**Summary of Aunt Jennifer’s Tigers**

‘Aunt Jennifer’s Tigers’ is a poem by American poet Adrienne Rich. It talks about the burden faced by women in marital life, which she depicts through the character Aunt Jennifer, who is a housewife. Summary of Aunt Jennifer’s Tigers given in BYJU’S CBSE Summary will give the readers an insight into the kind of subjugation and compromise married women are subjected to – particularly in the twentieth century, the era in which the poet wrote this poem. Aunt Jennifer has no one to share her pain with. She tries to express it creatively – through a portrait of tigers she has made. The tigers are in complete contrast to her personality and prance around fearlessly around the men under trees. It shows a deeply ingrained desire of hers to live fearlessly and freely like those tigers. Students can also refer to [CBSE Notes](https://byjus.com/cbse-notes/) for further explanations and solutions for English chapters in the Class 12 CBSE English syllabus.

**CBSE Class 12 English Aunt Jennifer’s Tigers Summary**

The poet starts the poem by depicting the central character Aunt Jennifer. She is a married woman doing embroidery for a wall hanging or some decorative piece of cloth which has tigers in it. The tigers are prancing in this portrait. They are set against a forest as a background, and they look like topaz stones — tigers of yellowish-brown colour set against the green of the forest. They are in contrast to Aunt Jennifer’s character, who has suffered a lot under the dominance of her husband. The tigers are fearless and are not scared of the men standing under the trees of the forest. This is a representation of Aunt Jennifer’s deepest desire – to be fearless and free. The men in the forest represent the kinds of restrictions imposed upon her by her husband.

Aunt Jennifer misses the youthful and carefree attitude she had before marriage that would make her gracious and confident. It is depicted by how the poet uses the words ‘sleek, chivalric certainty’ for the tigers’ movement.

Living continuously under fear and torture has made Aunt Jennifer weak and jittery. She is not even able to execute her daily activities with calmness and composure. The poet uses the imagery of ‘fluttering fingers’ to show her fear — she is not even able to handle the wool she is knitting. She finds it difficult to pull the ivory needle during her embroidery work. Aunt Jennifer is shaken to her core by the long exposure to being told what to do and what not to do. The experience of the marriage is so brutal that everything related to it seems a burden that seems to remind her of the bondage. As a result, she finds her wedding ring too heavy to carry. It is symbolic of the cumulative effect of suffering and emotional toil she has gone through in the past years.

This bondage that Aunt Jennifer is suffering is not easy to escape from. She might be free from it only when she dies. But the poet says that death might not bring an end to this situation of hers as, even in her death, she will have the ring on her hand to remind her of all the difficulties and unpleasant things she had to deal with throughout her married life. The poet is invoking Aunt Jennifer’s experiences as a married woman, which were negative in nature. In spite of all this, she had desires that were subdued – the desire to live without restrictions or bondage. The portrait of tigers that she has created represents this desire – an alternative side of her personality.

**Conclusion of Aunt Jennifer’s Tigers**

The summary of Aunt Jennifer’s Tigers shows how it is to live under dominance as a married woman – under constant fear and restrictions. The poem ends with the mention of her wedding ring, which shows her connection to her husband. The poet mentions that she has no way of freeing herself from this suffocating bondage in this lifetime — not even after her death, as she will still be wearing the ring. Instead of dying peacefully, she would be dying with the weight of difficulties she had to endure as a married woman.

A detailed understanding of the poem can help students critically analyse and appreciate the poem. Students can refer to our website for further information and content related to the Class 12 English subject for better understanding and preparation for [CBSE](https://byjus.com/cbse/) board exams. They can also access topics like grammar and writing in English.