Vikram’s English Academy (ICSE)

**Assignment: Mrs. Packletide’s Tiger**

Answer the following :

1. **Why did Mrs. Packletide wish to kill a tiger?**

**Ans.** Mrs. Packletide desired to kill a tiger as she wanted to get her pictures published. She wanted to surpass Loona Bimberton, who was a boastful lady. Loona had had a joyride in an aeroplane and she kept on boasting about her adventurous trip. This was the cause of jealousy for Mrs. Packletide and she wanted to do something more exciting and adventurous than her. Ultimately she planned to kill a tiger to get more fame than her rival Loona Bimberton

1. **What made Mrs. Packletide decide to give a party in Loona Bimberton’s honour?**

**What did she intend to give Loona on her birthday ? Why?**

**Ans.** Mrs. Packletide decided to give a party in Loona Bimberton’s honour just to highlight her accomplishment of hunting a tiger. The party would be to mock Mrs. Bimberton and not a real honour. She intended to give a tiger - claw brooch on Loona’s birthday so that it would remind Loona about Mrs Packletide’s feat of killing a tiger.

1. **What care did the villagers take of the tiger? What was the greatest anxiety of the villagers with regards to the tiger?**

Ans: The villagers took great care of the tiger so that Mrs Packletide could shoot it and they can get a thousand rupees. Children were posed night and day on the outskirts of the local jungle to head back the tiger in case it attempts to roam away to fresh hunting grounds. They left cheaper kind of goats to keep the tiger satisfied with his present quarters. Even the mothers carrying their babies home through the jungle after the day’s work in the fields hushed their singing lest they might curtail the restful sleep of the tiger. The greatest anxiety of the villagers was that the tiger should not die of old age before the date appointed for the memsahib's shoot.

1. **Who was Ms. Mebbin? Was she really devoted to Mrs. Packletide? How did she behave during the tiger shooting ?**

**Ans.** Ms. Mebbin was Mrs. Packletide’s paid companion. No, she wasn’t devoted to Mrs. Packletide. She was only loyal towards money. During the shooting of the tiger, Miss Mebbin kept thinking whether they had paid more than required to the villagers for the tiger. It was Ms. Mebbin who revealed to Mrs. Packletide that the goat was shot dead instead of the tiger and that the tiger had actually died from a heart-attack.

1. **Was Mrs. Packletide a good shot?**

**Ans.** No. Mrs. Packletide wasn’t a good shot. She manipulated the entire shooting of the tiger. . She agreed to pay a thousand rupees to trap an old and weak tiger in the village. Inspite of the villagers making it easy for her to shoot, she missed the aim and ended up killing the goat which had been used as a bait.

1. **What comment did Miss Mebbin make after Mrs. Packletide had fired the shot?**

Ans. Mrs Packletide’s rifle flashed out fwith a loud report and the tiger sprang to one side and then rolled over in the stillness of death. It was Ms. Mebbin who drew attention to the fact that the goat was in death-throes from a mortal bullet-wound. The wrong animal had been hit and the beast of prey had succumbed to heart- failure caused by the sudden report of the rifle, accelerated by old age.

1. **How did the villagers react to the tiger’s death ?**

**Ans.** The villagers had been looking forward to the thousand rupees which they were to get from Mrs Packletide. As soon as the tiger sprang to one side and died, their joy knew no bounds. The villagers in ambush behind the trees, swarmed on to the scene and their shouting speedily carried the glad news to the village, where the the villagers started rejoicing. Later when they realized that the tiger had not died due to Mrs Packletide’s firing, they made no attempts to stop the fiction about her shooting the beast, lest they should lose their money. Hence they did not pay any heed to the fact that the goat was shot instead of the tiger.

1. **What was Louisa Mebbin’s attitude towards money? Give instances to justify your answer.**

Ans: Louisa Mebbin adopted a protective elder-sister attitude towards money, implying that she was careful while dealing in money matters. Whenever she was out of her country and putting up in a hotel she would never give any tips to the staff. Even during the shooting of the tiger she kept worrying if Mrs Packletide had paid more than required to the villages for such an old tiger. Further she also mentioned that if the tiger did not touch the goat before being killed, they should not pay the villagers for the goat.

1. **Do you think Mrs. Packletide was able to achieve her heart’s desire ? Give reasons for your answer.**

Ans. Initially, Mrs. Packletide was indeed successful in achieving her heart's desire of shooting a tiger in order to possess a tiger-skin and get her photographs published in the papers. She accomplished her dream of outdoing Loona Bimberton and becoming more famous than her. But later she had to pay a heavy price to keep the fact that the tiger had not been shot by her rifle.

1. **How did Ms. Mebbin manage to get her week-end cottage? Why did she plant so many tiger-lilies in her garden ?**

**Ans.** Miss Mebbin blackmailed Mrs. Packletide in order to procure the weekend cottage. She said that she would let out the secret that the tiger had actually died of a heart attack and not as a result of Mrs. Packletide's skill of shooting. Mrs. Packletide finally gave in to her demands and Miss Mebbin was successful in getting her weekend cottage. Miss Mebbin planted many tiger-lilies in order to remind herself how she had procured the cottage.

1. **“The incidental expenses are so heavy”, she confides to inquiring friends. Who is the speaker ? What is she referring to here ?**

**Ans.** Mrs. Packletide is the speaker of these lines. In these lines she refers to the heavy price which she had to pay to her companion, Miss Mebbin, to keep the secret of the incident of shooting a goat instead of a tiger. She ended up paying six hundred and eighty pounds to Miss Mebbin.

1. **What are the actions of people normally governed by? How was Mrs Packletide an exception? Give reasons for your answer.**

Ans: The actions of people in general are governed by hunger and love. Mrs Packletide is an exception because all her actions were driven by her dislike of Loona Bimberton. Loona Bimberton had become the talk of the town as she had been carried in an aeroplane by an Algerian aviator . In order to show her superiority, Mrs Packletide decided to kill a tiger. She also planned a luncheon on the pretext of honouring Loona Bimberton with the actual motive to show off her hunting skills. She also planned to send a tiger-claw brooch to Loona Bimberton on her next birthday.

1. **According to you, why did Mrs. Bimberton not attend the party ? How did she**

**convey it to Mrs. Packletide ?**

**Ans.** Mrs. Bimberton wrote a letter to Mrs. Packletide and thanked her for the tiger-claw brooch. However she didn’t attend the party because she couldn’t bear the celebration of her rival’s victory. She declined to go because she knew that her repressed emotions of defeat could turn immensely dangerous.

1. **Was Ms. Mebbin trustworthy ? Why ?**

**Ans.** No, Ms. Mebbin was not at all trustworthy. She blackmailed Mrs. Packletide and sought out a bribe, the week-end cottage, a price which Mrs. Packletide had to pay in order to hide the truth. Ms. Mebbin, very seemingly, explained how she would reveal the secret out to Loona Bimberton if her needs were not taken care of.

1. **Describe the new cottage that Ms. Mebbin got.**

**Ans.** The new cottage that Ms. Mebbin got was very pretty, situated near Darking. The price was six hundred and eighty without any legal hassles. It was named as “LesFauves’. It was brightly coloured and the garden borders had tiger-lilies growing.

1. **Describe how the event of hunting the tiger took place.**

**Ans.** Inorder to shoot the tiger, a platform had been constructed in a comfortable and conveniently placed tree. Mrs. Packletide and Ms. Mebbin sat on it. A goat, who bleated persistently, was tied at an appropriate distance. A rifle was kept at an accurate place and Mrs. Packletide waited for the tiger to arrive. When the tiger arrived, he laid flat when he saw the tied goat. But later on, the tiger started walking towards the victim. And suddenly Mrs. Packletide gave a shot. The tiger sprang to one side and rolled over until he died. Villagers started rejoicing the triumph but later on Louisa Mebbin pointed out that it was the goat who had died on account of the bullet. The tiger had actually perished because of heart-failure.

1. **Write a character sketch of Mrs. Packletide.**

**Ans.** Mrs. Packletide, the protagonist of the story, is a vain lady who cannot see her rival Mrs. Loona Bimberton being appreciated. Hence all her actions are focused on proving that she is more capable than Mrs. Bimberton. She decides to shoot a tiger only for the name and fame that she would get in the process. She is not courageous enough to participate in the actual hunt and finds it safer to pay thevillagers one thousand rupees to make all arrangements for her. Since she is rich, she believes that she can manipulate and get things done in her favour. But finally she gets manipulated by Ms. Mebbin who blackmails her into buying her a

week-end cottage. She proves to be silly to squander away her wealth for the sake of false prestige and reputation.