Vikram’s English Academy (ICSE)

**AT FIRST GLANCE, HE SEEMED A FRIENDLY SORT OF A PERSON….**

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At first glance he seemed a friendly sort of a person yet there was something I could not catch in his eyes. His face was faded and creased like vellum paper and parchment. His eyes were milky and watery. He had a trembling and faltering voice and he wore moth eaten clothes. He had a weak smile on his face. Looking at his face anyone would sense that he was lonely. He spoke harshly to the tea-vendor.

It seemed that he knew the place very well and lived somewhere nearby. He quickly drank his tea and took his rotten wooden staff and started walking in a narrow lane. I could not help but follow as I could see that he needed someone. There were many houses in that lane and nobody other than Mrs. Possafots. I could see that he was going near an old house. The old house seemed to have collapsed inwardly on itself somewhat, like a loaf of bread taken out of oven too soon. The roof sagged and the cedar shringles stood up in places like wonky teeth. The windows had no glass in them now and they seemed not to be quite rectangular anymore. The lean to shed the side hung downwards as if the fight had left it and it could no longer bring itself to stand up against the elements. In the high winds of the season the old house could be heard creak as if in its death throes. The grass grew long and unkempt around it. I waited for a few minutes staring at the house and thinking whether to go in or not. The old man turned behind with his quaking quavering voice. He asked me to come inside as he pushed open the door.

So dark in the house, riddled with objects of antiquity. A life time of collecting memories but no one left to share with the stacks of old newspapers living in the room like a giant monolith. In the dark, one can only imagine all the years of collecting. Not one was read. Dusty old knick knacks, gifts from old friends, a box and the old man drew his hand down the box remembering his first wife. Oh! How life is uncertain he thinks. If only he could go back in time. Loneliness is his best friend now. How he cheated death all of those years, how everyone died why did he live so long, lonely. A knock at the door stirs the old man from his memories. It’s that old crab Mrs. Possafots he thinks. Mrs. Possafots comes every day to catch his cats he says. Oh how he despised her for years! Now she’s the only company.