

# **SECTION – A: READING SKILLS**

## **CHAPTER-1**

### **UNSEEN PASSAGES**

#### **Introduction**

- The word 'comprehension' means to fully understand the text using one's intellect. A comprehension passage is a text set for testing the reader's ability to comprehend (understand) the meaning being implied by the text and the theme of that particular passage. Students need to fully understand the text by using their intellect.
- Questions based on a passage generally appear in a chronological relationship with the passage. Usually, the first question has the answer in the initial paragraphs and so on, but if the answers are inferential, then the matter might have to be collected from various paragraphs. For this, one needs to be familiar with the entire passage.

#### **Types Of Comprehension Passage:**

- Discursive Passages:** These passages involve an opinion. These passages involve an opinion. They have a logical flow and are argumentative or persuasive in nature. They may also include literary passages which are the extracts from a literary piece.
- Case-based Factual Passages:** These passages convey vivid information about a particular subject. These passages report about an event or a new finding. They can also provide instructions or even descriptions of something.

The complete information is conveyed through visual inputs, graphs or even reports.

#### **MNEMONICS**

Technique to solve the passage:

**Mnemonic:** ROAST

**Interpretations:**

**R:** Read the passage silently.

**O:** Organise your understanding by getting hold of the theme.

**A:** Avoid distractors, examples or illustrations. Focus on the stem of the questions.

**S:** Spot the key words of the questions in the passage to identify the correct answer.

**T:** Trigger words like 'but' or 'however' are used only to confuse. So, avoid focusing on them.

#### **FUNDAMENTAL FACTS**

- Read the entire sentence together to make out the sense or meaning.
- Infer the meaning of the difficult words through the context clues.
- Any option that is distracting you out of the passage is never the correct answer. The right answer is always based on the information given within the passage.
- Try to draw inferences from the given statistics rather than focussing on the numbers.

#### **REMEMBER...**

- Look for the main idea in the passage provided.
- Write a summary of what you read.
- Break up the reading into smaller sections.
- Pace yourself.
- Eliminate distractions by looking for the main idea.
- Finally sum up what you read.



# **SECTION – B: CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS**

## **CHAPTER-2**

### **SHORT AND LONG WRITING TASKS**

#### **TOPIC-1 NOTICE WRITING**

#### **Introduction**

- Notices are short compositions written to convey information or to make formal announcements, such as a change of name. They are simple and lucid in style. Notices are either posted on designated noticeboards or published in newspapers.



#### **Some Useful Tips**

- Notice carries 5 marks.
- It usually begins with 'This is to inform' or 'It is hereby informed that'.
- The content must include complete information covering the 7 W's: who, what, where, why, when, in what way, and for whom.

- The signing off should include a signature, name, and designation of the person in charge.
- The word limit should not exceed 50 words.
- The word 'NOTICE' along with a proper title and the issuing organisation should be mentioned.
- Date of issuing the notice should be mentioned.
- The purpose of the notice should be clearly stated.
- It must be written in a box.
- The language used must be lucid and formal. It must be written in the third person, i.e., pronouns like I, you, me, mine, your, our, etc., must not be used. The choice of tense will depend on the nature of the notice. For example in a notice announcing an event, future time reference will be used more than any other tense forms.

Notices can be categorised under the following headings?

1. Meeting: Date, Time, Place

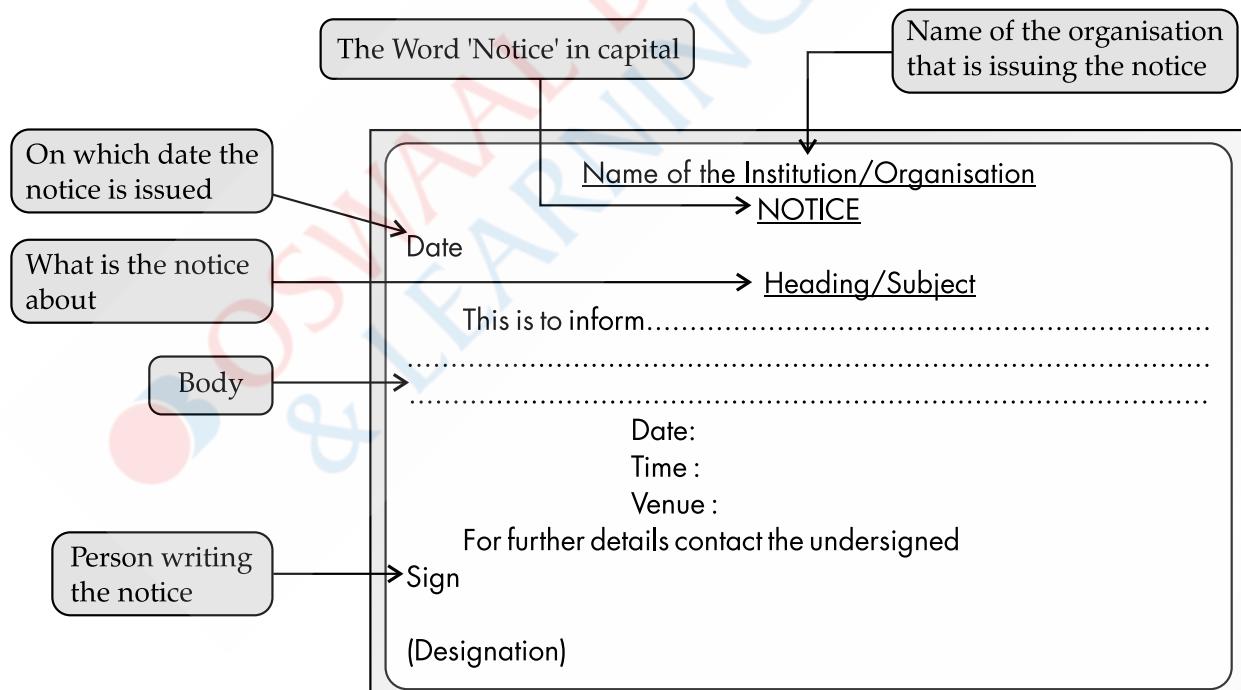
Agenda, Purpose, Objective, Chief Presiding Person (if any), Additional Information, Contact Address

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 2. Events:        | Name<br>Objective, Occasion<br>Date, Time, Duration, Venue, Who can Participate, Additional Information (if any), Contact Address                           |
| 3. Lost & Found:  | Name of the Article Lost or Found, Date, Place and Time<br>Specific Marks for Identification<br>Contents<br>Whom, When, and Where to Contact                |
| 4. Tours & Camps: | Name of the Club/Association<br>Objective<br>Name of the Destination<br>Duration, Occasion, Expenditure<br>Additional Information (if any), Contact Address |

#### FUNDAMENTAL FACTS

- Passive voice should be used to write a Notice.
- In a Notice, use short sentences and simple words.
- Do not use flowery text or fancy words in a Notice.

### Some Useful Tips



## TOPIC-2 INVITATIONS & REPLIES

### Formal Invitation Format:

Mr. & Mrs. Sharma  
 request(s) the pleasure of your benign presence  
 on the auspicious occasion of  
**NAME OF THE EVENT**  
 (Marriage/Engagement/House Warming/  
 Baby Shower, etc.)  
 On  
 17 February  
 at  
**Kaka Vatika, Delhi Road**  
**Faridabad (Haryana)**  
 RSVP                      With Best Compliments from:  
 All Relatives & Friends  
 Mr. & Mrs. Sharma  
 Phone: 983426XXXX

- Mention acceptance/regret.
- Specify the reason for refusal; also, send the best wishes if refused.
- Be brief and specific.
- Do not exceed the word limit (usually 50 words).

Sender's Address

Date .....

Dear XYZ

.....

..... BODY .....

.....

.....

Date: .....

Time: .....

Venue: .....

Yours truly

Name

### Formal Invitation Letter Format:

Sender's Address  
 .....  
 .....  
 Date .....

Receiver's Designation .....

Receiver's Address .....

..... Subject .....

Respected Sir  
 .....  
 .....  
 ..... BODY .....

.....  
 .....  
 Date: .....

Time: .....

Venue: .....

Yours truly  
 Name (Designation)

*Note: Formal & Informal Replies differ in terms of language only.*

*Formal Replies require formal tone whereas Informal Replies require warm and simple tone.*

#### (a) Formal Replies:

##### Formal Refusal:

M. Ramakrishnan is thankful to Mr. Iyer for his kind invitation to the wedding of his son on 15 March 20XX at hotel Surya. However, he regrets his inability to attend due to prior commitments. He wishes the couple a happy married life.

#### (b) Informal Replies: (Letter)

- Acknowledge the invitation in the first person.
- Address the sender of the invitation in the second person.
- Mention acceptance/regret.
- Specify the reason in case of refusal.
- Use warm and simple language.
- Do not exceed the word limit (usually 50 words).

### REMEMBER...

1. Identify the type of letter.
2. Make sure you open and close the letter correctly.
3. Establish the main intent of the letter.
4. Be precise.

## TOPIC-3 FORMAL LETTER WRITING

### Introduction

- The most common form of written communication is a letter. Although informal letters have now become obsolete, formal communication like commerce, trade, official correspondence, public representation, complaints and other dealings, transactions and communication with non-acquaintances are still conducted through letters.

### Classification of Letters

Letters may be divided into the following classes:

- **Informal letters** — These letters are written to close associates.
- **Formal letters** — These are:
- 1. **Business or Official Letters:** For making enquiries, registering complaints, asking for and giving information, placing orders and sending replies.

2. **Letter to the Editor:** Giving suggestions or opinion on issues of public interest.
3. **Application for a Job:** Forwarding your resume for a job opportunity.

### [A] Letter to the Editor

Letter to the Editor is written to the editor of a newspaper or a magazine. It is written to highlight a social issue or a problem to spread awareness and call for an action, respectively. It is written with the intention to get it published in the said medium.

#### Main Characteristics:

1. Be brief, clear, and to the point.
2. Use separate paragraphs for separate topics.
3. The first paragraph should indicate the theme of the letter.
4. Make factual statements.
5. Use simple and direct language. Avoid the use of long and fancy words, and ambiguous construction.
6. Even while lodging a complaint or making criticism, you should be polite and charming.
7. Avoid common-place and clumsy expressions.
8. Use a proper layout/format for these formal letters.
9. Use of punctuation marks is dispensed within the block format.
10. Remember the following points about block format:
  - (a) There is no indentation.
  - (b) Each block begins with the margin on left-hand side.
  - (c) Extra space should be left between different sections and paragraphs.
  - (d) Omit punctuation marks in address and date. A comma (,) shouldn't be put after the salutation.
11. You may use the following layout for logical flow of ideas.
  - Para I: Introduction of theme/issue
  - Para II: Causes
  - Para III: Consequences/results
  - Para IV: Suggestions to overcome the problem

#### Format

Sender's Address	..... .....
Date	.....
Receiver's Designation and Receiver's Address	.....
Subject: (In bold/ block letters. It should be underlined)	.....
Sir	.....
Introductory paragraph	.....
.....	.....
..... Main body of the letter .....	.....
.....	.....
..... Concluding paragraph .....	.....

Yours sincerely  
 Signature  
 (Full Name in Capitals)  
 Designation (Optional)

### [B] Application for Job

The application for a job may be written with or without a bio-data. In case it is written without a bio-data, the main body of the letter should contain the following information:

1. Personal information, e.g., age, health, gender, etc.
2. Educational/professional qualifications.
3. Experience/suitability for the job.

The format is similar to that of a letter to the editor.

#### BIO-DATA or CURRICULUM-VITAE (C.V.):

The application for a job is accompanied by a bio-data of the applicant. The bio-data is also called resume or curriculum- vitae (C.V.). It contains full information about the candidate, pertaining to the job requirement.

The letter with bio-data will have the bio-data as an enclosure. The relevant information will be included under the heading 'Bio-data'. The covering letter will be a formal official letter with proper format, language and style. The following features must be mentioned in the bio-data:

#### BIO-DATA

1. Full Name .....
2. Father's Name .....
3. Date of Birth/Age .....
4. Permanent Address .....
5. Telephone Number/Mobile Number .....
6. Email .....
7. Educational Qualifications
  - (a) Secondary: School attended, course, examinations passed, grades obtained.
  - (b) Tertiary: College, university, exam, division.
  - (c) Technical/Professional: Degree or diploma obtained: institution/university
  - (d) Any other
8. Experience (Name of institution, position held, nature of duties, duration)
  - (i) .....
  - (ii) .....
  - (iii) .....
9. Present Employment (Optional)
  - (a) Organisation .....
  - (b) Position .....
  - (c) Salary drawn .....
10. Hobby .....
11. Languages known .....
12. References (Name, designation, official address)
  - (i) .....
  - (ii) .....
13. Signature

## TOPIC-4 ARTICLE WRITING

### Introduction

An article is an expression of one's thought on an issue or a subject logically and coherently written in meaningful paragraphs.

#### Main Characteristics:

1. Give a title that catches the attention of the reader.
2. Begin with a striking opening sentence which addresses the readers and gets them interested in the topic.

3. Present a strong argument for your ideas supporting it with evidence and elaboration.
4. Use linking devices ('however', 'therefore', 'although', 'even though', 'in order to') to make the composition appear as a whole.
5. Introduce a new point at the beginning of each paragraph that follows to strengthen your ideas.
6. Develop your ideas as much as you can, to make them interesting and substantial.
7. Conclude with your strongest point.
8. Use passive voice, humour, emotive language, and rhetorical questions to provide a specific effect.

#### FORMAT:

**Part 1 – Heading:** It should be captivating and need not exceed more than five to six words. Unnecessary punctuation marks shouldn't be used in the heading.

**Part 2 – Byline:** It contains the name of the writer of the article.

**Part 3 – Body:** It is the main content part of the article. It consists of at least 3 to 4 paragraphs.

**Paragraph 1:** This is the introduction paragraph. It reveals the theme of the article. A quotation or striking facts, here, excite the interest of the readers. The language used should be simple. A good way is to start with a quotation/ some statistic based on research/ with a question.

**Paragraph 2 & 3:** These paragraphs deal with a complete analysis of the theme of the article.

Analyse and explain different types of problems/issues related to the topic.

- Explain the current scenario of the problem and the actions taken to resolve them. This may include advantages or disadvantages of the issues too.
- Develop the cause-and-effect relationship by supporting it with factual information.

**Paragraph 4:** This is the concluding paragraph. An article shouldn't be left open-ended. Sum up all the points raised or issues highlighted giving a food for thought or a planned action.

#### FUNDAMENTAL FACTS

Newspaper articles are predominantly based on facts, whereas magazine articles usually report factual events in a summarised form/ expression of ideas on any interesting topic.

#### MNEMONICS

**Concept:** Article Writing

**Mnemonics:** BELLE CNG

**Interpretation:**

**B:** Be ardently passionate.

**E:** Embrace failure with a smile.

**L:** Learn to challenge your limits.

**L:** Learn your craft by practising regularly.

**E:** Enjoy writing trivia. Let your work percolate, before you brew it.

**C:** Creativity is cyclic.

**N:** Nurture your creativity.

**G:** Good critiquing should inspire you, not dampen your spirits.

#### FUNDAMENTAL FACTS

1. Article writing is the process of inventing or rather presenting your thoughts in an appealing way. The writer thinks critically and reshapes something known into something that is different and original. Each piece of writing has a purpose and is targeted at an audience. It is organised cohesively with a clear beginning, middle and an end. Attention is paid to the choice of appropriate vocabulary, figurative use of language and style.

2. Things that must be avoided by a writer:

**Verbosity:** Using more words than are necessary to express an idea.

**Repetition:** Repeating an idea in different words.

**Pedantry:** Using high sounding, difficult, and obscure words instead of simple short ones.

**Periphrasis Or Circumlocution:** Using a roundabout way of saying a simple thing.

**Archaic Words:** Use of ancient/ outdated words and phrases.

**Colloquialism:** Words or expressions used in familiar conversation such as 'tis, bike, phone.

**Slang:** Specific colloquialisms invented for humour and vividness in expressions such as cool dude, damn.

**Indianisms:** Translating the idioms and expressions of Indian languages literally.

**Mixed Metaphors:** Comparing a thing to two or more things.

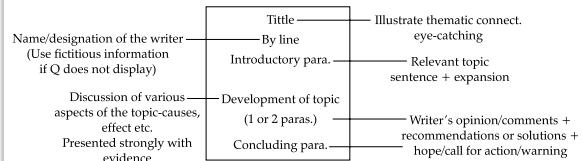
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#### REMEMBER

1. Knowing what a finished piece of writing can look like can guide you through.
2. Know some common fixes.
3. Keep a list of ideas handy.
4. Do not forget to keep a check on time to edit after writing.

#### Format of an Article

The article should be crafted in this manner:



**Note:** An article is not boxed. A box has been used here, as a tool for clear illustration.

## TOPIC-5 REPORT WRITING

### Introduction

A report is a brief account of an event that has already taken place. A report of an event includes one's ideas, opinions and impressions about the event.

#### Types of Reports

1. A newspaper report.
2. A report about an event or function at school/ institute/organisation.

3. A report about an accident/or an incident that you have witnessed.
4. A report about an enquiry or survey.

**Format**

1. Headline
2. Byline (Name of the reporter)
3. Opening paragraph
4. Details (Next two paragraphs)
5. Conclusive statement

(It can either be a summary of the whole situation, a conclusion, condemnation, appeal, or warning)

**Specifications**

**Headline:** It must be catchy and brief.

**Byline:** The line with the writer's name is called the 'By' line because it tells by whom the article is written.

**Lead Paragraph:** A lead paragraph usually answers the questions: Who, What, Where, When and Why.

The report usually begins with the name of the city where the report is being written and the date when it is being written.

Remember to write about these in the lead paragraph:

- Day, date, and time when the incident happened
- Name/ names of the person(s)/ event(s), etc. that the news is about
- Place of the incident
- Details of the incident
- Reasons why the incident happened

**Paragraph 2:** The second paragraph should tell the reader how the incident happened in detail. Narrate the incident in a chronological order.

**Paragraph 3:** Eyewitness accounts should add to the authenticity of the news.

**Paragraph 4:**

- Describe the planned future course of action.
- Remember to use simple, clear, but formal language.



## SECTION – C: LITERATURE TEXTBOOK AND SUPPLEMENTARY READING TEXT

### CHAPTER-1

### THE LAST LESSON

**Introduction**

'The Last Lesson' is set against the backdrop of the Franco-Prussian war (1870–71), in which France was defeated by Prussia in the war led by Bismarck. Prussia, then consisted of what now are the nations of Germany, Poland, and parts of Austria. In this story, the French districts of Alsace and Lorraine have passed into Prussian hands. This story also shows the effect of this incident on the normal life in the schools. It also highlights the pain that was inflicted upon the people of a territory by the conquerors, who took away the rights of the people to study or speak their own language.

The story portrays the incident as a tragic one and displays the emotional intensity felt by the people, when they are deprived of learning their own language. It also highlights the importance of language and its utility to fend for the continuity of a race.

**Theme:** The themes of patriotism, freedom of language, and the love for one's mother tongue are predominant in the story. This story reflects upon the arrogance of the coloniser to forcibly take away the rights of those who are colonised. 'The Last Lesson' stresses on the importance of education and the necessity to respect and learn one's own language. This story draws our attention to the unfair practice of linguistic chauvinism. It refers to the irrational concept, of promoting one's own language, while disregarding all other languages, considering them as inferior.

**Title:** The story 'The Last Lesson' highlights the basic trend that there is plenty of time to do things; hence,

one keeps rescheduling and delaying the lessons of life, oblivious to the fact that life is subject to change.

The last French lesson taught by M. Hamel symbolises the forfeiture of language and the loss of sovereignty for France. It becomes an emotional lesson rendered by M. Hamel to the villagers, signifying the changing order of life and its impact on the sensibilities and sentiments of people. The marching soldiers under the window represent the dawn of Prussia in France, defeat of the French people and the resultant threat to their language and culture.

**Summary**

As Franz started very late for his school that morning, he was in great fear, especially because his teacher M. Hamel had said that he would put up questions on participles, and Franz did not know anything about it. For a moment, he thought of running away and spending the entire day out, but he moved hurriedly towards the school.

When he was passing the town hall, there was a crowd in front of the bulletin board.

The blacksmith, who had read the bulletin, told Franz not to hurry.

Franz wanted to reach his desk unnoticed. He expected that there would be noise and commotion as usual. However, he was surprised as was the school. M. Hamel was not rapping his ruler on the table. He too looked grave and quiet.

Scan this



The Last Lesson

There was no chance of Franz entering the room unnoticed. Unexpectedly, M. Hamel did not rebuke him. Instead, he spoke kindly to him and told him to go to his desk. M. Hamel had put on his beautiful green coat, his frilled shirt, and his embroidered black silk cap. He used to put on these clothes only on special occasions, but it was no special day. Franz could not understand why M. Hamel had put on those Sunday clothes.

There were village people on the back benches that had always been empty. The former Mayor, the former post master, the old Hauser with his triangular cap, and some other village people occupied those back benches.

M. Hamel climbed up his chair and spoke to his pupils in a gentle and serious tone. He told them that an order had come from Berlin. French would not be taught to them anymore. Instead, German was going to be taught, and that the new teacher was expected to arrive the very next day. The students were going to have their last lesson in French that day. M. Hamel's words struck Franz like a thunderbolt. He was sorry to have wasted his time.

M. Hamel, then, praised his mother tongue. He said that French is the most beautiful, most logical, and the clearest language in the world. He exhorted the people to stick to it. He assured them that if they held fast to their language, they would be able to get rid of the Prussian rulers. Their language was the key to their freedom from slavery.

It was M. Hamel's last day at school, but he had the sincerity and commitment to carry out his teaching work as usual. He taught grammar as the last lesson.

The atmosphere in class was very appealing. The teacher was teaching genuinely and honestly, and students and others were studying with utmost concentration.

Franz listened to his lesson attentively. He felt Hamel had never explained the lesson so vividly ever before. It

appeared to him that on that last day, he wanted to give his pupils all the knowledge he possessed.

Later, the students were given writing exercise. M. Hamel had brought new copies for the class that day, and so, everyone was engrossed in their work. Even the little children, when asked to trace their fishhooks, did it with utmost perfection, as if that was French too. Just then, the pigeons cooed very low, and Franz wondered sarcastically if Prussians could force pigeons to sing in German.

While the class was in motion, M. Hamel sat motionless. It appeared as though he wanted to inscribe this classroom scene in his mind. For 40 years, he had served in that school, and now he had to leave the very next day, without any notice and without any formal farewell even.

The church clock struck twelve. It was time for the school to close. M. Hamel wanted to say something, but he was overwhelmed with emotions. He wrote "Vive La France" (Long Live France) on the blackboard, and with a wave of his hand, dismissed the class.

#### KEY-TERMS

**commotion:** stir

**bulletin board:** a board on a wall where people can post public messages, such as notices, pictures, announcements, or information.

**vive la France:** long live France

**linguistic chauvinism:** dominance or superiority of one language over the other

#### REMEMBER...

- The narrative voice as a whole and not only the few lines highlighted in an extract.
- Analyse how the characters are presented.
- What is the main theme that the text portrays?
- What is the structure or shape of the text?



## CHAPTER-2

### LOST SPRING

### (STORIES OF STOLEN CHILDHOOD)

#### Introduction

This story is written by a famous short-story writer Anees Jung. She began her career as a writer in India. She has been an editor and columnist for major newspapers in India and abroad, and has authored many books. The following is an excerpt from her book titled 'Lost Spring, Stories of Stolen Childhood.' Here, she writes about the utter poverty and traditions which force children to lead a life of exploitation. Anees Jung highlights the utter destitution of ragpickers of Seemapuri and the bangle makers of Firozabad.

**Theme:** 'Lost Spring' is an account of those poor children, who are doomed to poverty and a life of exploitation. The two protagonists of the chapter, Saheb-e-Alam and Mukesh, lose their childhood while carrying the burden of poverty

and illiteracy. In their austere tales of exploitation, the author finds indications of pliability and hope.

In this story, the author reveals the utter destitution of the rag-pickers of Seemapuri and the bangle-makers of Firozabad. This story describes the oppressive insufficiency and customs that compel the children to live a life of abuse.

**Title:** Spring is the season of optimism and anticipation. It symbolises life. But unfortunately, millions of children in our country waste their childhood in rag-picking and other hazardous industries. The joys of childhood, the vibrancy of spring, is lost either in the garbage or in dingy cells with furnaces. The grinding poverty and traditions condemn these children to a life of exploitation. They see very little hope of escaping from their impoverished life of melancholy and deprivation. Moreover, years of mind-

numbing toil have killed all the initiative and the ability to dream. They are entangled in a spiral that moves from poverty to apathy, to greed, to injustice.

## Summary

### 'Sometimes I find a rupee in the garbage.'

The author comes across a boy, Saheb, every morning. She always found him searching for something in a heap of garbage. When he was asked why he did it, he replied, 'I have nothing else to do.' She told him to go to the school, but there was no school in his neighbourhood. She told him that she was going to start a school. Saheb was happy. He would go to her school, but she did not intend to start a school.

Saheb's full name was Saheb-e-Alam. It means the 'Lord of the Universe.' However, the poor boy wandered on roads along with other barefooted poor boys like him.

Many children walk barefoot. Some people argue that lack of money is not the reason. It is a tradition to walk barefoot, but the author asserts that perpetual state of poverty is the real cause.

Like all other families of ragpickers, Saheb's family came from Bangladesh in 1971. They came there because their homes and fields were destroyed by floods. They had nothing to live on.

About 10,000 ragpickers live in Seemapuri. They live in mud structures with roofs of tin and tarpaulin. They lack all civic amenities like sewage and running water. Living in Seemapuri enables them to cast their votes. They move about and pitch their tents wherever they can find food. Rag-picking is their sole means of earning a livelihood.

Saheb used to stand outside a club. He watched two young men playing tennis. Tennis fascinated him. He wished to play tennis. Someone gave him a pair of discarded tennis shoes. Half of his dream came true. Of course, playing tennis was out of his reach.

Saheb got a job at a tea stall. He was paid 800 rupees a month and all meals. Still, he was not happy. He lost his carefree look and his freedom. He was no longer his own master.



### 'I want to drive a car.'

The author visited Firozabad. Firozabad is famous for its bangle making industry.

She came across a boy named Mukesh. His family too was engaged in manufacturing bangles. Mukesh took her to his house. They went through stinking lanes choked with garbage. Families of bangle makers lived there. Their houses had crumbling walls and wobbly doors.

They entered Mukesh's house, where a frail young woman was cooking meals on a firewood stove. Her eyes were filled with smoke. She was the wife of Mukesh's elder brother.

Mukesh's father was old and weak. He had lost his eyes working on furnaces and polishing bangles. He could not afford to send his two sons to school. He could only teach them the art of making bangles. He had built the house but could not repair it. Mukesh's grandmother expressed her belief in destiny. She said that on account of their karma (deeds), they were born in the bangle makers' caste. It was their destiny to suffer, and that no man could change what was ordained by fate. In fact, her belief was shared by all.

Another woman told the author that despite hard work, they had never had a full meal in their whole life. The author could see bangles everywhere. She saw boys and girls sitting with parents before flickering oil lamps. They welded pieces of coloured glass that she had learnt. Their eyes got used to dark, and they lost their eyesight before they were adults. At home, families worked hard all day before furnaces with high temperatures. All the operations of bangle making cause blindness.

Generation after generation, families of bangle makers have been engaged in making bangles. They live in poverty, they work hard, and die in poverty. Nothing has changed with the passage of time. They find themselves in the clutches of middlemen and moneylenders. The police and the administration do not help them. If they try to pull out of the vicious circle, they are in trouble. The police beats them up and puts them in jail.

### KEY-TERMS

**ragpicker:** someone who collects rags and other waste material from the streets, refuse heaps, or trash cans for a livelihood.

**perpetual state of poverty:** never-ending poverty

**barefoot:** wearing nothing on the feet.

**vicious:** cruel; likely to hurt somebody.



## CHAPTER-3

### DEEP WATER

#### Introduction

William Douglas (1898–1980) was born in Maine, Minnesota. After graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in English and Economics, he spent two years teaching at a high school in Yakima. He was an advisor and a friend to President Roosevelt. Douglas was a leading advocate of individual rights. He retired in 1975, with a term lasting thirty-six years and remained for a time the longest period-serving

justice in the history of the court. 'Deep Water' has been taken from his book 'Of Men and Mountains'. It was his personal experience. It reveals how as a young boy, William Douglas nearly drowned in a swimming pool. In this extract, he talks about his fear of water, and thereafter, how he finally overcame it.

**Theme:** The lesson, 'Deep Water,' revolves around the idea of terror. It conveys that fear or anxiety is a great obstacle to our happiness and progress. It is a negative feeling that

paralyzes us and makes us passive. We cannot avoid it, but we can overcome it with persistent efforts, hope, and determination. By absolute will power and optimism, we can overcome it. It is rightly said by Roosevelt, "All we have to fear is fear itself."

**Title:** The title, 'Deep Water' is quite appropriate to this extract from 'Of Men and Mountains' by William O. Douglas. The title is highly expressive and at once focuses our attention on the main theme- experiencing fear of death under water and the efforts of the author to overcome it.

## Summary

Douglas was about four years old. He visited a beach with his father. They stood in the surf. A powerful wave swept him and knocked him down. He was terrified. He had avoided water since then.

When Douglas was about eleven years old, he had a desire to learn swimming. The Yakima River was treacherous. Many people had drowned in it. His mother advised him never to try to swim in it, but the Y.M.C.A pool was safe. It was only two to three feet deep at its shallow end. The other end was about nine feet deep, and the drop was gradual.

Douglas decided to learn swimming there. He bought a pair of water wings and went to the pool.

He paddled with water wings. He imitated others.

One day, he was sitting all alone on the edge of the pool, when a well-built, young man came there. He looked at skinny Douglas and out of mirth, picked him up and tossed him into the deepest part of the pool. Douglas hit the water, surface in a sitting position, and began to sink to the bottom slowly. Douglas was terrified, but he could think of a plan to save himself. He decided to spring from the bottom of the pool as soon as his toes touched it, but he failed. Even multiple efforts were in vain.

Then, he began to drift downwards. He could make no effort. He was relaxed. There was no fear. There was no panic. It was all quiet and peaceful. He felt as if he were floating in space. He was unconscious. When Douglas regained his consciousness, he realised that he had been saved. He was lying on his stomach. He was vomiting.



He heard voices. Someone said he had nearly died. The young man who had thrown him into the pool said that he had done it out of fun.

After some time, Douglas went home. He was weak and trembling. The dreadful experience haunted him again and again. A few years later, he went to the waters of the Cascades. He wished to wade into them. The terror seized him again. His legs were paralysed. Whenever and wherever he went fishing, canoeing, bathing and swimming, he was seized with terror. The joy of living was lost. Finally, Douglas decided to get an instructor to help him overcome his fear of water. The instructor helped him bit by bit, piece by piece. First, he put a belt around Douglas and attached the belt with a rope. He held the end of the rope as they moved up and down the pool. He made Douglas put his face under water and exhale. He held Douglas on the side of the pool and made him kick with his legs. He was with Douglas for about six months. When he felt that Douglas was able to swim alone, he left.

Though Douglas was able to swim the length of the pool up and down, he was not sure that the old fear had left him completely. He, however, was prepared to overcome it if it reappeared. Then, he went to Lake Wentworth in New Hampshire. He dived off a dock at Triggs Island. He swam two miles across the lake to Stamp Act Island. He used all the strokes he knew. Only once did the terror return, but Douglas was able to overcome it at once. He still wanted to test himself, so Douglas went to Warm Lake. There, he swam across the other shore and back. Terror did not reappear. Douglas gave out a cry of victory.

His terror of water and his conquest of it gave him an insight into the meaning of life and death. He had experienced the fear of death, as well as the sensation of dying. He felt there is peace in death, so he lived more intensely. He enjoyed life.

### KEY-TERMS

**treacherous:** dangerous

**unconscious:** in a state that is like sleep or not knowing something; not aware of somebody/something.

**dreadful experience:** something that is very bad or unpleasant, or very poor in quality.

**sensation of dying:** a sense that one's life is coming to an end.



## CHAPTER-4

### THE RATTRAP

#### Introduction

The Rattrap is written by a Swedish writer, Selma Lagerlof. The rattrap seller is a homeless tramp. He stays for a night in the cottage of a lonely crofter, who entertains him like a guest and a trusted friend. He tells him everything, but in the morning, the peddler smashes a window pane, and steals the crofter's money. Later, there is a turn in his fortune. The ironmaster mistakes the peddler for an old comrade. It was the ironmaster's daughter' kindness that brought a change of heart in the peddler.

The lonely tramp is a philosopher too! Not only does he make rattraps to sell, he thinks that the world too is a rattrap. As rats are lured by pork and cheese to enter the trap, so are men lured by land, food, shelter, clothing, etc. These are different baits. Those who touch these baits are trapped. He knew a few persons who were already trapped and others who were trying to bite the bait and get trapped.

**Theme:** The Rattrap is a beautiful story, which deals with the themes of love, compassion, and importance of human dignity, and the transformative power of love.

The Rattrap is a striking story that illustrates the life-transforming power of the human touch. The story brilliantly captures the effect of a compassionate gesture in bringing out the best in a human being.

**Title:** The story has an appropriate and suggestive title. It at once draws our attention to the central theme—the whole world is a big rattrap. This metaphor helps us to understand the human predicament. All the good things of the world are nothing but baits to tempt a person to fall into the rattrap. Through the character of the peddler, the writer drives home the idea that most human beings are prone to fall into the trap of material benefits.

## Summary

A rattrap peddler went around selling small rattrops.

The peddler led a lonely life and was given to meditation. He thought that the world itself was a rattrap. He was amused to think that some people were already trapped and some others were trying to reach the bait.

It was a cold evening in December. He saw a grey cottage on the roadside. The owner of the cottage was a lonely old crofter. He welcomed the peddler. He gave the peddler hot porridge to eat and tobacco to smoke. Then, they played cards. The crofter was generous, as well as trustful. He told the peddler that he had a cow, and that he sold milk and cream. He also told him that he received thirty kroners as payment of the previous month. Then, he took down a pouch and showed him the money. Then, he put the money back in the pouch and hung it on a nail in the window frame. Next morning, the peddler left. The crofter locked his cottage and went away.

The peddler came back to the cottage. He smashed the pane and stole the money. Now, he thought that it was not safe to walk along the public highway. So, he went into the woods. There, he walked and walked, but could not get out. He was tired. He looked upon the forest as a rattrap in which he was caught.

After a while, he heard the regular thumping of a hammer's strokes. He stood up and walked in the direction of the sound. He opened the gate of the works and went into the forge. The blacksmith and his apprentice were there waiting for peg iron to be ready, to be put on the anvil. It was the Ramsjo Iron works.

The blacksmith hardly took any notice of his presence. On one of his visits, he came into the forge, he looked intently at the peddler's face. He felt sure that the peddler was one of his old regimental comrades, Captain von Stahle, who had fallen into evil ways. He invited the peddler to come home with him for Christmas. But the peddler was alarmed. He refused and the ironmaster went home.



The ironmaster sent his daughter Edla to persuade the peddler to come home. They wanted his company only over Christmas Eve. The peddler felt confidence in his daughter. He agreed to go with her. On the way, he was sorry to have stolen the crofter's money that had put him in the trap. The ironmaster was happy to have his old regimental comrade under his roof. He planned to feed him well and give him some respectable work. The servant cut the peddler's hair and bathed him. The peddler appeared, wearing one of the ironmaster's fine suits. However, when the ironmaster looked at him in the daylight, he felt he had made a mistake.

The peddler was not Captain von Stahle. He thought that the man had deceived him. He even thought of handing him over to the sheriff.

The peddler said that he had not pretended to be what he was not. He had not been willing to go to the ironmaster's house. Even then, he was ready to put on his rags and leave. He also told the ironmaster that the world was a rattrap and that he too might be tempted by a big bait while getting caught in the trap. The ironmaster told him to leave at once.

Edla did not like her father's asking the poor peddler to leave. She thought it was unfair to turn away the man whom they had invited. She wanted to have the joy of entertaining a homeless wanderer on Christmas. She stopped the peddler, and her father gave in.

Edla served food to the peddler. In the evening, during Christmas party, he was given Christmas presents, which he thankfully received. Edla told him that her father's coat that the peddler was wearing was also a Christmas present. She assured him that he would be welcomed again if he liked to spend the next Christmas Eve with them.

Next morning, the ironmaster and his daughter went to Church. There, they learned that the peddler was a thief. He had robbed the crofter. The ironmaster was sure that the peddler must have made away with their silver. Edla was dejected. But when they reached home, they learnt that the peddler had left. But he did not take away anything. On the other hand, he had left a Christmas present for Edla. Edla opened the present. It was a tiny rattrap. Edla was happy to see that the peddler had left the crofter's money behind. There was a letter also. It was addressed to Edla. He had thanked her for the kindness. He wanted to do a good turn to her, so, he had left the crofter's money and had requested her to return it to the crofter. He said that he was treated as a real captain. That was why he could come out of the rattrap in which he had been caught. He had signed the letter as Captain von Stahle.

### KEY-TERMS

**regimental comrade:** a fellow soldier in a regiment.  
**crofter:** a person who lives and works on a small farm.  
**persuade:** induce (someone) to do something through reasoning or argument.

# CHAPTER-5

## INDIGO

### Introduction

Louis Fischer was an admirer of Gandhiji. He met Gandhiji several times and wrote his biography, 'The Life of Mahatma Gandhi'. This lesson 'Indigo' is taken from that book.

Gandhiji considered Champaran a turning point in his life. Probably, it was the turning point in the history of India. Gandhiji visited Champaran in 1917. The British government was well-trenched in India at that time. Indian masses had a deep-rooted fear of the British.

An illiterate man Rajkumar, was greatly perturbed by the injustice meted out to Indian peasants by the British landlords. The cause of the problem was indigo and the greed of the landlords.

The British landlords owned large estates in Champaran. In those days, harvesting indigo was very profitable. The British landlords, through a long-term agreement, forced Indian tenants to plant 15% of their holdings with indigo and surrender the entire product to the landlord as rent. Harvesting indigo was an unpleasant job.

However, the things changed. Germany developed synthetic indigo.

Naturally, the prices of indigo were sure to plummet. Harvesting indigo was no longer profitable. Therefore, the landlords offered to release the peasants of the irksome job of harvesting indigo. They demanded compensation for it. Illiterate peasants, who did not know the real motive of the British landlords, gladly agreed to this while there were others who resisted.

Soon, the peasants learnt about the synthetic indigo. Then, those who had paid compensation demanded their money back. The landlords hired thugs to calm them down. The peasants engaged lawyers. At this point, Gandhiji visited Champaran. He felt it was no use going to courts. He wanted to free the peasants from the fear of the British. Gandhiji campaigned their cause and finally succeeded. He remained firm, fearless, and dedicated.

**Theme:** In the chapter 'Indigo', the main theme is that how an effective leadership can overcome any problem. The chapter tells us about the leadership shown by Mahatma Gandhiji to secure justice for the oppressed people through convincing argumentation and negotiation, assertion and dialogue. So, Gandhiji imparted the lesson of self-reliance and fearlessness. It also lays emphasis on the contributions made by many unacknowledged Indians to the freedom movements. This story highlights that the struggle for the noble cause never goes unrewarded.

**Message:** The chapter 'Indigo' highlights the unequal economic system that existed during colonial British rule. It resulted in Indian peasants suffering, while the British planters exploited them. It also highlights the importance of Gandhiji's decision to take up their case, which exposed the unjust system.

**Title:** The title 'Indigo' is quite appropriate, to the point and suggestive. It at once focuses our attention on the central issue—the exploitation of the indigo sharecropper peasants at the hands of cruel British planters.

The extract also points out the work done by Gandhiji and his associates to improve the economic, political, cultural and social life of the indigo sharecroppers. 'Indigo' is highly suggestive and apt.

### Summary

The annual convention of the Indian National Congress was held in Lucknow in December 1916. A poor illiterate peasant came there to complain against the injustice meted out to the peasants in Champaran. He met Gandhiji. Gandhiji had never heard of Champaran. He had many engagements. So, he did not give any assurance to Shukla, but Shukla was resolute. He followed Gandhiji wherever he went. At last, Gandhiji fixed a date. He told Shukla to meet him in Calcutta on that particular date.

In Calcutta, Gandhiji found Shukla waiting for him. Both of them went to Patna by train. Shukla led Gandhiji to the house of a lawyer, Rajendra Prasad. He became the first President of India. The lawyer was out of town, but the servants knew Shukla. He had been there several times to request the lawyer to help the indigo sharecroppers. They let them stay on the grounds, as they mistook Gandhiji for another peasant and untouchable. They did not allow them to draw water from the well lest the entire water in the well should become polluted.

Gandhiji decided to break his journey to camp at Muzaffarpur, because he wanted to gather more information that Shukla had been unable to provide. He sent a telegram to Professor J. B. Kripalani whom he had met at Shanti Niketan. Kripalani came to the station with his students to receive Gandhiji. At Muzaffarpur, Gandhiji stayed in the house of Mr. Malkani, a government school teacher. In those days, Indians were afraid to harbour men like Gandhiji who were advocates of home rule, but Malkani had the courage.

The news of Gandhiji's arrival in Muzaffarpur and his mission spread quickly. Sharecroppers came to Muzaffarpur to see him. The lawyers also called on him. They briefed him about their cases. Gandhiji chided the lawyers for collecting heavy fees from poor peasants. He thought the most important thing was to free the peasants from the fear of their British landlords.

British landlords held large estates in Champaran. Indians worked as sharecroppers on their land. By a long term agreement, the sharecroppers were compelled to plant 15% of their holdings with indigo and surrender the

Scan this



Indigo

entire indigo produced to the landlords as rent. Harvesting indigo was an irksome business for the peasants.

Recently, the landlords had heard that Germany had developed synthetic indigo. British landlords knew that the prices of indigo would fall and planting indigo was no longer profitable. They offered to release the sharecroppers from their obligation to harvest indigo. But the Britishers demanded compensation. Many peasants agreed, while a few of them resisted. Soon, the peasants learnt about the synthetic indigo. Those who had paid compensation demanded their money back.

A dispute arose between the landlords and the sharecroppers. The landlords hired thugs. The sharecroppers engaged lawyers.

Gandhiji wanted to get the facts. He visited the Secretary of the British Landlords Association. However, the secretary refused to give any information saying that Gandhiji was an outsider. Gandhiji told him that he was not an outsider.

Then, Gandhiji called on the commissioner of Tirhut Division. He was rude to Gandhiji. He told Gandhiji to leave Tirhut immediately, but Gandhiji did not leave. Motihari was the capital of Tirhut. Gandhiji made it his headquarters. He started his investigations. A peasant was maltreated in a nearby village. Gandhiji decided to go and find the facts, but the police stopped him. He was served with a notice to leave Champaran. Gandhiji wrote back that he would not concede the notice. Consequently, Gandhiji was summoned by the court. Gandhiji sent a report to the Viceroy.

The peasants learnt that the Mahatma who wanted to help them was in trouble with the authorities. Thousands of peasants gathered around the court building. This spontaneous show of their courage baffled the British authorities. They felt powerless. Gandhiji helped them to regulate the trial.

In the court, Gandhiji pleaded guilty. He asked for penalty. He read out a statement. He said he was faced with conflict of duties, he respected the lawful authority. He was not a law-breaker. However, he could not disregard the voice of his conscience to do the humanitarian and national service.

The judge said he would take several days to deliver the judgement, but he let Gandhiji go free.

Gandhiji asked his lawyer friends what they would do if he went to jail. They replied they would go home. Gandhiji asked again what would happen to the poor peasants. Then, the lawyers felt ashamed. Gandhiji, who was a stranger, was willing to go to jail for their sake. The lawyers claimed to have been serving the peasants. Going home would mean a shameful betrayal. They told Gandhiji that they too would follow him to jail. Gandhiji was pleased. He declared that the battle of Champaran was won.

He, then, divided the group into two pairs and put down the order in which each pair would court arrest.

However, the Lieutenant Governor of the province decided to drop the case against Gandhiji. This was the victory of civil disobedience.

Gandhiji and lawyers now proceeded to conduct an enquiry. They recorded the statements of thousands of peasants. In the meantime, the Lieutenant Governor summoned Gandhiji. After long interviews, the Lt. Governor constituted an official commission of enquiry to go through the indigo peasants' complaints. The commission comprised of British officials, landlords and Gandhiji as the sole representative of the sharecroppers.

The commission collected the crushing evidence against the British landlords. The landlords were nervous. They agreed in principle to refund the peasants' money that they had extorted illegally.

Gandhiji demanded 50% of it, but the landlords offered only 25%. Gandhiji agreed to it. He had won a moral victory.

Gandhiji explained that the amount was not important. By agreeing to refund the peasants' money, the landlords had lost their prestige. They were no longer dreaded. The peasants learnt that they had rights and there were people to defend their rights.

The landlords abandoned their estates which went back to the peasants. This was the end of indigo sharecropping in Champaran. Gandhiji was not satisfied by just winning the indigo battle. During his stay in Champaran, he saw that the people of Champaran were socially and culturally backward. He decided to remove their backwardness. Gandhiji decided to open primary schools. He appealed to teachers, two of his young disciples, their wives and several other volunteers. Gandhiji's wife Kasturba taught about personal hygiene and community cleanliness.

Gandhiji had come to Champaran casually at the entreaty of Shukla. He had expected that his visit would last a few days. However, he had to stay there for seven months continuously. He kept a distant watch on the Ashram. He called for regular financial accounts. He even wrote to them that it was time to fill in the old latrine trenches and dig new ones.

Charles Freer Andrews was a devoted follower of Gandhiji. He came to Champaran. Gandhiji's lawyer friends wanted Charles to stay on to help them. But Gandhiji opposed the idea. He said they should not seek an Englishman's help in their fight. They must fight their battle themselves. For Gandhiji, self-reliance, India's independence and helping the sharecroppers were all bound together.

#### KEY-TERMS

**Convention:** assembly, session

**law-breaker:** a person who breaks the law.

**volunteer:** a person who freely offers to take part in an enterprise or undertake a task.

**British Landlords Association:** a national landlord association for British residential landlords.



## CHAPTER-6

### POETS AND PANCAKES

#### Introduction

This piece, Poets and Pancakes, is taken from Asokamitran's book 'My Years with Boss'. Asokamitran worked in The Gemini Studios. His duty was to cut newspaper clippings on a wide variety of subjects and preserve them in files.

Gemini Studios was located in Madras (Chennai). Film-making was at its infancy in India. Asokamitran humorously in a rambling style writes the poets and pancakes Poets and Pancakes. To begin with, he talks of the make-up department of the studios. It was at the upstairs of a building that was popularly supposed to have been Lord Clive's stables. Then there are quite a few buildings which were supposed to have been Clive's residences. Asokamitran does not believe all this to be true. Lord Clive's stay in India was very short. He lived in Madras for still shorter time. He couldn't have lived in all these houses.

'Pancakes' was a strange brand name for a make-up material. The Gemini Studios bought truckloads of this material. It was used by the make-up department. The author humorously says that it made decent looking boys and girls ugly.

Talking about the make-up department, he talks of his office boy. He was in fact a grown-up man of forty. He aspired to be a director or a top star, but he remained an office boy. He blamed his neglect on Subbu, who was considered to be No. 2 in the Gemini Studios.

Now the author tells us about Kothamangalam Subbu. He was a talented person. He was a poet, novelist, actor and film maker, all rolled into one, but he had no aspirations. He was loyal to boss.

Then he tells us of the legal advisor who was a member of the story department. He wore western clothes and looked odd among khadi-clad writers and poets, who were averse to communism. The legal advisor ruined the career of a talented actress unwittingly.

Talking of communism, the author speaks of the arrival of Moral Re-armament Army at the Studios. It was a sort of counter-communism movement. It presented plays in the studios. Their plays influenced Tamil dramas, but their anti-communism had no effect. Later an English poet paid a visit to the Studios. But nobody could understand what the poet said or what the purpose of his visit was.

The poet, which the author discovered, was the Editor of the periodical, The Encounter. He wrote an essay on his disillusion with communism. His visit to the Studios had been in this connection.

**Theme:** 1. Nepotism and Fawning at the place of work

2. Hierarchy at the place of work
3. Social Integration at the place of work
4. Publicity at the place of work
5. Jealousy at the place of work

**Message:** The narrative gives an insight into how different people work together despite their casual dislike for each other and how different is the reel life from real life.

**Title:** The story is based on the functioning of the Gemini Studios during its years of glory. The title 'Poets and Pancakes' refers to poets who were scriptwriters at the studio and also to a brand of make-up 'pancake' that was liberally used.

#### Summary

'Pancakes' was the brand name of a make-up material. The Gemini Studios bought a lot of it. Many well-known dresses must have used that material. It was used by make-up men to turn decent-looking players into hideous-looking monsters. In fact, it was because most of the shooting of a film was done on the sets. The sets and the studio lights required that every pore of players' faces was closed. A strict hierarchy was maintained in the make-up department to make the player look ugly. The chief make-up man made the hero and heroine ugly. His senior assistant made the second hero and heroine ugly and so forth. It was the office boy's job to make the crowd players ugly.

The make-up department had an office boy. He was not a boy but a forty-year-old man. He had joined the Studios years ago. He believed that he had a great talent and hoped to become a star actor, director, screen writer or lyrics writer. But he was frustrated. He blamed his disgrace on Gemini Studios. The make-up department was upstairs in the building that was said to have been Robert Clive's stables. The make-up room looked like a hair cutting salon because it had large mirrors and lights. The lights gave out intense heat. The person who underwent make-up had a miserable experience of being scorched like that of being in a hell.

The make-up department presented a picture of national integration long before AIT began broadcasting programmes on national integration. In the beginning, the department was headed by a Bengali. He was succeeded by a Maharashtrian who was assisted by people from all parts of India.

The nature of author's job appeared to be insignificant. He was usually seen tearing newspapers. Everybody would walk into his cubicle and want to give him some work to do. The office boy would come in to recite his poems. He wished to impress the author by his talent and how it was going waste on account of Subbu.

The office boy was frustrated. Probably, he was jealous of Subbu's stature. Subbu was very close to Boss. When boss had any difficulty in presenting a scene in a film, Subbu would suggest a number of practical ideas.

Subbu was a good poet too. He could write poems of high order, but he deliberately suppressed his talent to write for the masses. He was a novelist too. He had written a novel in which he recreated the mood and manner of Devadasis of early 20th century. He had created life-like characters too.



Subbu was an excellent actor, but he never aspired for lead roles. However, whatever minor roles he played, he acted better than the main players.

Subbu loved all. Several friends and relatives stayed with him for long periods, but Subbu did not care. He never gave a thought to the money he spent to support them, but the office boy hated him. Perhaps, Subbu appeared to be a sycophant.

Though, Subbu was always seen with the boss, he was a member of the story department. Besides writers and poets in the story department, there was a lawyer too. Officially, he was known as legal adviser. But people called him by an opposite name. Once, the legal adviser unwittingly ruined the career of a talented actress.

One day the actress, who was not seasoned in worldly wisdom, lost her temper on the sets. She spoke angrily against the producer. The legal adviser switched on the recording equipment. When she paused, he played back the record. The actress was dumbfounded to hear her own voice. Though she had said nothing offensive, she never appeared on the stage again.

The legal adviser wore trousers, a shirt and a tie. Sometimes he wore a coat too. He appeared off among khadi-clad poets and writers. The poets and writers worshipped Gandhiji though they had no affiliation to his ideas, but they were averse to communism. They had a notion that a communist loved nobody. He was an anarchist.

The feelings against communism were widespread in South India. Moral Rearmament Army was a sort of Anti-Communism Movement. It visited Gemini Studios in 1952. They were about 200 people belonging to at least 20 nationalities. They presented two plays 'Jotham Valley' and 'The Forgotten Factor' in the most professional manner. The Gemini family of 600 and the citizens of Madras were greatly impressed by their plays.

Their message was simple but the sets and costumes were excellent. For many years, the Tamil drama imitated the sunrise and sunset scenes presented by MRA. The scenes were presented on a bare stage with white background and a tune played on the flute. However, the MRA did not influence the outlook of the Gemini bosses. The enterprises continued unchanged. The staff had enjoyed hosting MRA.

A few months later, Gemini Studios received another guest. It was an Englishman. Nobody knew who he was. Some said he was a poet, but he was not one of the poets known to them. Some believed that he was an editor because the top men of The Hindu were taking the initiative.

However, he was not the editor of any of the newspapers which the staff of Gemini Studios had heard of.

The Englishman was welcomed by the boss, Mr. Vasan. He read out a long speech talking of freedom and democracy and then the Englishman spoke. Nobody could understand what he said. His accent had made it impossible, but they were baffled. They could not understand the purpose of his visit. They made Tamil films for simple people who could not be expected to have any interest in English poetry. The visit of the Englishman remained a mystery.

The author saw a notice in The Hindu. The Encounter, a British periodical, was organizing a short story contest. The author had never heard of the periodical. He wanted to send an entry. He wanted to have some information about it before he sent the entry. He visited the British Council Library. There he found copies of The Encounter. He learned that its Editor was Stephen Spender, who had visited the Gemini Studios. After a few years, the author had retired. One day, he saw a pile of low-priced paperback edition of 'The God that Failed'. He bought a copy. It contained six different essays of six different writers. They described writers' journeys to communism and their disillusioned return. One of the writers was Stephen Spender. The whole mystery of Spender's visit was cleared. Mr. Vasan was not interested in his poetry but was interested in his views on communism.

#### KEY-TERMS

**hierarchy:** a system in which members of an organisation or society are ranked according to relative status or authority.

**cubicle:** a small partitioned-off area of a room.

**unwittingly:** without being aware; unintentionally.

**disillusioned:** disappointed in someone or something one discovers to be less good than one had believed.



## CHAPTER-7

### THE INTERVIEW

#### Introduction

'The Interview' is an excerpt taken from 'Penguin Book of Interviews'. It is written by Christopher Silvester. In this chapter, the author talks about the technique of 'interview' as a new way of interrogating. He talks about it with reference to the field of Journalism. Moreover, he also discusses the importance of this new technique. He goes on to state how the interview has become a vital arena in everyone's lives, regardless of the class, literacy or anything. We learn about the opinions of many celebrities

concerning an interview. Thus, it teaches us about the functions, methods and merits of an interview. Moreover, the author also incorporates an excerpt from an interview with the writer, Umberto Eco by Mukund Padmanabhan from 'The Hindu'. This part allows us to get a glimpse at Umberto's literary method.

**Theme:** This chapter offers two differentiating thoughts about interviews, their capacities, benefits and strategies. Interviews act as mechanism of discussion and distinctive impression of person concerned is formed through interviews. Thus, an experienced interviewer can bring

out the facts from fiction and proficiency in conducting interviews can be characterised as an aesthetic art form.

**Message:** The lesson conveys the message that the prodigious individuals have some unique traits with which they acquire accomplishments which are beyond expectations of the common people.

**Title:** The title of the chapter is apt as it focuses on the aim and objective of the interview. Interviews present each individual as unique, nonetheless, conversations are very interesting and informative as seen from Umberto's interview.

## Summary

### Part-I

*—Christopher Silvester*

#### General Introduction about Interviews

Invented 130 years ago, interviews have gained a common place in journalism. Everyone reads interviews. It evokes different responses in different minds. Till date, a large number of celebrities have been interviewed and re-interviewed.

**Diverse Opinions about the Interviews:** If something exists in this world, then there are bound to be opinions about it.

Good opinions that exist about interviews are that they are the source from which we can derive truth. It provides a good platform for communication. It gives a good idea about our contemporaries.

Bad opinions are held by those who are interviewed as they see themselves as victims. An interview, for them, acts as an interference and even seems to make them small and vulnerable in front of others.

Primitive cultures believed that by taking, photograph, one takes the very soul of the person who is clicked.

V.S. Naipaul, who even received a Nobel Prize in literature in 2001 said that people are wounded and lose a part of themselves.

Lewis Carroll said that he had a horror of the interviewer and so he never consented to be interviewed. It was his horror of being lionised (or controlled) which made him avoid all acquaintances and interviewers. He even narrated amusing incidences where he managed to avoid these people and run away.

Rudyard Kipling also hated being interviewed. He considered it immoral and a crime which deserved punishment. He claimed that only a coward person would become an interviewer and no respectable person would agree to be an interviewee. The irony was that later, Kipling had himself interviewed Mark Twain.

H.G. Wells calls interviewing an ordeal, but was a frequent interviewee himself and forty years later interviewed Joseph Stalin.



Saul Bellow described interviews as if someone is choking one's throat.

**True Nature of Interview:** Interviews have many drawbacks, but they are effective medium of communication. According to Denis Brian, the interview is an expressive medium which gives the interviewer a very important position. In fact, our vivid impressions of our contemporaries are through interviews.

### Part-II

*—Umberto Eco*

**Interview of Umberto Eco:** This is an excerpt from the interview between Mukund Padamanabhan (from The Hindu newspaper) and Umberto Eco, a professor at the University of Bologna in Italy who had already acquired a formidable reputation as a scholar for his ideas on semiotics (the study of signs), literary interpretation, and medieval aesthetics before he turned to writing fiction. The interview revolves around the success of his novel, *The Name of the Rose*, whose more than ten million copies were sold in the market. The interviewer begins by asking him how Umberto manages to do so many different things to which he replies by saying that he has philosophical interests. He has pursued them doing academic works or writing novels. He further justifies and mentions that his books about children talk about peace and nonviolence which in the end, reflect his interest in philosophy. Hence, he is doing the same thing and has done only one thing in reality.

**Interstices:** He believes there are empty spaces in one's life, just like there are empty spaces in atoms and the Universe. He calls them interstices and most of his productive work is done during that time.

**An Academic Scholar:** Umberto identifies himself as an academic scholar who attends academic conferences during the week and writes novels on Sundays. It doesn't bother him that he is identified by others as a novelist and not a scholar, because he knows that it is difficult to reach millions of people with scholarly work.

**The Name of the Rose:** Talking about his novel, *The Name of the Rose*, he mentions that it is not an easy-read. It has a detective aspect to it along with metaphysics, theology and medieval history. Also, he believes that had the novel been written ten years earlier or later, it would have not seen such a huge success. Thus, the reason for its success still remains a mystery. But this tremendous achievement also highlights one aspect, that is, the right timing is an important factor for any accomplishment.

### KEY-TERMS

primitive: very simple and not developed.

lionised: give a lot of public attention and approval

interstice: gap

ordeal: a very unpleasant and prolonged experience.

# CHAPTER-8

## GOING PLACES

### Introduction

Going Places is a short story by A. R. Barton which presents the perceptions, dreams and desires of an adolescent girl. The readers get a glimpse in the life of the protagonist, Sophie: her relationship with her friends and family, her socio-economic position and her dreams and fantasies.

Going Places is a story which reflects an adolescent's desire for going places. "Going Places" is an idiomatic phrase which refers to a promising young person's likelihood of becoming successful and famous (e.g. "She's going places", meaning she is going to be successful).

**Theme:** 'Going Places' deals with themes of adolescence, escapism, hero worship and fantasizing. This story beautifully portrays the subtle intermingling of various emotions that one encounters in the giddy phase of life that is teenage.

**Message:** The lesson conveys the message that it is good to dream, however, dreams should be realistic. Merely fantasizing and day dreaming will cause disillusionment unless one is hardworking and persevering.

**Title:** The title, 'Going Places', captures the essence of the story. Sophie, the protagonist of the story is always imagining of 'going places' – of being rich and famous and it is from this point of reference that we can understand her nature and the reason why she acts the way she does.

### Summary

Sophie and Jansie are classmates and friends. After a few months, they will be out of school. Sophie is a daydreamer. She tells Jansie that after school, she will have a boutique. Jansie tells her that she will need a lot of money to have a boutique, but Sophie is not discouraged. She says that she will be a manager and then, she will save money. She hopes to be a fashion designer or an actress too. Jansie becomes sad. She knows they have no other option but to work in a biscuit factory.

At home, Sophie declares that when she will earn some money she will have a boutique. Her father, who was back from the day's work, while eating a shepherds' pie retorted that he would thank her if she could buy a decent house for the family. Her younger brother, Derek, also scoffs at her impractical idea. He remarks that she thinks money grows on trees. Her mother who is bent over the sink, could only sigh. Sophie feels uncomfortable and leaves the room. She goes to her elder brother, Geoff, with whom she can comfortably share her secrets.

Danny Casey is a young football player. He is Irish and plays for the United. He is her hero. She thinks of him all the time. She tells Geoff that she had chance meeting with Danny Casey in the arcade. She asked Casey to give her an autograph, but neither of them had a pen and paper. Geoff tells their father about her meeting with Casey. He

calls them her wild stories. Sophie asserts that it is true. Her father tells her that if she talks like that she would be in trouble. He observes that Danny is a promising player, but he is too young. They should take care of him lest he should go astray.

Sophie likes her brother Geoff. He is an apprentice mechanic. He travels to work every day. She imagines that it is a fascinating world which Geoff visits. She has already begun to imagine riding behind Geoff into that world. She is confident the world will receive her with open arms.

She tells Geoff that Danny Casey has asked her to meet him again next week. Geoff can hardly believe her. He thinks that Sophie is too young and Danny must be having a lot of girls. However, Sophie says that Danny has told her that he has no girlfriend. Geoff thinks it is the most unlikely thing. Danny could not have told her all about this. Sophie makes Geoff promise that he will not tell their father about the date. One day Sophie comes across Jansie. Geoff has told Jansie's brother that Sophie has had a meeting with Danny Casey. Jansie is curious to know all about it. Sophie is alarmed. She suspects that Geoff has told Jansie's brother about the date too. However, soon she discovers that Jansie knows nothing about the date. Then, Sophie tells her about her meeting with Danny Casey and why she could not get his autograph. She tells Jansie to keep it a secret because she does not wish the neighbours to come to her house and ask about all it. She is scared of her father, she tells Jansie that if her father learns about it, he will murder her. Jansie promises to keep the secret. Sophie, her father, and brothers go to watch the United. There, Danny Casey scores the second goal. Sophie is proud of her hero. Her father is also happy and goes to the pub to celebrate.

Sophie decides to meet Danny Casey. After dark, she goes along the canal to a quiet and secluded place. It was an ideal place for the meeting. There is a wooden bench under a tree. She sits on it to wait for Danny to come. She imagines he is coming out of the shadows. She is excited, but he does not come. Time passes and she begins to lose hope. At last, she is disappointed. She feels he will not come. She thinks now she will not be able to tell Geoff that he was wrong. Geoff had doubted if Danny would come at all. Slowly and disheartened, she walks to the arcade. There she imagines meeting him once again. She asks for an autograph. Once again, they discover that they don't have a pen and paper. Then, Casey disappears and Sophie stands there as if enchanted by the meeting. Once again, she pictures him as she saw him at the United, scoring a goal and the audience cheering wildly.

### KEY-TERMS

**adolescent:** (of a young person) in the process of developing from a child into an adult.

**going places:** being successful

**fascination world:** the world which is very interesting, attractive, enchanting, or alluring.

**arcade:** gallery with an arch



# POETRY

## CHAPTER-1

### MY MOTHER AT SIXTY-SIX

#### Introduction

'My Mother at Sixty-Six' is a poem that confesses a daughter's painful feelings of fear of losing her mother. In this poem, the poetess Kamala Das beautifully highlights the complexities of human relationships. This poem is one of the best examples of human bonding. Firstly, the daughter, who is the poet, is surprised to realise that her mother is ageing. Secondly, she notices how the rest of the world appears young and energetic. This is in contrast to her mother, who continues to age. Thirdly, the poetess expresses her apprehension over losing her mother if the old woman dies. Finally, the poetess says how she hides her true feelings and smiles outwardly, in spite of being very worried about her ageing mother. She fears that she will not see her mother again, and so wishes to show her love for her mother.

**Theme:** The poem 'My Mother at Sixty-Six', is an intimate work presenting the poet's thoughts. It deals with the feelings of fear and emotions that daughters experience with their mothers. This poem brings out the ordinary but profound human nature through a personal reverie. Death is inevitable, but people are afraid of losing their loved ones. As its thematic concern, the poem brings out the inner thoughts of a daughter towards her mother.

'My Mother at Sixty-six' is based on the theme of advancing age and the fear of loss and separation associated with it. The poetess undergoes a plethora of emotions when she sees her mother ageing and feels the pangs of separation at the thought of losing her.

**Message:** Ageing is an inescapable phase of every human's life.

The message of the poem is the gradual but inevitable realisation that one's parents are getting old. Here, the poetess is sad about realising the same about her mother. The message is thus to spend more time with them. The last lines depict the irony of life. Life is full of false promises, fake smiles and temporary joy, whereas death and loss are ultimate and their fear remains in one's mind right from a young age. Thus, the poem 'My Mother at Sixty-Six', begins with grief over old age and ends with mourning over the whole life.

**Title:** 'My Mother at Sixty-Six' is an emotional poem that describes a daughter's concern over her mother's ageing. Through the lines of this poem, the poetess has expressed her fear of losing her old mother. This is a confessional poem that presents the common feelings daughters have for their mothers. In this regard, this poem is a representational work and the title is appropriate.

**Form, Style, and Literary Devices:** The poem, 'My Mother at Sixty-Six', is confessional. As such, it is a first-person monologue. The poetess expresses her inner thoughts and her reactions to those thoughts. The language is conversational. The arrangement of the

lines is free and fluid. The poetic touch appears when the poet describes her mother and her old age. She first compares her mother's appearance to that of a corpse. She then describes her mother as the winter moon. In both instances, the poet alludes to the imminent death of her mother. It is usually mothers who describe their children as moons, but here, an affectionate daughter describes her mother as a moon. The last lines of the poem repeat the word 'smile', indicating that people helplessly display such gestures to express their true feelings for their loved ones. The poetess uses a number of similes to describe the condition of her old mother, repetition to show how she managed to hide her feelings, and personification to show the plants in their blooming stage. We also find the idea of escapism. The poem is free verse without any rhyme Scheme.

**Analysis:** My 'Mother at Sixty-Six' is a poignant poem by Kamala Das that deals with the themes of ageing, a person's love for her mother, separation, uncertainty and death. A sensory and deeply sensitive poem, 'My Mother at Sixty-Six', is a first-person confessional poem that captures the reader's attention and provides a glimpse of the subtle intricacies of a mother-daughter relationship. The poem captures the speaker's train of thought, and the entire poem is written in a single sentence. The poem makes use of a natural, unaffected rhythm, striking imagery and a sense of movement to convey the insecurities and apprehensions of the poet-persona about her rapidly ageing mother and the inevitable separation that must follow.

#### Summary

This poem follows a single line of thought and switches between the physical and emotional realms with great fluidity, it is neither necessary nor desirable to differentiate the poem in separate segments.

The first part of the poem deals with the sensory and emotional experience of the poet-persona while travelling in the car, and the second part deals with her experience at the airport before separating from her mother:

Driving from my parent's home to Cochin last Friday morning, I saw my mother beside me,

*doze, open mouthed, her face*

*ashen like that*

*of a corpse and realised with pain*

*that she was as old as she looked but soon*

*put that thought away, and*

**Explanation:** This confessional poem is as intense in its feeling, as it is subtle in its approach. The poem engages with a plethora of mingled emotions ranging from love, pain, nostalgia, sadness and despair. Furthermore, action and emotion are beautifully intertwined in this poem.

The idea of movement is central to understanding the poem: the physical movement to the airport, the emotional journey of the poetess and the movement of her mother towards old age are all intermingled in this poem about love, longing and separation.

The poetess was driving from her parent's house to Cochin Airport the previous Friday. While inside the car, she happens to see her mother beside her, **dozing off**. The striking image of a woman, weakened by age, dozing off with her mouth open, leaves a very strong impression on the speaker, who feels that her mother's face resembles the pale face of a dead body (like that of a corpse). The thought of her mother rapidly advancing (quite like them in the car) towards death deeply disturbs her, and she attempts to put the thought away by looking outside the window.

*looked out at young*

*Trees sprinting, the merry children spilling out of their homes,*

**Explanation:** This transition from the stillness of the dozing mother to the frivolity and movement of youth through a single glance is simply remarkable. The literary device of contrast is used to bring out the distinctive features of the two different worlds separated by a window pane—one with the infirmity of old age and the other tinted with the frolic of youth. The literary device personification is used to describe the trees, 'sprinting'. They are compared to children 'young trees sprinting' while describing their apparent movement as seen from inside the car. The merry children, on the other hand, are said to be 'spilling' out of their homes, thus providing a fluid nature to their happy movement. The literary device used in this case describes the human subject (children) in terms of an inanimate object. Such a technique is known as chremamorphism and can be understood as being the opposite of personification. The movement of the trees and children is in sharp contrast to the dozing posture of her mother.

*but after the airport's*

*security check, standing a few yards away, I  
looked again at her, wan, pale  
as a late winter's moon and felt that old*



*familiar ache, my childhood's fear, but all I said was, see you soon, Amma,*

*all I did was smile and smile and smile.....*

**Explanation:** When the speaker looks at her mother, standing a few yards from her at the airport security check, the mother's face is described by the simile 'wan, pale as late winter's moon'. A brilliant image of the winter moon is used in this part of the poem. 'Winter' is used to evoke a sense of an ending (like the ageing mother), a certain frigid, inert state (like that of a corpse), and the inevitable darkness (death) that is to follow. Also, the moon has stereotypically received a feminine treatment, and the simile 'as a pale moon' is quite apt to describe the round, pale face of the aged mother. On seeing her mother, the poetess experiences 'that familiar old ache, my childhood fear'. Though she doesn't specifically state what it actually is, we can safely infer that it is the fear of losing her mother.

Despite being deeply thoughtful of her mother's present and future, the speaker can neither stop herself from going away from her mother, nor can she stop her mother from going away from her forever. All she can do is part with the hope of seeing her mother again. The parting is made all the more poignant by the fact that, though she hopes to see her mother, she fears that she might not.

This intermingling of emotions of love, hope, longing, nostalgia, fear and a sense of helplessness in the face of the inevitable seems to find its way into the repetition of the final words of the poem: all I did was smile and smile and smile...

#### KEY-TERMS

**nostalgia:** a wistful or excessively sentimental yearning for return to or of some past period or irrecoverable condition

**sensory:** connected with your physical senses

**dozing off:** to fall asleep especially for a short period of time.

**frigid:** not showing any emotion

#### REMEMBER...

- The narrative voice as a whole and not only the few lines highlighted in an extract.
- Analyse how the characters are presented.
- What is the main theme that the text portrays?
- What is the structure or shape of the text?



## CHAPTER-2

### KEEPING QUIET

#### Introduction

'Keeping Quiet' is a splendid poem by Pablo Neruda that dwells on a quality which seems to have been lost in the buzz of 21st century: the quality of silence. In an age which accepts rush in a celebratory gesture, 'Keeping Quiet' is a gentle reminder what life can be like in a brief moment of a silent pause. This message instantly resonates in the digital

age where "switching off" has become a much-needed life-hack. The theme of quietude and stillness is accompanied with the themes of peace, pacifism, fellowship, solidarity, brotherhood, justice and ecological conservation. To keep quiet is to stay still and understand that one is a thread, woven within the exquisite fabric of the cosmic order. It is to identify oneself with all and in doing so, escape the "sadness of never understanding ourselves". To keep quiet

is to escape the death with which we threaten ourselves and for once, truly and genuinely, live.

**Theme:** It is basically an anti-war poem. The poet is deeply concerned about violence, cruelty to animals and plight of manual workers. The poet offers a very simple solution to many of our social, political and religious problems. The solution is self-introspection.

**Message:** 'Keeping Quiet' leaves a message of universal brotherhood and peace. It urges people to stop aggression, including that towards the environment.

**Title:** The title of the poem is quite appropriate and logical. It suggests the necessity of quiet introspection. The people of the world are overactive and always on the move. Their activities have caused untold troubles and sufferings. Keeping quiet will do them a lot of good. The poem stresses the significance of mutual understanding and the necessity for introspection.

Form, Style and Literary Devices: 'Keeping Quiet' by Pablo Neruda is a reflective piece of poetry which has philosophised a solution to the problems caused in the world due to growing materialism, greed and power-lust. The poet's writing style in the poem is very soulful and it seems to come straight from the heart. The tone of the poem is calm all throughout. Since the poet is urging his readers to stay silent and still, he himself adopts a very tranquil serene tone, to set the mood of the poem.

#### FIGURES OF SPEECH:

**Language:** The usage of the term 'language' is an instance of metonymy, in which a symbol or sign is used for the thing signified. Language here stands in for culture/race.

**Arms:** 'Arms' is an instance of pun. In pun, duplicity of sense is created because of the unity of sound. Arm here stands for a body part as well as weaponry.

**Sudden strangeness:** Instance of alliteration. The same syllable is repeated at the beginning of successive words.

**His hurt hands:** This is an instance of alliteration.

Wars with fire, Wars with gas: This is an instance of Palilologia. In Palilologia, there is a repetition of the same words in a line or sentence – 'Wars with' occurs twice.

**The Earth can teach us:** This is an instance of personification. Earth is given the human attribute of teaching. Extended metaphor: An extended metaphor can be found in the lines – "Perhaps the earth can teach us/as when everything seems dead/and later proves to be alive". Here the stillness which Neruda advocates is being compared to the stillness of winter. Just like winter leads to rejuvenation, even the quietness recommended by the poet leads to re-growth.

**Symbolism:** Symbolism is abundant in 'Keeping Quiet'. Fisherman and whale stand for the oppressor and oppressed respectively. Salt gatherer is symbolic of humanity whereas 'clean clothes' symbolise peace.

Rhyme Scheme: This poem is written in blank verse.

## Summary

Written in a simple yet elegant language, 'Keeping Quiet' is a free verse poem. It begins with an appeal to keep quiet and stay still at the count of twelve and urges for a complete cessation of words and action:

*'Now we will count to twelve  
and we will all keep still'*

**Explanation:** At the heart of this poem is inclusivity. The poem seeks to rise above racial and linguistic differences

This attempt towards inclusion is seen in the opening lines of the poem. The speaker employs the collective "we" to begin the exercise of keeping quiet. The count till twelve may be interpreted as signifying the twelve-hour mark of the clock from which the two hands circle in a monotonous manner, very much like the daily activities of life.

*'For once on the face of the Earth  
let's not speak any language,  
let's stop for one second,  
and not move our arms so much.'*

**Explanation:** Noteworthy is the fact that Keeping Quiet is as much about staying silent as it is about staying still which is why the poem advocates for a ceasing of words ("let's not speak in any language) and actions ("let's not move around so much"). Language brings differences. The great number of languages on the "face of the Earth" seem to highlight the ways in which we are different from others. The use of the words "any language" suggests that the speaker recognises the limits of language and envisions a state beyond the domain of language itself – the realm of silence. Keeping Quiet then is also about letting our differences dissipate in the silence of our similarities.

The moving of arms not only harks back to the ceaseless movement of the hands of the clock but also to the gestures of restlessness and aggression which the modern world is obsessed with.

*'It would be an exotic moment  
without rush, without engines,  
we would all be together  
in a sudden strangeness'*

**Explanation:** This hectic pace of a busy life is what makes silence an 'exotic moment'. Like the clock, our lives have become utterly mechanical, dominated by "rush" and "engines". A moment of silence will not only be delightful and rare (exotic moment) but also a 'strange' one. This is because we have internalised rush to such an extent that silence, though enjoyable has become unfamiliar to us because silence has become rare in the modern world. Keeping Quiet is one powerful way of escaping the mechanistic motion of the modern life.

*'Fishermen in the cold sea  
would not harm whales  
and the man gathering salt  
would look at his hurt hands.'*

**Explanation:** In line with his political ideology, Neruda was intensely aware of the exploitative economic structures of the capitalist economy which has exploited man and animals alike.

Man's greed not only leads to the exploitation of other creatures but of fellow human beings who are oppressed by the unjust economic system. Neruda strongly sympathised with the working class and very well understood the strong class divisions that had fractured the Chilean society. The sufferings of both the workers in the salt mines and the sea creature in the ocean would end for a moment if only everybody kept quiet. The theme of environmental



conservation and Social Justice makes its presence strongly felt in this stanza.

*Those who prepare green wars,  
wars with gas, wars with fire,  
victory with no survivors  
would put on clean clothes  
and walk about with their brothers  
in the shade, doing nothing.'*

**Explanation:** These lines highlight the devastating consequences of war. It seems that all the troubles in the world, from the plight of the whales to the horrors of war result from someone's inability to keep quiet. Somebody, in some corner of the world takes an unnecessary action which jeopardises the fate of everybody else. By writing about those who "prepare wars", the speaker hints at the manufactured nature of war which is intended to satisfy specific interests of interested parties and devastate the lives of others. The damage done by the conventional, chemical and biological weapons (green wars, wars with gases, with fire) can be stopped only if and when governments and nations teach themselves to keep quiet.

"The war began for me when my friends started disappearing".

If only we could keep quiet, people waging such wars would put on clean clothes, free of the bloodstains and guilt and would be able to walk hand in hand with the 'brothers' in the shade, in silence and in peace.

*'What I want should not be confused  
with total inactivity.'*

*Life is what it is about;  
I want no truck with death.*

**Explanation:** The poet makes it clear that what he's advocating shouldn't be confused with total inactivity for total inactivity means death and he has nothing to do with death. In his own words: I want no truck with death.

*If we were not so single minded  
about keeping our lives moving,  
and for once could do nothing,  
perhaps a huge silence  
might interrupt this sadness.  
of never understanding ourselves  
and of threatening ourselves with death.'*

**Explanation:** These are perhaps among the most insightful of lines in the poem where a stark reality of the modern life is highlighted: of being intensely caught up in the web of rush and activity to the extent of not understanding ourselves. It is the tragedy of the modern world where people are too busy to live. If everybody kept quiet for a single moment, a huge silence may interrupt the sadness of being too busy to understand ourselves. Our inability to keep quiet results in our failure to understand ourselves and others. The monotonous rush of life makes individuals threaten oneself with death and their failure to keep quiet makes nations threaten each other with wars. Thus, the silence which results from keeping quiet isn't only an exotic one. It is also an introspective one. It is a soothing silence that can heal the self-inflicted wounds of humanity.

The poem ends on a positive note by saying that perhaps we can learn the importance of keeping quiet from nature:

*Perhaps the Earth can teach us  
as when everything seems dead  
and later proves to be alive.  
Now I'll count up to twelve  
And you keep quiet and I will go.'*

**Explanation:** These lines bring to light a very important fact: that mere movement and rush should not be confused with life. Perhaps this is the mistake we have been committing all our lives. We have confused movement with life. Perhaps this is why we need to keep quiet: to know the difference between mindless movement and meaningful living. Perhaps this realisation may help us appreciate life and perhaps this is the reason why the poet helps us remain with this realisation before quietly exiting the scene, letting us fully understand and appreciate what it means to keep quiet.

#### KEY-TERMS

**Exotic moment:** the moment of stillness, quietness and strangeness.

**Introspection:** self-analysis

**Exploitative:** using someone or something unfairly.

**Jeopardise:** to do something that may damage something or put it at risk.



## CHAPTER-3

### A THING OF BEAUTY

#### Introduction

The poem, 'A Thing of Beauty', portrays that things are figuratively an endless source of nectar that pours down to us from heaven bringing eternal joy for the soul's grandeur. They are like a medicine of life, a never diminishing source of pleasure and delight, a boundless source of joy that seems to be a precious gift from Heaven. A beautiful thing will give joy throughout one's lifetime. One can return to the beautiful thing and never finish finding it as a source of joy. Even after one dies, the thing of beauty will continue

to exist and will give joy to people of the next age group. When they in turn pass, it will give joy to the peer group after theirs, and so on. Thus a beautiful thing may in that sense be a joy forever.

**Theme:** This poem, in many ways, signifies a romantic finale of Keats's firm belief in the non-destruction of beauty, and of its claim to legitimacy with reference to its permanence, and its ability to call up, or contextualise the truth. This forms the main theme of the poem. The poet's artistic view of beauty as an obstinate source of pleasure and joy comes in the face of a knowledge of the sharp problems

of life, to which the essential thing of beauty offer their own mode of struggle. Unlike the common place objects of everyday certainty, the objects of beauty are resistant to the perishability of time, and indeed of mortality. This interlaces the melancholic note characteristic to many of the poet's odes with a classical, fleeting form of beauty. Their power rises with time. They are the signifiers of a continuity that is reflected as historical truth, of a story that exceeds the limitations of specific insight, but includes and decides the collective flow. The sun, the moon, the flora and the fauna in nature are protectors of an infinity that can never be equated with the temporariness and incontinency of human schemes.

**Message:** The poem "A Thing of Beauty" from John Keats's poem 'Endymion', is usually read as a straightforward assertion which gives the message that every beautiful thing gives unending pleasure. This idea can be interpreted in several diverse senses. For the reason that human beings share the same basic natures and respond to the same motivations in the same basic ways, a thing of beauty even if lost for a time, perhaps even for centuries, will still have the ability to give joy to future generations if it is experienced again later.

**Title:** The poet describes that anything which is beautiful imparts joy. Happiness is a natural emotion which evokes in a person's mind as and when he comes across anything beautiful. Thus, the title is quite appropriate.

**Form, Style, and Literary Devices:** The poem "A Thing of Beauty" received contemptuous criticism after its release and Keats himself noted its rambling and unpleasant style. On the other hand, he did not regret writing it, as he equated the process to diving into the ocean to become more accustomed with his surroundings. Keats was never afraid of failure; for he believed that he would sooner fail than not be among the greatest.

Not all critics detested the work. Some of the poets said that the song of Endymion beats throughout with a noble poet's sense of all that his art means for him. What automated defects there are in it may even serve to accelerate our sense of the youth and brightness of this voice of aspiration.

#### FIGURES OF SPEECH:

**Rhyme Scheme:** aabbc

**Alliteration:** Use of consonant sound at the start of two words which are close in series. For example, 's' in sleep sweet, 'b' in band bind, 'n' in noble nature, 'c' in cooling covert, 'h' in have heard.

**Metaphor:** • bower quiet (calmness of the bower is compared to the calming effect of a beautiful thing)

- wreathing a flowery band (the beautiful things of our life bind us to the earth)
- immortal drinks (beautiful objects of nature are forever like a never ending portion of a drink)

**Anaphora:** • Use of same phrase in two consecutive lines (of noble natures- Of all the unhealthy).

**Imagery:** • creating a sensory effect of beautiful things lined up in a string (A flowery band to bind us)

- Trees giving shade (sprouting shady boon)
- growing process of daffodils (daffodils with the green world they live in)

- clean river streams (Clear rills)
- Bushes full of musk roses (sprinkling of fair musk rose blooms)
- books describing valour of fighters (grandeur -mighty dead)
- God providing us with best things (pouring from the heaven's brink) **Inversion:** normal order of words is reversed (Are we wreathing a flowery band) **Antithesis:** opposite words placed together (old and young)

#### Paraphrase

1. *A thing of beauty is a joy forever  
Its loveliness increases, it will never  
Pass into nothingness; but will keep  
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep  
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and  
quiet breathing.*

Scan to know  
more about  
this topic.



A Thing of  
Beauty

The poet says that beauty stays forever. It never fades away. Rather, it increases with the passing time. The perception of the poet regarding beauty is that it never goes off with the passing time, rather it beautifies more and more. For the poet, beauty is like a beautiful shady tree under whose shade all the creatures can sleep peacefully and enjoy good health.

2. *'Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing.*

*A flowery band to bind us to the earth,  
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth  
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,  
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways  
Made for our searching : yes, in spite of all,  
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall  
From our dark spirits.*

The author says that individuals have an attachment to the Earthly things. This attachment is such that it has the resemblance of a flowery wreath. Furthermore, there are traps that keep people connected to materialistic things. This connection with materialistic things distracts humans from eternal happiness. This is because the focus of such materialistic people will be on acquiring more and more resources rather than on attaining eternal happiness. It is the beauty which fills us with the spirit to live. It is the beauty which builds the desire in us to live though there are sad moments and cruel people around us. The world has a lot of negativity, hatred, and greed. According to the poet, the cause of gloom and sadness is this negativity. So here the poet wants to say that without beauty the earth will be full of cruel people, sad and gloomy moments. It is the beauty which is created by god which helps us to remove the sadness from our hearts.

Moreover, one can fade away these negative vibes away with the help of beautiful things that surround us. This is because these beautiful things bring nothing but positivity.

3. *Such the Sun, the Moon, Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon.*

*For simple sheep; and such are daffodils  
with the green world they live in; and clear rills.  
That for themselves a cooling covert make  
'Gainst the hot season; the mid forest brake.*

*Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk—rose blooms.  
And such too is the grandeur of the dooms*

The poet informs us about some beautiful things that are all around us. Beauty is certainly in the eyes of the one who beholds. This means one can see the beauty in anything. Furthermore, the poet talks about the numerous creations of God which we should admire. One such creation is the Sun which provides energy. Moreover, the poet also talks about the beauty of the moon and the natural beauty of the trees.

There are various animals around that make our world lively. The pretty flowers like daffodils enhance the liveliness and greenery of the world. Moreover, the flowing streams of water provide refreshment and cooling effect to us in the hot summer season. The forests have plenty of pretty musks rose flowers. Such flowers are a beautiful sight and eyes feel the delight due to them. All such things certainly are things of beauty.

4. *We have imagined for the mighty dead;  
All lovely tales that we have heard or read;  
An endless fountain of immortal drink,  
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.*

The poet further explains that one must not forget the beautiful and inspiring stories of the brave soldiers. These mighty warriors risked and sacrificed their lives in order to protect others.

These beautiful things have a resemblance to the fountain of immortality bestowed upon us by God as a gift and a blessing. They are like nectar given by God to us. Such beautiful things are an inspiration for all of us to continue living. They make life worth living. Also, they help us in maintaining our faith in goodness. Life without these beautiful things would certainly become very hard.

### KEY-TERMS

**Resemblance:** the state or fact of resembling; similarity.

**materialistic:** the acquisition of wealth and material possessions, rather than with spiritual, intellectual, or cultural values.

**gloomy:** partially or totally dark

**refreshment:** the state of being refreshed

**nectar:** the sweet liquid that bees collect from flowers to make honey



## CHAPTER-4

### A ROADSIDE STAND

#### Introduction

'A Roadside Stand' deals with the lives of poor, deprived people. Furthermore, the poet contrasts the struggling lives of the countryside people with the insensitive life of the city dwellers. The city dwellers don't even bother to ponder on the harsh condition of the roadside stand. The city dwellers don't think about the struggles these roadside people have to go through in order to sell their goods. These poor people have nothing to do except wait for the passing cars to stop and purchase their products. If at all a car stops by, it is to know about directions or to complain about something. The poet deeply sympathises with these impoverished people and feels compassionate for them. This sympathy is evident in the portrayal of the roadside sheds in a poignant manner.

So, 'A Roadside Stand' shows us the great contrast between the comfortable life of city dwellers and the harshness faced by the impoverished rural people.

**Theme:** The poem, through the owner of a roadside stand reflects upon the life of people that are deprived and mindlessly ignored by the city-bred people. The owner wants to be accepted by the city people even if they don't buy anything from his stand.

Further, the poet also points out that growth and development are unequal in cities and villages which is why people in the villages tend to remain dissatisfied and unhappy as well.

**Message:** The poem, 'A Roadside Stand', is the artist's request for thought of the helplessly low individuals who work tirelessly, yet their lives have indicated no advancement. He communicates his torment at their pity

and distress and looks for help and alleviation for them.

**Title:** In his poem, 'A Roadside Stand' the poet deals with the lives of poor deprived people of the villages with a clarity that is perceptive and at the same time portrays his deepest sympathies and his feelings of humanity. The poem also brings into focus the unfortunate fact that progress and development is unequal between the cities and the villages, leading to feelings of distress and unhappiness among the dwellers of the later.

#### Form, Style, and Literary Devices:

**Form** (structure or pattern) of the poem – The poem has 56 lines divided in 6 Stanzas.

**Tone** (the poet's or reader's attitude towards the subject) of the poem – The poem has a sympathetic tone.

#### FIGURES OF SPEECH:

**Rhyme Scheme:** The rhyme scheme of the poem is abab.

**Transferred Epithet:** 'polished traffic' referring to the city dwellers who pass by the countryside and sometimes they take out a moment to scrutinize the surroundings around them.

'Selfish cars' is yet another use of a transferred epithet. This refers to the car owners who do stop at the roadside stand but to ask about the police or the gas stations.

**Personification:** "the sadness that lurks behind the open window there..." where sadness is an example of personification. Sadness dwells in the windows of the farmers because they wait for cars to stop and make a purchase.

**Alliteration and Oxymoron:** 'Greedy good doers' and 'beneficent beasts of prey' are examples of both alliteration and oxymoron.

## Paraphrase

1. *The little old house was out with a little new shed*

*In front at the edge of the road where the traffic sped,*

*A roadside stand that too pathetically pled,  
It would not be fair to say for a dole of bread,*

*But for some of the money, the cash, whose flow supports  
The flower of cities from sinking and withering faint.*

The occupants of the little old house have extended the shed in front, around the edge of the road where traffic passes by. Though it would be unfair to state that the shack-owners wanted a charity of bread, but nevertheless they seemed to implore the passers-by to stop and buy something from the shack. These deprived people long for the feel of the currency, the circulation of which flourishes the city folks.

2. *The polished traffic passed with a mind ahead,*

*Or if ever aside a moment, then out of sorts*

*At having the landscape marred with the artless paint  
Of signs that with N turned wrong and S turned wrong  
Offered for sale wild berries in wooden quarts,  
Or crook-necked golden squash with silver warts,  
Or beauty rest in a beautiful mountain scene,  
You have the money, but if you want to be mean,  
Why keep your money (this crossly) and go along.*

But unfortunately, the refined traffic whizzed past, unmindful of the shack. Or, if by chance, any one stopped, it would be with a feeling of reproach at this blot on the picturesque landscape. They are very perturbed to see the unimpressive and toppled up signboards. The shack offered for sale wild berries in a wooden quart (quarter of a gallon). The poor quality local produce is highlighted with the usage of words like "crook-necked", "squash with silver warts".

The place also offered a blissful stay in the lap of nature for the ones who had money. Angry at the callous attitude of the so-called 'polished traffic', the poet commands them to move ahead oblivious of the road-side stand.

3. *The hurt to the scenery wouldn't be my complaint*

*So much as the trusting sorrow of what is unsaid:  
Here far from the city we make our roadside stand  
And ask for some city money to feel in hand  
To try if it will not make our being expand,  
And give us the life of the moving-pictures' promise  
That the party in power is said to be keeping from us.*

The poet's concern is not about the blemish on the landscape but regarding the unvented sorrow of the shed-owners. Expressing the view point of these people, the poet converts their ardent desire to handle some city money, which may perhaps alleviate their sufferings as sometimes promised in movies. The political party in power actually deprives them of a prosperous life.

4. *It is in the news that all these pitiful kin*

*Are to be bought out and mercifully gathered in  
To live in villages, next to the theatre and the store, Where  
they won't have to think for themselves anymore, While*



*greedy good-doers, beneficent beasts of prey, Swarm over  
their lives enforcing benefits*

*That are calculated to soothe them out of their wits,  
And by teaching them how to sleep they sleep all day,  
Destroy their sleeping at night the ancient way.*

The poet quotes the news which highlights the evacuation and relocation of the poor villagers to the vicinity of the theatres and the shops. Tall promises have been made to take good care of them. Outraged at the negligent attitude of the civic authorities, government and even social service agencies, the poet addresses them as "greedy good-doers" apparently benefactors but actually "beasts of prey" who exploit the innocent village folk by giving them a short term sense of security, the villagers are not being helped but harmed.

They pay a heavy price by losing their land. These developers, civic authorities, with a calculative strategy "soothe" (silence) and befool the unalloyed heart and minds of these villagers. By ensuring them a better life and hence good sleep, they actually sleep peacefully and destroy their slumber with anxiety. In the ancient way, people used to work during day and sleep in nights which has been reversed here where they are not able to sleep at night because they haven't worked in the day.

5. *Sometimes I feel myself I can hardly bear*

*The thought of so much childish longing in vain,  
The sadness that lurks near the open window there,  
That waits all day in almost open prayer  
For the squeal of brakes, the sound of a stopping car,  
Of all the thousand selfish cars that pass,  
Just one to inquire what a farmer's prices are.  
And one did stop, but only to plow up grass  
In using the yard to back and turn around;  
And another to ask the way to where it was bound;  
And another to ask could they sell it a gallon of gas  
They couldn't (this crossly); they had none, didn't it see?*

The poet is distressed to note the interminable wait on the part of the shed owners for their prospective buyers, he calls it almost a "childish longing in vain". The shop window is blanketed with an ambience of sadness that surrounds expectancy. It seems these people yearn for the sound of the car brakes near the shack.

One of the "selfish cars" that pass by the shed has perhaps halted to enquire the "farmer's price" while the other just wanted to use the backyard to turn. It's indeed a satire that one of the occupants of the car stops at the shed to get a gallon of gas. It highlights a sense of alienation that exists between the rural and urban life. Unaware of the villager's plight and engrossed with the pleasure of the material world, these people are unable to gauge the glaring difference in city and rural life.

6. *No, in country money, the country scale of gain,*

*The requisite lift of spirit has never been found,  
Or so the voice of the country seems to complain,  
I can't help owning the great relief it would be  
To put these people at one stroke out of their pain.  
And then next day as I come back into the same,  
I wonder how I should like you to come to me  
And offer to put me gently out of my pain.*

The poet regrets that the yardstick of gain vested in money, isn't found in the country-side at all. Money he feels elevates spirits and the lack of it dampens the villagers' perspective towards life. They tend to express their grievance about a life bereft of money. At this point of time, the poet is overwhelmed with emotions and contemplates their pain at one go by changing their lives. But a later logical thought and a poised state of mind tells him the futility of this rash act. It might compel him to seek purgation of pain from others for his thoughtless decision.

### KEY-TERMS

- greedy good-doers:** The selfish rich people who pretend to be worried about the poor
- beasts of prey:** an animal, especially a mammal, that kills and eats other animals.
- soothe:** to make somebody calmer or less upset; to comfort somebody
- ambience:** the character and atmosphere of a place
- overwhelm:** to cause somebody to feel such a strong emotion that he/she does not know how to react



## CHAPTER-5

### AUNT JENNIFER'S TIGERS

#### Introduction

'Aunt Jennifer's Tigers' is a 1951 poem by American poet Adrienne Rich. It appeared in her first published book of poems, 'A Change of World'. Told from the perspective of an anonymous speaker, the poem describes a woman, Aunt Jennifer, who crafts vibrant tapestry panels (depicting tigers) to escape—mentally, at least—her unhappy marriage. Written at a time when divorce was unacceptable. The poem criticises the traditional institution of marriage, suggesting that it oppresses women.

Aunt Jennifer's fingers swiftly and delicately work the yarn, yet she finds it physically difficult to pull even a small needle made of ivory through the canvas. Her husband's wedding band feels huge and weighs heavily on her hand.

**Theme:** 'Aunt Jennifer's Tigers' by Adrienne Rich is a multi-layered poem that uses the images of sewn tigers to talk about the institution of marriage. The poet also explored the themes like Female Role in Home, Female Role in Marriage, Animals as Symbols, Women and Nature, Patriarchal Power, Individual Freedoms, Political Issues, Art as escapism, etc.

**Message:** This poem is a vigorous protest against male chauvinism and patriarchy, which want to marginalise woman in every front.

**Title:** The title 'Aunt Jennifer's Tigers' is appropriate as it suggests that the poem is about Aunt Jennifer's knitted tigers. With their chivalrous, ferocious, bright and carefree attitude, she creates an alternate world for herself. The tigers are the only means of free expression in her life, which is otherwise burdened by the fear and struggles of the married life. This poem belongs to the feminist literary. **Form, Style, and Literary Devices:** Through the short lines of the poem, the speaker embodies the struggle this woman is going through and juxtaposes it against the tigers that she's creating. Their power is contrasted against her own lack of power.

In three verses, the reader is left in no doubt that Aunt Jennifer has suffered over the years and is looking for a positive way to express her artistic talents before it's too late.

The tiger she creates will outlast her and become a symbol of freedom and independence.

**Structure:** The poem's structure hints at the parallel existence of freedom and fear. The first stanza describes artistic freedom, but the second stanza narrates patriarchal power. The structural similarity between the two stanzas rather highlights the binary opposition between rebellion and repression. In the final stanza, repression and rebellion are seen together. It indicates that women can revolt if only they throw away the conventions represented by the wedding ring.

**Tone:** The poem's voice is distant, which is created from the third-person point of view. The third person narrator, the third-person view point and the older generation have made Aunt Jennifer more authentic. Moreover, in the case of tigers, we get references to strong verbs and active voices. On the contrary, in Jennifer's case, we get passive voices suggesting the passivity of her life.

#### FIGURES OF SPEECH:

**Rhyme Scheme:** 'Aunt Jennifer's Tigers' is a three-stanza poem that is separated into stanzas of four lines, known as quatrains. These quatrains follow a simple rhyme Scheme of aabb, with the couplets changing end sounds from stanza.

**Imagery:** It is quite important in this poem. It can be seen through the description of the tigers, their landscape, and Aunt Jennifer's hands.

The creator of the tigers, Jennifer, lives a life of fear, depression and submission. But her tigers are fiercely uncompromising. Here, the animal imagery suggests violence and energy, which women aspire to acquire but painfully lack.

**Anaphora:** It is a simple and useful technique. There is a good example in the first stanza with the repetition of 'They' at the start of lines three and four.

**Alliteration:** It helps to create a feeling of rhythm and rhyme, even if one does not exist. For example, 'finger fluttering' in stanza two and 'prancing, proud' in stanza three.

**Symbolism:** Heavy wedding band: symbolises oppression in an unhappy marriage; Tigers: untamed free spirit.

The physical intimacy of a wedding band, Aunt Jennifer's Tigers, indicates the presence of patriarchal politics.

**Hyperbole:** The weight of the husband's wedding ring.

**Paradox:** Here a trembling and 'mastered' woman creates free and confident creatures in her artistic endeavours. 'Fluttering' fingers produce something that has 'certainty'.

**Contrast:** This poem identifies the problems facing women in the society. The male-dominated society subordinates women. So they have nothing to do but continue the roles imposed on them by the male counterparts. Aunt Jennifer is the representative of these ill-fated women. Marriage as an institution does not support them. It rather ensures their eternal bondage. That's why the wedding ring is inseparable in Jennifer's life. The final stanza points at the contrast between the fearless tigers and the lifeless aunt. In fact, through this contrast, Rich is stressing at the basic idea of feminism. According to feminism, women are deprived of equal status because of the social structures and repressions. The tigers are beyond these norms, but Jennifer is confined within it.

## Paragraph

### 1. Aunt Jennifer's tigers prance across a screen,

Bright topaz denizens of a world of green.

They do not fear the men beneath the tree;

They pace in sleek chivalric certainty.

In the first stanza of 'Aunt Jennifer's Tigers,' the speaker begins by describing the movement of the tigers across the fabric canvas. They are prancing 'across a screen' in a 'world of green'. The perfect rhymes give this poem a sing-song-like sound that is juxtaposed against the darker subject matter. It creates a haunting atmosphere that allows for easy contemplation of the problems of marriage. The speaker describes very clearly how the tigers do not 'fear the men beneath the tree'. They move without fear or trepidation. It should be noted that this is a state that the artist, Aunt Jennifer, does not know. She is not without fear, as they are. The animals are personified. Rich uses words like 'chivalric' (an older term that connects to a certain, respectful yet patronising treatment of women) to describe them. They are masculine, without worry, and 'certain' in their actions. This makes it seem even less likely that Jennifer will find this same strength.

### 2. Aunt Jennifer's fingers fluttering through her wool

Find even the ivory needle hard to pull.

The massive weight of Uncle's wedding band

Sits heavily upon Aunt Jennifer's hand.

The speaker describes in the next stanza how quickly Jennifer's fingers move. They 'flutter' through the movements but are without real strength. The word 'flutter' evokes the image of birds' wings and gentle movements. Her hands find the 'needle hard to pull'. There is something weighing them down, a 'wedding band'. The ring that ties her to her husband keeps her from moving beyond who she is at that moment. It 'sits heavily' on her hand, her mind, and her soul.

### 3. When Aunt is dead, her terrified hands will lie.

Still ringed with ordeals she was mastered by

The tigers in the panel that she made

Will go prancing proud and unafraid.

The third stanza begins with a striking move into the future. The speaker looks towards the time when Aunt Jennifer is

going to die. These lines are enjambed, encouraging the reader to move smoothly and quickly through the stanza. She will stop eventually, as will the movement of her hands. But the ring will still be there. Even in death, she will in some ways be tied to her 'ordeals'. As she struggles, suffers and dies, the tigers will continue to prance proudly on her page. They, unlike her, are 'unafraid'.

**Analysis:** The speaker describes the tigers which her aunt produced by using coloured threads on heavy cloth. They are set in motion. They are moving quickly by raising the front legs and jumping forwards on the back legs. In the green jungle they look bright yellow and as valuable as topazes which reveals her dream of a happier life in her needle work.

There are men sitting under the tree, but the tigers do not care for them. They move on to their goal boldly and smoothly. Jennifer finds it difficult to make pictures by using the ivory needle. She is tired of doing the household chores after she got married. She can't get herself involved in her artistic work. She has to do it in her leisure time. Even then she has to be sure whether her husband is watching her or not. So her hands are terrified. She will not be free from fear until she dies. She will be dominated by her husband. She will die, but her art will express her desire to move proudly and fearlessly like the tigers she has made.

Aunt Jennifer's hands are 'terrified' because of the massive weight of household duties. They are heavily pressed. They have undergone severe trials. She is dominated by her husband continuously. 'Fingers fluttering', 'ordeals', 'mastered', 'hard to pull' indicate her fear. By mentioning that it is 'Uncle's wedding band', the poet suggests that Uncle owns Jennifer too and that, as a female, she is the property of her husband. The word 'massive' and 'heavily' suggest Aunt Jennifer lives a demanding sort of life in which she has to attend to her husband's needs and fulfil his commands. As a result, she is somewhat worn out in her old age. Aunt Jennifer is 'ringed', trapped in her marriage and controlled like an animal. Her husband is her master. Her wish to be like the tiger, 'proud and unafraid' also shows her fear in real life. Tigers are fierce, courageous and independent animals. They lead their life the way they want to. But Aunt Jennifer is just opposite to tigers. She is quiet, coward and totally dependent on her husband. She leads her life the way her husband likes her. So tigers are an appropriate contrast to her.

Aunt Jennifer has an artistic talent. If she used it properly, she will surely become a great artist. But she is unable to use her ability because of cowardice. She can't go against the established pattern of life. She is pressed by 'the massive weight' of household work. Instead of pleasing herself, she tries to please her dominating husband. She lives a quiet and subdued life. But the tigers she imagined are just opposite her. They are proud, active, fearless, determined and chivalric. They move towards their goals with single-mindedness.

The tigers in the poem represent Jennifer's innermost desire. She wants to be strong like the tigers that do not fear the men. Like the beautiful animals in the jungle, she wants to create precious pieces of art. Her life has been uncertain, helpless. Her husband is strong and fearless, but he is not chivalrous. So she finds courage, justice and honour in the smooth movement of the tigers. Thus, the tiger stands for her unfulfilled wishes. She can't revolt against him on

Scan this



Aunt Jennifer's  
Tigers

her own. In order to gain freedom, she must be like her tigers, that prance being proud and unafraid. Like them, she wished she did not fear the men. The word 'chivalric' suggests her inner wish, that is, that her husband should show bravery, honour, generosity and good manners to her like the knights in the Middle Ages did. She would like to go forward towards her goal like the determined tigers.

### KEY-TERMS

prancing: walking in a very energetic manner  
revolt: to make somebody feel disgusted or ill  
chivalry: courage, respect for women  
ordeals: torturous treatment



## SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER-1 THE THIRD LEVEL

### Introduction

'The Third Level' by Jack Finney is about the harsh realities of war. War has irreversible consequences, thus leaving people in a state of insecurity. It is also about modern day problems and how common man tends to escape reality by various means. In this story, a 31-year-old man named Charley hallucinates and reaches the third level of the Grand Central Station, which only has two levels.

**Theme:** The narrative oscillates twice between the past and the present; therefore, the prime theme of the story is time travel. However, escapism is another significant theme of the story.

**Title:** The chapter Third Level deals with the themes of insecurity, fear, and war. The narrator, Charley also seems to be stressed. His longing for some idyllic and peaceful place like Galesburg makes him stray to a corridor at Grand Central Station that takes him into the past, the year 1894. The people, their attire, ambience, the platform, everything on the platform, locomotive, currency being used, the newspapers, magazines, etc., were old style. Only Charley is an exception. This hallucination of Charley comes to an abrupt end when he has to flee from there in a hurry to save himself from being caught by the cops. Later on, when he shares this experience with his psychiatrist friend, Sam, he ascribes this phenomenon to the stress Charley was facing and his hobby of philately, through which he tried to escape into an ideal world. Sam, his psychiatrist friend, also strayed to the third level. Charley finds a first-day cover in the collection of his grandfather's stamps. Sam had somehow found the third level. He had gone there and started a new business of hay, feed, and grain. Since the chapter deals with the third level at the Grand Central Station, New York, the title 'Third Level' is perfect for the story.

**Message:** The story of the third level clearly explores the science fiction genre of 'time travel'; Jack Finney, the recipient of the World Fantasy Award interweaves fantasy with reality in the most futuristic projection of time travel.

### Summary

Charley was a 31-year-old man married to Louisa. Several times, he had lost himself in the Grand Central Station. He

always found himself bumping into new doorways and new corridors. Every time, he had a new experience. He had even begun to believe that the Grand Central was like a huge tree ever pushing new tunnels and new corridors like the roots under the ground. Once, he got into a mile long tunnel and came out in the lobby of a hotel. At another time, he came up into the building of an office.

There were certainly only two levels at the Grand Central. However, Charley asserted that there were three levels. He talked about it with his friends. One of them was a psychiatrist. The psychiatrist said that it was nothing but day dreaming. He explained that it was only an escape from his present life. The modern world is full of fear, tension, and worries. The third level provided him with an exit from it. His other friends agreed with the psychiatrist. They said that his stamp collection was also a temporary escape. Charley did not agree with them. He said that his grandfather started the stamp collection, and in his grandfather's days, life was peaceful. He did not need an escape. Besides, President Roosevelt also collected stamps.

One day, Charley got late from his office. He wanted to reach home soon, so he went to the Grand Central to catch a train. He walked down to the first level and then walked down another flight of stairs. He thought he had reached the second level again, but he got lost. He walked down a corridor. He thought it was wrong, but he walked downward. He walked down a short flight of stairs. He thought that he had reached the second level again, but he had reached the third level.

The third level was entirely different and old-fashioned. There were fewer ticket windows. The information booth was made of wood. The lights were open flame gas lights. There were brass spittoons on the floor. Men had beards and sideburns. Women wore old-fashioned dresses and high-button shoes. The railway engine was small with a funnel shaped stack. Everything looked a century old. He walked to the newsboy. There he glanced at "The World". The lead story was about President Cleveland. Later, Charley found out from the library files that it was printed on June 11, 1894. Charley wanted to go to Galesburg. He had been there in his childhood days. It was a wonderful town has tremendous trees and frame houses.



In 1894, it was a heaven of peace and tranquility. peace and tranquility. People lived a carefree life. Therefore, he asked for two tickets to Galesburg. He paid the fare in modern notes which were different from those in 1894. The clerk thought the notes 'were fake' and Charley was trying to cheat him. He threatened to get him arrested.

Charley immediately turned around and fled as fast as he could.

Next day, Charley bought old-style notes from a coin dealer. He got only two hundred old dollars for three hundred new dollars. However, he could never again find the corridor that led to the third level.

Charley's wife was worried when she heard that he had bought old-style notes. Therefore, Charley turned to his stamp collection. One day, among his grandfather's collection of first day covers, he discovered an envelope. The postmark showed that it had been there since July 18,

1894. He opened the envelope, but the paper inside was not blank. It was a letter from Sam, the psychiatrist friend whom Charley had often told about Galesburg. He had already gone there. He urged Charley to continue to look for the third level and join him in Galesburg in 1894. It was a wonderful place.

Later, Charley learnt that Sam had bought eight hundred dollars' worth of old currency. Charley hoped Sam would have set up hay and feed business in Galesburg and that was what he had always wished to do.

### KEY-TERMS

**psychiatrist:** a medical doctor who diagnoses and treats mental, emotional, and behavioural disorders.

**carefree life:** having no problems or not being worried about anything

**hallucinates:** imagine things or fantasise

**oscillates:** keeps changing



## CHAPTER-2

### THE TIGER KING

#### Introduction

The story mocks the willfulness and arrogance of those in power. Kalki takes his readers to the days of autocratic and eccentric kings. These kings lived under the thumb rule of British, hence they fear them. In order to make the story mysterious Kalki has added supernatural element in the story. The haughty king disapproved the prophecy made by the astrologer about his death, but his death from the wooden tiger (100th tiger) approved it.

The story 'The Tiger King' is satire on the conceit of those in power. Most of the time the rulers are not interested in serving the people or work for the welfare of the public; instead they spend their time in foolish pursuits. Even the coteries who surround these power centres are interested in taking advantage of the proximity for their own welfare. This is a story about transience-of life, of power and reverberates the maxim: "Too many slips between a cup and a lip."

**Theme:** The story is a satire on the conceit of those in power. It also makes a very earnest plea for the protection of the tiger. It is an indirect comment on subjecting innocent animals to the willfulness of human beings.

**Title:** "The Tiger King" is a very appropriate title for the story for several reasons. First of all, the king is crazy about tiger hunting so much that he marries a princess whose father's kingdom has a sizeable tiger population. He kills one hundred tigers just to fulfil his vow. Secondly, the king with all his frenzy, anger and ruthlessness is as ferocious as a tiger. Thirdly, he dies of a silver prick received from a wooden toy tiger. Finally, the prediction that a tiger would cause the king's death also comes true. Since the story revolves round the king and the hundred tigers that he kills, it could not be better titled than "The Tiger King".

**Message:** It conveys that getting too much obsessed in winning over something and losing control over oneself leads only to self-destruction. Another message that is revealed through this lesson is that no one can change what's written in destiny no matter what they do.

#### Irony and Satire in 'The Tiger King'

'The Tiger King' is replete with irony that reveals the follies of autocratic and willful rulers who flout all laws and bend them to suit their selfish interests. The dramatic irony in the story is sharp when the Tiger King alone is unaware that his bullet had not killed the hundredth tiger. The other characters and the readers anticipate his doom as he celebrates his triumph over his destiny. We realise how misplaced the King's pride at killing the first tiger was. The astrologers had prophesied, "You may kill ninety nine-tigers like this, but your death will be brought on by the hundredth tiger." The King wanted to prove the astrologer wrong and to save his life. Ironically, to avert death he actually invites it. The lofty titles used to introduce the Tiger King, suggesting an invincible ferocity are indeed ironic for he is finally killed by a cheap, crudely made wooden toy tiger which became the tool of Nature's revenge. He had killed a hundred tigers in vain and must be punished for it. Irony is indeed sharp when the surgeons announce the operation successful and declare the king dead.

#### Instances of Satire:

Satire employs irony, sarcasm, ridicule, etc. in exposing and criticising follies and vices in men. The story uses humour to criticise self-seeking Kings who willfully exploit both nature and their subjects for selfish interests.

- When the Maharaja of Pratibandhpuram was told that he would be killed by a tiger, he could never imagine the twist in fate where a toy tiger could be fatal. Because of his conceit, he was unprepared for such surprises flung by life at him.

- The grandeur associated with a king's life proves a mockery. The news of the king's ailment invited not one, but three surgeons. They got so tied up in technicalities that they declared the operation successful even though the king died.
- The story also satirises the corrupting influence of power. Just because the Tiger King had power, he felt he could browbeat his subjects and even defeat fate. He neglected his responsibility as a ruler. He neglected the welfare of his subjects, his family, increased and reduced taxes at will and sacked his officers. They feared him or else he would have learnt the truth.
- When we see the king gloating over his bravery after killing the hundredth old, weak tiger, we notice that Kalki is satirizing the notions of cowardice and bravery. There is no heroism in fighting an unequal battle. The King's cowardice was obvious when he justifies that one may kill even a cow in self-defence.
- Kalki is also criticizing the King's men and subjects who pander to his whims out of fear or like the shopkeeper manipulate and fool him.

#### Light humour in the Tiger King:

- The instance of the Stuka bomber.
- The king's offer of mouse hunt etc.
- The incoherent babbling by the Dewan and the Chief Astrologer.
- The Dewan procuring an old tiger from People's Park and its stubborn refusal to get off the car and the description of its waiting in humble supplication to be shot.
- The shopkeeper quoting three hundred rupees for a cheap two annas and a quarter for a toy tiger.

## Summary

The Tiger King is born. Astrologers had foretold that one day the Tiger King would have to eventually die. He would grow up to become the hero of heroes and the champion of the champions. However, the child born under that star would, one day, have to meet his death.

A great miracle took place. The ten-day-old Jilani Jung Bahadur spoke very clearly. He told them that all those who were born, would have to die one day. There was nothing new in that. There would be some sense if anyone could tell him the manner of his death. Everyone stood stunned. An infant, born just ten days ago, was talking in such a manner. The chief astrologer told the prince that he was born in the hour of the bull. The bull and the tiger were enemies. Therefore, his death would come from a tiger.

There were innumerable forests in the Pratibandapuram State. They had tigers in them. The Maharaja was overjoyed when he killed his first tiger. He sent for the state astrologer and showed him the dead beast. He told the Maharaja that he would have to kill ninety-nine more. He must be very careful with the hundredth tiger. The king asked what if the hundredth tiger were also killed. The astrologer declared

that he would tear up all his books on astrology and set fire to them. Then, the king would have no trouble.

The state banned tiger hunting by all except the Maharaja. If anyone dared to disobey, all his wealth and property would be confiscated. The king did face some problems. Sometimes, the bullet missed its mark. Once, a tiger jumped upon him and he fought the beast with his bare hands. Once a high-ranking British officer wished to hunt tigers in Pratibandapuram, but he was refused permission. He could hunt all other animals except tigers. The Maharaja stood in danger of losing his kingdom itself. He managed to retain his kingdom by offering a bribe of 50 gold rings worth three lakh rupees to the officer's wife. The Maharaja's tiger hunt continued to be highly successful. He was able to kill seventy tigers within ten years.



The king's mission of killing tigers came to a halt. The tiger population became extinct in the forests of Pratibandapuram. The king decided to marry into the royal family of a state with a large tiger population. The Deewan found out the right girl. Maharaja Jung Bahadur killed five or six tigers each time he visited his father-in-law. In this way, he was able to kill 99 tigers.

There remained just one tiger to reach his tally of a hundred. If he could kill just one more tiger, the Maharaja would have no fears left. He could give up tiger hunting altogether. He had to be very careful with that last tiger. However, the hundredth tiger was found nowhere. The Maharaja became very sad. The Deewan realised that if the Maharaja didn't find the tiger soon, the results could be quite dangerous. A tiger was brought from the People's Park in Chennai. It was brought straight to the forest where the Maharaja was hunting. The Maharaja took a careful aim and the tiger fell in a heap. The Maharaja became elated at killing the hundredth tiger. After he left, the hunters had a closer look at the tiger. The tiger was not dead. They decided that the Maharaja must not know that he had missed the target. Therefore, one of the hunters killed the tiger.

A few days later, the third birthday of the Maharaja's son was celebrated. The Maharaja brought a wooden tiger from a shop as a special gift on his birthday. On that day, father and son played with the wooden toy-tiger. Its surface was rough. One of those needle-like slivers pierced the Maharaja's right hand. The next day, infection flared up in his hand. In four days, it developed into a suppurating sore. Three surgeons performed an operation. 'The operation was successful'. The Maharaja was dead. In this manner, the hundredth tiger took its final revenge on the Tiger King.

#### KEY-TERMS

**autocratic:** ruler with absolute power

**invincible:** incapable of being defeated, overcome, or subdued

**innumerable:** too many to be counted

**suppurating:** undergo the formation of pus; fester.



## CHAPTER-3

### JOURNEY TO THE END OF THE EARTH

#### Introduction

Before human evolution, Antarctica was part of a huge tropical landmass called the Gondwana land which flourished 500 million years ago. Geological, geographical and biological changes occurred and Antarctica separated and moved away, evolving into what it is today.

The writer emphasises the impact of human endeavour to dominate nature.

The challenge to the ecology of the world makes Antarctica (with the simple eco-system and lack of biodiversity) a crucial place for study. The 'Students on Ice' programme provides inspiring educational opportunities which help to foster an understanding and respect for our planet.

**Theme:** Tishani Doshi's visit to Antarctica, the coldest, driest and windiest continent in the world, aboard the Russian research vessel Akademik Shokalskiy, gave her a deeper understanding and a better perspective to the damage caused by human impact on earth. Antarctica, though unpopulated, has been affected and there is a growing concern for its half a million year old carbon records trapped under its ice sheets.

The 'Students on Ice' programme takes high school students to Antarctica to create awareness in them, the future policy makers, and helps students realise that the threat of global warming is very real.

**Title:** The title 'Journey to the End of the Earth', has more than one meaning. It describes an educational journey to Antarctica undertaken by a group of high school students.

The author calls it a journey to the end of the earth because it began 13°09' degrees North of Equator in Madras, involved crossing nine time zones, six checkpoints, three oceans and as many ecospheres. She travelled over 100 hours in combination of a car, an aeroplane and a ship. The journey being to the extreme south of the Earth, was really towards the end of it. Another meaning of this title is more significant as the warnings that Antarctica gives are shocking and much concerning the humanity and the millions of other species on the earth. The changes taking place in Antarctica are pointing a warning finger at the existence of the earth; the earth is journeying to its end.

**Message:** Humans, who have existed a mere 12,000 years, have caused tremendous damage and played havoc with nature. Population explosion, strain on available resources, carbon emissions, fossil fuels and global warming have all resulted in climatic and ecological imbalances that have affected Antarctica too.

#### Summary

The author visited Antarctica on a Russian research ship called Akademik Shokalskiy. She started from Chennai. They had to cross nine time zones, six checkpoints, three water bodies, and three ecospheres. The whole journey took her 100 hours.



When she landed on the Antarctica, she was spellbound by its vastness, isolation, and uninterrupted horizon. She wondered how there could have been a time when India and Antarctica were part of the same land mass—Gondwana.

About 650 million years ago, Gondwana was a super continent. It was warm and many species of flora and fauna prospered there and there were no humans then. However, around the time when dinosaurs were wiped out, Gondwana began to break up. India pushed against Asia and buckled its crust to form the Himalayas. South America drifted to join North America, opening up the Drake Passage. It created a cold current that went round the South Pole. It left the Antarctica cold and isolated.

The Antarctica is now a part of that history. It helps us to understand where we came from and where we are going. It helps us to understand the significance of Cordilleran folds and pre-Cambrian granite shields. It helps us to understand about evolution and extinction. Antarctica has remained unspoiled by humans. Its ice-cores hold half-a-million-year-old carbon record. It can help us to examine Earth's past, present and future.

Antarctica is a huge expanse of ice. It is all barren. There are no human markers. There are no trees, buildings, or billboards. There are huge icebergs. There are blue whales, but there are very tiny things too. There are no mornings, noons, evenings and nights. It is a 24-hour day. There is silence everywhere. Therefore, you lose all earthly sense of time and space there.

Human civilisation is only 12000 years old. It is only a few seconds old on the geological clock. However, during this short period, man has caused much confusion. He has built towns and cities. He has wiped out many other species to grab the limited natural resources. By burning fossil fuels, man has created a blanket of carbon dioxide around the world. This is raising the global temperature.

This rise in temperature has caused climatic changes. It is the most hotly debated question. Many scientists foretell disaster.

Antarctica is the place to see the impact of these changes. Because it has a simple ecosystem, a little change in the environment can trigger a big effect. For example, take the microscopic phytoplankton. They are single celled plants. Through photosynthesis, they assimilate carbon to form organic compounds. They sustain the entire food chain in the southern oceans. They regulate the global carbon cycle. Any further depletion of ozone layer will cripple phytoplankton. If they do not function, the entire food chain and global carbon cycle would collapse.

'Students on Ice' is a programme headed by Canadian Geoff Green. He has chosen to take students to the end of the world—Antarctica. He wants to provide young students an opportunity to understand and respect the planet. Students are young. They are ready to learn and act. They can actually see the effect of global warming. They see glaciers retreating and ice shelves collapsing. They cannot remain unaffected.

They can see that the threat is real. They are the future policy-makers. They have idealism. They will act.

Just near the Antarctic Circle, the research ship Shokalskiy was caught between white stretches of ice. It could go no farther. Therefore, the captain decided to turn round and go north, but before doing that, he ordered everybody to climb down the gang plank and walk on the ocean. Therefore, all the 52 of them walked on ice. Beneath the ice there was a living ocean. They saw seals sunning themselves on ice floes. They looked like stray dogs lying in the shade of a banyan tree.

### KEY-TERMS

**endeavour:** to attempt (something, such as the fulfillment of an obligation) by exertion of effort.

**spellbound:** having your attention completely held by something, so that you cannot think about anything else.

**unspoiled:** beautiful because it has not been changed or built on.

**photosynthesis:** the process by which plants use sunlight, water, and carbon dioxide to create oxygen and energy in the form of sugar.

**depletion:** a reduction in something, or the act of reducing it.



## CHAPTER-4

### THE ENEMY

#### Introduction

The story highlights how a Japanese doctor saves the life of an American prisoner of war and rises above narrow national prejudices. He risks his honour, career, position and life by sheltering a war prisoner of the enemy camp and saving his life. The author has beautifully portrayed the conflict in the doctor's mind as a private individual and as a citizen with a sense of national loyalty.

**Theme:** 'The Enemy' gives the message that humanism transcends all man made prejudices and barriers. Dr. Sadao upholds the ethics of medical profession in treating an enemy. The story is a great lesson of peace, love, sympathy, fellow feeling and humanism.

**Title:** The title 'The Enemy' is quite appropriate and highly suggestive. It focuses our attention on the wounded man who is incidentally washed ashore to the doorstep of a famous Japanese surgeon, Dr Sadao Hoki during the war. The first reaction of the Japanese pair is typical of average, patriotic Japanese who hate their white enemies. However, the doctor in Sadao prompts him to bring the man inside his house and cure him. The doctor's involvement with the white enemy annoys the domestic staff who show open defiance and resistance. The doctor faces grave danger to his position, safety, name, fame and family by harbouring the enemy. He could be condemned as a traitor and killed. In spite of all the odds, the doctor finds himself emotionally unable to hand him over to the police. He has no love for the man. He regards him his enemy, yet he can't kill him. He tells the old General how he operated on the white man and saved him. The General is all praise for his skill, hopes for his own successful operation at his hand, and promises to kill the man for him. The doctor faces a lot of tension—mental, emotional and physical. He passes sleepless nights waiting for the assassins, who never turn up. Meanwhile, 'the enemy' recovers and the doctor devises means to let him escape in order to get rid of him. At the end of the story he is left wondering why he could not kill that man.

**Message:** We learn how love and compassion can make us better human beings as opposed to prejudices and biases against other people with whom we do not share anything but the bond of being humans.

#### Summary

Dr. Sadao Hoki's house was built on the Japanese coast. His father never joked or played with him. Sadao knew that his education was his father's chief concern. For this reason, he had sent Sadao to America at twenty-two to learn surgery and medicine. He had come back at thirty and before his father died, he had seen Sadao become a famous surgeon and scientist.

Sadao had met Hana in America but didn't fall in love with her until he was sure she was a Japanese. His father would never have accepted her unless she had been 'pure in her race'. Sadao met her at an American Professor's house. They came home to Japan. Their marriage had been arranged in the old Japanese way. They were perfectly happy and had two children.

Sadao and Hana found something coming out of the mist. A man seemed to be on his hands and knees crawling. Then, they saw him fall on his face and lie there. He was wounded and lay motionless on the sand. He was a white man. On the right side of his lower back, Sadao saw that a gun wound had reopened. He was bleeding. He had packed the wound with the sea moss. The man cried, but didn't awake. They read the faint letters on his cap: 'U. S. Navy'. The American was a prisoner of war.

If they sheltered the white man in their house, they would be arrested. But if they turned him over as a prisoner, he would certainly die. The couple was in a fix. All Americans were their enemies. If he were healthy, they could hand him over to the police. But he was wounded. He would die unless he was operated upon. At any rate, something was to be done with him. The servants were frightened at what their master had just told them. They thought that their master should not heal the wound of that white man. Even Yumi refused to wash the white man and returned to her work. Hana herself washed Tom's breast and face with steaming hot water carefully.

Sadao asked Hana to help him to turn the man. She obeyed. She was asked to give the anaesthetic if needed. The bullet was still there. He had lost much blood. Hana

Scan this  
  
The Enemy

couldn't bear the sight and ran out of the room. She had never seen an operation. Sadao went on with his work. But she came with a bottle and some cotton in her hand. Then, with a very clean and precise incision, the bullet was taken out. The man quivered, but was still unconscious. He only muttered a few words in English. Dr. Sadao declared that the man would live in spite of all.

The young man woke up. He was very weak. His blue eyes were terrified when he saw where he was. Hana consoled him not to be afraid. She comforted him that he would soon be strong. On the third day, Dr. Sadao examined the wound. Tom asked what they were going to do with him. He looked barely seventeen. For a moment, Sadao didn't answer. Tom was a prisoner of war and should have been handed over to the police.

The servants felt that they could not stay if Sadao hid that white man anymore in the house. People would think that they liked Americans. The servants grew more watchful daily. Sadao wanted the prisoner to get up on his feet. He should practice it every day till he gained strength. The man thanked the doctor for having saved his life. The doctor cautioned him not to thank him so early. The last stitches had been pulled out. The young man would be all right within a fortnight. On the seventh day, the servants left all together. Hana was terrified, but maintained her pride as a mistress. She paid them off and thanked them for all they had done for her.

The old General was sick. He knew that Sadao was indispensable to him. He didn't want Sadao to be arrested. What would happen if Sadao were condemned to death and the next day he himself had to have his operation? He didn't trust other surgeons. The General hit upon a plan. It would be best if the American could be quietly killed. He had his own private assassins. He could send two of them

to his house at night. Sadao agreed that it would be very natural.

Sadao thought over the General's plan. The whole thing could go out of his hands. He didn't tell anything to Hana. The next morning, he went to the guest room. He thought of putting his boat on the shore that night with food and extra clothing in it. The American might be able to row to that little island not far from the coast. Nobody lived on that island. He gave all necessary instructions to Tom. If his food ran out before he caught a Korean boat, he could signal him two flashes. The young American shook Sadao's hand warmly and walked into the darkness of the garden. Sadao informed the General that the young man had escaped. The General had promised Sadao to get him killed. But due to his own illness, he forgot to respect his promise. Sadao got his reward. He didn't receive any signal. No one was on the island. The prisoner had gone safely. Sadao remembered that he had great difficulty in finding a place to live in America because he was a Japanese. The Americans were full of prejudice. White people were repulsive. It was a relief to be openly at war with them at last. Then, he remembered the 'haggard face of the prisoner—

'White and repulsive', 'Strange', he thought, 'I wonder why I could not kill him?'

#### KEY-TERMS

**prejudice:** a strong unreasonable feeling of not liking or trusting somebody/something, especially when it is based on his/her/its race, religion or sex

**crawling:** to move slowly with your body on or close to the ground, or on your hands and knees.

**compassion:** to suffer together.

**consoled:** to make somebody happier when he/she is very sad or disappointed.



## CHAPTER-5

### ON THE FACE OF IT

#### Introduction

The story speaks about two individuals, who meet unfortunate odds but develop different attitudes while facing those odds. The two persons are Derry, a young acid-attack victim, and Mr. Lamb a much older man who lost his limb in a blast.

Through the contrast in the outlook of both these survivors, the author tries to create a tale of overcoming odds and seemingly insurmountable difficulties and retaining hope in the ability to find happiness.

**Theme:** The play, "On the Face of It" brings out the idea that the people who have any handicap/ physical impairment of some kind, generally suffer from a sense of loneliness and mental pain. It also talks about how appearances are deceptive and most often, we go on dealing with impressions and prejudices about others without caring to know about them actually.

The theme of the play is the consequences of physical impairment on the affected person's body, mind and soul. The actual pain and inconvenience caused by the disabilities is often much less than the sense of alienation felt by the disabled person.

**Title:** According to the dictionary, "On the Face of it" is an informal expression used to say that something seems to be good or true, but this opinion may be changed when you know more about it.

In the play, 'On the face of it', there is so much of diversity, so many differences and divides between the people and other species of the world but underneath is a oneness, a sameness – all of them are created by God and all of them need to live and grow together with love and mutual acceptance. As the play progresses, the characters' views about each other and our impression of them changes for the better.

Thus, Susan Hill has quite appropriately entitled her play "On the Face of it".

**Message:** The moral of the play is that physically disabled people should focus on their bright future and not to brood over shortcomings of life and society should accept them in a way that they are so that they can lead a good life. In this way they can fight out the loneliness, depression and disappointment.

## Summary

Derry walks slowly and cautiously through the long grass. He enters Lamb's garden. Mr. Lamb speaks to him when he is close at hand. Derry is startled. He is apologetic. He didn't know if there was anybody there. Mr. Lamb tries to make Derry comfortable. Mr. Lamb says that he can pick up crab apples. Derry need not go away on Mr. Lamb's account. Mr. Lamb doesn't mind who comes in the garden. The gate is always open. Derry did not need to climb over the wall of the garden. Derry says he didn't come there for stealing apples. Mr. Lamb assures him that he can stay there.

Derry says that people are afraid of him. They look at his face and find it terrible and ugly. Mr. Lamb thinks that perhaps Derry's face got burnt in a fire. Derry corrects him. Derry says he got acid all down on that side of his face and burnt it all way. The acid ate up his face.

Mr. Lamb is old. Derry is young. Derry has got a burnt face. Lamb has got a tin leg. Similarly, one green plant is called a weed and another a flower. All are life. Mr. Lamb lost his leg. Some kids call him "Lamey-Lamb". A tin leg and a burnt face are not the only things to be taken notice of or to be stared at. There are so many other things like crab apples, weeds and sunflowers. They deserve our attention and Mr. Lamb enjoys life and people as much as he can. He doesn't care if nobody ever kissed him. Mr. Lamb asks Derry if he doesn't care to be kissed by pretty girls. Girls with long hair and large eyes. Will he not like to be kissed by the people he loves? Derry replies that no one will ever kiss and love him. He is grieved that he won't ever look different. Even when he grows as old as Mr. Lamb, he will look the same. He will still only have "half a face". Mr. Lamb replies that Derry may have a 'half face', but the world has got a 'whole face'. He should look at it.

Derry is obsessed with what people say and comment. People remind Derry that there are people even worse than

him. They might be blind, dumb or may be mad by birth. Sometimes people can be very cruel. A woman looked at him. She said to another woman, "Look at that, that's a terrible thing". She told her that only a mother could love such a face. Mr. Lamb advises Derry to keep his ears shut. Derry says that he doesn't like being close to people. He can't stand people staring at him and passing cruel comments about him.

Mr. Lamb reminds Derry that he can't lock himself up in a room and never leave it. Then, he narrates to him the story of a man who was afraid of everything in the world. So, he went into his room, locked the door and stayed there. A picture fell off the wall on to his head and killed him. Mr. Lamb says that he enjoys life as it comes. He sits in the sun and reads books. He is not fond of curtains. Mr. Lamb motivates Derry. Derry has got two arms, two legs, eyes and ears. He has got a tongue and also a brain. He can get on the way he wants like all others. And if he chooses, he can "get on better than all the rest". Derry asks, "How?" Mr. Lamb replies that Derry can live the same way as he himself does. For him everybody is welcome. The gate is always open. Derry says that there are some people whom he hates. Mr. Lamb says that hatred is more harmful than a bottle of acid. Derry gets up and prepares to go. He says he will come back. Mr. Lamb says that generally people say so but never come back.

Derry comes home. His mother warns him not to go back there. Derry assures her that she need not fear. Only an old man with a tin leg lives there. He has a huge house and a garden. He is Mr. Lamb. He says things nobody else has ever said. Derry runs to Mr. Lamb's garden. He opens the garden gate. He cries that he has come back. Suddenly, there is a crash. The ladder falls back, Mr. Lamb also falls down with it. He dies. Derry begins to weep. He goes on crying "Lamey-Lamb ! I did come back".

### KEY-TERMS

**shortcoming:** an imperfection or lack that detracts from the whole.

**apologetic:** feeling or showing that you are sorry for something you have done.

**weed:** a wild plant that is not wanted in a garden because it prevents other plants from growing properly.

**obsessed:** having or showing excessive or compulsive concern with something.



## CHAPTER-6

### MEMORIES OF CHILDHOOD

#### Introduction

Memories of Childhood summary deals with two extracts which belong to two different autobiographical episodes. Furthermore, these two episodes deal with the lives of two women, whose names are Zitkala Sa and Bama. Both of them had to face hardship and were victims of social discrimination. Zitkala Sa had to deal with racial discrimination, while

Bama had to suffer caste discrimination. In both extracts, the writers explore their childhood, and there is a reflection on their relationship with the prevalent culture. The culture was harsh towards these women and treated them in a harsh manner in their childhood. Both of these accounts are meant to convey how these women went through their oppression. Also, there was resistance by both narrators in their own ways. Zitkala-Sa and Bama were young, but not so

young that they were naive about the mainstream culture's evil scheme. They became rebellious due to their bitter childhood experiences.

**Theme:** The two accounts mentioned here took place in two cultures at different places and at different times, but they explore a common universal theme of prejudice and humiliation faced by marginalised communities from mainstream culture and how both the brave girls used their talent and education to stand up for their own and community rights. Both used the power of the pen to fight oppression.

**Title:** 'Memories of Childhood' serves as an apt title for the text because it is these memories from and of childhood which have been instrumental in shaping these two women and their attitudes. Their past has been a history of oppression, the pain of which they have carried since childhood.

**Message:** Memories of Childhood summary explores the racial and caste discrimination which two children had to experience.

## Summary

### I. The Cutting of My Long Hair—Zitkala-Sa

The first day in the land of apples was a bitter-cold one. The ground was covered with snow, and the trees were bare. The sound of the bell and the clatter of shoes were annoying to sensitive ears. People murmured in an unknown tongue. The narrator's soul had lost her peace and freedom. But all was useless.

A pale-faced woman came up after them. The girls were marching into the dining room. These were Indian girls in stiff shoes and closely clinging dresses. The boys entered through the opposite door. She was feeling very uncomfortable. A small bell rang. She pulled up her chair and sat on it. But she noticed that all others were standing. She felt confused. The second bell was sounded. All were seated at last. She caught the eyes of a pale-faced woman upon her. She was being keenly watched by the strange woman. The third bell was sounded. Everyone picked up their knife and fork and began eating.

Late in the morning, the narrator's friend, Judewin, gave her a terrible warning. She had overheard the pale-faced woman talk. They were talking about cutting her long, heavy hair. Among her people, short hair was worn by mourners. Shingled hair was worn by cowards. Judewin decided to submit, but the narrator rebelled. She decided not to submit but to struggle.

She disappeared. She came into a large room with three white beds in it. She crawled under the bed and hid herself. She heard the footsteps nearby. The steps were quickened. The voices grew louder. They looked under the bed. She was dragged out. She was carried down the stairs and tied fast to a chair. She faced extreme indignities. Her long hair was shingled like that of a coward! No one

came to comfort her. Now, she was only one of the many little animals driven by a herder.

### II. We Too Are Human Beings — Bama

The narrator was in the third grade. She hadn't yet heard people speak openly of untouchability. But she had already seen, felt, experienced, and been humiliated by what it was. The distance from her school to her home could be covered in ten minutes. But it took her from half an hour to an hour to reach there. She watched all the fun and games that were going on. She saw performing monkeys. She saw the snake charmer displaying his snakes. The other attractions were the Maariyata temple, the Pongal celebrations, the statue of Gandhiji, and the sweet and snack stalls. She could go on and on. Everything stopped her and attracted her attention.

Political parties would arrive. They cried through their mikes. Then, there might be a street play, a puppet show or a stunt performance. Some or other entertainment was always going on. There were coffee clubs in the bazaar. She would see people chopping onions or almonds, blown down by the wind. All these sights stopped her from going home. Then, she would see people selling vegetables, fruits, and sweets.

One day, the narrator saw that a threshing floor had been set up near her street. The landlord sat there, watching the proceedings. Then, an elder from their street came along from the bazaar. He was carrying a small packet. It contained something like vadai or green banana bhaji. He came along holding out the packet by its string without touching it. The elder went straight to the landlord. He bowed low and extended the packet towards him. The landlord opened it and began to eat. She went home and told the story in all its comic detail. She fell about with laughter, but Annan (older brother) was not amused. He told her that the man was not being funny. He was from a low caste. He couldn't touch the food packet.

When she heard it, she felt terribly sad. It was disgusting. She felt so provoked and angry that she wanted to touch those vadas herself straightaway. She wondered why poor people showed respect and bowed before such cruel persons. The rich forgot that others are also human beings.

Annan told the narrator that they were born in a community of 'low caste' people. They were never given any honour, dignity or respect. If they study and make progress, they can throw away these indignities. If they are learned, then people will come to them of their own accord. The words Annan spoke to her that day made a very deep impression on her. She studied hard and stood first in her class. Many people became her friends.

### KEY-TERMS

**Rebellious:** defying or resisting some established authority, government, or tradition; insubordinate; inclined to rebel.

**herder:** a person who looks after a herd of animals such as cattle or goats.

**humiliated:** to reduce (someone) to a lower position in one's own eyes or others' eyes

**provoked:** to cause a particular feeling or reaction

