗਿਆ । ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਸਵਾਮੀ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਸੋਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਨੂੰ ਦੂਰ ਕਰਣ ਲਈ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਾਰਥਨਾ ਕਰੇ ।

ਰਾਜੂ ਦਾ ਮਨ ਆਪਣੇ ਅਤੀਤ ਵਲ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ । ਉਸਦੇ ਪਿਤਾ ਦੀ ਮਾਲਗੁਡੀ ਵਿਚ ਇਕ ਛੋਟੀ ਜਿਹੀ ਦੁਕਾਨ ਸੀ । ਉਥੇ ਰਾਜੂ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਿਤਾ ਦੀ ਦੁਕਾਨ ਤੇ ਮਦਦ ਕਰਦਾ ਸੀ । ਮਾਲਗੁਡੀ ਇਕ ਰੇਲਵੇ ਸਟੇਸ਼ਨ ਬਣ ਗਿਆ । ਰਾਜੂ ਦੇ ਪਿਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਉਥੇ ਵੀ ਇਕ ਦੁਕਾਨ ਮਿਲ ਗਈ । ਰਾਜੂ ਆਪਣੇ ਮਾਤਾ-ਪਿਤਾ ਦੇ ਮਕਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਸੀ । ਪਿਤਾ ਦੀ ਮੌਤ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਦ ਰਾਜੂ ਦੋਵੇਂ ਦੁਕਾਨਾਂ ਚਲਾਉਣ ਲੱਗਾ । ਉਸਦਾ ਮੇਲ Marco ਅਤੇ Rosie ਨਾਲ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ । Marco ਨੂੰ ਪੁਰਾਣੀਆ ਚੀਜ਼ਾਂ, ਖੰਡਰਾਂ, ਗੁਫਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਰੁਚੀ ਹੈ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਉਸਨੇ art ਤੇ ਇਕ ਕਿਤਾਬ ਲਿਖਣੀ ਹੈ । ਉਹ ਆਪਣੀ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਨੱਚਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਪਤਨੀ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਰੁਚੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਸੀ । Marco ਦੀ ਪਤਨੀ ਨੂੰ ਡਾਂਸ ਕਰਣ ਵਿਚ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਤੋਂ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਰੁਚੀ ਸੀ । ਇਸਦਾ ਨਤੀਜਾ ਇਹ ਹੋਇਆ ਕਿ ਰੋਜ਼ੀ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਜੂ ਵਿਚ ਨੇੜਤਾ ਵਧਦੀ ਗਈ । ਰੋਜ਼ੀ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਜੂ ਬਹੁਤ ਸਮਾਂ ਇਕੱਠੇ ਗੁਜਾਰਨ ਲੱਗੇ । ਰਾਜੂ ਰੋਜ਼ੀ ਦੇ ਡਾਂਸ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ੰਸਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਗਿਆ । Marco Mempi Peak House ਵਿਚ ਕਾਫੀ ਸਮਾਂ ਬਿਤਾਉਂਦਾ ਸੀ । ਉਹ ਪੁਰਾਣੀਆਂ ਇਮਾਰਤਾਂ, ਮੰਦਰਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਫਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਰੁਚੀ ਰੱਖਦਾ ਸੀ । ਰਾਜੂ ਨੇ ਉਸਨੂੰ celebrity dancer ਬਣਾਉਣ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਕਸਰ ਨਾ ਛੱਡੀ । ਰਾਜੂ ਇਕ ਸਕੂਲ ਗਿਆ । ਉਸ ਸਕੂਲ ਦੇ Annual Day Celebration ਵਿਚ ਰੋਜ਼ੀ ਨੇ ਭਾਗ ਲਿਆ । ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਰੋਜ਼ੀ ਨੇ ਬੜੀ ਪ੍ਰਸਿੱਧੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕੀਤੀ । ਰਾਜੂ ਨੇ Manix ਨਾਮ ਦੇ ਆਦਮੀ ਨੂੰ ਨੌਕਰ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਕੰਮ ਤੇ ਲਗਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਤਾਕਿ ਉਹ ਰੋਜ਼ੀ ਦੇ ਡਾਂਸ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮਾਂ ਦਾ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਧਿਆਨ ਰੱਖ ਸਕੇ ।

ਰੋਜ਼ੀ ਬਹੁਤ ਚੰਗੀ ਡਾਂਸਰ ਬਣ ਕੇ ਬਹੁਤ ਪ੍ਰਸਿੱਧ ਹੋ ਗਈ । ਪੈਸਾ ਵੀ ਆਉਣ ਲੱਗਾ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਜੂ ਨੂੰ ਧੋਖਾਧੜੀ ਦੇ ਕੇਸ ਵਿਚ ਦੋ ਸਾਲ ਦੀ ਜੇਲ੍ਹ ਹੋ ਗਈ । ਜੇਲ ਤੋਂ ਛੁੱਟਣ ਮਗਰੋਂ ਉਹ ਸਰਯੂ ਨਦੀ ਦੇ ਕਿਨਾਰੇ ਮੰਗਲਾ ਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਿਚ ਗਿਆ ।

ਇਸ ਪਿੰਡ ਦੇ ਆਲੇ-ਦੁਆਲੇ ਦੇ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਸੋਕਾ ਪੈ ਗਿਆ । ਸਾਰੇ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਰਾਜੂ ਦੇ ਕੋਲ ਗਏ । ਉਹ ਰਾਜੂ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਾਰਥਨਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਵਰਤ ਰੱਖੇ ਤਾਕਿ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਖ਼ੁਸ਼ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਵਰਖਾ ਕਰਣ । ਹੁਣ ਰਾਜੂ ਸੋਚ ਵਿਚ ਪੈ ਗਿਆ । ਉਸਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਉਹ Valen ਨੂੰ ਕਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸ ਦਵਾਏ ਕਿ ਉਸ ਵਿਚ ਪਵਿੱਤਰ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਨ-ਆਤਮਾ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਗੁਣ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ । Valen ਅਤੇ ਦੂਸਰੇ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਰਾਜੂ ਤੋਂ ਆਸ਼ਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਕੋਈ ਚਮਤਕਾਰ ਦਿਖਾਏ । ਵਰਤ ਦੇ 12ਵੇਂ ਦਿਨ, ਅਕਾਸ਼ ਵਿਚ ਬੱਦਲ ਗਰਜਣ ਲੱਗ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਜੋ ਕਿ ਵਰਖਾ ਦੇ ਹੋਣ ਦੀ ਸੰਭਾਵਨਾ ਦਰਸ਼ਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ । ਨਾਵਲ ਦੇ ਅੰਤ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਕਿ ਰਾਜੂ ਜੀਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਾਂ ਬੇਹੋਸ਼ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ । ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਨਾਵਲ ਇਕ ਸ਼ਕ ਦੀ ਸੰਭਾਵਨਾ ਤੇ ਖ਼ਤਮ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ।

Persons and Places in the Guide

Persons

Raju : He is a tourist guide of Malgudi. He is popularly known as "Railway Raju". After his release from jail where he was lodged for forgery, he becomes a sanyasi or a holy man.

Rosie : She is a dancer from the Devadasi community. She is beautiful and graceful. She is married to an archaeologist who is referred to as Marco by Raju. The art historian and archaeologist is interested in the dead archaeological things. Her husband does not take any interest in the vibrant and bootylicious lady.

Marco : He is Rosie's husband. He is an eternal archaeologist who is always involved in his archeological research. His indifference to Rosie estranges her.

Velan : A village peasant from Magala. He happens to be Raju's first and staunch acolyte. It is with him that Raju shares his murky past.

Gaffur : He is a taxi-driver. He is Raju's friend. He takes Marco and Rosie from place to place in his taxi.

Mani : He is Raju's secretary after Rosie becomes a famous classical dancer.

Karia : He is a porter (coolie) at the Malgudi Railway Station. His son looks after Raju's stall at the railway station.

Lalitha : She is the daughter of Raju's uncle. She was supposed to marry Raju. This did not take place.

Places

Malgudi : A fictitious town in South India. It is the setting of all of Narayan's hort stories and novels. Raju lives near the station. He runs a stall at the railway tation.

Mempi Hills : It is a tourist attraction. It overlooked Malgudi.

Malgudi is situated on the banks of river Sarayu.

Board High School : It is the school in Malgudi where Raju got his acquaintance with the three R's.

Anand Bhawan : It is a hotel in Malgudi. Marco and Rosie stayed here.

Iswara Temple : It is a temple in the North Extension of Malgudi. Here Marco studies the temple engravings.

New Extension : It is a posh locality in Malgudi where Raju and Rosie start living after Raju had left his ancestral house.

Kalipet : A town situated at a distance of sixty miles from Malgudi where Rosie had a dance assignment.

The Taj : It is a hotel in Malgudi. The lawyer from Madras stayed here. He worked for the defence of Raju in a case of forgery.

Mangala : It is the village where Velan lived.

Aruna : It is a place at some distance from Mangala. The nearest telegraph office was situated here.

Chapterwise Summary of The Guide

Chapter 1

The opening chapter of the novel tells us about Raju, formerly a tourist guide. He has just been released from jail. He has taken shelter in a deserted temple on the banks of the river Sarayu. He has been there for over a day. He got himself shaved. The talkative barber told him that he looked like a Maharaja. His appearance was impressive. This impressed Raju and inspired confidence in him.

We see Raju bored and lonely. He is sitting cross-legged on a granite slab. He looks for company. A simple villager, Velan by name, comes to him. He welcomes him and asks him to sit down. Velan sits and tells Raju that he lives in a village called Mangala. There is something saintlike or pontifical about the appearance of Raju. This encourages the simple villager to confide in him his troubles. He tells Raju that he has a step sister of marriageable age. He has fixed her marriage with her cousin's son. But she ran away on the day of marriage. She came back home and sulks the whole day. He does not know how to deal with her. Velan needs Raju's advice.

Raju was a railway guide. The habit of guiding others was ingrained in him. He got involved in the problem of Velan.

The narrative of the novel moves backward and forward, in a zig-zag manner. The present is dramatised by the novelist and Raju himself narrates his past to Velan at a much later date. The dramatisation of the present alternates with the narration of the past in the first person by Raju and in this way past and present are juxtaposed, the one serving to illuminate the other.

At a later date Raju told Velan that all his troubles were due to Rosie. He could never understand why she called herself Rosie, instead of by any other Indian name as Devi, Meena, Lalitha etc. She was not a European or Anglo-Indian. She looked just the ordinary orthodox dancer that she was. Raju told her at the very first

opportunity that she was a great dancer and she fostered India's cultural traditions. She felt pleased to hear this. He praised her and her art whenever he could do so without being heard by her husband. Raju felt that Marco was a queer man. He looked like a permanent tourist or space traveller. He could fittingly be called Marco Polo.

Raju then shifts to his past. He was fated to become a tourist guide. Railways got very early into his blood. He felt at ease on the railway platform and considered the stationmaster and porter the best company for men and their talk the most enlightened.

Raju's house was built by his father long before the railways were ever thought of. It was outside the Malgudi town and was available cheap. Then he built a small shop of wooden planks and gunny sack. He sold peppermint, fruit, tobacco, betel leaf and other odds and ends. Raju was asked to help his father as a child when his father went inside the house for his midday meals.

Raju was woken up early in the morning when a neighbour's cock crowed. Their day began with the ritual puja before the pictures of gods. After his father had milked the cow, he tried to teach Raju the Tamil alphabet. But Raju's heart was not in studies. Then Raju's father went to attend his shop. Raju used to rush off to the shade of a tamarind tree across the road and played all the day. Sometimes Raju's father took him to the town in a bullock cart on shopping trips. Raju liked these trips. He could see the panorama of life consisting of men and vehicles, hogs and boys.

Raju muses his childhood and how he became a tourist guide, the stranger Velan interrupts his train of thought to tell him of his domestic problem. In a sudden burst of pontificality, Raju tells him that everyone has a problem. The stranger (Velan) has made him wear the toga of saintliness or holiness.

Raju's self-esteem makes him feel like an actor who was always expected to utter the correct sentence. He reminded the stranger of the great Buddha's words that there was not a single home in the world without a problem.

The stranger was impressed with the holy man's wisdom. He bows respectfully before Raju and introduces himself as Velan of Mangala village. He then talks about his stubborn half-sister who ran away from home on the day fixed for her marriage to a cousin's son. She was found three days later in a festival crowd in a distant village. Since then she has been sulking.

Raju, the holy man, assures Velan that such things are common in life. He asks Velan to bring his sister to the shrine so that he can speak to her. Velan bows low and tries to touch Raju's feet.

Next morning Velan brings his sister to Raju. The girl had braided her hair and adorned herself with jewellery. Raju has to go for his wash-room requirements. He tells them to go a certain distance away and wait for him. Velan hands over a hamper of fruits for Raju who welcomes this. Raju then starts telling the story of Devika. Velan is of the stuff disciples are made of. He is never bothered about an incomplete story or an incomplete moral.

Raju fumbles with the story his mother had told him in his childhood. He remembers his father would keep chatting with wayfarers outside the 'hut shop' till late in the night without bothering about his evening meals.

Raju tells Velan that he would think about his problems later on and then give him his advice. He added that every question must bide its time. Raju thinks that he seems to be growing wings. He found himself asking if he has been in prison or in some sort of transmigration.

Velan is satisfied that 'his Swami' is actually seized of the problem faced by him. Raju fixes his gaze at Velan's half-sister and tells her : "What must happen must happen, the course of things cannot be reversed."

Chapter 2

Raju thinks of the time when the railway track was laid at some distance from his house. It would take about six to eight months for the track to be ready. The trains would start coming to Malgudi. Work continued at a fast pace. Now Raju could not play under the tamarind tree. He became friendly with the boys working on the track. He listened to their talks and shared their jokes. Many lorries brought material in the form of timber and iron and a variety of goods for the railway track. Raju became possessive of the land on which work was going on. He would drive away all the intruders coming to the site of the track. Once he had a violent fight with a shepherd boy. Raju's father was worried. He decided to send Raju to the pyol school. Going to school was a drudgery for Raju. Raju was a reluctant school-boy. But Raju's father was a strict disciplinarian. Raju reached the school rather late. By the time he reached school, his classmates were through their lesson.

Raju was not sent to the Albert Mission School. He was sent to pyol school. The master presiding over this funny school was seen waving his cane. He listed the sins and misdeeds and rebuked those who peeped inside his establishment. Soon Raju left the pyol school. He read heavier books of high school board. It means that Raju was becoming an adult fast.

Now we switch over to the present. Velan is seen bursting with the news of a miracle. The girl (Velan's half-sister) has realised her mistake and she was willing to do what they would ask her to do. She agrees to marry her cousin. She gives consent to it by keeping her head bowed. Her wedding was to take place in a few days time. One day Velan comes to invite Raju to attend the wedding. Raju does not want to be seen in a wedding crowd. Villagers keep bringing some eatables and fruit for the holy man. They are thankful to God that the holy man consumes the fruits brought by them. Raju goes to the inner half of the temple and starts posing like a saint. Soon the food stops coming to him. He calls the boy grazing sheep nearby and says to him that he is the new priest of the temple. But the boy refuses to go to him because it is a crocodile place. He is the nephew of Velan.

Raju hides himself from the view of the people one evening when they come to see him. They are disappointed when they don't find Raju at his usual place or somewhere near it. They returned at nightfall talking about the Swami's qualities.

Raju feels tense when Velan and his friends do not turn up the next evening. He spends a restless night wondering about his future course of action. He manages with some left-over food. Next morning he beckons the boy on the opposite bank of the river. He offers him a banana and asks him to go to the village to inform Velan and his friends that he is back. The boy has been sent by his uncle to know whether the Swami has returned to the temple. He feels relieved.

Chapter 3

Raju goes on thinking of his life in the past. The railway came to Malgudi. It was a festive occasion when the first train arrived in Malgudi. There was a holiday in school. Children kept marching up and down the railway track all through the day.

The station was tastefully decorated with festoons and buntings. A piper played. A band was playing mirthful tunes. Coconuts were broken on the railway track. An engine steamed in, pulling a couple of carriages. Elite of the town was present at the railway station. Raju's father was allotted a shop on the platform. He had become so prosperous that he kept a horse and carriage and engaged a syce to take him around on his business errands. A shed was added to the courtyard to accommodate the carriage and the pony. Raju's mother did not approve of the horse and a carriage. She regarded it as an extraordinary vanity. She constantly nagged him about it.

Raju's father entered into an agreement with the groom who attended the horse and the carriage so that the latter would earn his living by running the jutka and pay a fixed amount of two rupees to Raju's father every evening. The groom did not stick to the agreement as he turned out to be a cheat. He pretended that he did not earn enough, so he could not pay Raju's father. But as soon as the agreement was annulled, he started doing brisk business.

Meanwhile, the shop allotted to Raju's father at the railway station began to do well. It was a spacious shop. Raju's father transferred all the articles from his 'Hut shop' to the railway station allotted shop. He started feeling that he was not running a big business after all. The station master told Raju's father to fill up the empty space in the shop otherwise his licence would be cancelled. He was told about the type of things/articles to be stocked for the railway passengers. He had to think in advance about every customer's demand and provide for it.

The station master assumed the role of "the palpable God" for Raju's father. He was always at his beck and call. He cheerfully carried out all his commands. Raju was given charge of the whole old shop. Most of the old customers who came here to enjoy the pleasures of gossip with Raju's father stopped coming there. They found the young Raju unequal to the task. They found the surroudings of the shop at the station too sophisticated for their gossip sessions. Raju's father also found himself out of step with the new environment. He returned to his old hut shop. He felt himself in his elements in the old Hut shop. Raju was very glad to get the complete charge of the railway station new shop. This new responsibility of the railway station shop enabled him to discontinue his school studies.

Chapter 4

Raju shifts to his narrative in the present. A short while before Raju had given a banana to the shepherd boy to inform Velan and others that he had returned to the temple. It worked a miracle. Velan and his friends came to the river bank next evening. The boy had gone from house to house telling the people that the Swami was back in the temple. Men, women and children made a bee-line to the shrine in the evening. All of them were excited to see the Swami back. They saw his radiant face.

Raju is glad to see his audience. He feels that he should play the role of a saint to the hilt. He pecks at the cheeks of small children. He asks growing children about their studies at school. Raju knows that there is no school in the village and that small boys are sent for grazing cattle during the day. Raju offers to run an evening school in the temple premises. He selects a teacher among the villagers to look after it.

The meek schoolmaster waits on Raju as he is enjoying his afternoon sleep. The schoolmaster feels uneasy in Raju's presence but he agrees to teach the village children in the evenings. Raju also expresses a desire to speak to the children from time to time.

The school starts working from the next day onwards. The school teacher is able to muster only a dozen odd boys but they must leave early as it is feared that there is a crocodile in the river. They are afraid of crossing it in the dark. Raju begins to sermonise. He tells the children that a crocodile can do no harm if their mind is clear. He advises the teacher not to be dispirited if there are only a dozen boys to be taught. He tells the teacher that they should try to make everybody happy and wise. Raju's own lectures to the students are full of wise sayings, chiches and platitudes. He is fond of pronouncing certain utterances, pearls of wisdom and gems of thought. He spoke to students on godliness, cleanliness, spoke on the Ramayana and its characters. He addressed them on all kinds of things. He felt hypnotised by his own voice. When he spoke, children looked towards him with upturned faces. Raju felt impressed by his own grandeur and majesty.

Raju felt that he is not a mere non-entity. On introspection, he felt that he had been preparing himself for this role even while managing the railway station shop. Raju had become a voracious/avid reader even though he was a reluctant school boy under the tutelage of his father. He educated himself by reading the second hand books school boys left with him for sale.

Raju's father suddenly died late at night one day after dinner. At that time he had been talking with his old cronies and pals. After dinner, he lay down to sleep and never woke up again.

Raju's mother soon adjusted herself to the status of a widow. His father had left them enough to live comfortably. The old shop or the 'Hut shop' was closed. The new shop at the railway station was extended. Raju stocked old magazines and newspapers and bought and sold school books. Albert Mission College had started at Malgudi. He started putting books where formerly coconuts used to be kept.

He read all types of books in the railway station shop. He gazed on pictures of ruins and new buildings, battleships and pretty girls around whom his thoughts lingered. He learned from extensive and unguided reading. Raju gave discourses to children. Sometimes parents of children also listened to Raju's discourses. Raju realises that the essence of sainthood seemed to lie in one's ability to utter mystifying statements.

Raju used to engage people in singing holy songs to the soft rhythm of his hands. Attendance at the prayer meeting grows manifold in the evening and people seek Raju's advice on disputes and quarrels with other people in the village. He belongs to the world now. He even prescribes medicines for sick children and has no private life of his own.

Chapter 5

Raju as a guide (2017) : Raju's helpful and cheerful nature and demeanour endear him to many people. Soon he comes to be known as Railway Raju. Passengers alighting at the Malgudi railway station inevitably turned to him for help and guidance. He was only more than ready to be helpful to the visitors. Passengers/Tourists always came looking for him. He never had a 'no' for any question asked by the visitors. He even took recourse to falsehood in order to appear pleasant to a visitor. He would even leave his shop to take a man to the taxi stand, haggle with the taxi driver Gaffur over the fare and his itinerary and prove his utility and usefulness to someone coming to Malgudi. Gaffur had a rickety taxi and he soon became Raju's friend and confidant.

He engaged porter Karia's son to look after his shop in his absence. Raju's mother did not want Raju to wander so much. Raju would tell his mother that he would look after the railway station shop. That assurance satisfied his mother who had plans of getting him married to her brother's daughter Lalitha.

Raju was able to find that Marco's wife Rosie wanted to see a king cobra which could dance to the music of a flute. Marco did not approve of Rosie's fancy for the dance of a king cobra. He lost his temper at the mention of the king cobra's dance. He told Rosie to go and find the king cobra in Raju's company without bothering him. He said that he could not stand the sight of a snake. He went to the extent of telling her that her interests were morbid. Raju instantly disliked Marco. He pitied Marco because Marco was taunting such a divinity as Rosie. Raju had made himself more presentable. He was wearing good, fashionable clothes. Even his mother said that he was dressed like a bridegroom. Even Gaffur said some insinuating things when he went to meet him.

Now begins the Rosie-Marco-Raju episode. This is the soul of the novel. Raju has learnt all the aspects of his trade as a tourist guide. He has learnt the tricks of beguiling the passengers with the concocted figures about the things. Malgudi has different places interesting from the scenic and historical point of view. Now he could assess the financial position of the various tourists to the town. Some went to see a waterfall, some ruins, getting interested in the crumbling bricks. As already mentioned, one such tourist, alongwith his wife Rosie, alights from a train on to the platform. She is the daughter of a woman dancer.

Rosie and Marco are accommodated in the Anand Bhawan Hotel. Raju notices that the woman is not glamorous but she is fascinating in some ways. She wants to see the king cobra. She is taken to the place where the king cobra can be seen. The husband does not like this. He snubs Rosie for making such a request. He thinks that Rosie's tastes are morbid.

Rosie sways her body in a dance giving the snake-girl performance. She sways her body to the rhythm. She appears to be the greatest dancer of the century to Raju. Marco is not at all interested in such dances. He is interested in the researches of the caves at a distance from the town.

Raju develops hatred for Marco from the beginning, for he has started loving his wife. Marco wishes to study the friezes. He wishes to study the cave paintings. He says to Raju, "If a man is to have peace of mind it is best that he forget the fair sex."

Rosie is reluctant to go with Marco to see the caves. Raju tells Marco that he could persuade Rosie to accompany him. Raju was surprised by this effusiveness as Marco had always been curt and taciturn. Raju jumped to the conclusion that the situation must be pretty serious if Marco loosened his tongue to this extent. Raju felt bold enough to offer to go to Rosie's room and to mediate on behalf of Marco and Marco agreed.

Raju immediately went to Rosie's room, knocked at the door. Rosie answered from within not to disturb her as she did not want to come with him. Raju hesitated. He wondered how to address her. The sweet voice of Rosie asked from inside who he was. It is not Marco, her husband and he was the person who accompanied her to the king cobra's dance. He added that he did not sleep for the whole night after the dance. The way she danced, her form and figure haunted him all the night.

A dishevelled Rosie opened the door. Her eyes were red with recent tears. Raju told her to dress up and join her husband in the car below as she was being awaited. Raju told her that she could come out as she was and no one would mind it. He added that no one would decorate the rainbow.

But Rosie wanted to be left alone in peace. Raju said that her husband insisted on her accompanying them. Raju added that life is such a blank without her. Rosie succumbed to his flattery. Soon she came out of her room. She looked like a vision. Marco was amazed to see Rosie outside. He told Raju that he was really a wizard as he had prevailed upon Rosie to come out. They were going to Mempi Hills as Marco wanted to study the cave paintings. They reached the Peak House about four in the afternoon. Joseph, the caretaker of the Peak House knew Raju and looked after his guests because Raju used to tip him lavishly. They could not go to the caves as it was late. Raju was besotted with Rosie. But he was conscious that she is a married woman with her husband. It was not possible or right to think of someone else's wife. But it was impossible for Raju to pull his thoughts of Rosie back.

At night, Rosie wanted to watch the game from behind the glass wall, but Marco wanted to be left alone. She invited Raju to join her. Marco had no objection to his association. Rosie sat close to Raju. Raju was overwhelmed by her perfume. Raju began to breathe havily with excitement. Rosie asked Raju why he was breathing so noisily. Raju wanted to tell Rosie about the effect her dance had on him last night. But Marco happened to come on the scene at that very time. He asked them if they had any luck in spotting the game.

The atmosphere was tense once again next morning. Marco came out all dressed up to leave. Raju served him coffee. But there was no sign of Rosie. Marco told Raju that Rosie should be left alone. He cannot go on wasting his time. Every morning there used to be some tiff between Marco and Rosie. Rosie and Marco seemed to be very angry with each other. They seemed to be flying at each other's throat. Raju was angry that Marco did not know how to value the treasure that he possessed.Raju felt that Marco was like a monkey who was picking up a rose garland.

'Langoor ki bagal mein hoor Khuda ki Qudrat.'

'Kaag ki chonch mein angoor Khuda ki Qudrat'.

Raju hated Marco. Raju wondered why he had come there to accompany this monster of a Marco. He hated Marco so much that he wanted him to stumble and roll down the hill.

They reached the caves. The entrance was beyond a thicket of lantana. A huge door on its rusty hinges stood open. It was a cave with a single rock covering its entire roof. Marco stood outside and surveyed the entrance. He started talking about its architecture and date. But Raju was unable to make out anything. Raju commented :

"Dead and decaying things seemed to unloosen his tongue and fired his imagination. Things that lived and moved and swung their limbs had no interest for him."

Raju had no role as a guide when Marco was busy in studying the caves. He was feeling bored stiff with Marco's measuring, writing, photographing and Marco's presence there. Raju warned Marco that there might be reptiles in the cracks in the walls of the caves. But Marco was least bothered about reptiles. Marco told Raju that reptiles generally did not come to such places. Besides he was not afraid of reptiles. At this very time, the sound of Gaffur's taxi was heard.

It was a God-sent chance for Raju to escape from Marco's company and Marco didn't mind Raju's disappearance from the spot. He only asked Raju to retain Gaffur till he returned on his own.

Rosie was waiting when Raju returned to the Peak House. She asked Raju if he had returned alone. She told him that the researcher Marco must have been wall-gazing. Rosie's interests were wide and varied. She wanted to live life. Raju got his opportunity to ask some personal questions from Rosie. Raju was able to deduce that Marco neglected his wife because he was all the time absorbed in his work. They were diametrically opposite. While Marco was interested only in wall-gazing, Rosie wanted to live life. Raju felt emboldened. He asked Rosie, "Every night you generally sit up and quarrel, do you ?" Rosie frankly tells Raju that when they are alone, they start arguing and then quarrelling. They don't agree on most matters. Then he leaves her alone and then he comes back. Raju told Rosie that it was unthinkable that anyone should find it possible to quarrel with her.

"Being with her would be such a bliss," said Raju. Rosie was not able to understand the import of the words being with her was such a bliss. Raju was very badly smitten by the aroma and charm of Rosie. He was prepared to devastate himself for the sake of Rosie. He wanted to pour his heart out to her. And if she wanted, he would not mind if she kicked him out. He appreciated her dancing. He went on to say that he goes on thinking of her dance throughout the night. She is world's artist number one. He wanted her to know that he goes on pining for her every hour.

Rosie was deeply influenced by Raju's flattering words. Rosie then started telling Raju why she married Marco. She belonged to the class of Devadasis, dedicated to the temples in South India. Devadasis were not considered favourably. They were not deemed to be respectable in society. Raju however assured her that she belonged to the noblest caste on earth. Rosie further said that Devadasis were considered to be public women.

Rosie tells Raju that her life was planned by her mother. She was educated and had a Master's Degree in Economics. She did not want to end up as a temple dancer. She responded to a newspaper advertisement seeking a good-looking match for a rich bachelor of academic interests. The advertisement required good looks, university degree and no caste restrictions. She wanted to get rid of her Devadasi origin. Rosie was accepted in marriage by the rich bachelor on condition that she should discontinue her traditional practices.

Marco was a rich man. He had a big house and a car. He lived all alone. As a matter of fact, he lived with books and papers. Rosie was soon disillusioned with the life-style of Marco. Rosie wanted a live real husband. Rosie went on saying that Marco was interested in painting and old art. Raju hinted that Marco was not interested in those beings who can move limbs. Rosie was overcome with the dryness and monotony of life with Marco. Raju placed his hand on her shoulder and gently stroked it. Raju impressed upon Rosie that he was really very unhappy to think of her. He felt that she was a gem lost to the world. Had he been in place of Marco, he would have raised her to the status of the queen of the world. Rosie did not push away his hand and he began to play with her hair.

Gaffur's rickety car/taxi had broken down on the way. Nobody minded the delay. This gave Marco time to study the walls of the cave. It gave Raju some more time to watch the game of wild animals beyond the glass wall in Rosie's company at night, holding her hand. Marco sat in his room poring over his notes.

When Gaffur turned up on the next day, Marco told him that he was continuing to stay on there. He asked Gaffur to get him a few things from his hotel room. He also wanted Raju to stay back if it did not interfere with his other assignments. At this time, there was a silent appeal in the eyes of Rosie and Raju agreed to stay on.

Rosie, Raju and Gaffur returned to Malgudi. Raju did not have time for anything, not even his mother's anxious enquiries. He decided to take Rosie on a sight-seeing tour of Malgudi on his own in Gaffur's car that day. She behaved like a baby in Raju's company. Gaffur warned him quietly that he should go slow as Rosie was a married woman. Raju bought her presents and they had dinner. She felt that she was in Raju's gratitude. It was quite late when Raju took Rosie into her hotel room and spent the night with her.

Raju knew the nitty-gritty of the work of a tourist guide. He could easily assess the depth of a tourist's pocket and his social standing. He knew how to size up prospective tourists. He particularly remembered a couple—Rosie and Macro who changed the course of his life. Rosie and Marco were an ill-matched couple. Rosie had married Marco to get out of her Devadasi background. She still wanted to dance. Marco was dead against her kind of dance. His only interest in life was archaeology and historical art. Raju was a witness to their domestic discord and estrangement. Raju looked upon her as a divine creature whom he must possess. Raju began to play upon her emotions through flattery. He seduced her despite warning from his friend taxi-driver Gaffur. Marco's indifference to his wife turned her into Raju's mistress, and he came to know about it only when Rosie told him about it.

Chapter 6

In his new avatar as a respectable Swami, Raju spends several years in the temple on the Sarayu bank. He loses count of time. He only knows the cycle of seasons such as the harvesting season. His disciples bring him sugarcane and jaggery cooked with rice ; the Tamil New Year when they bring him fruits and sweets, Dassehra when they bring in extra lamps and the women got busy all through the

nine days, decorating the pillared hall with coloured paper on Deepawali when they bought him new clothes and crackers and he invited the children to a special session and fired the crackers.

He has grown a long beard that now caresses his chest, his hair covers his back, and he wears a necklace of colour beads. His eyes shine with softness and compassion. The villagers keep on bringing him so many things. He loses interest in accumulating them. He distributes whatever he has to the gathering at the end of the day. He is being called Swami by his congregation. One year there are no rains. The river is getting dry. Cattle do not get grass to eat. The crops are ruined. The village shopmen start charging high prices taking advantage of the drought. Velan and his men pick up axes and knives to fight them and their relatives. A fight ensues and several men and Velan fall down with injured skulls and burns.

During a visit to the Swami, Velan's brother tells the Swami (Raju) the names of several bullies who beat the shopmen. Raju tells him that he would not eat till they stop quarrelling. But this gentleman makes a false propaganda. He tells the people in the village that the Swami would not eat his food because it has not rained, and he would not eat till it rains. The atmosphere becomes electrified. The villagers forget their differences and bickerings. Someone brings the news that the crocodile in the river is dead. So they walk to the Swami and pay homage to him. Raju, on the other hand, has been waiting for his food. Now he sees a crowd walking to him. All men, women and children call him Mahatma. They touch the dust of his feet. Velan says that the Swami's penance is as great as that of Mahatma Gandhi.

Raju's surprised at the folly of the people. Raju tells Velan that he would eat his food from tomorrow. Velan is surprised at Swami's wisdom. According to the gullible Velan, Swami knows that it would rain tomorrow. The whole village is happy that Raju has agreed to go on a fast for their sake. Now Raju begins to see the grave consequence of this. He is not prepared for this. He thinks of quitting the place for good or he might be in trouble. Before the people assembled, he makes the fire and cooks his meals and gulps it hurriedly lest they should see him in the guilty act of eating. He also keeps some food in reserve.

Chapter 7

Here we turn to the Malgudi scene. Here Marco was busy collecting research material. He had married hoping that he would be getting help from his wife but she herself proved as a dreamer as one could be. Marco was not at all a practical (pragmatic) being. He was willing to spend money like water but he wanted a voucher for every item of expenditure. Rosie began to pay Raju more attention. The duties of Raju were confined to the looking after the interests and aptitudes of Rosie. Gaffur was unhappy and offended with Raju because he did not like that Raju should take interest in a married woman. He was of the view that an uneducated wife would have been better than Rosie. But Raju remained fuddled with the association that he had developed with Rosie. Raju was of the view that the art historian and archaeologist was a fuddy-duddy and he was a poor match for a fascinating woman. Marco was credulous and he thought that Raju will satisfy Rosie by catering to her needs and requirements as required by a young woman. He was gullible enough to know that women and vines begin to bank upon those who are

within easy access. Raju began to pay more and more attention to his dress and appearance. Probably, the semi-educated Raju believed that 'apparel oft proclaims the man'. Raju started paying scant attention to the railway station shop. Raju's mother was anxious about the maintenance of accounts lest the shop boy should bungle the accounts in the shop. Raju was very deeply involved with Rosie. He did not attend the tourists who came to seek his advice. They went back disappointed.

Rosie felt guilty of neglecting her husband. She began to pay more and more attention to Marco. She became silent and mysterious. Her warmth towards Raju declined. She began to adopt a cold attitude towards him. One day Rosie asked Raju if he (Raju) was also like her husband, not interested in her dancing. Raju said that he would even give his life to see her dance. She felt exalted. She got busy practising dance. Raju was not actually interested in her dancing or music. He kept up the false pose lest she should go back to her husband's umbrella. Rosie trusted Raju and she told him a lot about the technicalities and intricacies of dancing.

Marco now started greeting his wife with elan and gusto. He told her about the third cave and about other things in which she was not at all interested. He was talkative and warm. He also talked of all kinds of art jargon which was all Greek to her. He talked of art jargon even to Raju. It was quite boring for Raju.

Once Raju scolded Marco for not taking Rosie with him. Marco was absolutely reasonable. Most probably Marco had come to know about the affair of his wife with Raju. The eyes of Rosie were swollen. Raju felt very angry. He was surprised because this woman who had been in his arms forty eight hours ago was trying to become assertive. Being estranged from Rosie, Raju's life was almost like hell for him. He lost his sleep and taste for food. Marco was going to settle his accounts. Time passed just like that.

One fine morning, Raju found Rosie standing on the threshold of his house with a trunk and a bag. She told Raju about what had transpired between her and Marco. She also revealed to him how Marco had asked her about Rosie-Raju affair. Rosie felt that she had made a grave blunder. She was guilty of a grievous sin. She was alone in the world. Since the time of her confession of her affair with Raju, her husband had not paid any attention to her. He bluntly told her that she was not his wife. She was a woman who would not mind going to bed with anyone who flattered her.

Raju consoled her. He assured her that he would make her a top artist. His mother told Raju to put an end to all that had gone on between him and Rosie. He rejected her advice, saying that he was an adult and he knew what he was doing. His mother said, "You can't have a dancer in your house." Rosie tried to please Raju's mother by trying to scrub the floor and doing other domestic chores. But Raju's mother could not brook the idea of having a tainted woman in her house. At the same time economic problems began to trouble Raju. The boy at the railway station shop was turning very troublesome. He was proving a nuisance for Raju. The sales were constantly declining. He slapped the boy in the face for being negligent and irresponsible. There was no zest left in his life. He was, of course, thinking of Rosie, all the time. His mother asked Raju if anything was wrong with him. Raju told his mother that nothing was wrong with him. She advised her that a married woman's place was with her husband. She has to be like Sita and Savitri. Raju was

eventually forced to take a more realistic view of his fast dwindling finances. His shop was not doing so well. The Railways served him with a notice to quit and the shop was given to a new contractor. Raju grew desperate and angry. He blamed the porter's son for ruining him. His mother knew that it was Rosie. Raju created a scene at the railway station when the new contractor took over his shop. The burly fellow just pushed him aside when Raju lost his temper and flew at him. Raju soon realised that his railway association was now definitely ended. It made his heart heavy. Rosie was standing aside, watching all this.

Chapters 8 & 9

Raju's railway shop was gone. His main creditor, the sait called on him. At this time, Raju was watching Rosie at her dance practice. Raju owed the sait eight thousand rupees. He visited Raju and demanded his money. The sait did not want to give him more than a week. Raju made fun of the sait. The sait filed a criminal case against him. He consulted Gaffur. He engaged a lawyer who was reputed to be an adjournment lawyer. This litigation meant heavy expenditure for Raju.

Gaffur advised Raju to do something to earn his living. He wanted some loan from Gaffur to act as a dance critic for Rosie's dances. Gaffur, a sincere friend, told him to stop thinking of Rosie and doing something to earn an honest living. But Raju had different views. He believed that living with Rosie under the same roof was enough for him.

Raju had different plans. If he had only five hundred rupees. Raju's mother and brother wanted Rosie to leave their house immediately. Raju did not want Rosie to leave. So Raju's mother left Malgudi to live with her brother in their ancestral village.

Rosie now wants Raju to fulfil his promise of promoting her as a dancer without any further delay. Raju starts meeting people to arrange for Rosie's debut on stage. Rosie was now re-named as Nalini. People lapped her up as a promising dancer who has taken upon herself to revive and promote the dying art of Bharat Natyam. Invitations poured from far and near and Raju had a tough time managing all her commitments and assignments. And lo and behold ! Nalini's name soared rocket-like. Her name became a household property. Raju took pride in puffing himself up with self-congratulations. He felt that he had made Nalini what she had become. Even Marco could not have done anything to promote her. Raju always occupied the centre sofa in the front whenever Nalini performed. Raju felt convinced that she needed his inspiring presence to give her best performance. Nalini had reached the pinnacle of fame and glory in acting as the pillar of Bharat Natyam. It was a world of showmanship till they reached the privacy of their house. There she threw off all the restraints and formality of hours. Nalini gave Raju a passionate hug and Raju smothered her with smooches and cuddles. Raju would have uttered something like this :

"Bliss was on that evening to be alive
And to be in the company of curvaceous Nalini was very heaven."

In her heart of hearts, Nalini felt that she won't be able to repay her debt to him.

Raju lost the court case. The sait got the possession of his house. Raju and Nalini rented a bigger house in the posh New Extension Area. The new house was in

keeping with their status. Raju employed a local graduate, Mani as his secretary to look after his and Rosie's engagements.

Raju felt vastly superior to everyone. He hobnobbed only with politicians, high government officials, rich businessmen and celebrities. He picked up habits as drinking and gambling. He felt that he had made Nalini's career and he was indispensable to her. Nalini was out of touch with Raju's cronies. Nalini was lost in her own world. She kept up her regular dance practice. She was happy in the company of her accompanists, musicians and fellow dancers. She had found her moorings in life at last. Raju, however, wanted Nalini to be happy only in his company. Soon Nalini became so famous that she was invited to perform all over the state on the terms and conditions settled by Raju. Nalini was not bothered about the enormous money that she earned from her performances. She cherished only the applause.

In the euphoria of his new life, Raju had forgot that Marco still existed. Nalini never mentioned Marco's name. One day Raju received a book by post. It was full of illustrations and comments. It carried Macro's name with an acknowledgement of the services rendered by Raju during his research in the cave paintings of Mempi Hills, a monograph entitled the Cultural History of South India. Raju did not want to show it to Nalini. He hid it in his liquor closet. A brilliant review of the book appeared in a Bombay magazine. Nalini showed a renewed interest in Marco and his work. She asked Mani to get her a copy of this book. Raju still did not disclose the fact of his having received the book from Marco. Rosie cut a picture of her husband from the magazine and pasted it on her dressing room mirror. A few days later while in bed, she asked Raju about Marco's book. Raju thought that Mani might have told Nalini about it. Nalini was still interested in her husband and his work. Raju tried to tell her that the book was meant for him. So it was upto him to dispose of the book in any way he liked. Nalini sat up in bed and started crying. Raju turned over and pretended to sleep. He wanted Nalini to have a good cry because Raju had seen that she had been recently very gloomy.

There was an ugly scene between Rosie and Raju. He questioned her as to why she was crying. She should be pleased with her reputation. She replied that she is pleased. Raju told her to stop crying and go to sleep. Nalini then asked Raju why he feels irritated when she speaks of her husband. Raju questions her if she does not remember when and how he left her. Nalini tells Raju that her husband had been very kind to her. Raju was non-plussed on knowing about her sudden love for her husband. Nalini was not happy about her hectic life. He re-assured Nalini that there was nothing for her to be sorry about. He told her that she was famous and she had made a lot of money.

Nalini was sick of it. She felt like a performing parrot who was taken in a cage from one fair to another and ordered to perform. She thought of Marco as a performing monkey and both of them laughed over the analogy. Raju thought of avoiding Nalini as she was passing a period of moodiness. Nalini and Raju had several engagements during this period.

A few days later, a communication addressed to Rosie alias Nalini was seen by Raju. He opened the communication. It was from Marco's solicitors informing Rosie that she and Marco had some jewellery in their joint names in the locker of a bank. The jewellery could be delivered to her if she could sign at the place indicated. Raju

himself signed for 'Rosie alias Nalini' in the document, posted it himself to the solicitors the next morning and kept asking Mani for several days after that whether a box had been received in Nalini's name. No jewellery box was received for several days. Time passed. Nothing was heard about the jewellery box.

In the midst of Nalini's performance in Kalipet after some time, the Superintendent of Police, a card-playing mate of Raju, serves him a warrant of arrest on a charge of forgery. On his return home, he explains his position to Nalini who listens to him in stunned silence. She blames it on his karma. She tells him that she knew all along that he was not doing right things. Raju has to spend a few days in the police lock-up before he gets the bail.

Chapter 10

Raju had to stay for three days in the lock-up. Rosie came to see him in the lock-up and wept. They had made a lot of money but all of it was gone. It was with difficulty that the ten thousand rupees required for the bail were arranged and the bail obtained. It was now impossible for Raju to live the old way of life. Very few people visited them. They did not receive any letters or telegrams. Raju's old friends gradually deserted them. There was a stigma attaching to his name. It is well known that nobody likes to associate with an alleged criminal. Their income had been enormous but much of their money had been spent in lavish living. Therefore Rosie was required to go through the engagements they had already entered into and also accept future offers. He, therefore, decided to talk to her about the matter.

It was a difficult task. The fact was that ever since his arrest he had become a sort of hanger-on in the home. Rosie had taken full charge of her affairs and was acting with great courage and determination. He realised that there was strength in her and she could manage her affairs. She told Raju that on the first of next month she was to dismiss some of her servants and thus cut down her expenses. Raju realised that now it was Nalini who was the master of the situation. She had done everything to help him and had arranged all things with courage and determination. But suddenly Raju felt angry with her. He thought that she was not on the threshold of a prison. She promised to help Raju out of his problems and difficulties even if she had to pawn the last of her possessions. But once she had saved him from prison, she had to leave him to lead her own life.

Rosie ran round and got a best lawyer from Madras to fight Raju's case in court. She sold her diamonds and other jewellery as well as her shares Raju had bought in their names below par. She became hard-nosed and practical. It hurt Raju to see her run around and then rehearse for her shows. Mani helped her in all that. Raju has a vicious streak in him as he wanted to tell Mani that he should be careful. She could beguile him. Then he would find himself exactly in the same state as he finds himself now. He told him bluntly that he should beware of the snake woman. Raju somehow knew that Rosie would never give up dancing. He also knew that neither Marco nor he had any place in her life. Rosie's life had its own sustaining vitality in dancing and which she had always underestimated. The lawyer engaged by Nalini for the defence of Raju had his own star value. He was very expensive. He presented the case as a comedy in three acts in which the chief villain was Marco, an enemy of civilised existence. He made Marco out to be a sinister character who wanted to

drive his wife mad but she was saved by a humble humanitarian called Raju, who sacrificed his time and profession for the protection of the lady and enabled her to rise so high in the world of the arts. And Nalini had brought honour and glory to dance.

Marco then planned to blow the idyll of Raju and Rosie. Marco was a vile schemer. He brought out the document that was allegedely forged by Raju, who had not signed it but returned it to Marco. In fact, he had gone personally to post it. The document, in fact, was forged by someone else, as Marco was disappointed that his plan to entrap Raju and Rosie had failed.

But the prosecution case was strong. Raju was sentenced to two years' imprisonment. Raju's star lawyer was gratified as he felt that but for him, Raju should have got seven years jail sentence according to law books. All this time, Nalini worked harder to keep the lawyer as well as the household going.

Raju was considered a model prisoner in the jail. He visited all departments of jail as a sort of benevolent supervisor. He got on well with the warders. He relieved them in their jobs. When other prisoners had to be watched, he watched the weaving sections and the carpentry sheds. All categories of prisoners listened to Raju. He could talk them out of their black moods. When there was some relaxation, he could tell stories and philosophies and what not. They started referring to him as Vadhyar (teacher). There were 500 prisoners in that building and he could claim to have established a fairly widespread intimacy with most of them. He got on well with the jail officials. When the jail Superintendent went about his inspections, he was one of those privileged to walk behind and listen to his remarks. He ran little errands for him which endeared him to the Superintendent. He would promptly comply with his wishes and carry out his orders. He used to run ahead and warn warders and other subordinates of his arrival. That gave them time enough to rouse themselves from their brief naps and straighten their turbans.

He worked incessantly on a vegetable patch in the backyard of the Superintendent's home. He dug the earth and drew water from the well. He grew huge brinjals and beans and cabbages. When the harvest was ready, he plucked them off their stalks tenderly, washed them, wiped them, arranged them artistically on a tray and carried them in ceremoniously. The Superintendent felt very pleased on seeing those nicely placed vegetables and he hugged Raju. He was a lover of good food, wherever it came from. Raju loved every piece of this work, the blue sky and sunshine.

The Superintendent was so much pleased with Raju's work that he transferred him to his office. This was a position of privilege. Raju was even more comfortable than before. From the Superintendent's papers he could know that Rosie was still performing and was much in demand. Mani came to visit him and informed him that Rosie had left Malgudi and settled in Madras. The only thing she had carried with her was the book of her husband. She was capable of looking after her affairs well. On top of that, she continued to enjoy wide popularity. Raju was much pleased to learn that she had not gone back to her husband, but was living independently.

Raju was so comfortable in jail. He began to feel that no place could be more pleasant. He laughed at those fools who considered jail to be a horrible place. After two years, it was time for his release from the jail. He felt choked with tears. He would have been more happy to have continued to live in jail permanently.

Chapter 11

It took Raju all the night to narrate the story of his past to Velan. In this account, Raju has mentioned every detail of his career, without a single omission, till the time of his coming out of the jail. Velan listened to him with rapt attention. He does not make any comment about Raju's past life which Raju has narrated. He had thought that Velan would be disgusted and shout : "And we took you for a noble soul all along ! If one like you does penance, it'll drive away even the little rain that we may hope for. Be gone, before we feel tempted to throw you out. You have fooled us." But the irony was that Velan still addressed him as 'Swami', still considered him a great man and promising to keep it secret went away for the time being. Raju was disappointed to think : "Velan will finish me before I know where I am."

Velan makes a deep obeisance and leaves, promising to return in the evening.

The news of his fast spread. A detailed account of it was published in the newspapers. Suddenly the small village of Mangala shot into fame. People came to it in larger numbers to have darshan of the Swami who was sacrificing himself for the sake of others. Each day the crowd increased. Soon it looked like a big carnival.

A wandering newspaper correspondent happens to visit the village and he picks up the report for Raju's fast for rains. He wires the news item to his Madras office: "Holyman's Penance to End Drought". From there it is picked up by other papers and soon it is global news. Public interest is aroused and people start visiting the temple for the Swami's darshan. Daily news of the Swami's fast are flashed in the newspapers and journals. This brings James J. Malone, an American TV and Film Producer to the place to film Swami's fast. People come to be near the noble soul. Milling crowds are round the Swami but they remain silent, gazing at his fast.

Crowds increase with each passing day. Food stalls are set up on the river bank. People are eating and drinking and generally enjoying themselves while he is starving for their sake. He has lost all privacy as people are watching him all the time. He wants to stand up on the high pedestal and shout to the people to get away from there as they were doomed and he could not save them.

Raju is desperate. His daily ritual consists of going to the river bed, standing in knee-deep water for a couple of hours while chanting mantras, returning to the temple and lying down to be gawked at by people. Still, Raju hopes that a miracle will take place. He feels weak. He wants to make a desperate appeal to Velan to bring him some food. Velan is one man responsible for Raju's plight or dilemma. But Velan would not leave Raju even for a moment.

Raju begins to believe in the efficacy and power of his fasting. He feels if he can help the trees bloom, and the grass grow, why should he not do it thoroughly and in a flawless manner. He feels very enthusiastic.

The crowd going to the temple is surging. The railways have to run special trains to facilitate the people's journey to Malgudi. Outside the station, a number of buses are plying to Mangala. Gaffur's taxi is also doing brisk business. Never had this part of the country seen such a crowd. The Swami is always surrounded by a large crowd. They touch the water at his feet and sprinkle it over their heads. Velan is acting as master of ceremonies. People seem to be enjoying the carnival in different ways.

Telegrams and letters are coming from all over the country wishing the Swami success in his mission. People round the Swami sing devotional songs to the accompaniment of harmonium and tabla. The doctors sent by the Health Department were constantly monitoring Raju's fast deteriorating health.

On the eleventh and last day of Swami's fast, the crowds were pouring in. Velan and his assistants form a cordon round Raju and keep the people out of the pillared hall. The Swami is going down to the river. Raju goes down the steps of the river. He halts for breath on each step. Finally he reaches the basin of water. His lips are muttering the prayer. Velan and his companions hold Raju as if he were a baby. Raju opens his eyes, looks about and says, "Velan, it's raining in the hills. I can feel it coming up under my feet, up my legs–" Then he collapses. The novel ends in an ambiguity. We do not come to know whether Raju dies or survives after his collapse. He has spoken his prophetic words. He has said that it is raining in the hills. The drought is wiped out as we hear the words of Raju.

UNIVERSITY EXAM. STYLE QUESTIONS

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS LAQ

Q. 1. How has Narayan made use of the narrative technique in The Guide ?

Or

What literary techniques and used in R.K. Narayan's novel the Guide ?

(B.C.A. Sem. VI, May 2024)

Ans. Narayan is a traditional story-teller. In most of his novels, his narration moves forward chronologically. There is no looking backward or forward. The Guide, however, is an exception in this respect. In The English Teacher, The Guide and The Man-Eater of Malgudi, Narayan is the all-knowing (omniscient) author writing in the third person. He follows the conventional method of narration. In The Guide, however, part of the story is told by the author and part in the first person by the main character (protagonist) Raju himself. The novel begins with Raju's release from jail. Whatever happens to Raju after his release is told by the novelist whereas whatever happened to Raju before he was imprisoned is told in a series of flashbacks in Raju's own words and in the form of a confession to Velan who has come to regard him as a holy man.

The purpose and impact of this technique is to make the figure of the hero more sharp and real than the other characters. The reader gets the impression that Raju's character develops because of certain events and the events, in turn, change his character till he establishes himself in the role of a saint.

Raju is sitting on the bank of the Sarayu. He is bored by the loneliness of the place. An intruder, Velan, a village peasant comes. Since Raju is bored by loneliness, Velan's presence is welcome to Raju. Velan regards Raju as a saint in the temple. Raju's character develops because of certain events and the events change his character. Finally, he finds himself in the role of a saint. He gets exalted to the role of a Mahatma. His admirers and worshippers adore him so much that he gets prepared to go on a fast to woo the rain gods to bring rain to the drought and famine hit countryside. He becomes credible and convincing. The technique of narration keeps up the curiosity of the reader alive, regarding the past and present. It lends the

narrative freshness and vigour and makes it interesting. Raju's past and present are deftly jumbled. There is a constant impression of suspension and anticipation. The zig-zag narration endows a piquancy to the novel. The reader does not get confused. He remains alert and attentive to the narration.The present and the past are juxtaposed. Each illuminates the other in this unique technique.

Q. 2. Comment on the structure and plot of The Guide.

Or

Draw a detailed note on the plot construction of the novel 'The Guide'.

(B.A. Sem. VI, May 2024)

Ans. Narayan's novels are primarily the novels of character. They are also the novels of plot. Being a good storyteller, he gives us nice plots for his novels. His art of plot construction is realistic. Almost all novels of R.K. Narayan are slender and straightforward. His plots are not complicated or intricate. In Narayan's novels there is a mixture of the comic and the serious. Raju is the son of a petty street-corner shopkeeper. He becomes well-known as a tourist guide. He gets his father's railway station shop. As a tourist guide, he comes in contact with a couple, Marco and Rosie. In course of time, he becomes the lover of Marco's wife. The plot of novel 'The Guide' is comic and serious.

The story of the novel is divided into two parts. Part I traces the growth of Raju as a child and a young man who fell in love with a young woman who wanted to be a dancer against the wishes of her archaeologist husband. This part of the story closes with Raju's imprisonment. The second part shows Raju's growth into a swami after his release from the jail. The strings of the narrative of the first part of the story are in Raju's hands, but the novelist himself controls the narrative of the second part.

The plot has been designed in the manner of a biography. The present and the past have been culled together. The method of narration lends enchantment to it. At times dramatic element is also introduced. The number of episodes as well as of characters is limited. The dramatic element does not supersede the fictional element. On the contrary, it heightens the effect of the story.

The plot has a unity of design. It has a beginning, a middle and an end. The hero is the spinal cord of the plot. There are no irrelevant and unnecessary details in the plot. Panoramic view of the Indian scenes has been included.

The novelist has done excellent knitting of the events in forming a pattern. No loose ends are seen in the novel. The plot has been built on the principles of poetic justice and karma.

The novelist follows the technique of the double narration, a sort of past-present technique. It is with the presence of the hero that the novelist attains a unity of design. Hence the presence of the hero is indispensable on all spots. Three individuals are important for three important episodes. Raju, Rosie and Velan are the centres of these episodes. In Velan lies the episode of the holy man. In Rosie lies the foundation of romantic and tragic events of the hero and the heroine. In the maternal uncle of Raju lies the social disorder of the life of the hero.

The plot contains interesting sights and scenes. Malgudi railway station, the forests of Mempi, Indian cities like Madras and the jail, the source of the Sarayu river make the episodes in the novel interesting and entertaining.

Q. 3. Write an essay on R.K. Narayan's style and language.

Ans. R.K. Narayan's language is simple and unadorned. It is free from ornamentation. It is watery and unmetaphorical. It is suitable to the purpose and

occasion. Suitability, adaptability, flexibility and aptness are the hallmarks of the language. The other main features of Narayan's English are straightforwardness, brevity, and simplicity. Narayan's English is suited for the communication, religious practices, traditions, folklore. He is not interested in politics or socio-economic problems. He uses his language as an artist to communicate his experience of reality. He creates fantasies and uses his language to depict his understanding of the fundamentals of life.

He uses his language which is fit for his characters. Many of his heroes and heroines are common men and women. Narayan does not use bombastic words. A learner of English would do well to study Narayan's books. His novels are full of humorous situations and ironical statements. One likes to read the small ironies of life and pondering over them. A young learner can improve his command over the language by reading his works. He writes simple, lucid and easy to understand language. There is nothing obscure or ponderous about his expression, and language. Narayan does not lay any claim to great scholarship. He has no claim to sophistication for his kind of English. It does not have any literary qualities. His language is said to be one-stringed instrument. A sentence of Narayan would read like subject, verb and object.

Narayan's language is very close to the language of Indian newspapers. Comparisons are odious. His language is not like that of Graham Greene or Chekhov. The medium he has forged for himself is casual and convincing. He uses his language with absolute confidence.

Q. 4. Write a note on the significance of the title of R.K. Narayan's novel, The Guide. ***(B.A. Sem. VI, 2023) (V.Imp.)***

Ans. The title of the novel is quite suitable and suggestive. It captures the life and misadventures of the protagonist, Railway Raju, who becomes a full-fledged tourist-guide on the railway station of Malgudi. Later on, he becomes the spiritual guide and mentor of the people of the drought and famine hit area near the village Mangala. In the interim period, he acts as the guide of Rosie, the classical dancer. He helps Rosie in realising her aspirations. He develops sexual relationship with her and lands himself in jail on a charge of forgery through his prosecution by Rosie's husband.

On leaving jail, Raju takes shelter in a deserted temple. He is unwillingly mistaken for a sanyasi. His commonplace observations are taken for words of wisdom. To keep up his imposture, Raju agrees to fast unto death to save the drought and famine hit people of Mangala and other villages. The link between Raju the Guide and Raju the Swami/Mahatma make up a natural sequence. Everything that happens to Raju in the novel-his being a tourist guide, closeness with Rosie and Marco, his landing in jail-reflects his nature. At the end of the novel, the confident young man becomes the holy man deserving devotion of people. Standing in knee-deep water, he comes up to the expectations and faith of the people. Rain falls as the clouds thunder. We are not sure whether Raju dies or survives after his ordeal of the fast unto death. But one thing was certain. This was the first time in his life that he was completely at peace with himself, satisfied profoundly with existence itself.

We can say without a shadow of doubt that Raju lives upto his reputation in the beginning of the novel and at the end although there is the stigma of forgery on his

name. The title of the novel is quite appropriate. It captures the theme as well as the odyssey of Raju's life, the hero of the novel.

Q. 5. Discuss Narayan's depiction of Indian life in The Guide. ***(V. Imp.)***

Ans. Narayan's short stories (about 154) and 13 novels are set in a fictional setting of Malgudi. There are references to some towns in north India and south India (Tamil Nadu). Some say that Malgudi is a microcosm of India. It is Narayan's favourite territory like Wessex of Thomas Hardy. It is essentially a lower-middle class town with its schools, temples, hotels, printing shops and the neighbouring Mempi Hills, with its usual wells, singers, fake sadhus and other useless beings. It is not a regional town. It is an image of India and a metaphor for everywhere else.

Apart from the setting of the novel, the Indianness of Narayan is seen in various ways, as in his exploration of Indian motifs as Cobras, Devadasis, Bharat Natyam, swamis, the family ethos. The family has a central place in all his novels. But in The Guide the action is developed through the conflict between the egocentricity of an individual member (Raju) and family's (Raju's mother's and his maternal uncle's) claim on him.

The heroine of the novel Rosie is typically Indian. She may not be meek and submissive as the heroines of other novels. She practices Bharat Natyam and reads Bharat Muni's treatise on dance, 'Natya Shastra'. Rosie is a modern and educated young woman but she also shows her essential Indianness in her attitude of resignation when Raju is arrested for forgery. She was aware that Raju was not doing the right things. But then she takes his doing as 'Karma'. She is guilty of adultery. But she is penitent and shows her fidelity to her husband by saying : "After all, he is my husband." She is conscious of her duty as a Hindu wife's moral fidelity to her husband. She knows that she has to respect him.

The Guide has several Indian scenes. Raju is sent to a pyol school. Rosie dances to the tune of a gourd flute imitating the movements of a king cobra. The scene of the fasting swami brings many people who believe in the efficacy of the swami's fast to bring rain to relieve the superstitious people who believe in an Indian. swami's merit to do such things. The quarrel between Raju and his mother on the issue of his marriage is a typical Indian issue. Narayan portrays the pathetic plight of the illiterate and superstitious villagers of India who worship holy men and saints. Farmers think that aeroplanes disturb the clouds. As a result of this disturbance, rain does not come. Some agriculturists depend wholly upon rain. This leads to drought and famine.

Drought is a natural phenomemon. Illiterate villagers turn to holy men for rain. Summing up, we can say that The Guide is a real picture of Indian life in both its theme and atmosphere. It is in the noblest tradition of Hindu philosophy.

Q. 6. How is India symbolised in 'The Guide' ? ***(V. Imp.)***

Ans. Narayan's India is symbolised by Malgudi, an imaginary town and locale of his novels. Since the beginning of the first quarter of nineteenth century, the town has grown into a good city. Gradually, it has added hotels, studios, railway stations and ultra modern flats in the extension area. It is a town of the rich, the poor, beggars, potters, printers, teachers and small and big businessmen. It has grown from a small town into a town of tourists' interest. Narayan is called a regional novelist because he did not like to step out of this homely region.

Narayan represents Indianness through his symbols. He does not forget Hindu philosophy, Hindu culture, Hindu ethos. Temple, charkha, river, superstition, excessive credulity and faith symbolise the cultural past of India. Similarly, sofa set, studio, typewriter and scepticism are the specialities of new culture. The building of the railway station and the coming of the railway train to Malgudi introduces the hurry and flurry of the modern life into Malgudi. It was in this whirl of activities, skirmishes and clash of feelings that Raju was caught up when Marco and Rosie alighted from the train on Malgudi platform. 'Raju had hectic life, first looking after Marco and then Rosie, and eventually had no time for himself,' says the novelist.

Certain other Indian traits have been reflected. Hospitality is one Indian trait. Besides the spiritual side of India, India's poverty and squalor, the ignorance of its people and their illiteracy are also reflected time and again. The red-tapism of government officers and the unplanned scheme of life are typically Indian. The picture of a village teacher portrayed in 'The Guide' is typically Indian. Rosie was obsessed with thoughts of her husband (although herself guilty of adultery). Temple, astrology, fate and the Gita are all referred to in 'The Guide'. Narayan has not pandered to the foreign sensibility and does not intend to present a picturesque India for those foreigners who take sentimental interest in this country of ancient culture.

Q. 7. What vision of life has been presented by Narayan in The Guide ?

Or

What is Narayan's message in The Guide ?

Ans. Narayan is a pure artist. He does not preach any lesson through his work. His work is just art for art's sake. But we should not run away with the view that he is a writer without any vision of life. It simply means that there is no message, philosophy of life or morality in his novels. They are not didactic.

Narayan is a keen analyst of human passions and motives. This makes him a great critic of human conduct. He is concerned about human relationships — relationships within the family and relationships revolving round sex and money. By a deep study of these relationships, we can learn from them how to establish right relationships. Whatever disturbs the norm is an aberration, a serious moral foible, and a disorder. Sanity lies in accepting what is acceptable as social norm. Life must be accepted and lived, despite its many shortcomings.

In the novel prescibed for our study, The Guide, Raju comes into conflict with traditional morality as he seeks to realise his aspirations. The result is that the established social order is disturbed. He seduces Rosie and thus is guilty of immorality. When she comes to live with him conventional morality is violated, and there is anger and displeasure all around. The neighbours are annoyed. Raju's widowed mother was obliged to leave home of her husband and go away with her brother. Raju does not attend to his work on the railway station. He gets deep into financial trouble. He is unable to pay the dues of a cloth merchant Sait. He has to face a legal case in the court. His violation of the conventional norms creates chaos in Raju's life.

Raju is very self-seeking and selfish. He exploits Rosie both sexually and commercially. He develops sexual relationship with her and after promoting Rosie as a national dancer exploits her financially. Rosie made a confession of her sin of adultery. Thereafter he started exploiting her in every way. He goes to jail for the

crime of forgery. He becomes a model prisoner in the jail. After coming out of the jail, he exploits the credulity of the gullible and naive villagers of Mangala and agrees to play the role of a Sanyasi who can woo the gods to bring down rain for the famine and drought hit people. Thus he gives an admirable account of his holiness. It is at this stage that Raju does something for the community. He got a new strength to go into the ordeal of a fast unto death for the poor and suffering folks of Mangala. From the case of Raju, we learn an important lesson. We must live for others.

Self-seeking is not a good thing. It is condemnable. We must live in order to do good for humanity. Narayan has achieved in comedies what others have achieved through tragedies. Raju is not a man of high rank and social status. 'The Guide' shows Raju's self-awareness and also his sense of social and spiritual awareness.

Q. 8. Comment on 'The Guide' as a tale of life's little ironies.

Ans. R.K. Narayan's Malgudi novels like Hardy's Wessex novels are studies in life's little ironies. These novels bring out the undesired and the unexpected in the lives of the characters in the novel. The irony of life may be described as the happening of the undesired and the unexpected. In life, we expect one thing and its exact opposite happens or comes to pass. Life's little ironies make Narayan's novels tragi-comedies of mischance and misdirection. 'The Guide' is a study of life's little ironies enacted against the backdrop of Malgudi.

Narayan is a master of irony. He uses irony both on the level of character, situation and ideas. In his comic mode of presentation, he uses irony as his major technique. But his irony is hardly ever bitter. It is sweet and genial. The working of irony is best seen in the life and work of Raju. As a tourist guide, he is very popular. Marco regards him as a family member. But he seduces his wife Rosie and has a ripping time in her company.

Raju becomes a victim of irony at every step. He forges Rosie's signature to take delivery of the box of jewellery lying with Marco. Every day he waits for the arrival of the box and makes anxious enquiries. But the unexpected and the undesired happens. Instead of the box of jewellery, a warrant for his arrest arrives. He is arrested in the midst of a show. He had tried to conceal the facts from Rosie. But Rosie comes to know about his villainy and depravity. He was of the impression that he was indispensable to her. But Rosie started managing every event independently. She proves that Raju was a parasite on her.

Raju wanted to lead an obscure life after coming out of jail. He begins to be regarded as a Swami by a naive villager named Velan. He begins to be worshipped by the villagers. When the village Mangala and other surrounding areas are hit by famine and drought, he is asked to go on a fast unto death to woo the rain gods. He is exalted to the status of a Mahatma. He becomes so widely known that people come from far and wide to have his darshan. It is irony of life that from a fraud he becomes a sanyasi.

Rosie wanted to escape the stigma of being the daughter of a Devadasi. She gets married to a wealthy scholar named Marco. A tourist guide named Raju becomes friendly with her. He has sexual liaison with her. Then she is deserted by her husband. Even Raju does not have stable relationship with her and she gets back to Madras.

Thus life's little ironies confront Raju in all his endeavours. Because of his restless and ambitious nature, he keeps on getting into trouble. He is a glib talker. He tries to get into the minds of people. But things do not turn up the way he would like them to happen. That precisely is the tragi-comedy of life.

Q. 9. What social values of India have been dealt with in the novel 'The Guide' ?

Or

In spite of love and sex in the novel, 'The Guide', it is largely a piece of social criticism.

Or

Discuss the social problems presented by R.K. Narayan in his novel.

Or

'The Guide' is an economic interpretation of the life of Indians. Discuss.

Ans. R.K. Narayan is not a social critic like Munshi Prem Chand or Charles Dickens. He does not write novels for the purpose of propaganda. His purpose is not to depict the poverty of the teeming millions of India. He happens to refer to the economic condition of Indians. No deliberate effort is made by the writer to deal with the economic problems of Indians.

The picture of Indian masses, with all their attending poverty, has been portrayed in the crowds gathering around or about Raju. They are poor and uneducated. Some of them are so poor that they do not have the advantage of education. As a result, they are obliged to lead the life of superstitions and ignorance coupled with misery. Velan is not free from it. He brings to Raju those gifts which are home grown. Food is a big problem for Raju as it is for most poor people in India.

Several groups of people have been portrayed in the novel on the basis of their economic categorisation. There are poor villagers, poor shopkeepers like Raju's father who ran a Hut Shop, taxi driver like Gaffur, Joseph who was a caretaker of the Peak House, moneylenders like the Sait who filed a suit against Raju for the recovery of his dues, rich owners of theatres and circus companies.

These characters portrayed in the novel give us an idea of different sorts of people. The wretched and pitiable condition of the villagers is shown because of famine and drought. Water is scarce in certain parts of India. The percentage of literacy is very low in villages.

Q. 10. Write your comments on R.K. Narayan's theme of Indianness in his novel 'The Guide'.

Ans. A study of Narayan's novel tells us that he deals with a number of themes and ideas. Some of the important themes are human relationships, aspirations towards spiritual maturity, disturbance of order and restoration of normalcy, incongruous mixture of realism and fantansy and his Indianness in most of his novels.

R.K. Narayan is an Indian writing in English. His Indianness is reflected in various ways. He is a storyteller in the Indian tradition. His tales are episodic and loose in construction. Leaving aside The Guide, his novels are based on a straightforward and chronological narration.

He has a great regard for family ties. Human relationships, particularly domestic ties occupy a central place in his novels. If the accepted norms are violated, the

order is disturbed and the result is chaos. With the influence of the family, order is restored and normalcy established once again. Narayan's emphasis on the role of the family shows his Indianness.

There are a number of housewives in his novels who are troubled by their husbands. They are all typically Indian wives. Even when they revolt, the revolt is temporary, they return to their home and their children. Even Rosie in The Guide shows her essential Indianness in her regard or solicitude for her husband. Even when Raju is arrested for forgery, she tells him, "I felt all along you were not doing the right things. This is Karma. What can we do ?"

His Indianness is further seen in the introduction of much that is fantastic but which is credible in the Indian context. Many superstitions, rituals, Sadhus, Swamis and Sanyasis are ubiquitous characters in India. In The Guide there is a fast by a Swami to woo the rain gods to send rain. Raju is taken to be a Mahatma by the gullible villagers of Mangala. Communication with the spirit of the dead (The English Teacher), undertaking a fast to please a god or goddess to get some favour are relevant examples.

There is the exploitation of such Indian motifs as cobra and dancing Devadasis. Rosie reads Natya Shastra of Bharat Muni. Frequent use is made of Indian myths and legends as in 'Gods, Demons and Other Stories'.

But in one important respect, he deviates from the Indian tradition. He steers clear of didacticism. He does not preach any sermons about some code of conduct to be followed in human life. He is an analyst of character and conduct for he does not try to impose his views on his readers. He is given to analyzing individual feelings, emotions and actions. Nowhere in his novels R.K. Narayan preaches any moral sermons.

Q. 11. Discuss the theme of morality versus spiritual motivation and aspiration in The Guide.

Ans. R.K. Narayan does not preach any kind of sermon. He is not didactic. He is a penetrating analyst of human passions and human motives. Human relationships, relationship within the family, relationships centring on sex and money are his ever-recurring themes. Life has to be accepted and lived despite its many drawbacks, faults and foibles.

In The Guide, called his masterpiece, he takes up the theme of a fake sanyasi. Raju, a restless, attractive youngster acts as a guide to the tourists who come to visit the Malgudi ruins. Rosie's husband is an archaeologist, over-busy in research of cave paintings. He does not want his dancer wife Rosie to have anything to do with dancing. Raju seduces her, leading to Marco's separation from Rosie. Raju, a victim of his infatuation for Rosie starts living with Rosie and ruins his life. Marco gets Raju trapped into a case of forgery. Raju lands up in jail.

On leaving prison, he goes off into isolation, a totally broken man. He is unwittingly mistaken for a Sanyasi. He agrees to act as one with the credulous and gullible villagers of Mangala. They feed him and offer him worship. His commonplace observations are taken as words of wisdom. He soon learns the tricks of imposing his bogus holiness upon them. To keep up his imposture, he agrees to fast unto death. He tells them that the drought would be ended by his long fast for twelve or thirteen days. He collapses just as the rain falls. Whether he dies or survives, this is an ambiguity in the novel.

The Guide is a tragic treatment of the theme of innocence. But in 'The Guide' Raju cannot return to his old life, to his job as Railway Guide. The Guide, instead becomes a spiritual guide. He is a fraudster whose impersonation turns into a genuine act of self-sacrificial virtue.

Q. 12. Write an essay on the comic vision of R.K. Narayan with special reference to The Guide.

Ans. R.K. Narayan is an observer of life. He is neither a spiritualist nor a social reformer. He depicts life as it appears to him. He is neither purely tragic nor purely comic. It is the blend of the two. This is evident from his novels. In The Guide, Raju has good and bad days. He becomes a popular tourist guide. He becomes a seducer of another man's curvaceous and bootylicious wife. Forbidden fruits are very sweet. For her, he becomes a very successful impresario. He quarrels with his mother and maternal uncle.

The Guide is a tragi-comedy of R.K. Narayan. There is a touch of comedy in his characters and situations in The Guide. When Raju's father goes to buy goods from the town, Raju questions his father why he buys from others when he himself is a shopkeeper. Everything happens to Raju. He did not want to be a guide but became so on frequent enquiries from visitors. He did not want to be an impresario but he becomes one at the bidding of Rosie after she had been abandoned by her husband. He did not want to be a saint but sainthood was thrust upon him. As a young boy, Raju used to help his father in his shop. He did not know how to calculate the price of peppermints and toffees. He charged money from customers and himself ate extra peppermints. Raju's maternal uncle's snubbing of Raju is humorous. Gaffur, the taxi-driver's making fun of Raju's smart clothes to see Rosie is also humorous. When Raju wears fashionable clothes to go with Rosie, Raju's mother makes fun of him by saying that he is dressed like a bridegroom. Raju talks with the children like a big man. It is quite humorous. When villagers say that Raju knows what is going to happen in the future we cannot help laughing. Raju persuades the stubborn step-sister of Velan to marry the man chosen by Velan by uttering some platitudes and commonplace statements. Villagers think that Raju has worked a miracle. Narayan sees humour in evil and good and sin. His comic vision is able to make us laugh in all kinds of situations. This is precisely what we find in the comic vision of life. Narayan provides humour through satire, irony and wit.

Q. 13. Give an account of the drought and famine as portrayed by R.K. Narayan in 'The Guide'.

Ans. Raju stayed in a temple near Mangala for a long time. He lost count of time as to how long he stayed there. He began to play the role of a saint. His long beard caressed his chest. His hair covered his back. He wore a necklace of prayer beads. His eyes reflected softness and compassion. The light of wisdom beamed from his eyes. He had become a true blue saint. He was called 'Swami' by the simple, God-fearing people of Mangala and surrounding areas.

Then his troubles began. One summer there was total failure of rain. The people came to Raju with sad, long faces and poured out their tales of woe because of drought. Their crops were scorched. Their seedlings were dead, their wells were drying up and the water level in the river was falling. The earth became drier and

totally parched and cracks appeared on the surface of earth. Then cattle began to die. There was no fodder and water for them. All sorts of rumours began to spread. It was said that cholera had broken out in some villages and had taken a heavy toll of life. It was also said that hundreds of cattle had died in another village. Raju himself had seen that cattle were turning thin and emaciated. Food and different kinds of fruit that villagers used to bring for Raju (Swami) became smaller and smaller in quantity. People still came to him in large numbers but the usual cheer among them was lacking. On the contrary, they had myriad woes to pour into the ears of the Swami.

Time passed but rain showed no sign of falling since the sky was cloudless. The crops failed. There was scarcity of foodgrains and the shopkeepers demanded higher prices. There were quarrels between shopkeepers and customers. An irate customer slapped the shopkeeper in the face. That night there was a fierce fight between the supporters of the customer and those of the shopkeeper. Velan was hurt and was bent upon taking revenge.

Q. 14. How was the public interest aroused in Mangala village near the seat of the Swami ?

Ans. Raju was a tourist guide. He guided tourists who wanted to see the ruins of Malgudi. The important tourists were Marco, an archeologist and a researcher of cave paintings and his beautiful wife Rosie. He happened to be the lover of Marco's wife, Rosie. Marco left his wife in Malgudi and went away. Later he got Raju involved in a case of forgery. Raju had to go to jail for two years. After coming out of jail, he settled in a deserted temple on the bank of river Sarayu near the village Mangala. A man called Velan from Mangala comes to this spot. He has come after visiting his sister and daughter from a nearby village. He is curious to share a problem with someone. He finds the lonely man (Raju). Velan tells Raju the problem of his step-sister who is not willing to accept the plan of her marriage. Upon Raju's advice, Velan brings the girl to him. She is persuaded by Raju to accept the proposal of her marriage. She touches Raju's feet. Raju begins to feel that he has some merit of a saint. Before this event, Raju had given a banana to a shepherd boy and asked him to go and tell his uncle that his man had returned. The gift of a banana to the boy worked wonders. The boy went from house to house informing all that the new priest was back in the temple. The result was that men, women and children came in large numbers to have his darshan.

In the meantime, Raju learnt the boys of the village were not getting any education. He advised the villagers to conduct classes for the village boys in the temple itself in the evening. And the school master was given the assignment of educating the children in the temple itself.

Accordingly, the classes started with half a dozen children. Children were actually afraid of the crocodile that frequented that part of the river. Raju told them like a big preacher that a crocodile would not do anyone any harm if he had a clear mind and trouble-free conscience. By and by, the number of students increased. Raju also spoke to the students from time to time on holiness, cleanliness, on the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the characters in the epics. Raju felt hypnotised by his own voice. He felt that his own stature was growing. He saw the upturned faces of the children shining. The novelist remarks that it is in this way that saints are made.

And Raju was fast moving on the road to sainthood. In fact, Raju had read a great deal of philosophy, art, religion and culture when he was running the railway stall. He had been an avid reader of old and second hand books. He had picked up a good deal of miscellaneous information from the old books.

Children heard him very attentively. Raju cast a spell on children and their parents. Raju cast before the audience of parents and their children pearls of wisdom and gems of thought. His fame spread. Even women started coming to listen to the Swami. They washed the floor of the hall. They decorated it with buntings, festoons and flowers. A carpet was spread on the platform which was his seat. Raju began to grow a beard. He began to realise that his beard would enhance his spiritual status. He looked like a sadhu and talked like one. His audience went on increasing, overflowed the hall, and the outer corridors and people sat right up to the river's edge.

His influence was growing. It remained unabated. He chanted holy verses from Hindu scriptures; he discoursed on philosophy; he went to the extent of prescribing medicines. Mothers brought children who would not sleep at night. He pressed their bellies and prescribed some herbs. He advised the mother to bring the child again to him if the child got no relief from the herb. It was believed that when he stroked the head of a child, the child improved in various ways. Some people brought their quarrels and disputes to him over the division of ancestral property. He had to spend a big chunk of his time on these activities in the afternoon. He was hardly left any time for himself. He had to get up early and rush through all his own personal routine before his visitors started arriving. It was a big strain on him. He longed for a quiet and peaceful life.

His engagements with the villagers of Mangala enabled him to acquire the status of a saint.

Q. 15. Write a short essay on the role of Velan's brother in Raju's fast. ***(Imp.)***

Or

To what extent is Velan's brother responsible for urging the Swami to go on a fast ?

Ans. When Mangala and its surrounding areas were hit by famine and drought, a fight took place between a village shopkeeper and Velan. Raju got the news of the fight from Velan's brother. He was a dim-witted young man. He told Raju that Velan and some of his companions had been seriously hurt in the fight. However Raju did not want the fight to be prolonged for fear of his own exposure. He feared that police would come to the village and his identity would be known. It will be bad for him because of the police intervention. The police might come to know that he was an ex-convict. In his own interest, Raju wanted the fight in the village must be ended. So he told the dim-witted boy to tell the people in the village not to fight. But Velan's brother did not want to reveal all the facts about his meeting with Raju. He did not want his brother and others in the village to know that he had met Raju and told him about the fight in the village. So he fabricated a lie. He said that while he was passing by the Swami, the Swami had told him that he would go on a fast as there were no rains, and therefore the villagers need not bring food for him.

So the cause of Swami's fast was the folly of a dim-witted man. The story of th Swami's fast that he was going to undertake for their sake spread like wild fir People started comparing him to Mahatma Gandhi. People started saying that whe Mahatma Gandhi undertook a fast, many things happened in India. They felt tha if the Swami fasts, there will be rain. They felt that the Swami was undertaking fast for his love of them. Velan gave a very clear account of what the Swami wa expected to do. He should stand in knee-deep water, look to the skies, and utte prayers for two weeks. Velan believed that rain would surely come if the perso undertaking the fast was a pure soul. On hearing this, the whole village was in a ferment because a great soul like Raju had agreed to go through the ordeal of a two week long fast. It was Raju himself who had given this message and now he was caught in his own trap. He felt cornered. He realised that he had created a very grave situation for himself. He left his seat abruptly, as if he had been stung by a wasp and approached Velan. He thought of escaping this difficult situation. He thought over various ways. He would go to the city and there no one would be able to recognise him. He then thought of staying in the temple and eat his food quietly in the night. In the meantime rain would come in natural course.

So when Velan came to him the next night, he took him to the river steps, and began narrating his story of the past. He frankly told him that he was not a saint. There was silence all around. Raju's voice filled the silence of the night. Raju told Velan that he was no Swami. He was an ordinary man like him. Velan listened to him without uttering a word of surprise.

Q. 16. Discuss the theme of solitude in 'The Guide'.

Ans. Solitude is not the major theme of The Guide. It is only a sub-theme. Actually all the characters in the novel pass through a phase of solitude in their life. Raju's mother is separated from her son and yearns to see him until her death. Raju passes the last phase of his life in solitude as a Sanyasi. Marco and Rosie are the main solitudes in the novel. Marco was whole-heartedly devoted to his research on the cave paintings and archaeology. Rosie was wholly devoted to dancing. Marco was deeply engrossed in his scholastic pursuits. Rosie did not find the bliss of conjugal life as the wife of Marco. Rosie's preference or pursuit was dancing. Dancing was a pet aversion of Marco. Marco looked upon Rosie as a serpent girl. Marco in that case is a monster. He had no warmth for Rosie who was a curvaceous and beautiful woman. She was married but she had no sex life in the company of Marco. She got Raju as a seducer and she easily fell a prey to his flattery and started having extra-marital relations with Raju. Her husband Marco left her. She was left in Malgudi. She became a celebrity on her own because of her skill in dancing.

Raju was money-minded. He was found guilty of forgery and jailed for two years. Afterwards he was lonely. Rosie was as in a way loyal to her husband. She never accepted Raju as the substitute for her husband. She remembered Marco affectionately and always blamed herself for the discord and disharmony in her life. All the three characters were destined to lead a life of solitude.

Rosie and Marco were destined to live separately. So was Raju destined to live a life of solitude in a deserted shrine. He did not become a noted sanyasi. But his

life as a sanyasi was lived in the company of superstitious and illiterate villagers. At the same time he was always scared that he would be exposed as an ex-convict. To all intents and purposes, he led a lonely life.

Q. 17. R.K. Narayan is a regional novelist. Discuss.

Or

How far is it correct to say that most of R.K. Narayan's novels are confined to the locale of Malgudi ? Discuss with particular reference to The Guide.

Ans. Like Thomas Hardy and Arnold Bennet, R.K.Narayan is a regional novelist. Malgudi is his Wessex. He is well acquainted with all the riversides, forests, hills, towns and villages of this region. In his novels, he portrays the men and manners of Malgudi on a broad canvas and achieves distinction. Malgudi appears and re-appears in novel after novel of Narayan. Malgudi symbolises the traditional India bidding adieu to old traditions and welcoming the modern western civilisation. Surrounded by the Sarayu, the Mempi forests and the Mempi Hills, Malgudi is a semi-agricultural town in Swami and Friends, The Bachelor of Arts. The new civilization has started showing up in the tranquil and conservative life-style of Malgudi. The Malgudi of 'The Dark Room' is already a commercial centre with Ramani in insurance business. Malgudi figures again in The Financial Expert. In Waiting for the Mahatma, Gandhiji delivers a speech on the banks of the Sarayu. In The Vendor of Sweets, the setting is again Malgudi. In the novel prescribed for us 'The Guide' the town Malgudi with the advent of Railway and its life influenced by the railway system has been portrayed. Marco and Rosie alight from the train at the Malgudi railway station. Raju's father is allotted a stall by the railways.The surroundings of Malgudi attract tourists. Raju is unprincipled just because he grows in urban atmosphere. It is only on the outskirts of Malgudi, on the banks of the Sarayu that Raju gets peace. The atmosphere of Velan's village Magala is quite different from the urban atmosphere of Malgudi.

The Mempi Hills and the Sarayu symbolise the continuity of the universe and the definiteness of Malgudi.

Narayan has presented not only rustic characters like Velan in 'The Guide' but also the urbanised people. Malgudi with its people, and studios, its shops and streets, Mempi Hills and forests, its natural landscapes and other features is present in almost all novels of Narayan.

R.K. Narayan has immortalised Malgudi as a south Indian town-cum-village ambience, a juxtaposed locale for the urban and rural India. In 'Waiting for the Mahatma', he has presented Mahatma Gandhi's Quit India Movement. It symbolises the pan Indian struggle for the freedom of India from the British yoke.

Q. 18. The ideal of asceticism runs through Indo-Anglian fiction as a recurring motif. Assess R.K. Narayan's 'The Guide' in the light of this statement.

Or

'The Guide is the story of a man who deceives society by passing for a spiritual man.' Discuss.

Ans. A thorough reading of R.K. Narayan's 'The Guide' convinces us that it is the story of a man who deceives society by posing as a spiritual man. Raju, in The Guide, drifts into the role of a sadhu. Once he finds himself cast in the role of an

ascetic (sadhu), he tries his best to give a very good account of himself for the sak of self-preservation and partly because it suits his personality admirably.

In the first phase of his career, Raju is a tourist guide and a shop-keeper. In th second role, he is an impresario for a dancer (Rosie alias Nalini). In the third phas he lands himself in jail on the charge of forgery. The role of a sadhu or ascetic i thrust upon him. The role of an ascetic happens to him. He does not opt for this role He does not deliberately try to pass himself off for a holy man. But when he find that people believe in his spiritual power, he cannot disappoint them. He tell Velan of his shady past, of his stay in the jail, but it has no effect on Velan. Onc he is accepted as a sadhu (ascetic), he with characteristic thoroughness, pays attention to the details like his appearance, his beard, his fluency in uttering mystifying statements. He learns his trade while practising it.

It is Raju's forte to perform perfectly whatever role is given to him by fate. He has a ready wit that helps him in all walks of life. The same ready wit helps him when he becomes a saint. He soon learns that the essence of sainthood or asceticism lies in one's ability to utter mystifying statements. When the villagers talk about the crocodiles in the river, Raju says : "What can a crocodile do if your mind is clear and your conscience is untroubled....."

Another act that confirms Raju's career as a sadhu is his establishment of a night school in the temple. This temple becomes the meeting point for all the villagers of Mangala. Here the people listen to his discourses and story tellings. These evening sessions grow in popularity and Raju becomes a popular figure. Even the final phase of fasting originates in a similarly casual manner.

During the prolonged drought and famine, villagers become tense and disturbed. A minor quarrel in the village escalates into a riot. This news upset Raju. It is not that he is concerned about the welfare of the village people. Actually he is afraid that a disturbance might bring the police to the village. And if the newspapers reporters and policemen arrive there, Raju's identity might be disclosed. For his selfish interest, he makes an announcement, that if people go on fighting among themselves, he would stop eating his food. He gives this message to a dim-witted young man. The young man goes back to the village and gives a different version of Raju's message. He tells the villagers that the Swami will not eat until it rains. The words of the message appear to be authentic to the villagers. Only a few days back the Swami had told them of a saint who brought down rain by his fast.

As a result of this and in excessive zeal his disciples stop bringing him food. This has an ironic side because food had been the first link that had connected Raju with the inhabitants of the village. He had accepted the role of a sadhu because it gave him free supply of food. The villagers gathered round Raju for darshan and reverence but brought no food. His disciples started keeping a twentyfour hour vigil on Raju, the Swami or the asectic. As a result, he could not have food even on the sly. The role was fixed on him. He began to feel that his personality radiated a glory.

He had to accept the role of a sadhu for his own sake, to conceal his identity. He assumed the role primarily for his food as he used to get it from the villagers. Later, the faith of the people in him compelled him to act as a sadhu. Neither the fear of being caught by the police, nor the necessity of food but the faith of men, women and children in his spiritual powers converted the convict into a saint. It is by the collective

faith of the people in sadhus, acharyas, gurus, that certain things in India are accomplished. It was not possible for Raju to go back into his shady past. The faith of his followers had empowered him beyond his deceptive self. It was the faith of the people in his spiritual powers that he could transcend (surpass) his limited self. He became conscious that for the first time he was doing something in which he was not personally interested.

The ideal of asceticism is a pervasive cultural ideal in India. When sadhus or acharays pass by us, we do not feel astounded by their very being in the market or any other place in India. They are part of us. It is a recurrent motif in Indo-Anglian fiction. Waiting for the Mahatma by R.K. Narayan has the figure of Sabarmati ka Sant (Gandhiji). Baba Ram Dev in his saffron clothes is present on Indian television every day. The ascetic in a saffron robe is a readymade symbol in Indian literature. Through these sadhus, Indo-Anglian fiction writers also reveal themselves. Bhabhani Bhattacharaya has made use of Kalo in He Who Rides a Tiger. He is a deceptive character like Raju.

Q. 19. R.K. Narayan is a pure artist. He is not a propagandist like other Indo-Anglian novelists. Elucidate.

Ans. R.K. Narayan has the unique distinction of being a pure artist out of all the Indo-Anglian novelists. He writes for art's sake. He is not a propagandist. In each of his novels, he presents a slice of life as he sees it with perfect sincerity and truthfulness. The sole aim of his writing is to amuse and entertain his readers by presenting before them life's little ironies.

The hallmark of his genius is objectivity and impartiality. He presents life as it is both the good and the evil. He does not criticise or take sides. It is difficult to make out from his writings as to where Narayan's sympathies lie. His writings are free from any ideological prejudices. He holds a mirror to nature, and like a mirror presents nature truthfully without any distortion.

Artistic objectivity and detachment needs creative powers of a high order. Narayan has ample creative power. With his strong creative power, Narayan has described Indian life with a rare detachment without ever trying to moralise or give his own personal views. He looks with amused tolerance on the follies and frivolities which are a part of human life. He looks at the wicked and the virtuous with equal sympathy. He knows that life is certainly imperfect. Characters like Raju, Ramani and Sampath are not monsters of wickedness but erring mortals. He portrays both sides of the picture. Even wicked and deceptive characters become amusing in his hands. There is always a thorough analysis of motives in Narayan's work. He is a pure artist. Like all great artists, he also stresses propriety in human conduct. He is of the view that propriety and integrity can make human life more beautiful, and more worth living. His novels are so many guides to right and proper conduct.

Narayan has no philosophy to preach. His novels are all free from sermons. But he is a penetrating analyst through human motives and passions. This makes Narayan a great critic of human conduct. Human relationship -- relationship within the family circle -- and relationship around sex and money, are his ever recurring themes. Life must be accepted and lived despite its many shortcomings. This may be Narayan's message but the nuggets of information regarding each aspect have to be garnered or gleaned by each reader.

Q. 20. Comment on Narayan's use of irony, humour and satire with particular reference to 'The Guide'.

Or

Point out the sources of humour in 'The Guide'.

Ans. Humour is said to be the laughter of the heart just as wit is the laughter of the mind. Human humour may be defined as the kindly, amused perception of the incongruities of life and the artistic expression of such perception. A humorist is keenly alive to the discrepancy or contrast between what is and what should be between illusion and reality, between the action and professions of a man. A genuine or true humorist aims at amusing or entertaining his readers and he does so by exposing or ridiculing the human foibles and weaknesses or faults. A satirist is a moralist who criticises human wickedness and vice with a view to correcting or reforming it. Irony arises from the use of language having meaning opposite to the one intended.

Narayan is the greatest of the humorists among the Indo-Anglian novelists. We have various kinds of humour in his work. We get in him farcical humour or humour of situation, humour of character. We also get in Narayan verbal humour arising from jokes, jests, and use of clever language.

His humour is sometimes blended with pathos. Then we can smile through tears. Narayan satirises greedy businessmen, moneylenders, extorting house-owners, black-marketeers and profiteers, producers of obscene films, fake sadhus, credulous simpletons. His satire is mild. It is not bitter. He seems to be ridiculing or exposing his target for the amusement of his readers. His humour is genial and kindly for he accepts life as it is.

Narayan's vision of life is comic. Swami in 'Swami and Friends', looks at the face of his teacher and criticises. In 'Waiting for the Mahatma, the dead grandmother of the hero comes back to life on the cremation ground. In 'The Bachelor of Arts', Chandran is unable to marry the girl of his choice. He runs away from home.

Every variety of humour is found in The Guide. In the pyol school, children pry into the schoolmaster's house and see him cooking food while his wife stands by him. They feel susprised that the teacher knows cooking also.

The Guide has humour of character. Marco is a queer man. He would not give an anna without a voucher. Marco's appearance is comic. His thick-coloured glasses and helmet give him the appearance of a space-traveller. Raju in The Guide is also such a character. He has to undergo many comic discomfitures in his progression from a stall-keeper to a Mahatma. Rosie returns to him when he was getting used to life without her. Rosie sees him in a state of wretchedness and poverty in his one-room house. His burly and giant-like maternal uncle scolds Raju and he is humiliated in Rosie's presence. The idiot brother of Velan involves Raju in difficulties by giving wrong reports to the villagers. We feel amused at all this. The interior monologue of Raju shows him in a comic dilemma to the readers. He regretted having given the lue for bringing rain to the villagers by drumming into their ears that an ascetic or adhu could bring rain by fasting for two weeks. He could never imagine that this ormula for bringing rain would apply to him. Had he known, he would have changed he formula. He would have told the villagers to combine to help him eat a 'bonda' (a outh Indian snack like a north Indian 'aloo pakora') for two weeks. What a tooth-ome humour, Narayan gives us on a platter !

Narayan's prose weaves irony and wit. At every step we get fine and scintillating things which startle and delight. Narayan has enviable command over verbal irony. Talking about the pyol schoolmaster, Raju says, "His interest in us (students) was one rupee a month and anything else in kind we cared to carry." The essence of sainthood lies in one's ability to utter mystifying statements. When Velan prostrates before Raju, he says, "God alone is entitled to such a prostration. He will destroy us if we attempt to usurp His rights." Velan says to Raju, "Your penance is similar to that of Gandhiji. He has left a disciple in you to save us."

Narayan is a master of irony. The operation of life's little ironies is best seen in the life and career of Raju. In his life the unexpected and the undesired always happens. At every turn of the road, Raju is a victim of the irony of life or circumstances. He forges Rosie's signature to get the box of jewellery lying with Marco, and every day waits for the arrival of the box. But instead of the box of jewellery, he gets a warrant of his arrest. He is arrested in the midst of the show before a packed house. He had been acting as an impresario in an authoritative manner. His suffering due to the fast is brought out by his own self.

Irony is also the instrument of Narayan's satire. He satirises indirectly. His satire is mild. He does not work for the social reform through his satire but his purpose is to entertain. In The Guide, he has satirised lawyers, fake sadhus and crdulous disciples. Narayan's humour results from an observation of life and human follies and foibles and weaknesses. He observes the panorama of human life and there is a merry twinkle in his eyes.

Character Sketches

Q. 1. Give a character sketch of Rosie alias Nalini.
(B.A. Sem. VI, 2023) (B.C.A. Sem. VI 2023)

Or

Write in detail the character analysis of Rosie alias Nalini.
(B.A. Sem. VI, May 2024)

Ans. Rosie is the heroine of the novel The Guide. R.K. Narayan has given her liberal space in the novel. She is present in more than half of the novel. She holds a Master's degree in Economics. She is the daughter of a Devadasi, a temple dancer. She marries Marco to get out of the social stigma attaching to the class of Devadasis. She marries Marco, an archaeologist and wealthy man owning a big house and a car. She has been attracted by the excitement of a new life. But she remains an artist, a 'pundit of dancing'. Her passion for dancing is disliked by Marco. Raju exploits her for his own personal advancement. She has decided to make amends for her sin of adultery by sacrificing her art. She finally retires to Madras in order to rededicate herself to the practice and propagation of the Art of Bharat Natyam. Raju's arrest on a charge of forgery and Rosie's redemption take place at almost the same time.

Narayan describes her as not being very glamorous. But she did have a curvaceous figure, a slight and slender one, beautiful, fashioned eyes that sparkled. Her complexion was dusky which made her only half visible as if one saw her through a film of tender coconut juice.

She is the daughter of a Devadasi. Dancing is in her D.N.A. It is her obsession for dancing that is partly responsible for her predicament. Later on she attains perfection and becomes a celebrity as a dancer. Due to her devotion and hard work she attains a great recognition as a dancer.

She is a snake woman. As we see her landing in Malgudi, we see her anxious to see a king cobra and does a snake dance when she is taken to see a cobra. In fact, it

is not Rosie who bites society like a snake, but the society which does it. Her love of the snake-dance makes her look dramatically enchanting.

Pugnacity is a feature of her personality. Her husband has no warmth towards her. There is hardly any sex life between the husband and the wife. They keep on quarrelling in bed. It is anything but a conjugal life.

Rosie is a maze or an enigma. She is a vision like a fairy. She is above the reach of Marco and Raju. Raju himself realises that 'neither Marco nor he himself was suitable for her. When Raju was found guilty of forgery, Rosie tells him that she knew all along that he was not doing the right thing. She blamed this on 'karma'. Rosie cannot be misled. When Raju does not show her husband's book, she comes to know about it from a review. Sometimes she allows Raju to make love to her, but the other moment she would remember her husband and like to kick Raju away. At times she acts like a mature woman but at other times, she is like a child. She is fascinated by love of art. She gets estranged from her husband but still she hopes to convert him.

Her husband had pet aversion for her dancing. He used to snub her from time to time. The other man Raju tried to seduce her by flattering words. Her husband's coldness drove her to Raju. Moreover, when together, they would go on quarrelling. When Marco was staying in the Peak House, she fell into Raju's trap. Both of them started having sexual liaison. She suffered from inferiority complex because of her low birth and because of Marco's cold attitude. Even though she is guilty of adultery she is stricken with remorse. At last she decides to live all alone after leaving Raju.

She fails to adjust with a husband like Marco. She is stricken with a kind of sc zophrenia. She sleeps with Raju but feels for her husband. She sleeps with Raju in the Anand Bhawan Hotel; she fusses over her husband when she goes to the Peak House.

She is responsible for all the troubles of Raju. She has a pure soul. She is no doubt guilty of adultery but her husband was literally impotent. Marco was busy in doing research on cave paintings and on dead and decaying things but he did not do anything to know what his wife needed from him. Rosie (alias Nalini) wants to lead a life of zeal and excitement. That is why her marriage was a failure. Physically she remains wedded to Raju whereas spiritually she remains married to Marco. She is like the pendulum of a clock — married to Marco but having a ripping time with Raju in the Anand Bhawan Hotel. Like G.B. Shaw's Candida she gives her body to her romantic lover and tries to return to her husband. Candida returns to her husband safely. But Rosie is not able to get her husband back.

Summing up we can say that Narayan has sketched her intricate personality successfully. He is not interested in her emotional and psychic side. She has rhythm but not perfect harmony in her life. She is chirpy and vivacious but a woman requires a man who should love her and not be more interested in dead and decaying things.

Q. 2. Give a character-sketch of Marco.

Ans. Marco is a cuckolded husband. He has been very consummately sketched. He exists in a small cell. But he is not shame-tainted. His reputation as a man has been damaged because his wife has been sleeping with another man and she has confessed her sin of adultery. He is whole heartedly and single-mindedly devoted to scholastic pursuits. Rosie was devoted to dancing. In their life, sex has no place as

husband and wife. They are honest about their feelings. Marco married Rosie to help her rise in social esteem. She was the daughter of a Devadasi, a temple dancer. Her community did not enjoy respect in society. It was always difficult for a Devadasi to get a husband of some social standing. Macro is a flat character. He is of one piece. His sameness as a character is monotonous. We get the first glimpse of the man Marco in the following lines :

"He dressed like a man about to undertake an expedition with his thick jacket ; and a thick helmet. Over the helmet was perpetually stretched a green, sheeny, water-proof cover, giving him the appearance of a space-traveller."

Marco remains completely busy in his studies. He has no time even for looking to the physical needs of his wife. He did not know the meaning or essence of married life. So his married life was tragic.

At the initial stage, he is aggressively defiant about the wishes of his wife. She wanted to see a king cobra's dance. He said that her tastes were morbid. Raju finds him a hateful fellow. The cause of strained relations between Marco and Rosie could be the barrenness on the part of Rosie or the potential deficiency on the part of Marco. Marco once told Raju : "If a man wants to have peace of mind, it is best to forget the fair sex." He treated his wife cruelly and coldly. He called her a whore. A cynical idiosyncracy is seen in the character of Marco. "He could not yield an anna without a voucher, whereas if you gave him a slip of paper, you could probably get him to write off his entire fortune."

Q. 3. Sketch the character of Raju.

Or

Raju is the real hero of the novel. Discuss. ***(B.C.A. Sem. VI, May 2024)***

Ans. Raju is one of the most interesting characters in Indo-Anglian fiction. He is able to deceive society by passing for a spiritual man. From a tourist guide, Raju becomes an impresario and then he is jailed on the charge of forgery. After release from jail, he becomes a Sadhu willy-nilly. He finds himself cast in the role of a Sadhu. He attempts to perform this role with gusto.

Raju was born and brought up in a lower middle class family in a neglected corner of Malgudi. His education was irregular. He had garnered knowledge from life and nuggets of general information from scraps of newspapers, magazines and old books which he sold at his railway stall. His father considered him clay-headed. His mother used to call him a loafer even after his success with Rosie. Despite this, he was skilled in understanding human nature. The moment he saw Marco and Rosie alighting from the train, he could make out that they were his life-long customers.

He knew the success mantra in the worldly sense. He had a practical approach in many things. He went to jail for his excessive greed. Even in the jail, he was a model prisoner. As a tourist guide he had an uncanny knack of knowing what his customers wanted to see in Malgudi. He was full of confidence coupled with a delightful nature. He was always ready with an answer for a monster like Marco or the divine creature Rosie or the ignorant villagers of Mangala. Once he had a role to perform, it was Raju's habit to perform it with perfection. His going to jail was due to his own wrong actions. Sainthood also came to him because of his own utterances. Actually, his entire life is a series of improvisations. His quick adjustment to the part of a sadhu falls in line with similar improvisations. Living for the moment, and postponing the crisis indefinitely, these seem to be the principles that guide his action. He postpones things and generally does not look beyond the moment.

Raju is a materialist and a man of surface emotions. His craving for more and more money through the earnings of Rosie by dancing assignments was the natural reaction of a man from a low family. He is a rogue and a loafer. He wants to grab money from wherever he can. He was surprised to note Marco's fondness for the caves and dead things but neglect of a beautiful creature of flesh and blood. His genuine sympathy for Rosie developed into physical relationship. Gradually Raju's interest in Rosie reduced to carnal pleasures and material comforts.

Raju was a kind-hearted man. His kindness for Rosie makes him her lover or seducer. It is his kindness for the villagers that made him a sadhu. In jail, he acts as a teacher for the prisoners. Raju created sainthood for himself which ultimately went out of his control. The ascetic in a saffron robe is a readymade symbol in Indian literature. Sometimes the novelists reveal a good deal of themselves and of their art through this symbol.

Raju keeps on changing depending on the role he is required to play. He is a symbol of tradition in transition. Social responsibility is none of his concern. He is not spectacular at all. Whatever glamour he seems to have results from his contact with Rosie. His ordinariness has been made the material of dramatic episode in the novel. The hero's charm lies in the heroine.

Q. 4. Comment on the role played by Rosie in The Guide.

Ans. Rosie belongs to the caste of temple dancing girls. Her caste has no respect in society. They are considered as public property. Raju falls in love with Rosie at first sight when she alights from the train at Malgudi. Her coming to Malgudi plays havoc with Marco's life.

She is an M.A. in Economics. She marries a wealthy anchaeologist and art historian through a newspaper advertisement. She has a good figure, beautifully fashioned, eyes that sparkled, and a dusky complexion. She finds out that her husband is impotent. He is lost in his scholarly research work. She seizes the opportunity when Raju admires her snake-dance and predicts that one day she will be the greatest dancer of the century. Her husband's indifference and Raju's flattering words result in an adulterous liaison. Sometimes she feels pangs of guilt and tells Raju that Marco is after all her husband. Later she is amazed that Marco does not throttle her for infidelity. She plans to go back to him, fall at his feet and repent for her sin.

She feels suffocated when Marco deserts her. She goes to live with Raju. It is her desire to perfect her dance. She rehearses regularly and makes her debut at a school annual day function. She is delirious with joy. She falls for Raju because he appreciates and admires her art. Her maiden performance is a resounding success. Soon she is flooded with invitations for dance assignments. She started rolling in money. Rosie wants to express herself through dance before an appreciative audience. Rosie thinks of her husband when she finds his picture in the Illustrated Weekly of India with a brilliant review of his book on cave paintings. She cuts out Marco's picture and pastes it out on her dressing mirror. She scolds Raju for denying her the information about Marco's book having been already received by him. There is an ugly scene between the two.

The rift is cemented when Raju is arrested for forging Rosie's signature on a legal document sent by Marco about a box of jewellery. Rosie is hurt. She spends a lot of

money to defend Raju in the case. Raju is sentenced to two years imprisonment. Rosie closes down the establishment and moves over to Madras but she will have nothing to do with him also.

Narayan does not criticise Rosie for her improper conduct in relation to Marco. Narayan was working within the framework of traditional Hindu society. He leaves her alone. He stands steadfastly by Rosie. She gets an opportunity to recover from her folly. Rosie is left free as she is a strong-minded woman who is unwilling to sacrifice her happiness or ambition for the sake of keeping up appearances and staying with a monster of a husband.

Q. 5. Comment on the role played by Marco in The Guide.

Ans. The word husband cannot be made applicable to a man like Marco. Narayan has not given him his family name in the novel. He is an enigma, even a monster to Raju. Such characters are odd, eccentric characters. They keep away from the mainstream of human life. When he alights from the train with his wife at Malgudi, Raju's dislike for him is more than visible. He has come there to study and decrypt and understand carvings in temples and visit the ancient caves near Mempi Hills. He is single-minded in the pursuit of his goal just as his wife Rosie is devoted to dance. They are a mismatch as husband and wife as they fiercely hate each other's hobby. This often leads to squabbles and quarrels between the two. We read about a few ugly scenes in the Anand Bhawan Hotel at Malgudi and the guest house on Mempi Hills.

Raju considers Marco's marriage to Rosie as a monkey picking up a rose garland. He is unable to understand Marco's interest in dead and decaying things. He did not understand why the husband Marco could not take interest in a curvaceous and fascinating woman. Rosie also finds that her scholarly husband is more interested in books, papers, paintings and old art than in being a real, live and manly man.

Marco's passion for his vocation is complete and absolute. He has no eye for his pretty wife. He is not even aware of his wife's loneliness. He does not even ponder over his indiscretion of leaving his young and vivacious wife with the young and handsome guide. He does not realise that he is a willing cuckold as he has left his young wife with a young man.

Rosie goes away from Marco for his aversion to her dance. Marco calls dance a monkey trick or street acrobatics. What interests Rosie irritates Marco and she confesses to Raju : "I could have preferred any kind of mother-in-law, if it had meant one real, live husband." Raju becomes credible and acceptable only because of the neglect Rosie suffers at the hands of Marco.

Marco appears to be eccentric. He would not part with an anna without a voucher. If you gave him a slip of paper, you could probably make him to write off his entire fortune. Marco is self-righteous, stern, and self-centred ; he thinks he has got his wife's body and soul. He thinks his rights over his property (here wife) are unlimited. One of the conditions of his marriage to Rosie was she would leave dancing. But now that she mentions dancing, he is furious. He accuses her of breaking the agreement of marriage. He feels stunned by her confession of infidelity. Marco fails to understand that a wife can be unfaithful to her husband even once and can still be in love with him. Rosie makes a passionate appeal to him that she wants to be with him. Marco

has no effect. He says that he is trying to forget that he ever took a wife. He adds that he will complete his work and go. He tells Rosie that she is also free to leave him. Then he leaves for Madras.

Marco is full of honesty and integrity. He acknowledges Raju's help in writing his book. He is scrupulous towards Rosie too as he tries to restore a box of jewellery to her. He takes revenge on Raju as he is the seducer of his wife and he is guilty of forgery.

Q. 6. Write a short essay on the Raju-Rosie relationship in The Guide.
(B.C.A. Sem. VI, 2023) (Imp.)

Ans. Human relationships, more particularly, family relationships constitute a major theme in Narayan's novels. These relationships focus on relationship between students and teachers, between father and son and between husband and wife. Raju-Rosie relationship is of a more complex kind. This relationship generally centres round sex and money.

Rosie comes to Malgudi with her husband. She is young, charming and fascinating. Raju falls in love with this enchanting woman because her husband is impotent who spends all his time in studying ancient ruins. Dead and lifeless things interest him more than a flesh and blood wife. Rosie's passion is dance. And dance is Marco's pet aversion. Marco regards dance as monkey tricks which Raju appreciates. As a result of this aversion of dance by her husband, Rosie is unhappy.

This clears the decks for Raju's seduction of Rosie. Raju wins Rosie over by paying flattering compliments to her dance as she sways alongwith the king cobra to the tune of the gourd flute on the outskirts of Malgudi. She has a fight with her husband. Marco sends Raju to fetch her. Raju does not want her to waste time in getting ready. He wants that she should join them in the car as she is, as there was no need to decorate a rainbow. He even adds that life is so blank without her presence. Marco gets busy in studying the dead and decaying things. Raju takes care of Marco's wife. They spend many nights in the Anand Bhawan Hotel while Marco stays at the Peak House at a distance from Malgudi.

The relationship between the two is not merely carnal and physical but they have temperamental affinity. They are young and romantic. They are both attracted by the panorama of life. Both have zest for life. Both of them would break from the shackles of tradition and live life in their own way.

Marco comes to know of Rosie's infidelity. For a moment Marco is stunned. Rosie is repentant and begs to be excused for her sin in the manner of a Hindu wife. Marco decides to desert Rosie. Rosie is left alone. Rosie has to fend for herself. She comes to Raju's house and begins to do dance practice. Raju supports her. She lives in his house. Her mother opposes the stay of a dancer in her house. Raju's mother leaves the house along with her brother to their village. Raju and Rosie live as husband and wife. Raju begins to promote her as a dancer. She begins her dance practice in right earnest. Raju begins to scout for a chance where Rosie can make her debut on stage.

Raju's management and innovative skill gives Rosie a more Indian and sophisticated, poetic and pan-Indian name Nalini. Soon Nalini becomes a celebrity dancer. Raju becomes her impresario (business manager). Nalini's name as a great dancer shoots into prominence. This goes to Raju's head and he has the grand illusion

that Rosie is nothing without him. He assumes that he is the star maker. He wants to earn maximum money from Nalini's dance performances. Nalini is satisfied with the acclaim that her performance receives all over the country. Raju becomes friendly with politicians, bureaucrats, high government officials and wealthy businessmen. He spends his free time gambling and drinking with them while Rosie is busy rehearsing for her dance engagements.

Raju becomes possessive and does not want anyone to have direct access to Nalini. Nalini likes to mix with people. This creates some rift between them. Raju receives a copy of Marco's book 'A Cultural History of South India'. Raju hides the book and does not show it to Nalini. When she comes to know about this book from a glowing review in newspapers, she questions Raju about his mean act. This widens the rift between the two. Nalini feels stifled by the routine that Raju tries to impose on her. Because of this, she feels like one of those parrots in a cage taken around village fairs, or a performing monkey. Raju tries to laugh it off.

One day comes a legal document by post addressed to 'Rosie alias Nalini' stating that Marco wants to hand over a box of jewellery to his wife. Raju thinks that it is a ploy on the part of Marco to come closer to Rosie as she has become famous. He feels insecure and forges Rosie's signature.

Raju is arrested on a charge of forgery. The rift between him and Rosie is complete. Rosie undertakes to defend him in the court. She engages the best lawyer at a high fee. She takes on more dance assignments as she has no money and Raju has spent most of the money. Rosie tells Raju that she felt all along that he was not doing the right things. That was karma. Raju is galled to see that Rosie is getting more dance offers. It pains him all the more that Rosie can now manage everything all alone. When Raju is sentenced to two years imprisonment, the relationship between Rosie and Raju comes to end. Neither Marco nor Raju had any place in Rosie's life. She went back to Madras to live there all alone.

Q. 7. Describe in detail the nature of Marco-Rosie relationship.

Ans. R.K. Narayan is a keen student of human relationship in his novels. He has dealt with simple relationships between parents and children, between teachers and students. As we read some more of his novels, the relationship is about sex and money in 'The Guide'.

Rosie comes to Malgudi with her husband Marco. Rosie is curvaceous and desirable. She is dissatisfied with her husband who is interested in dead and lifeless things and has no interest in his voluptuous wife. Raju, the tourist guide, falls in love with her at first sight. Rosie is a professional dancer. Marco regards dancing as monkey tricks and no better than street arobatics. She feels frustrated with her husband. Raju exploits Rosie in her state of mind by lavishing rich praise on her dancing skill. Rosie expressed her desire to see a live cobra dancing. He takes her out to see a cobra dance the very next day. Rosie goes into raptures to see the cobra dance and herself dances with it. Raju is seen to be a smart practitioner of feminine psychology. She feels attracted towards Raju because he takes interest in her art—Marco hates dance. Raju wins her by fulsome praise.

Marco remains wrapped up in studying dead and decaying things. One day Marco is waiting in his car. He asks Raju to bring Rosie out to the hotel room. He tells her to leave the hotel and come to the car. She need not change her dress. He added that

she was more than ok in her slovenly dress. Afterall, beauty needed no ornament. She is a bit unwilling to come out. Raju told her boldly that there was no need to decorate a rainbow. He also whispered into her ear that life would be blank without her presence. Raju was able to win her by his flattering compliments. Subsequently Raju was alone with her in the hotel room for several nights while the scholarly Marco stays in the rest house on Mempi Hills.

Both Rosie and Raju have a strong romantic streak and zest for life. The panorama of life opens up for them. They like to enjoy life to the lees and sex is the staple pleasure of their life.

Marco soon comes to know of their romantic escapades. Being a Hindu wife, she tries to atone for her moral lapses. She angrily tells Raju to get out of her life. The rejected Raju spends sleepless nights. He avoids food and human company.

One afternoon he finds Rosie at his door step. She has been deserted by her husband. Raju asks her in and they begin to live together as husband and wife. Rosie starts her dance practice offending Raju's mother and neighbours. Incensed, Raju's mother leaves her husband's home and goes to live with her brother in the village.

Rosie becomes famous as a dancer. Raju becomes her theatre manager. Rosie earns a lot of money by her dance assignments in some towns of the country. He leads a life of luxury and spends money lavishly. He becomes friendly with district officials. Raju is much in demand for dance engagements. Raju's relationship with Rosie is purely for money.

Marco was hurt because of Rosie's infidelity. Marco, in the meantine, has written a book "Cultural History of South Indian Art". He sends a copy to Raju for Rosie. Raju keeps the book will himself and hides it from Rosie. He forges Rosie's signature on a voucher to get some jewellery in the name of Rosie and Marco. The jewellery is in a bank. The forgery is detected and Raju is sent to jail. Rosie tries her best to defend but Raju is sentenced to three years imprisonment. Rosie was separated from Marco. She left Malgudi and started living independently in Madras.

Miscellaneous Questions

Q. 1. Write a short essay on the treatment of love, sex and marriage in The Guide.

Ans. Love and Sex constitute an important part in the story and theme of the novel. In the opening when Rosie and her husband Marco alight from the train, Rosie appears as a fascinating woman to Raju. She is curvaceous and enchanting. Because of Marco's indifference to his wife, Raju gets smitten by her. The pattern of love gets framed between the wife of another man and a stranger, in the form of the railway guide, Raju. The woman has been depicted as a serpent woman who has a fancy for king cobra. She enjoys the dance of the cobra with active imitation. She proves to be a serpent who stings not only her husband but also Raju. As a dancer she fascinates the audience in different towns of the state. She is the daughter of a Devadasi but attracts everybody. She is an epitome of grace, beauty, fascination and enchantment. For her sin of adultery she represents the west. But she does not seem to be fit for the east. She is all for liberalism but she fails to realise that real art does not depend on flaunting but in concealment.

Rosie does not get love from her husband. He did not like her obsession with dance. She attracts Raju who flatters her in all sorts of ways and is able to woo her successfully. Her husband is an archaeologist and art historian. He is interested in dead and decaying things. He is unable to give warmth to his wife and she drifts to an outsider. While the husband is studying cave paintings and other temple carvings, she stays in a hotel at some distance from her husband. The result is tempestuous relationship between the woman and Raju. Anand Bhawan Hotel becomes an arena for steamy scenes between Raju and Rosie.

Narayan does not deal with sex in a naked manner. He shuts the doors on lovers. In accordnace with the traditions of the country, Narayan does not allow the readers to view a scene of sex. There is no sex as we find in novels like Lolita, Sons and Lovers, Liza of Lambeth, Cakes and Ale, Lady Chatterley's Lover. The contoured beauty of Rosie has a certain sex appeal which triggers the hero on the love track. The love between the hero and the heroine is clandestine, reduced to mere companionship. It is disappointing for the voyeurs. To D.H.Lawrence and Somerset Maugham, sex and beauty may be like flame and fire. In The Guide, it is sex and illicit love which is responsible for the downfall of the hero and the parting of ways between a husband his wife.

So far as marriage is concerned, R.K. Narayan has taken a radical view of marriage. There is illicit love between Raju and Rosie. It is passion and illicit love on the part of the hero. Raju is a selfish lover. He plays his cards very deftly. It is sexual liaison and commercialism.

So far as marriage is concerned, Narayan shows that a woman has to comply with the wishes of the husband. Rosie had agreed not to dance after marriage. But she finds it extremely difficult to stick to that condition. She rejects Raju and Marco parts from Rosie because she is guilty of adultery. She does not stay with Raju nor does she go back to Marco. She likes to live independently. In her heart of hearts, she was penitent and wanted to go back to Marco but Marco did not want to continue with a tainted woman.

Q. 2. Write an essay on R.K. Narayan as a regional novelist.

Or

Write an essay on Malgudi.

Ans. R.K. Narayan is a regional novelist. He is a regional novelist like Thomas Hardy in Wessex, Pottery Towns in Arnold Bennet. Narayan's Malgudi has its own individuality. Its name occurs again and again in Narayan's novels and short stories. Malgudi is Narayan's Casterbridge. The inhabitants of Malgudi have their kinship with all humanity.

Malgudi is a symbol of the transitional Indian shedding the old traditions and accepting the modern civilisation. It is thus a bridge between the East and the West, the ancient and the modern. Malgudi railway station finds its mention in almost all of R.K. Narayan's Novels. One can board the train from Madras to the Malgudi station. Within the town of Malgudi there is the Market Road, which is described as the life-line of Malgudi. Lawley Extension, Nallappa's Mango Grove, Kabir Lane, Ellaman Street are some of the tell-tale names and a reader of R.K. Narayan finds himself already acquainted with R.K. Narayan.

From the novels of Narayan we come to know that Malgudi has a municipality, a Town Hall, a club, and two schools —the Albert Mission School and the Board School. The hotels have also come up.

We can say that Malgudi is the real hero of about 12 novels of R.K. Narayan and the many short stories. All things pass and change, men and women try to live but the old landmarks of Malgudi remain.

Malgudi is the land of his heart's desire. He loves its people, and portrays in his novels the men and their manners, their spirit and their inner essence.

The Malgudi novels and short stories are strongly imbued with the spirit of place. The action of all his novels and short stories is set in the imaginary small town of Malgudi in South India. Narayan is essentially a chronicler of town life.

Q. 3. Write an essay on R.K. Narayan's style and language.

Ans. R.K. Narayan's language and style is simple and unadorned. It is free from ornamentation. It is watery and unmetaphorical. It is suitable to the purpose and occasion. Suitability and adaptability, flexibility and aptness are the hallmarks of the language. The other main features of Narayan's English are straightforwardness, brevity and simplicity. It is not journalistic. Narayan's English is suited for the communication of Indian sensibility. It is rooted in history, social conditions, weather, racial memories, religious practices, traditions, folklore. He is not interested in politics or socio-economic problems. He uses his language as an artist to communicate his experience of reality. He creates fantasies and uses his language to depict his understanding of the fundamentals of life.

He uses a language which is fit for his characters. Many of his heroes and heroines are common men and women. He uses a straightforward language.

Narayan does not use bombastic words. A learner of English would do well to study Narayan's books. His novels are full of humorous situations and ironical statements. One likes to read the small ironies of life and pondering over them. A young learner can improve his command over the language by reading his works. He writes simple, lucid and easy to understand English. There is nothing obscure or ponderous about his expression and language.

Narayan does not lay any claim to great scholarship. His language has no claim to sophistication. It does not have any literary qualities. His language is said to be a one-stringed instrument. A sentence of Narayan would read like subject, verb and object. It is substantially free from ornamentation and flowery language.