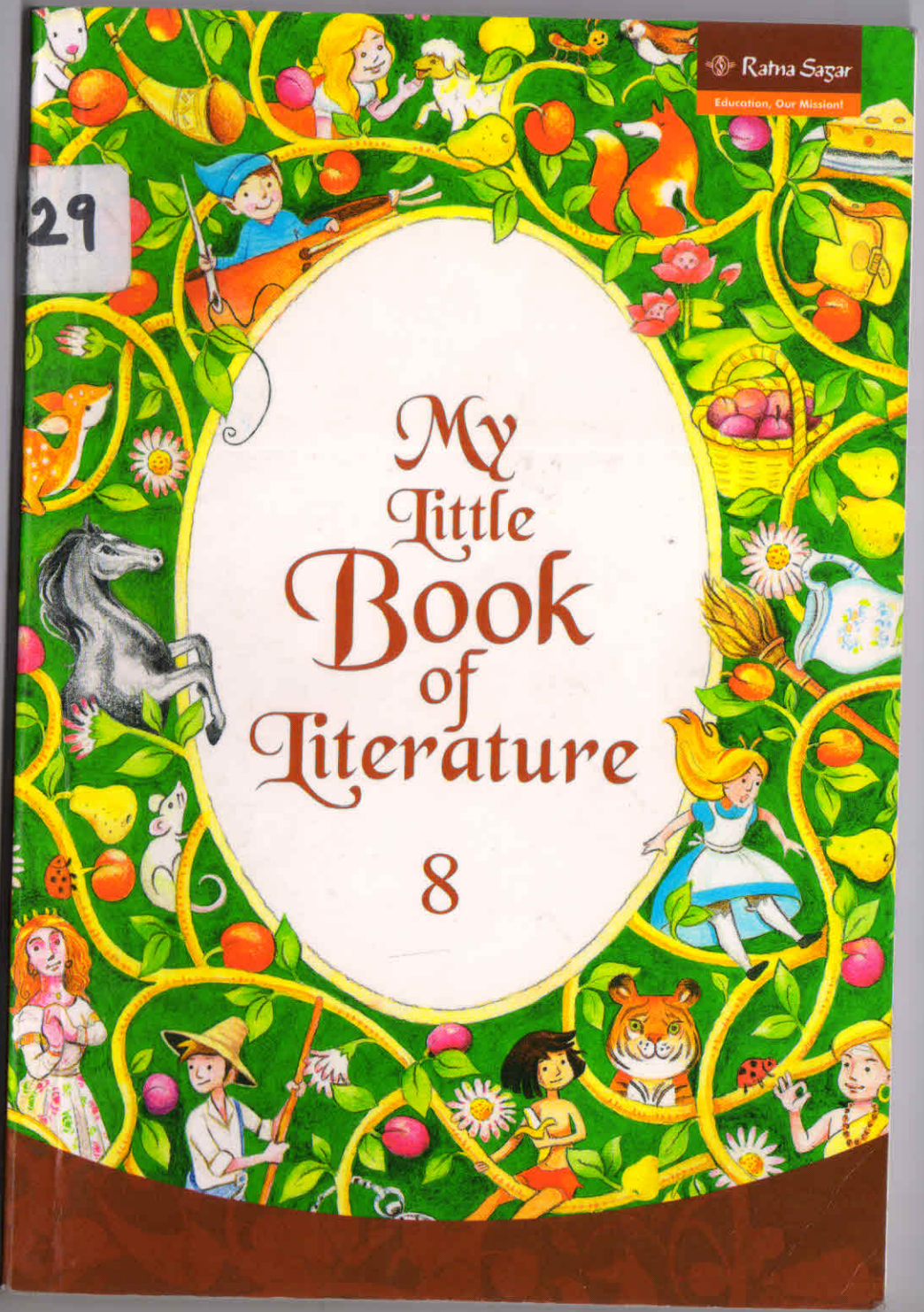
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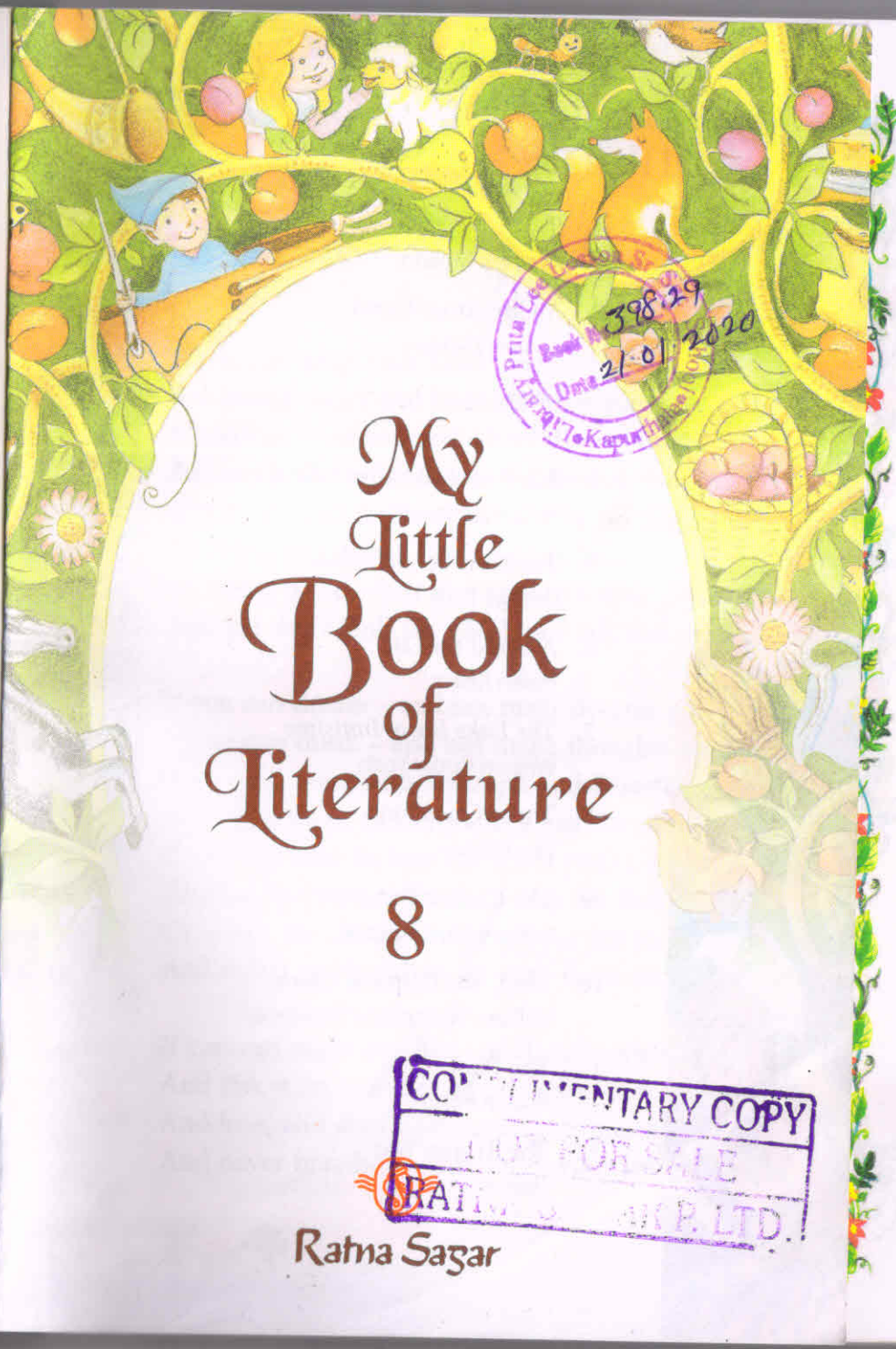
My Little Book of Literature engages the child in a way that encourages learning, while retaining the pleasure that comes from reading for its own sake. This is what will make children good readers for life.



My Little Book of Literature

8

Ratna Sagar

Contents

1

If

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream – and not make dreams your master;
If you can think – and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;

If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on!"

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings – nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And – which is more – you'll be a Man, my son!

Rudyard Kipling

Words to Know

impostors: people who pretend to be someone else in order to deceive others

knaves: unprincipled men, rogues

pitch-and-toss: a gambling game

sinew: tendon, tissue joining muscle to bone

Man: here, a fine human being

Read and Answer

A Answer these questions.

1. What does the poet mean by 'keep your head'?
2. How does the poet want us to react when everyone doubts us?
3. Why should you not 'look too good' nor 'talk too wise'?
4. What does the poet mean by 'If you can dream – and not make dreams your master'?
5. How can truth be 'twisted'?
6. Which quality can help a failed person start again?
7. What does the poet want us to do? Tick (✓) the correct answers.
   a. be calm and composed ☐
   b. sound wise and good all the time ☐
   c. develop self-control ☐
   d. express our emotions readily ☐
   e. treat success and failure alike ☐
   f. avoid taking risks ☐
   g. endure hardship without complaining ☐
   h. remain balanced when happy or sad ☐

B Answer with reference to the context.

If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies

1. What could one be waiting for?

2. What would one need to keep waiting?

3. Why does the poet ask you not to lie?

C Think and answer.

1. What do these lines/phrases from the poem mean? Tick (✓) the correct options.

a. And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise.

i. stop being good and wise forever ☐

ii. avoid being preachy and good in a way that draws too much attention to yourself ☐

b. If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue.

i. learn to talk well amidst a crowd ☐

ii. be with different kinds of people yet live by your values ☐

c. unforgiving minute

i. time is harsh as it is short and it does not come back to you ☐

ii. time is a big healer of wounds ☐

d. Triumph and Disaster

i. success and failure ☐

ii. peace and war ☐

e. Or walk with Kings – nor lose the common touch

i. be among important people but don't lose your humility and values ☐

ii. be with kings and not with common people ☐

Word Power

Look at the underlined words in these two lines from the poem.

If you can trust yourself when all <u>men</u> doubt you.

And – which is more – you'll be a <u>Man</u>, my son!

Even though the poet is talking about human beings in general, he uses the term 'men' and 'Man' to refer to them.

However today, it is considered a good practice to make your language gender-neutral when you are talking in general terms, without referring to a particular gender.

For instance, you can rephrase the first line as shown below to remove its gender bias.

If you can trust yourself when <u>everyone</u> doubts you.

Write gender-neutral equivalents for these terms.

1. spokesman / spokeswoman _____
2. policeman / policewoman _____
3. chairman / chairwoman _____
4. fireman / firewoman _____
5. salesman / saleswoman _____
6. actress _____

Know More

1. In 1895, Leander Starr Jameson, an English nobleman led a military force in South Africa. The mission turned out to be a disaster. Jameson took responsibility for the failure of the mission and became a hero for Britain due to his courage. Kipling was inspired by Jameson's character and his ability to face failure with dignity and composure. He wrote the poem 'If' highlighting the great virtue all human beings must aspire to have.
2. In 2007, Joni Mitchell set the poem to music. However, Mitchell made gender corrections to keep up with the times. 'All men' was replaced by 'everybody' and a few other changes were also made.

2

A Christmas Carol

This extract is taken from A Christmas Carol *by Charles Dickens. Ebenezer Scrooge is a wealthy but cold-hearted miser. On Christmas Eve, he refuses a Christmas dinner invitation from his nephew, Fred. He is rude to two elderly gentlemen who come to his house to collect money for the poor. He overworks his clerk, Bob Cratchit, and is angry for having to give him a holiday on Christmas. At night, the ghost of Scrooge's former partner, Jacob Marley, who has been dead for seven years, visits him. He comes to warn Scrooge to mend his ways. Because of Jacob Marley, the ghosts of Christmas Past, Christmas Present, and Christmas Yet To Come appear and point out to Scrooge how cruel and bitter he has become. Scrooge realizes his mistakes and decides to change his ways.*

"What's today?" cried Scrooge, calling down to a boy in Sunday clothes, who perhaps had loitered in to look about him. "Eh?" returned the boy, with all his might of wonder.

"What's today, my fine fellow?" said Scrooge.

"Today!" replied the boy. "Why, CHRISTMAS DAY!"

"It's Christmas Day!" said Scrooge to himself. "I haven't missed it. The Spirits have done it all in one night. They can do anything they like. Of course they can.

Of course they can. Hallo, my fine fellow!"

"Hallo!" returned the boy.

"Do you know the Poulterer's, in the next street but one, at the corner?" Scrooge inquired.

"I should hope I did," replied the lad.

"An intelligent boy!" said Scrooge. "A remarkable boy! Do you know whether they've sold the prize Turkey that was hanging up there? Not the little prize Turkey, the big one?"

"What, the one as big as me?" returned the boy.

"What a delightful boy!" said Scrooge. "It's a pleasure to talk to him. Yes, my buck!"

"It's hanging there now," replied the boy.

"Is it?" said Scrooge. "Go and buy it."

"Walk-ER!" exclaimed the boy.

"No, no," said Scrooge, "I am in earnest. Go and buy it, and tell them to bring it here, that I may give them the direction where to take it. Come back with the man, and I'll give you a shilling. Come back with him in less than five minutes, and I'll give you half-a-crown!" The boy was off like a shot.

"I'll send it to Bob Cratchit's! He shan't know who sends it. It's twice the size of Tiny Tim. Joe Miller never made such a joke as sending it to Bob's will be!"

Scrooge wrote down the address on a piece of paper, and went downstairs to open the street door, ready for the arrival of the poulterer's man.

"Here's the Turkey. Hallo! Whoop! How are you! Merry Christmas!"

It was a Turkey! He never could have stood upon his

"Hallo, my fine fellow!"

legs, that bird. He would have snapped them short off in a minute, like sticks of sealing-wax.

"Why, it's impossible to carry that to Camden Town," said Scrooge to the poulterer's man. "You must have a cab."

The chuckle with which he said this, and the chuckle with which he paid for the Turkey, and the chuckle with which he paid for the cab, and the chuckle with which he recompensed the boy, were only to be exceeded by the chuckle with which he sat down breathless in his chair again, and chuckled till he cried.

Scrooge dressed himself all in his best, and at last got out into the streets. He regarded everyone with a delighted smile. He looked so irresistibly pleasant that three or four good-humoured fellows said, "Good morning, sir! A merry Christmas to you." And Scrooge said often afterwards, that of all the blithe sounds he had ever heard, those were the blithest in his ears.

He had not gone far, when coming on towards him he beheld the portly gentleman, who had walked into his counting-house the day before, and said, "Scrooge and Marley's, I believe?" It sent a pang across his heart to think how this old gentleman would look upon him when they met, but he knew what path lay straight before him, and he took it.

"My dear sir," said Scrooge, quickening his pace, and taking the old gentleman by both his hands. "How do you do? A Merry Christmas to you, sir!"

"Mr Scrooge?"

"Yes," said Scrooge. "That is my name, and I fear it

may not be pleasant to you. Allow me to ask your pardon. And will you have the goodness–" here Scrooge whispered in his ear.

"Lord bless me!" cried the gentleman, as if his breath were gone. "My dear Mr Scrooge, are you serious?"

"If you please," said Scrooge. "Not a farthing less. A great many back-payments are included in it, I assure you. Will you do me that favour?"

"My dear sir," said the other, shaking hands with him. "I don't know what to say to such munificence–"

"Don't say anything, please," retorted Scrooge. "Will you come and see me?"

"I will!" cried the old gentleman. And it was clear he meant to do it.

"Thank you," said Scrooge. "I am much obliged to you. I thank you fifty times. Bless you!"

He went to church, and walked about the streets, and watched the people hurrying to and fro, and patted children on the head, and questioned beggars, and looked down into the kitchens of houses, and up to the windows; and found that everything could yield him pleasure. He had never dreamt that any walk–that anything–could give him so much happiness. In the afternoon, he turned his steps towards his nephew's house.

He passed the door a dozen times, before he had the courage to go up and knock. But he made a dash, and did it.

"Is your master at home, my dear?" said Scrooge to the girl. Nice girl! Very.

"Yes, sir."

"Where is he, my love?" said Scrooge.

"He's in the dining room, sir, along with mistress. I'll show you upstairs, if you please."

"Thank you. He knows me," said Scrooge, with his hand already on the dining-room lock. "I'll go in here, my dear."

He turned it gently, and sidled his face in, round the door. They were looking at the table (which was spread out in great array), for these young housekeepers are always nervous on such points, and like to see that everything is right.

"Fred!" said Scrooge.

Dear heart alive, how his niece by marriage started! Scrooge had forgotten, for the moment, about her sitting in the corner with the footstool, or he wouldn't have done it on any account.

"Why bless my soul!" cried Fred, "who's that?"

"It's I. Your uncle Scrooge. I have come to dinner. Will you let me in, Fred?"

Let him in! It is a mercy he didn't shake his arm off. Scrooge was at home in five minutes. Nothing could be heartier. His niece looked just the same. So did the plump sister when she came. So did everyone when they came. Wonderful party, wonderful games, wonderful unanimity, wonderful happiness!

But he was early at the office next morning. Oh, he was early there. If he could only be there first, and catch Bob Cratchit coming late! That was the thing he had set his heart upon.

And he did it, yes, he did! The clock struck nine. No Bob. A quarter past. No Bob. He was full eighteen minutes and a half behind his time. Scrooge sat with his door wide open, that he might see him come into the Tank.

His hat was off before he opened the door, his comforter too. He was on his stool in a jiffy, driving away with his pen, as if he were trying to overtake nine o'clock.

"Hallo!" growled Scrooge, in his accustomed voice as near as he could feign it. "What do you mean by coming here at this time of day?"

"I am very sorry, sir," said Bob. "I am behind my time."

"You are!" repeated Scrooge. "Yes. I think you are. Step this way, if you please."

"It's only once a year, sir," pleaded Bob, appearing from the Tank. "It shall not be repeated. I was making rather merry yesterday, sir."

"Now, I'll tell you what, my friend," said Scrooge, "I am not going to stand this sort of thing any longer. And therefore," he continued, leaping from his stool, and giving Bob such a dig in the waistcoat that he staggered back into the Tank again, "and therefore, I am about to raise your salary!"

Bob trembled, and got a little nearer to the ruler. He had a momentary idea of knocking Scrooge down with it, holding him, and calling to the people in the court for help and a strait-waistcoat.

"A merry Christmas, Bob!" said Scrooge, with an earnestness that could not be mistaken, as he clapped him on the back. "A merrier Christmas, Bob, my good fellow, than I have given you for many a year! I'll raise your salary,

and endeavour to assist your struggling family, and we will discuss your affairs this very afternoon, over a Christmas bowl of smoking bishop! Make up the fires, and buy another coal-scuttle before you dot another *i*, Bob Cratchit!"

Scrooge was better than his word. He did it all, and infinitely more; and to Tiny Tim, who did not die, he was a second father. He became as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew, or any other good old city or town in the good old world knew.

Charles Dickens

Words to Know

with all . . . wonder: in great amazement

Poulterer: chicken and turkey seller

Walk-ER!: an exclamation of disbelief

I am in earnest: I am serious.

Tiny Tim: Bob Cratchit's son, who suffered from poor health

Joe Miller: a popular comic stage actor in London in the 18th century

recompensed: here, paid

blithe: cheerful

what path lay . . . him: here, what he had to do

farthing: a coin formerly used in Great Britain, worth one fourth of a penny

munificence: here, an act of great generosity

great array: a variety of dishes were laid out on the table

niece by marriage: nephew's wife

started: here, jumped (as if from fright)

the Tank: here, the small, dismal room in which Bob Cratchit worked

feign: here, imitate

strait-waistcoat: also called straitjacket, a long-sleeved jacket-like garment used to bind the arms tightly against the body to restrain a violent person

endeavour: try

smoking bishop: a Christmas drink made from red wine, lemons or oranges, sugar, and spices

coal-scuttle: metal container for keeping coal

dot another *i*: here, do any further work

Read and Answer

A **Answer these questions.**

1. Which words sounded the 'blithest' to the ears of Ebenezer Scrooge?
2. What kind of a reception did Scrooge get in Fred's home?
3. Why did Scrooge reach office early the day after Christmas?
4. What Christmas cheer did Scrooge bring for Bob Cratchit?

B Answer with reference to the context.

1. "My dear sir," said the other, shaking hands with him. "I don't know what to say to such munificence –"
   a. Who said these words and to whom?
   b. Why did the speaker say these words?
   c. What is the munificence?
2. "What do you mean by coming here at this time of day?"
   a. Who said these words and to whom?
   b. Was the speaker really angry?
   c. Why had the person being spoken to come late?

C Think and answer.

Why do you think Bob Cratchit thought of calling people for help when Scrooge informed him that he would raise his salary?

Do and Learn

1. List six qualities you would associate with Christmas. Cheerfulness and charity are examples. Do you think these qualities can be a part of everyday life? Write a few lines on how the Christmas spirit can be celebrated every day, and not just on the day of Christmas.
2. 'You will find, as you look back on your life, that the moments that stand out are the moments when you have done things for others.' These were the words of Scottish writer and preacher Henry Drummond (1851–1897).

Do you agree with this statement? Discuss it in class. Share an incident where you were kind and generous to a person, and relate how you felt about it. Discuss any other moment that proved to be a high point in your life.

Know More

We all know 25 December is Christmas Day, when we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. But did you know that the day after Christmas, 26 December, is an important day as well in many parts of the world? This day is celebrated as Boxing Day. Despite its name, it has nothing to do with boxing. Some say that this holiday came to be observed because those who worked on Christmas Day would take the next day off to be with their families. Their employers would then present them with gift boxes as an appreciation of their service. In our story, Bob Cratchit has a windfall of fortune, with Scrooge raising his salary and promising to assist his family, on Boxing Day.

3

Dusk

This is a short story by H H Munro, who wrote under the pen name Saki. Munro had mastered the art of the unexpected ending. In this story, he uses the same device and holds the readers' interest till the very end.

Norman Gortsby sat on a bench in the Park, with his back to a strip of bush-planted sward, fenced by the park railings, and the row fronting him across a wide stretch of carriage drive. Hyde Park Corner, with its rattle and hoot of traffic, lay immediately to his right. It was some thirty minutes past six on an early March evening, and dusk had fallen heavily over the scene, dusk mitigated by some faint moonlight and many street lamps. There was a wide emptiness over the road and sidewalk and yet there were many unconsidered figures, moving silently through the half-light or dotted unobtrusively on bench and chair, scarcely to be distinguished from the shadowed gloom in which they sat.

The scene pleased Gortsby and harmonized with his present mood. Dusk, to his mind, was the hour of the defeated.

The wanderers in the dusk did not choose to have strange looks fasten on them, therefore they came out in this bat-fashion, taking their pleasure sadly in a pleasure-ground that had emptied of its rightful occupants. Beyond the sheltering screen of bushes and palings came a realm of brilliant lights and noisy rushing traffic.

So Gortsby's imagination pictured things as he sat on his bench in the almost deserted walk. Money troubles did not press on him; had he so wished he could have strolled into the thoroughfares of light and noise, and taken his place among the jostling ranks of those who enjoyed prosperity or struggled for it.

On the bench by his side sat an elderly gentleman with a drooping air of defiance that was probably the remaining vestige of self-respect in an individual who had ceased to defy successfully anybody or anything. His clothes could scarcely be called shabby, at least they passed muster in the half-light, but one's imagination could not have pictured the wearer embarking on the purchase of a half-crown box of chocolates or laying out nine pence on a carnation buttonhole. He belonged unmistakably to that forlorn orchestra to whose piping no one dances; he was one of the world's lamenters who induces no responsive weeping. As he rose to go, Gortsby imagined him returning to a home circle where he was snubbed and of no account, or to some bleak lodging where his ability to pay a weekly bill was the beginning and end of the interest he inspired. His retreating figure vanished slowly into the shadows, and his place on the bench was taken almost immediately by a young man, fairly well dressed but scarcely more cheerful of mien than

his predecessor. As if to emphasize the fact that the world went badly with him, the newcomer unburdened himself of an angry and very audible expletive as he flung himself into the seat.

"You don't seem in a very good temper," said Gortsby, judging that he was expected to take due notice of the demonstration.

The young man turned to him with a look of disarming frankness, which put him instantly on his guard.

"You wouldn't be in a good temper if you were in the fix I'm in," he said, "I've done the silliest thing I've ever done in my life."

"Yes?" said Gortsby dispassionately.

"Came up this afternoon, meaning to stay at the Patagonian Hotel in Berkshire Square," continued the young man, "when I got there, I found it had been pulled down some weeks ago and a cinema theatre run up on the site. The taxi driver recommended me to another hotel some way off and I went there. I just sent a letter to my people, giving them the address, and then I went out to buy some soap – I'd forgotten to pack any and I hate using hotel soap. Then I strolled about a bit, had a drink at a bar and looked at the shops, and when I came to turn my steps back to the hotel, I suddenly realized that I didn't remember its name or even what street it was in. There's a nice predicament for a fellow who hasn't any friends or connections in London! Of course I can wire to my people for the address, but they won't have got my letter till tomorrow; meantime I'm without any money, came out with about a shilling on me,

"You wouldn't be in a good temper if you were in the fix I'm in."

which went in buying the soap and getting the drink; and here I am, wandering about with two pence in my pocket and nowhere to go for the night."

There was an eloquent pause after the story had been told. "I suppose you think I've spun you rather an impossible yarn," said the young man presently, with a suggestion of resentment in his voice.

"Not at all impossible," said Gortsby judicially, "I remember doing exactly the same thing once in a foreign capital, and on that occasion there were two of us, which made it more remarkable. Luckily we remembered that the hotel was on a sort of canal, and when we struck the canal we were able to find our way back to the hotel."

The youth brightened at the reminiscence. "In a foreign city I wouldn't mind so much," he said, "one could go to one's Consul and get the requisite help from him. Here in one's own land one is far more derelict if one gets into a fix. Unless I can find some decent chap to swallow my story and lend me some money, I seem likely to spend the night on the embankment. I'm glad, anyhow, that you don't think the story outrageously improbable."

He threw a good deal of warmth into the last remark, as though perhaps to indicate his hope that Gortsby did not fall far short of the requisite decency.

"Of course," said Gortsby slowly, "the weak point of your story is that you can't produce the soap."

The young man sat forward hurriedly, felt rapidly in the pockets of his overcoat, and then jumped to his feet.

"I must have lost it," he muttered angrily.

"To lose a hotel and a cake of soap in one afternoon suggests wilful carelessness," said Gortsby, but the young man scarcely waited to hear the end of the remark. He flitted away down the path, his head held high, with an air of somewhat jaded jauntiness.

"It was a pity," mused Gortsby, "the going out to get one's own soap was the one convincing touch in the whole story, and yet it was just that little detail that brought him to grief. If he had the brilliant forethought to provide himself with a cake of soap, wrapped and sealed with all the solicitude of the chemist's counter, he would have been a genius in his particular line. Genius certainly consists of an infinite capacity for taking precautions."

With that reflection Gortsby rose to go; as he did so an exclamation of concern escaped him. Lying on the ground by the side of the bench was a small oval packet, wrapped and sealed with the solicitude of a chemist's counter. It could be nothing else but a cake of soap, and it had evidently fallen out of the youth's overcoat pocket when he flung himself down on the seat. In another moment Gortsby was scudding along the dusk-shrouded path in anxious quest for a youthful figure in a light overcoat. He had nearly given up the search when he caught sight of the object of his pursuit standing irresolutely on the border of the carriage drive, evidently uncertain whether to strike across the Park or make for the bustling pavements of Knightsbridge. He turned round sharply with an air of defensive hostility when he found Gortsby hailing him.

"The important witness to the genuineness of your story

has turned up," said Gortsby, holding out the cake of soap, "it must have slid out of your overcoat pocket when you sat down on the seat. I saw it on the ground after you left. You must excuse my disbelief, but appearances were really rather against you, and now, as I appeal to the testimony of the soap, I think I ought to abide by its verdict. If the loan of a sovereign is any good to you–"

The young man hastily removed all doubt on the subject by pocketing the coin.

"Here is my card with my address," continued Gortsby, "any day this week will do for returning the money, and here is the soap–don't lose it again; it's been a good friend to you."

"Lucky thing your finding it," said the youth, and then, with a catch in his voice, he blurted out a word or two of thanks and fled in the direction of Knightsbridge.

"Poor boy, he as nearly as possible broke down," said Gortsby to himself, "I don't wonder either; the relief from his quandary must have been acute. It's a lesson to me not to be too clever in judging by circumstances."

As Gortsby retraced his steps past the seat where the little drama had taken place he saw an elderly gentleman poking and peering beneath it and on all sides of it, and recognized his earlier fellow occupant.

"Have you lost anything, sir?" he asked.

"Yes, sir, a cake of soap."

Saki

Words to Know

bush-planted sward: grassy land covered with bushes

mitigated: lessened

unobtrusively: not noticeably

bat-fashion: like a bat (which comes out in the night)

thoroughfares: main roads

vestige: trace or sign

forlorn: sad; cheerless

mien: expression

expletive: a rude word expressing anger or unhappiness

dispassionately: without showing any emotion

predicament: a troublesome situation from which it is difficult to get out

eloquent pause: a pause in a conversation that says a lot

I've spun . . . yarn: made up and told you a rather unbelievable story

reminiscence: memory

derelict: abandoned

embankment: here, raised mound of earth or stone along the road

improbable: not likely to happen or not likely to be true

requisite decency: here, required kindness (of lending him some money)

jaded jauntiness: here, a look of self-confidence that has been shown too many times (hence, jaded)

brilliant forethought: here, excellent planning for what may happen

solicitude: care

scudding: running

irresolutely: indecisively

sovereign: an English gold coin equivalent to one pound sterling

quandary: state of uncertainty

Read and Answer

A **Answer these questions.**

1. According to the narrator, whom does the dusk hour belong to?
2. Compare and contrast the two people who sat on the bench with Norman Gortsby.
3. What proved to be the weak point in the young man's story?
4. "Lucky thing your finding it." What 'luck' did the young man have in the story?

B **Answer with reference to the context.**

1. The young man turned to him with a look of disarming frankness, which put him instantly on his guard.
   a. To whom did the young man turn?
   b. What did the young man say to him?
   c. Describe the young man.
   d. Why do you think the 'look of disarming frankness' put the person on his guard?
2. "It's a lesson to me not to be too clever in judging by circumstances."
   a. Name the speaker.
   b. Whom did the speaker judge?
   c. Did his judgement turn out to be correct?
   d. What lesson did the speaker ultimately learn?

Do and Learn

1. Some people possess a flair for making up a story at a moment's notice. With the help of your partner, make up a story on any one of these themes: friendship, fraud, kindness, family, school life or society, in not more than half an hour. Then narrate it to the class.
2. The story has a surprise ending. This is called a twist in the tale. We are led to believe something and suddenly the end is not what we had expected. Read other stories by Saki, such as 'The Open Window' and 'The Background', and write a note on each of the endings.

4

Scratching the Tiger's Back

Regrettably, the Tiger is
known for fierce attack.
But there are days when the Tiger says,
"Come here and scratch my back."
His moods vary with meals.
At times the Tiger is not
Charged with electricity.
His blood isn't that hot.
He feels so lazy that he lazes;
Stays put, doesn't go places.
His stripes don't blaze
His skin doesn't glow.
He feels so lazy that time
And the afternoon and the winter sun turn slow.

That autumn evening
When for a moment brief
Light through the leaves
Is itself black-and-gold, black shadow and gold leaf
That evening as the sun sinks
You will not think
Of him with fear
And even if you do

The tiger will be on the far bank
Not here.
That night you will not dream of tigers
As a print of black daggers and gold daggers.

And even if he does enter your dreams,
He will do so softly.
He will not charge
He will not barge
Into your sleep.
All he will tell
You is "I am well
Because I lunched well.
I too am made by God.
I am a symbol, I am like you.
Both good and evil dwell
In me too –
For good – gold, for evil – black.
Tonight I'll say nothing
You can scratch my back."

Keki N Daruwalla

Words to Know

Charged with electricity: full of energy

for a moment brief: lasting for a short time

Read and Answer

A **Answer these questions.**

1. Why does the poet use the word 'regrettably' to say that 'the tiger is known for fierce attack'?
2. Why do the afternoon and the winter sun turn slow for the tiger? What does the poet mean by this?
3. According to the poet,
   a. how do we usually visualize tigers in our dreams?
   b. how would our dream of the tiger be different 'that night'?
4. 'I am a symbol, I am like you.'
   a. What is the tiger a symbol of?
   b. How is the tiger similar to human beings?

B **Think and answer.**

1. The tiger seems to be asking for something. What do you think it is?
2. What do you think the poet is trying to convey through the poem?
3. 'At times the tiger is not charged with electricity' means that
   a. the electricity does not charge his body.
   b. he is tired.
4. The line 'black and gold daggers' refers to
   a. the sunlight passing through the green leaves.
   b. the stripes on the body of the tiger.

5. Gold and black colours have been compared to
   a. leaves and shadows.
   b. good and evil.

Word Power

There are many idioms in the English language that are based on the names of the various parts of the body.

For example: to scratch someone's back, which means to do something helpful for somebody.

Complete the sentences given below by choosing the correct idioms from the brackets.

1. Tigers too have emotions and sometimes they also need _____ (a head to cry on / a shoulder to cry on)
2. The workers wanted to discuss their problems, but they were given the _____ by the factory owner. (cold shoulder / warm shoulder)
3. We might be good friends, but we do not _____ on many things. (see through the same eyes / see eye-to-eye)
4. Mohan's new house cost him _____ (an arm and a leg / both arms and the legs)
5. I wanted to try bungee jumping but I got _____ (cold hands / cold feet)
6. My uncle is an _____ at chess. (old hand / old leg)

7. Grandfather had _____ (blue fingers / green fingers). It is thanks to him that our house has such a beautiful garden.

Do and Learn

1. Write a short poem on an animal you enjoy watching – an elephant, a dog, a cat or any other animal.
2. Identify six words related to tigers in this wordsearch.

E	N	D	A	N	G	E	R	E	D
F	C	C	R	N	E	V	Q	V	X
E	P	A	B	F	H	P	K	O	R
L	O	R	S	V	Z	X	Y	S	C
I	S	N	D	A	C	E	G	J	K
N	T	I	S	T	R	I	P	E	S
E	L	V	O	W	I	L	D	X	Z
A	H	O	R	T	S	V	O	V	W
R	R	R	A	M	B	U	S	H	O
C	S	O	B	C	F	H	J	K	I
A	U	U	S	R	T	M	U	N	W
P	K	S	X	B	D	A	S	P	R

Know More

1. The tiger is the biggest species of the cat family.
2. Each tiger has a unique pattern of stripes on its body.
3. Tigers have striped skin, not just striped fur.
4. Tigers are good swimmers. A tiger can swim up to six kilometres easily.
5. A tiger turns into a man-eater only if it is unable to hunt easily. This may be a result of the tiger getting old, sick, injured or losing its teeth.
6. A group of tigers is known as an 'ambush' or a 'streak'.

5

The New Schoolfellow

This extract is taken from George Eliot's famous novel The Mill on the Floss. *Tom and Maggie are brother and sister. They live in a small town in 19th-century England. Tom is a lively boy, fond of outdoor activities. He meets Philip Wakem at his boarding school. Philip has a hump on his back owing to an accident. The meeting between the two boys is awkward but amusing and interesting for an observer.*

It was a cold, wet January day on which Tom went back to school, a day quite in keeping with this severe phase of his destiny. If he had not carried in his pocket a parcel of sugar-candy and a small Dutch doll for little Laura, Mr Stelling's daughter, there would have been no ray of expected pleasure. But he liked to think how Laura would put out her lips and her tiny hands for the bits of sugar-candy, and to give the greater keenness to these pleasures of imagination, he took out the parcel, made a small hole in the paper, and bit off a crystal or two, which had so solacing an effect that he repeated the process more than once on his way.

"Well, Tulliver, we're glad to see you again," said Mr Stelling heartily. "Take off your wrappings and come into the study till dinner. You'll find a bright fire there and a new companion, Master Philip."

Tom felt an uncomfortable flutter as he took off his woollen comforter and other wrappings. He had seen Philip Wakem at St. Ogg's. He was lawyer Wakem's son. He did not see how a bad man's son could be very good.

"Here is a new companion for you to shake hands with, Tulliver," said that gentleman on entering the study, "Master Philip Wakem. I shall leave you to make acquaintance by yourselves. You already know something of each other, I imagine, for you are neighbours at home."

Tom looked confused and awkward, while Philip rose and glanced at him timidly. Tom did not like to go up and put out his hand, and he was not prepared to say, 'How do you do?' on so short a notice.

Mr Stelling wisely turned away and closed the door behind him; boys' shyness only wears off in the absence of their elders.

Philip was at once too proud and too timid to walk towards Tom. He thought, or rather felt, that Tom did not like to look at him; everyone, almost, disliked looking at him, and his imperfect body was more noticeable when he walked. So they remained without shaking hands or even speaking, while Tom went to the fire and warmed himself, every now and then casting furtive glances at Philip, who seemed to be drawing absently, first one object and then another on a piece of paper he had before him. He had seated himself again, and as he drew, was thinking what he could say to Tom and trying to overcome his own repugnance to making the first advances.

Tom began to look oftener and longer at Philip's face, for he could see it without noticing the hump, on Philip's back and it was really not a disagreeable face – very old-looking, Tom thought. He wondered how much older Philip was than himself. This Wakem was a pale, puny fellow, and it was quite clear he would not be able to play at anything worth speaking of. But he handled his pencil very well and was drawing one thing after another without any trouble.

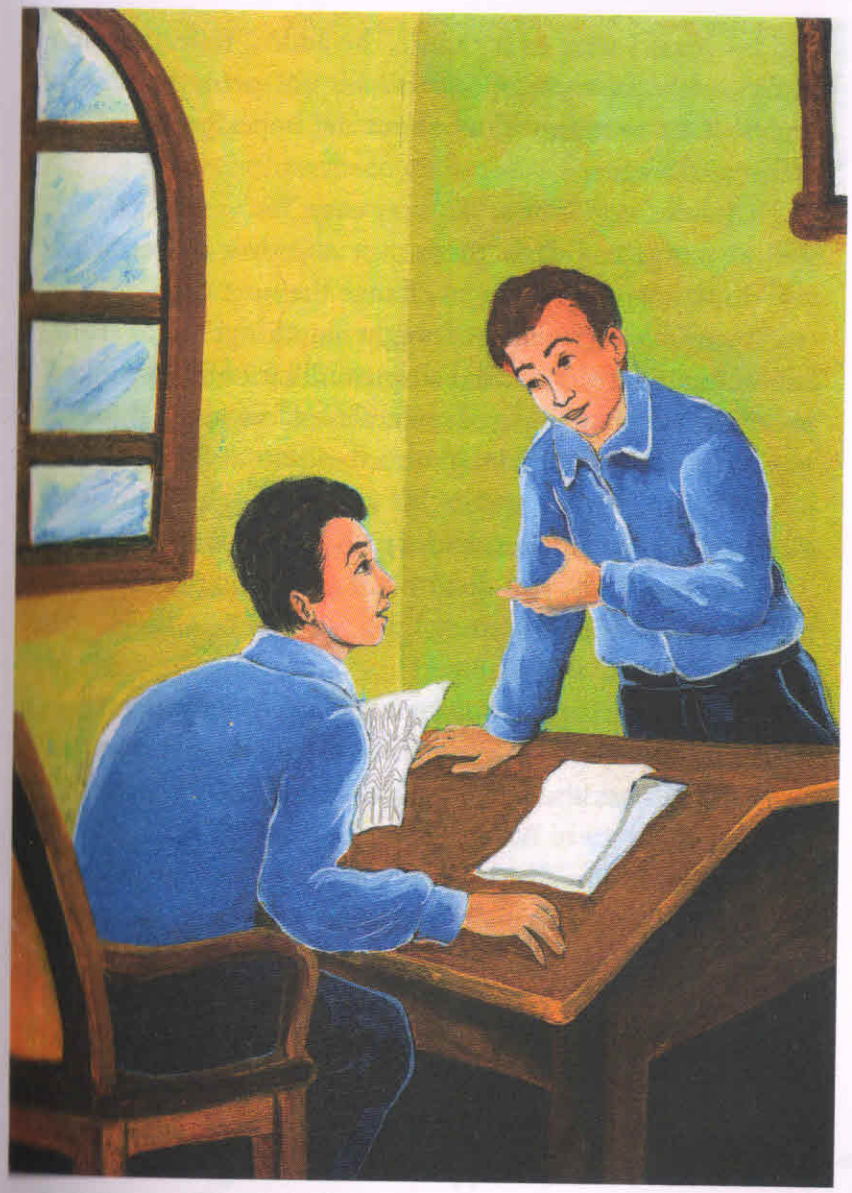
What was he drawing? It would be certainly better to have him as a companion than to stand looking out of the study window at the rain all alone. Something would happen every day – a quarrel or something; and Tom thought he should rather like to show Philip that he had better not try his tricks on him. He suddenly walked across the hearth and looked over Philip's paper.

"Why, that's a donkey and a spaniel, and partridges in the corn!" he exclaimed, his tongue being completely loosened by surprise and admiration.

"Oh, my buttons! I wish I could draw like that. I'm to learn drawing this half; I wonder if I shall learn to make dogs and donkeys!"

"Oh, you can do them without learning," said Philip; "I never learnt drawing."

"Never learnt?" said Tom in amazement "Why, when I make dogs and horses and those things, the heads and the legs won't come right, though I can see how they ought to be very well. I can make houses and all sorts of chimneys – chimneys going all down the wall – and windows in the roof, and all that. But I dare say I could draw dogs



"Why, that's a donkey and a spaniel, and partridges in the corn!"

and horses if I were to try more," he added, reflecting that Philip might falsely suppose that he was going to 'knock under', if he were too frank about the imperfection of his accomplishments.

"Oh, yes," said Philip, "it's very easy. You've only to look well at things and draw them over and over again. What you do wrong once, you can change the next time."

"But haven't you been taught anything?" said Tom, beginning to have a puzzled suspicion that Philip's crooked back might be the source of remarkable faculties. "I thought you'd been to school a long while."

"Yes," said Philip, smiling, "I've been taught Latin, and Greek, and mathematics, and writing, and such things."

"Oh, but, I say, you don't like Latin, though, do you?" said Tom, lowering his voice.

"Pretty well," said Philip.

"Ah, but perhaps you haven't got into the propria quae maribus," said Tom, nodding his head sideways, as much as to say, "that was the test; it was easy talking till you came to that."

Philip felt some bitter complacency in the promising stupidity of this well-made, active-looking boy. But made polite by his own extreme sensitiveness as well as by his desire to make friends, he checked his laughter and said quietly, "I've done with the grammar; I don't learn that any more."

"Then you won't have the same lessons as I shall?" said Tom with a sense of disappointment.

"No, but I dare say I can help you. I shall be very glad

to help you if I can."

Tom did not say thank you, for he was quite absorbed in the thought that Wakem's son did not seem so spiteful a fellow as might have been expected.

"I say," he said presently, "do you love your father?"

"Yes," said Philip, colouring deeply, "don't you love yours?"

"Oh yes . . . I only wanted to know," said Tom, rather ashamed of himself. Now, he saw Philip colouring and looking uncomfortable. He found much difficulty in adjusting his attitude of mind towards the son of Lawyer Wakem, and it had occurred to him that if Philip disliked his father, that fact might go some way towards helping him deal with this difficult situation.

"Shall you learn drawing now?" he said by way of changing the subject.

"No," said Philip. "My father wishes me to give all my time to other things now."

"What! Latin, and Euclid, and those things?" said Tom.

"Yes," said Philip, who had left off using his pencil and was resting his head on one hand while Tom was leaning forward on both elbows and looking with increasing admiration at the dog and the donkey.

"And you don't mind that?" said Tom.

"No, I like to know what everybody else knows. I can study what I like by and by."

"I can't think why anybody should learn Latin," said Tom. "It's no good."

"It's part of the education of a gentleman," said Philip.

"All gentlemen learn the same things."

"What! Do you think Sir John Crake, the master of the harriers, knows Latin?" said Tom, who had often thought he should like to resemble Sir John Crake.

"He learnt it when he was a boy, of course," said Philip. "But I dare say he's forgotten it."

"Oh, well, I can do that, then," said Tom, with serious satisfaction at the idea that, as far as Latin was concerned, he could be quite like Sir John Crake. "Only, you have to remember it while you're at school, else you've got to learn ever so many lines of 'Speaker'. Mr Stelling's very particular – did you know? He'll have you up ten times if you say 'nam' for 'jam' – he won't let you go a letter wrong, I can tell you."

"Oh, I don't mind," said Philip, unable to choke a laugh, "I can remember things easily. And there are some lessons I'm very fond of. I'm very fond of Greek history and everything about the Greeks. I should like to have been a Greek and fought the Persians, and then have come home and have written tragedies, or else have been listened to by everybody for my wisdom, like Socrates, and have died a grand death." (Philip, you perceive, was not without a wish to impress Tom with a sense of his mental superiority.)

"Why, were the Greeks great fighters?" said Tom, who saw a vista in this direction. "Is there anything like David and Goliath and Samson in Greek history? Those are the only bits I like in the history of the Jews."

"Oh, there are very fine stories of that sort about the Greeks – about the heroes of early times. They fought

many battles and wars."

"Oh, what fun!" said Tom, jumping away from the table and stamping first with one leg and then the other. "I say, can you tell me all about those stories? Because I shan't learn Greek you know . . . Shall I?" he added, pausing in his stamping with a sudden alarm lest the contrary might be possible. "Does every gentleman learn Greek? Will Mr Stelling make me begin with it, do you think?"

"No, I should think not – very likely not," said Philip. "But you may read those stories without knowing Greek. I've got them in English."

"Oh, but I don't like reading; I'd sooner have you tell them to me. But only the fighting ones, you know. My sister Maggie is always wanting to tell me stories, but they're stupid. Can you tell a good many fighting stories?"

"Oh, yes," said Philip, "lots of them, besides the Greek stories. I can tell you about Richard Cœur-de-Lion and Saladin, and about William Wallace and Robert Bruce and James Douglas – I know no end."

"You're older than I am, aren't you?" said Tom.

"Why, how old are you? I'm fifteen."

"I'm only going in fourteen," said Tom, "I wish Mr Stelling would let us go fishing. I could show you how to fish. You would be able to fish, wouldn't you? Its only standing and sitting still, you know."

Tom, in his turn, wished to make the balance dip in his favour. This boy must not suppose that his acquaintance with fighting stories put him on a par with an actual hero like Tom Tulliver. Philip answered almost peevishly, "I can't bear fishing.

I think people look like fools sitting and watching a line hour after hour, or else throwing and throwing, and catching nothing."

"Ah, but you wouldn't say they looked like fools when they landed a big pike, I can tell you," said Tom, who had never caught anything that was 'big' in his life, but whose imagination was on the stretch with indignant zeal for the honour of the sport. Wakem's son, it was plain, had his disagreeable points, but could become a friend nonetheless. Happily for the harmony of this first interview, they were now called to dinner, and Philip was not allowed to continue talking about fishing.

George Eliot

(Adapted from The Mill on the Floss*)*

Words to Know

severe . . . his destiny: difficult period of his life

solacing: comforting

wrappings: extra clothes worn for warmth

furtive: here, attempting to steal a glance when the other person is not looking

repugnance: extreme dislike

knock under: be defeated by

remarkable faculties: here, extraordinary qualities

propria quae maribus: proper nouns of the masculine gender

bitter complacency: a feeling of contentment or satisfaction mixed with bitterness

perplexity: confusion

Sir John Crake, the master of the harriers: a person responsible for looking after small hounds that helped when the Royalty went hunting

Richard Cœur-de-Lion: King Richard I of England (1157–1199), also known as Richard the Lionheart, a great military leader and warrior

Saladin: first Sultan of Egypt and Syria (1138–1193), a great warrior and conquerer

William Wallace: Sir William Wallace, one of the main leaders during the Wars of Scottish Independence

Robert Bruce: Robert I (1274–1329), King of Scotland, who led the country during the Wars of Scottish Independence

James Douglas: Sir James Douglas (1286–1330), one of the chief commanders of the Wars of Scottish Independence

peevishly: in an annoyed manner, irritably

pike: a kind of fish

indignant: angry (at Philip talking unfavourably about fishing)

zeal: enthusiasm

Read and Answer

A Answer these questions.

1. What did Tom Tulliver do with the parcel of sugar-candy?
2. Why did Mr Stelling leave Tom and Philip alone after introducing them to one another?
3. Why did Philip not get up to shake hands with Tom?
4. What prompted Tom to suddenly walk across to Philip?
5. Which lesson was Philip very fond of?
6. Why did Tom feel that Philip was not a spiteful fellow after all?

B Answer with reference to the context.

"I can study what I like by and by."

1. Who says these words and to whom?
2. What does the speaker like to study?
3. What do these words tell us about the speaker?

C Think and answer.

'Philip felt some bitter complacency in the promising stupidity of this well-made, active-looking boy.'

Philip felt complacent or self-satisfied because he knew he was far more knowledgeable than Tom. But why do you think he felt bitter at the same time?

Do and Learn

1. Tom and Philip are very different from each other. Do you think people of different temperaments can be friends? Discuss with your partner and write a paragraph about it.
2. Find three examples from 'The New Schoolfellow' to show that George Eliot understood children very well.

Know More

George Eliot is the pen name of British writer Mary Ann Evans (1819–1880). Her novels are known for their realistic portrayal of life and people. Most of Eliot's novels are set in rural England. *The Mill on the Floss* draws on many of George Eliot's own childhood experiences.

Think It Over

George Eliot said that she used a male pen name so that her work would be taken seriously. Some of the novels written by her under this pen name are *Adam Bede*, *Silas Marner* and *Middlemarch*. During her time, women mostly wrote lighthearted romances, of which she was critical.

Do you think the author was right in adopting a male pen name? Think it over and discuss in class.

6

A Bond for Life

American author, activist and lecturer Helen Keller was the first deaf-blind person to receive a Bachelor of Arts degree. She lost her eyesight and hearing after a mysterious fever struck her when she was nineteen months old. As she grew older, Helen felt a burning desire to speak, and frustrated by her inability, became stubborn and wild. Fortunately, her parents learned about the Perkins Institute for the Blind. The Institute sent the twenty-year-old Anne Sullivan to instruct Helen at her home. This extract from the autobiography The Story of My Life *talks about Anne's arrival at Helen's home, and how, from then on, everything acquired a new meaning in her life.*

The most important day I remember in my life is the one on which my teacher, Anne Mansfield Sullivan, came to me. I am filled with wonder when I consider the immeasurable contrasts between the two lives which it connects. It was the third of March 1887, three months before I was seven years old.

On the afternoon of that eventful day, I stood on the porch, dumb and expectant. I guessed vaguely from my mother's signs and from the hurrying to and fro in the house that something unusual was about to happen, so

I went to the door and waited on the steps. The afternoon sun penetrated the mass of honeysuckle that covered the porch, and fell on my upturned face. My fingers lingered almost unconsciously on the familiar leaves and blossoms which had just come forth to greet the sweet southern spring. I did not know what the future held of marvel or surprise for me. Anger and bitterness had preyed upon me continually for weeks, and a deep languor had succeeded this passionate struggle.

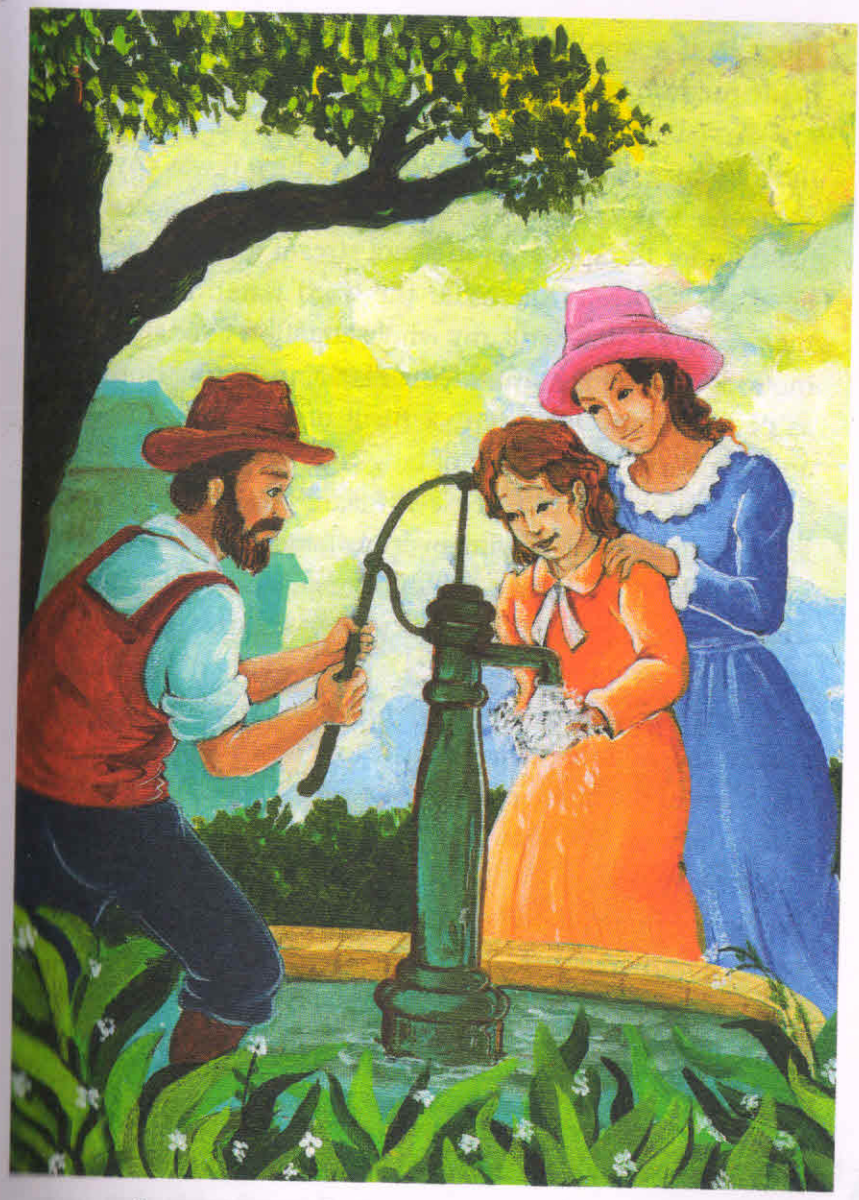
Have you ever been at sea in a dense fog, when it seemed as if a tangible white darkness shut you in, and the great ship, tense and anxious, groped her way toward the shore with plummet and sounding-line, and you waited with beating heart for something to happen? I was like that ship before my education began, only I was without compass or sounding-line, and had no way of knowing how near the harbour was. 'Light! Give me light!' was the wordless cry of my soul, and the light of love shone on me in that very hour.

I felt approaching footsteps, I stretched out my hand as I supposed to my mother. Some one took it, and I was caught up and held close in the arms of her who had come to reveal all things to me, and, more than all things else, to love me.

The morning after my teacher came she led me into her room and gave me a doll. The little blind children at the Perkins Institute had sent it, and Laura Bridgman had dressed it; but I did not know this until afterwards. When I had played with it a little while, Miss Sullivan slowly spelt into my hand the word 'd-o-l-l.' I was at once interested

in this finger play and tried to imitate it. When I finally succeeded in making the letters correctly I was flushed with childish pleasure and pride. Running downstairs to my mother I held up my hand and made the letters for doll. I did not know that I was spelling a word or even that words existed; I was simply making my fingers go in monkey-like imitation. In the days that followed I learnt to spell in this uncomprehending way a great many words; among them pin, hat, cup, and a few verbs like sit, stand, and walk. But my teacher had been with me several weeks before I understood that everything has a name.

One day, while I was playing with my new doll, Miss Sullivan put my big rag doll into my lap also, spelt 'd-o-l-l' and tried to make me understand that 'd-o-l-l' applied to both. Earlier in the day we had had a tussle over the words 'm-u-g' and 'w-a-t-e-r.' Miss Sullivan had tried to impress it upon me that 'm-u-g' is mug and that 'w-a-t-e-r' is water, but I persisted in confounding the two. In despair she had dropped the subject for the time, only to renew it at the first opportunity. I became impatient at her repeated attempts and, seizing the new doll, I dashed it upon the floor. I was keenly delighted when I felt the fragments of the broken doll at my feet. Neither sorrow nor regret followed my passionate outburst. I had not loved the doll. In the still, dark world in which I lived there was no strong sentiment or tenderness. I felt my teacher sweep the fragments to one side of the hearth, and I had a sense of satisfaction that the cause of my discomfort was removed. She brought me my hat, and I knew I was going out into the warm sunshine. This



Someone was drawing water and my teacher placed my hand under the spout.

thought, if a wordless sensation may be called a thought, made me hop and skip with pleasure.

We walked down the path to the well-house, attracted by the fragrance of the honeysuckle with which it was covered. Someone was drawing water and my teacher placed my hand under the spout. As the cool stream gushed over one hand she spelt into the other the word water, first slowly, then rapidly. I stood still, my whole attention fixed upon the motions of her fingers. Suddenly I felt a misty consciousness as of something forgotten – a thrill of returning thought; and somehow the mystery of language was revealed to me.

I knew then that 'w-a-t-e-r' meant the wonderful cool something that was flowing over my hand. That living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, and set it free! There were barriers still, it is true, but barriers that could in time be swept away.

I left the well-house eager to learn. Everything had a name, and each name gave birth to a new thought. As we returned to the house every object which I touched seemed to quiver with life. That was because I saw everything with the strange, new sight that had come to me. On entering the door I remembered the doll I had broken. I felt my way to the hearth and picked up the pieces. I tried vainly to put them together. Then my eyes filled with tears, for I realized what I had done, and for the first time I felt repentance and sorrow.

I learnt a great many new words that day. I do not remember what they all were, but I do know that mother, father, sister, teacher were among them – words that were

to make the world blossom for me, 'like Aaron's rod, with flowers.' It would have been difficult to find a happier child than I was as I lay in my crib at the close of that eventful day and lived over the joys it had brought me, and for the first time longed for a new day to come.

Helen Keller

Words to Know

porch: a small covered area at the entrance of a house

honeysuckle: a kind of sweet-smelling, twining vine

lingered: continued to stay

languor: lack of physical or mental energy

tangible: something that can be touched

plummet and sounding-line: devices used to find the depth of water (hence, distance from the shore)

Perkins Institution: the first school for the blind in the United States, founded in 1829

Laura Bridgman: a deaf and blind girl who had been successfully educated at the Perkins Institution, and about whom Charles Dickens wrote in his book *American Notes*

uncomprehending: without understanding

tussle: struggle

confounding: confusing

spout: here, the mouth of the water-well from which the water flowed out

hearth: the floor of a fireplace

gushed: flowed out

like Aaron's rod, with flowers: In the Bible, Aaron was the brother of the prophet Moses. Aaron's rod performed many miracles, so did Miss Sullivan's entry into Helen's life prove to be miraculous.

Read and Answer

Answer these questions.

1. What were Helen's feelings the day Anne Sullivan was to arrive at her house?
2. What image does the author use to convey her lack of direction before the arrival of Anne? What image does she use to describe her world after Anne's arrival?
3. How did Anne Sullivan make Helen understand that everything has a name?
4. What effect did the 'living word' have on Helen?
5. Explain the following lines:
   a. Anger and bitterness had preyed upon me continually for weeks, and a deep languor had succeeded this passionate struggle.
   b. 'Light! Give me light!' was the wordless cry of my soul, and the light of love shone on me in that very hour.

Word Power

Tick (✓) the correct meaning of the words as they have been used in the story.

1. expectant
   a. hoping to receive something ☐
   b. waiting for something unusual to happen ☐
2. living word
   a. a word the meaning of which came alive because of a sensation ☐
   b. a word that lived because it was written on the arm ☐

Do and Learn

1. Read the complete autobiography of Helen Keller, *The Story of My Life*, to know more about her amazing journey from being deaf and blind to becoming a prolific writer and social activist. *Up from Slavery* is another inspirational narrative, which recounts the astonishing journey from slavery to leadership of educator and author, Booker T Washington.
2. Many people have etched their name in history by defying disabilities and achieving what able-bodied people could not.

   In the box given on the next page, match the names of the achievers to their area of excellence and their disability.

EXCELLENCE	ACHIEVER	DISABILITY
1. music composer	John Milton	blind
2. dancer, actor	Marla Runyan	lame
3. inventor	Stephen Hawking	blind
4. athlete	Ludwig von Beethoven	motor neuron disease
5. physicist	Louis Braille	deaf
6. poet	Sudha Chandran	blind

7

The Lake Isle of Innisfree

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

William Butler Yeats

Words to Know

Innisfree: The Lake Isle of Innisfree is an uninhabited island near the coast of Ireland.

wattles: sticks woven together to make fences

glade: an open area in a forest

cricket: a small brown insect that produces a rhythmical, chirping sound

all a glimmer: shining softly

full of the linnet's wings: full of flying linnets (songbirds)

lapping: gently striking (the shore) with a soft sound

in the deep heart's core: in the depths of the heart

Read and Answer

A Answer these questions.

1. What are the things that the poet wishes to do in Innisfree?
2. How does the poet imagine life to be in Innisfree?
3. Why does the poet want to go to Innisfree?
4. How can we say that the Isle of Innisfree has a deep influence on the poet's mind and heart?
5. Can we say that the poet lives in a city? Give reasons.
6. What does the phrase 'bee-loud glade' mean? Tick (✓) the correct answer.
   a. a glade that is noisy ☐
   b. a glade where one can hear the sound made by the bees ☐
   c. a place where bees feel happy ☐

B Explain these lines from the poem in your own words.

1. . . . for peace comes dropping slow,
   Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings.
2. There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow.

C Think and answer.

1. The poet imagines an escape from the weariness of everyday life.
   a. Which aspects of daily life does he probably dislike?
   b. How does the Isle of Innisfree present a contrast to them?
   c. Which colours suggest this contrast?
2. Will the poet be happy and satisfied if he lives in the Isle of Innisfree permanently? Do you think he will want to return to his previous life after a few days? Give reasons.

Word Power

A rhyme scheme is indicated by the pattern of rhyming words placed at the end of the lines in a poem.

What is the rhyme scheme of the poem?

A metaphor is a comparison of two unlike things that have something in common. Unlike a simile, where two things are compared directly using the word 'like' or 'as', a metaphor is more indirect, where the comparison is made by stating that something is something else.

A metaphor used in the poem is: *the veils of the morning.*

Identify another metaphor in the poem.

Do and Learn

Attempt writing a poem on a place that you love to visit. It could be a place close to your home or located in a different town. It may be a place in the countryside – say, in your village. It could even be an imaginary place – one that you wish existed somewhere.

You may use these points as clues:

- Why do you like that place? Which qualities make it special?
- What would you like to do when you visit it?
- What influence does the place have on you – how does it make you feel?

Know More

Innisfree is a real island in County Sligo in Ireland. As a child, Yeats would often go to Sligo on vacation. Thus, the place was closely connected to his childhood memories. Yeats has said that the inspiration to write the poem came from a sudden memory of his childhood while walking down a street in London. The poem is also influenced by Irish folklore. The poem describes the poet's longing to escape the dreariness of everyday life and take refuge in nature. The poet feels such a compelling desire to go to the island that he can actually hear the lake water lapping and calling him to Innisfree.

8

Three Questions

Leo Tolstoy is one of the greatest writers of all time. His writings are full of wisdom. Read this story by him about a king who approaches a hermit to find answers to three questions.

It once occurred to a certain king, that if he always knew the right time to begin everything; if he knew who were the right people to listen to and whom to avoid; and, above all, if he always knew what was the most important thing to do, he would never fail in anything he might undertake.

And this thought having occurred to him, he had it proclaimed throughout his kingdom that he would handsomely reward anyone who would teach him what was the right time for every action, and who were the most necessary people, and how he might know what was the most important thing to do.

Many learned men came to the King, but they all answered his questions differently.

In reply to the first question, some said that to know the right time for every action one must draw up in advance a table of days, months and years, and must live strictly according to it. Only thus, said they, could everything

be done at its proper time. Others declared that it was impossible to decide beforehand the right time for every action; but that, not letting oneself be absorbed in idle pastimes, one should always attend to all that was going on and then do what was most needful. Others, again, said that however attentive the King might be to what was going on, it was impossible for one man to decide correctly the right time for every action, but that he should have a council of wise men who would help him to fix the proper time for everything.

But then again others said there were some things which could not wait to be laid before a council, but about which one had to decide at once whether to undertake them. But in order to decide that one must know beforehand what was going to happen. It is only magicians who know that; and, therefore, in order to know the right time for every action, one must consult magicians.

Equally various were the answers to the second question. Some said, the people the King needed the most were his councillors; others, the priests; others, the doctors; while some said warriors were the most necessary.

To the third question of the King as to what was the most important occupation, some replied that the most important occupation in the world was science. Others said it was skill in warfare; and others, again, that it was religious worship.

All the answers being different, the King agreed with none of them, and gave the reward to none. But still wishing to find the right answers to his questions, he decided to consult a hermit widely renowned for his wisdom.

The hermit lived in a wood which he never left, and he received none but common folk. So the King put on simple clothes, and before reaching the hermit's cell, dismounted from his horse, and, leaving his bodyguard behind, went on alone.

When the King approached him, the hermit was digging the ground in front of his hut. Seeing the King, he greeted him and went on digging. The hermit was frail and weak, and each time he stuck his spade into the ground and turned a little earth, he breathed heavily.

The King went up to him and said, "I have come to you, wise hermit, to ask you to answer three questions: How can I learn to do the right thing at the right time? Who are the people I most need, and to whom should I, therefore, pay more attention than the rest? And, what affairs are the most important, and need my first attention?"

The hermit listened to the King, but answered nothing. He just spat on his hand and recommenced digging.

"You are tired," said the King, "let me take the spade and work awhile for you."

"Thanks!" said the hermit, and, giving the spade to the King, sat down on the ground.

When he had dug two beds, the King stopped and repeated his questions. The hermit again gave no answer, but rose, stretched out his hand for the spade, and said:

"Now rest awhile and let me work a bit."

But the King did not give him the spade, and continued to dig. One hour passed, and another. The sun began to sink behind the trees, and the King at last stuck the spade into

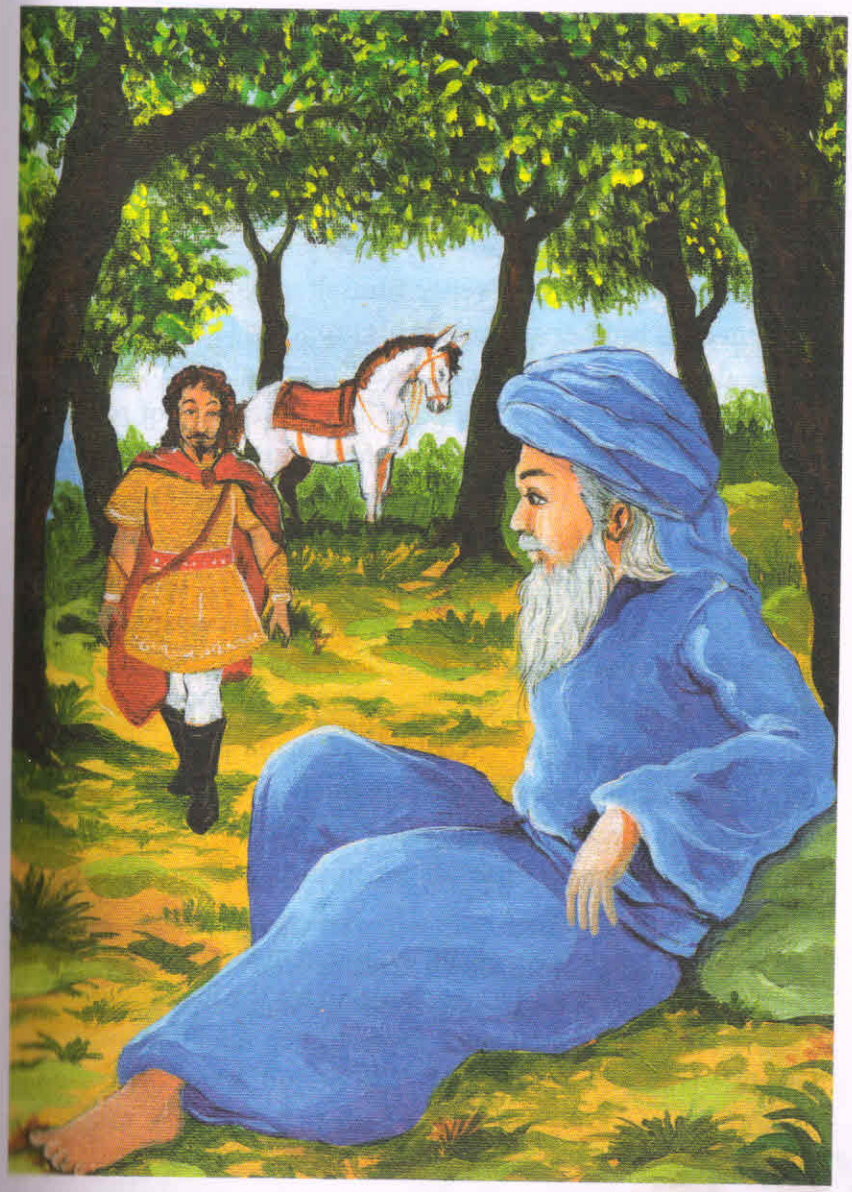
the ground and said:

"I came to you, wise man, for an answer to my questions. If you can give me none, tell me so and I will return home."

"Here comes someone running," said the hermit, "let us see who it is."

The King turned around, and saw a bearded man come running out of the woods. The man held his hands pressed against his stomach and blood was flowing from under them. When he reached the King, he fell fainting on the ground, moaning feebly. The King and the hermit unfastened the man's clothing. There was a large wound in his stomach. The King washed it as best as he could, and bandaged it with his handkerchief and a towel that the hermit had. But the blood would not stop flowing, and the King again and again removed the bandage soaked with blood, and washed and rebandaged the wound.

When at last the blood ceased flowing, the man revived and asked for something to drink. The King brought fresh water and gave it to him. Meanwhile the sun had set, and it had become cool. So the King, with the hermit's help, carried the wounded man into the hut and laid him on the bed. Lying on the bed the man closed his eyes and was quiet, but the King was so tired with his walk and with the work he had done, that he crouched down on the threshold, and also fell asleep – so soundly that he slept all through the short summer night. When he awoke in the morning, it was long before he could remember where he was or who was the strange bearded man lying on the bed and gazing intently at him with shining eyes.



The King went up to him and said, "I have come to you, wise hermit, to ask you to answer three questions".

"Forgive me!" said the bearded man in a weak voice, when he saw that the King was awake and was looking at him.

"I do not know you, and have nothing to forgive you for," said the King.

"You do not know me, but I know you. I am that enemy of yours who swore to revenge himself on you because you executed his brother and seized his property. I knew you had gone alone to see the hermit, and I resolved to kill you on your way back. But the day passed and you did not return. So I came out of my ambush to find you, and came upon your bodyguard. They recognized me and wounded me. I escaped from them, but would have bled to death had you not dressed my wounds. I wished to kill you, and you have saved my life. Now, if I live, and if you wish it, I will serve you as your most faithful slave and will bid my sons do the same. Forgive me!"

The King was very glad to have made peace with his enemy so easily, and to have gained him for a friend. He not only forgave him, but said he would send his servants and his own physician to attend to him, and promised to restore his property.

Having taken leave of the wounded man, the King went out into the porch and looked around for the hermit. Before going away he wished once more to beg for an answer to the questions he had asked. The hermit was outside, on his knees, sowing seeds in the beds that had been dug the day before.

The King approached him, and said:

"For the last time, I pray you to answer my questions, wise man."

"You have already been answered!" said the hermit still crouching on his thin legs, and looking up at the King, who stood before him.

"How answered? What do you mean?" asked the King.

"Do you not see," replied the hermit. "If you had not pitied my weakness yesterday and dug these beds for me but had gone your way, that man would have attacked you, and you would have repented not having stayed with me. So the most important time was when you were digging the beds; and I was the most important man; and to do me good was your most important business. Afterwards, when that man ran to us, the most important time was when you were attending to him, for if you had not dressed his wounds, he would have died without having made peace with you. So he was the most important man, and what you did for him was your most important business. Remember then: there is only one time that is important – the only time when we have any power, and that time is the present. The most necessary man is he with whom you are, for no man knows whether he will ever have dealings with any one else. And the most important affair is to do him good, because for that purpose alone was man sent into this life!"

Leo Tolstoy

Words to Know

proclaimed: announced publicly

idle pastimes: things one does just to pass one's spare time

widely renowned: famous far and wide

dismounted: got down

frail: weak; fragile

recommenced: began again

threshold: the entrance or doorway

executed: killed

came out of my ambush: here, came out of my hiding place

Read and Answer

Answer these questions.

1. What did the king want to know from the learned men?
2. Whom did the king finally decide to consult? How did he approach him?
3. Who was the bearded man? What had happened to him?
4. What did the bearded man intend to do and why?
5. The bearded man underwent a complete change of heart. How did this come about?
6. What was the answer that the hermit finally gave the king?

Word Power

Given below are many words that can be used to describe a person. In the table below, write the words you would use to describe the king, the hermit, and the king's assassin. One word can describe more than one character.

patient kind quiet helpful vengeful
bitter confused wise grateful
forgiving thankful humble modest
unaware faithful persistent persevering
industrious active merciful

	HERMIT	KING	ASSASSIN
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			

Do and Learn

1. A parable is a short and simple story that is used to illustrate a moral.

   Do you remember reading a parable? If you have, share it with your class and explain the moral behind the story.

2. Can you apply the hermit's answers to the king's questions to any situation you have faced? If you can, describe that situation. Show how the situation has proved the hermit's answers to be true.

Know More

1. Leo Tolstoy was a believer of non-violence. His views greatly influenced Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr in their non-violent struggles for freedom and equality.
2. Tolstoy's novel, *War and Peace*, is generally thought to be one of the greatest novels ever written.
3. Mahatma Gandhi was greatly influenced by Tolstoy's teachings on peaceful resistance to evil. Tolstoy would meet hatred expressed in violence by love expressed in self-suffering.

9

The Casket Test

Shakespeare's play The Merchant of Venice *begins with several suitors arriving to take the casket test to win the hand of the beautiful heiress, Portia. Several suitors arrive to take the test of the three caskets – one of gold, one of silver, and the third one of lead: one of them contains the portrait of Portia. Each casket has a message inscribed on it. The suitors try to interpret the message and choose the correct casket. But their interpretations reveal their follies. In this extract, the Prince of Arragon arrives to make his choice.*

CHARACTERS

PORTIA, an heiress of Belmont

NERISSA, her lady-in-waiting

THE PRINCE OF ARRAGON, a suitor to Portia

SERVANTS and other ATTENDANTS

ACT 2 SCENE 9

(*Belmont. A room in* Portia's *house*
Enter Nerissa *with a* Servant.)

NERISSA: Quick, quick, I pray thee; draw the curtain straight:

The Prince of Arragon hath ta'en his oath,

And comes to his election presently.

(*Flourish of cornets. Enter the Prince of Arragon, Portia, and their Trains.*)

PORTIA: Behold, there stand the caskets, noble prince:
If you choose that wherein I am contain'd,
Straight shall our nuptial rites be solemnized:
But if you fail, without more speech, my lord,
You must be gone from hence immediately.

ARRAGON: I am enjoin'd by oath to observe three things:
First, never to unfold to anyone
Which casket 'twas I chose; next, if I fail
Of the right casket, never in my life
To woo a maid in way of marriage;
Lastly, if I do fail in fortune of my choice,
Immediately to leave you and be gone.

PORTIA: To these injunctions every one doth swear
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

ARRAGON: And so have I address'd me. Fortune now
To my heart's hope! – Gold, silver, and
base lead.
Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.
You shall look fairer, ere I give or hazard.
What says the golden chest? Ha! let me see:
Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.
What many men desire! That 'many' may
be meant

By the fool multitude, that choose by show,
Not learning more than the fond eye doth
teach; Which pries not to the interior, but,
like the martlet,
Builds in the weather on the outward wall,
Even in the force and road of casualty.
I will not choose what many men desire,
Because I will not jump with common spirits,
And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.
Why, then to thee, thou silver treasure-house;
Tell me once more what title thou dost bear:
Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves:
And well said too; for who shall go about
To cozen fortune and be honourable
Without the stamp of merit? Let none presume
To wear an undeserved dignity.
O, that estates, degrees, and offices,
Were not derived corruptly! and that clear
honour
Were purchased by the merit of the wearer!
How many then should cover that
stand bare!
How many be commanded that command!
How much low peasantry would then be
glean'd
From the true seed of honour! and how
much honour
Pick'd from the chaff and ruin of the times,

To be new-varnish'd! Well, but to my choice:
Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.
I will assume desert. Give me a key for this,
And instantly unlock my fortunes here.

[*He opens the silver casket.*]

PORTIA: Too long a pause for that which you find there.

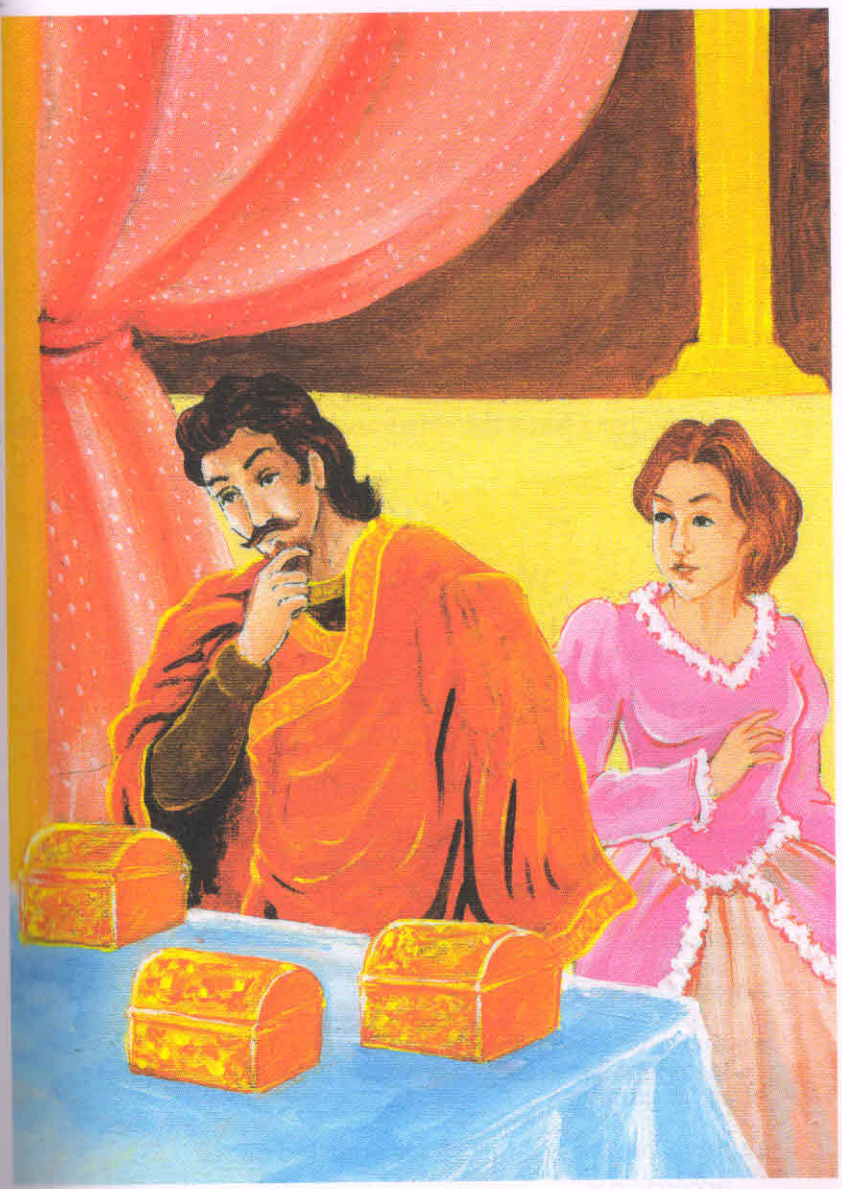
ARRAGON: What's here? the portrait of a blinking idiot,
Presenting me a schedule! I will read it.
How much unlike art thou to Portia!
How much unlike my hopes and my deservings!
Who chooseth me shall have as much as he deserves.
Did I deserve no more than a fool's head?
Is that my prize? are my deserts no better?

PORTIA: To offend, and judge, are distinct offices,
And of opposed natures.

ARRAGON: What is here?

[*Reads.*]

'The fire seven times tried this:
Seven times tried that judgement is,
That did never choose amiss.
Some there be that shadows kiss;
Such have but a shadow's bliss.
There be fools alive, iwis,
Silver'd o'er; and so was this.
I will ever be your head:
So be gone; you are sped.'



"I will not choose what many men desire,
Because I will not jump with common spirits."

Still more fool I shall appear
By the time I linger here:
With one fool's head I came to woo,
But I go away with two.
Sweet, adieu. I'll keep my oath,
Patiently to bear my wroth.
[*Exit with his Train.*]

PORTIA: Thus hath the candle sing'd the moth.
O, these deliberate fools! when they do choose,
They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.

William Shakespeare

Words to Know

straight: at once

ta'en his oath: Every suitor has to first take an oath before proceeding to select the casket. The content of the oath is mentioned a few lines later.

election: choice (of the caskets)

I am contain'd: here, my picture is kept

nuptial rites: marriage ceremony

enjoin'd: bound

injunctions: conditions

hazard: gamble

so have I address'd me: I have prepared myself accordingly

base: inferior; lowly

ere: before

fool multitude: foolish masses

show: appearance

fond eye: foolish eye

pries not: does not look closely

martlet: house martin, a bird of the swallow family

in the weather: in the open air; exposed

casualty: accident

jump with: go along with

common spirits: common men

cozen: cheat

cover: keep their hats on

bare: bareheaded, with their hats taken off as a mark of respect to superiors

glean'd: collected

true seed of honour: true sons of nobility

chaff: here, worthless people

to be new-varnish'd: to be given its original honour

assume desert: take the best

blinking idiot: fool, with wide-open, bulging eyes

schedule: scroll

The fire . . . this: Silver is refined seven times in a furnace for purification.

amiss: wrongly

shadows kiss: choose or embrace illusions

a shadow's bliss: an illusion of happiness

iwis: certainly

silver'd o'er: having white hair, which hides their foolishness by making them look wise

I: the fool in the picture

I will . . . your head: You will always be a fool.

sped: finished; you have had your try

wroth: misfortune

sing'd: burnt

deliberate fools: fools who formulate reasons (deliberate) for their actions

when they . . . to lose: When these fools set out to choose, their reasoning (wit) gives them enough good sense (wisdom) to choose wrongly, and thus they lose.

Read and Answer

A **Answer with reference to the context.**

1. I will not choose what many men desire,
   Because I will not jump with common spirits,
   And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.
   a. Who says these words and to whom?
   b. What does 'many men desire' refer to?
   c. Why will the speaker not choose what many men desire?
   d. What opinion do you think the speaker has of common people?

2. With one fool's head I came to woo,
   But I go away with two.
   Sweet, adieu. I'll keep my oath,
   Patiently to bear my wroth.
   a. Why does the speaker say 'With one fool's head I came to woo, But I go away with two'?
   b. What oath had the speaker taken?
   c. What message has the 'fool' just given to the speaker?

B **Tick (✓) the correct meaning for this sentence.**

O, that estates, degrees, and offices,
Were not derived corruptly!

1. The Prince of Arragon approves of corruption. He says estates, degrees and offices should be available to the corrupt. ☐
2. The Prince of Arragon wishes that estates, degrees and offices should belong only to those who are meritorious. ☐

C **Think and answer.**

1. The Prince of Arragon reasons rightly when he says that honour and fortune should be given to only those who deserve them, yet he gets a fool's head as his reward. Where did he go wrong?

2. What trait of the Prince's character is reflected in his name? Is the name justified? Give reasons for your answer.

3. Do you think Portia really considered herself 'worthless'? Give reasons for your answer.

Do and Learn

The Merchant of Venice is one of Shakespeare's most memorable comedies. For many it is synonymous with the character of Shylock. What is so special about this character? What makes him so unforgettable?

Read the play, and discuss the character of Shylock in your class. Would you call him the hero or the anti-hero of the play?

[An **anti-hero** is an important character in a story who does not have the usual good qualities of a hero. He is more interesting than a hero or a villain, as he is not all good or all bad, and therefore depicts real human nature.

The character of the anti-hero is often used by authors to comment on human failings, society, culture and politics.]

Think It Over

1. The Prince of Arragon dismisses the gold casket because he does not wish to be like the 'fool

multitude'. Ironically, his choice reveals the picture of a blinking idiot, proving him to be the fool.

2. Silver stands for vanity and self-deception – both exhibited by Arragon in his choice. He chooses silver, thinking that men should get only what they deserve, but he is vain and deluded in thinking that he deserves Portia.

10

The Cane Bottom'd Chair

In tattered old slippers that toast at the bars,
And a ragged old jacket perfumed with cigars,
Away from the world and its toils and its cares,
I've a snug little kingdom up four pair of stairs.

To mount to this realm is a toil, to be sure,
But the fire there is bright and the air rather pure;
And the view I behold on a sunshiny day
Is grand through the chimney-pots over the way.

This snug little chamber is cramm'd in all nooks
With worthless old knickknacks and silly old books,
And foolish old odds and foolish old ends,
Crack'd bargains from brokers, cheap keepsakes
from friends.

. . .

But of all the cheap treasures that garnish my nest,
There's one that I love and I cherish the best:
For the finest of couches that's padded with hair
I never would change thee, my cane-bottom'd chair.

'Tis a bandy-legg'd, high-shoulder'd, worm-eaten seat,
With a creaking old back, and twisted old feet;
But since the fair morning when Fanny sat there,
I bless thee and love thee, old cane-bottom'd chair.

. . .

It was but a moment she sate in this place,
She'd a scarf on her neck, and a smile on her face!
A smile on her face, and a rose in her hair,
And she sate there, and bloom'd in my
cane-bottom'd chair.

And so I have valued my chair ever since,
Like the shrine of a saint, or the throne of a prince;
Saint Fanny, my patroness sweet I declare,
The queen of my heart and my cane-bottom'd chair.

When the candles burn low, and the company's gone,
In the silence of night as I sit here alone –
I sit here alone, but we yet are a pair –
My Fanny I see in my cane-bottom'd chair.

She comes from the past and revisits my room;
She looks as she then did, all beauty and bloom;
So smiling and tender, so fresh and so fair,
And yonder she sits in my cane-bottom'd chair.

William Makepeace Thackeray

Words to Know

tattered: torn

toast at the bars: warm near the grill of the fireplace

toils: hard labour

cares: worries

snug: cozy; comfortable

four pair of stairs: eight flights of steps

realm: place or area

cramm'd: full of

nooks: corners

knickknacks: small things

foolish . . . ends: 'Odds and ends' means small, miscellaneous things

keepsakes: small objects that people give you so that you remember them

garnish: decorate

bandy-legg'd: with curved legs

high-shoulder'd: with a high back

sate: sat

shrine: place of worship

bloom'd: here, looked beautiful

patroness: someone who gives support and encouragement

yonder: there

Read and Answer

Answer these questions.

1. What is the 'snug little kingdom' of the poet?
2. Describe in your own words the poet's favourite place.
3. What thing does the poet cherish the most in this place? Why?
4. How does the poet imagine Fanny in the cane-bottomed chair?
5. Whose company does the poet have when his friends have left?

Word Power

The poet uses many words and phrases to denote his favourite room up the stairs and his beloved Fanny. For example, he uses the phrase 'the throne of a prince' for the cane-bottomed chair.

Find some more phrases from the poem and write them in the table given below.

FAVOURITE ROOM	FANNY

Do and Learn

1. Write a short poem on someone you love – your mother, father, sister, brother, friend or your pet.
2. *'And the view I behold on a sunshiny day*
   Is grand through the chimney-pots over the way.'

   Imagine you are looking out of the window of this room. What do you see? Illustrate what you see or write a paragraph describing it.
3. Try to think of descriptive phrases you would like to use for the people and things you love. Write two for each of them in the column below.

   For example, you can call your pet a 'ball of wool' if it is a furry, cuddly kitten, or your room 'lion's den' or 'rabbit's hole', depending on how you picture yourself!

1. mother	
2. father	
3. sister / brother	
4. pet	
5. friend	
6. favourite book / toy	

You can add to the above list of things and people.

11

The Pool

A beautiful story of boyhood and growing up, The Pool *is yet another story by Ruskin Bond where nature is a close ally and companion in some of the most memorable experiences of life.*

It was going to rain. I could see the rain moving across the Himalayan foothills, and I could smell it in the air. But instead of turning homewards, I pushed my way forward through the leaves and brambles that grew across the forest path. I had heard the sound of rushing water at the bottom of the hill.

I had to slide down a rock face into a small ravine, and there I found the stream, running over a bed of shingle. I removed my sandals and started walking upstream. Water trickled down from the hillside, from amongst ferns and grasses and wild flowers; the hills, rising steeply on either side, kept the ravine in shadow. The rocks were smooth, almost soft; some of them were grey and some yellow. A small waterfall came down the rocks and formed a deep, round pool of apple-green water.

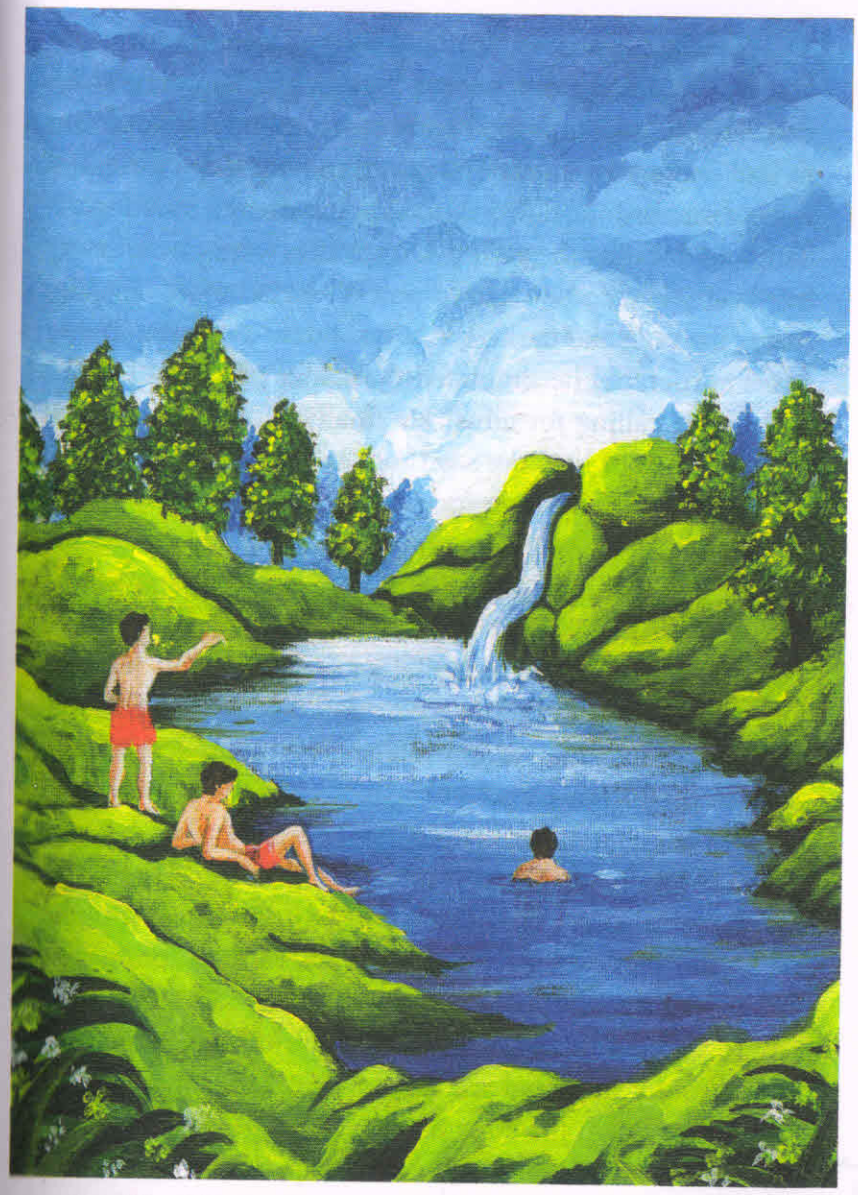
When I saw the pool I turned and ran home because I wanted to tell the others. It began to rain, but I didn't stop to take shelter; I ran all the way home.

I had two close friends, Anil and Somi. Anil lived in a crowded lane off Dilaram Bazaar, Dehradun. He was wild and a little dangerous, subject to sudden changes of moods and impulses. Somi, on the other hand, was sensitive and gentle in his ways; but in common with Anil, he had a sense of fun and an instinct for adventure. And though I studied in a class higher than theirs, they usually chose the adventures we were to have, and I would just grumble and get involved unwillingly. But the pool was my own discovery, and I was proud of it.

"We'll call it Rusty's Pool," said Somi. "Anil, remember it's a secret pool, no one else must know."

I think it was the pool that brought us together more than anything else. Somi was the best swimmer. He dived off rocks and went gliding about under the water like a graceful golden fish. Anil had long legs and arms, and he thrashed about with much vigour but little skill. I could dive off a rock, too, but I usually landed on my stomach.

There were slim silver fish in the stream. At first we tried catching them with a line, but they soon learnt the art of taking the bait without being caught on the hook. Next, we procured a bedsheet and stretched it across one end of the stream, but the fish wouldn't come anywhere near it. Eventually, Anil, without telling us, brought along a stick of gunpowder. Somi and I were startled out of an afternoon siesta by a flash across the water and a deafening explosion. Half the hillside tumbled into the pool, and Anil along with it! But we got him out, along with a good supply of stunned fish.



"We'll call it Rusty's Pool," said Somi. "Anil, remember, it's a secret pool, no one else must know."

The effects of the explosion gave Anil another idea, and that was to enlarge our pool by building a dam across one end. This he accomplished with our combined labour. But he had chosen the monsoon season, and one day a torrent of water came rushing down the bed of the stream, bursting the dam and flooding the ravine. Our clothes were carried away by the current, and we had to wait till night before creeping home through the darkest byways. Somi was spotted at a street corner, but he simulated the stance of a naked sadhu and began calling for alms! He finally slipped in through the backdoor of his house without being recognised.

Our other activities included wrestling and buffalo-riding. We wrestled on a strip of sand that ran beside the stream, and rode on a couple of buffaloes that sometimes came to drink and wallow in the more muddy parts. We would sit astride the buffaloes, and kick and yell and urge them forward, but on no occasion could we get them to move. At best they would roll over on their backs, taking us with them into a pool of slush.

Of course, it didn't matter how muddy we got, because we had only to dive into the pool to get rid of it all. If it was possible to get out of our houses undetected at night, we would come to the pool and bathe by the moonlight. We bathed silently, because the stillness of the surrounding jungle seemed to discourage high spirits; but sometimes Somi would sing, and we would float red, long-fingered poinsettias down the stream.

I don't remember how we broke up, because we hardly noticed it at that time. We never really believed that we

were finally parting, or that we were leaving the pool. After about a year, Somi passed his matriculation and entered the military academy. When I saw him a year ago, he sported a fierce and very military moustache. Shortly after Somi left, Anil and his family left town. I haven't seen him again. I can't visualize him in any conventional occupation as he was so wild and unpredictable. And yet, sometimes I wonder . . . Those who are wild when young often grow up to be responsible citizens.

And what of the pool?

I visited it last week, after an interval of four years.

At first I couldn't find it. I found the ravine, and the bed of shingle, but there was no water. The stream had changed its course, just as we had changed ours.

I turned away in disappointment and with a dull ache in my heart. It was cruel of the pool to disappear. But I hadn't gone far when I heard the sound of rushing water, and the shouting of boys; and pushing my way through the jungle, I found another stream and another pool, and half-a-dozen boys splashing about in the water.

They did not see me, and I kept in the shadow of the trees and watched them play. But I didn't really see them. I was seeing Somi and Anil and the lazy old buffaloes. I stood there for nearly an hour, like a spirit, romping again in the shallows of our secret pool.

Ruskin Bond

Words to Know

brambles: prickly shrubs

ravine: a deep narrow valley or gorge formed by running water, such as a river

shingle: large smooth pebbles found on the bed of a stream

impulses: actions prompted by sudden feelings or thoughts

instinct: a natural way of acting

grumble: here, complain

bait: food, such as worms, put on the hook of a fishing rod to catch fish

siesta: rest or nap, usually taken in the afternoon

deafening: very loud (almost causing deafness)

stunned: here, dazed; immobile. The fish were rendered immobile from the shock of the loud explosion.

torrent: a fast and forceful gush of water

byways: side roads

slush: here, soft mud

high spirits: here, merriment

poinsettias: plants with long, red petal-like leaves

we broke up: we parted ways

romping: playing and frolicking

shallows: part of the pool where the water is shallow

Read and Answer

A Answer these questions.

1. Describe the author's friends, Anil and Somi.
2. Why do you think the author was proud of the fact that he had discovered the pool?
3. What did the three friends do to catch the silver fish from the stream?
4. What were the other activities that the friends carried out near the pool?

B Think and answer.

1. 'I think it was the pool that brought us together more than anything else.' Elaborate.
2. 'The stream had changed its course, just as we had changed ours.' Explain.

Do and Learn

1. Read Ruskin Bond's poem 'We Rode All the Way to Delhi' where he narrates how he had gone cycling all the way from Dehradun to Delhi with his two friends. Can you guess the name of one of the friends?
   It is Somi! The other friend is Azhar. One may well wonder if Azhar and Anil are the same, too.

   In the poem, the author says, 'In the Bicycle Age,
   When I was a kid, We rode all the way to Delhi.'

What do you think he means by the 'Bicycle Age'? How different is the Age you live in from the 'Bicycle Age'? What name would you give to today's Age?

2. Read 'Tenacity of Mountain Water', a short story by Ruskin Bond, where he writes about how he (then an adult) discovered a spring in the mountains and followed it to find a pool. But he did not stop there. He followed it further to see it swell into a rivulet, then to a stream, then tumble down in a waterfall, and finally meander into the valley as a river.

   The author was not able to follow it further, but knew that eventually its waters would join the mighty Ganga, which in turn would join the vast ocean. Yet, the author concludes, the ocean is but a drop in the universe, no greater than the glistening drop of water that helped to start it all, in his little spring on the mountain.

12

The Trojan War

The Iliad, a Greek epic poem, was written by the blind poet Homer. It describes the Trojan War which took place between the Greeks and the Trojans in the twelfth or thirteenth century BCE.
The Iliad has a host of characters, both human and divine. In the Trojan War, the Greeks who lived on the mainland (of the country still called Greece) fought for nearly ten years against the city of Troy, which is now in Turkey.

According to legend, when Peleus married Thetis, the loveliest of the Nereides, all the gods and goddesses were invited to the wedding feast. The exception was Eris, goddess of discord. Infuriated at this slight, she threw a golden apple among the assembled guests. The apple bore the inscription 'For the fairest'. The apple was claimed by Athene, Hera, and Aphrodite, who were soon quarrelling bitterly over it.

They went to Zeus with their problem. Zeus was not willing to decide such a difficult matter. He sent the goddesses to Mount Ida, where Paris was tending his flocks. The goddesses gathered around the handsome shepherd, each offering to reward him if he gave her the prize. Hera

promised Paris power and riches; Athene said she would bring him glory and fame; and Aphrodite vowed that he would have the most beautiful woman in the world as his wife. Paris chose Aphrodite and gave her the golden apple, thus making enemies of the other two goddesses.

Paris was the son of Priam, king of Troy. Though he was born in a royal family, he had been brought up in obscurity because an oracle had prophesied that he would one day bring ruin to the city. Under the protection of Aphrodite, Paris sailed for Sparta to claim his prize, the most beautiful woman in the world. This woman was Helen, wife of Menelaus, king of Sparta.

Paris persuaded Helen to elope with him. They sailed away to Troy. Overcome by grief, Menelaus called upon all the kings and chieftains of Greece to help him recover his wife. An army was quickly assembled. Agamemnon, his brother, was commander-in-chief of that army. Among the illustrious warriors were Ajax, Diomedes, Nestor, Odysseus, and the greatest of them all, Achilles.

King Priam of Troy was old and weak, but his son Hector was a brave and noble young man. Hector had felt a presentiment of danger when his brother, Paris, had brought Helen to Troy. He knew that he must fight for his family, but grieved at the circumstances that had set hero against hero. The other principal warriors on the Trojan side were Aeneas, Deiphobus, Glaucus, and Sarpedon.

After two years of preparation, the Greek fleet and army assembled and set out for Troy. For nine years the Greek army besieged Troy. The two armies fought, neither

side winning over the other. Achilles soon showed himself to be the bravest and most daring of the Greek warriors. However, he quarrelled with Agamemnon, his commander in the war, and refused to go on fighting.

After this, the war went badly for the Greeks. Patroclus, who was Achilles's best friend, persuaded Achilles to lend him his armour. He hoped that wearing Achilles's armour would deceive the Trojans into thinking that Achilles was once more fighting against them. Thus, Hector was deceived; he fought with Patroclus and killed him.

When Achilles learnt of his friend's death, he swore to take revenge. He rejoined the Greek army and fought so fiercely that the Trojans withdrew into the city, leaving Hector, who refused to retreat, alone on the battlefield. However, when Hector saw that he was facing the real Achilles, he was afraid and ran towards the city gates. Achilles ran faster and cut off his retreat. Three times they circled the walls, until Hector saw that escape was impossible and turned to fight. Achilles killed Hector with a thrust of his spear.

With Hector's death, the Trojans suffered a serious setback. Paris was sent to fight with Achilles. Before Achilles was born, the Fates had told Thetis, his mother, that he would die young. After his birth, she had bathed him in the river Styx, whose magical waters gave protection from all wounds and diseases. However, the waters did not touch the heel by which Thetis held him. So, when Paris shot a poisoned arrow at Achilles, the gods guided the arrow to Achilles's heel, which was the only vulnerable part of his

body. Achilles died from the wound.

The Greeks began to despair of ever conquering the city of Troy. They decided to resort to a trick. They pretended to abandon the siege, and most of the ships set sail with warriors on board. They did not head for home, however, but sailed to a nearby island where they hid in a harbour. The Greeks who were left behind built a huge wooden horse which was hollow. The armed men that were left in the camp climbed into the horse and the opening was shut. The remaining Greeks then sailed away.

When the Trojans saw that the Greek camp had disbanded and the fleet had gone, they threw open the gates of the city and rushed out to look at the abandoned camp. They found the huge wooden horse there and wondered what it could be. Some suggested that it be carried back to the city and put on exhibition as a trophy of the war, but others were afraid of it.

Lacoon, the priest of Poseidon, tried to warn the Trojans against it. "Are you mad?" he exclaimed. "Have you not seen enough of Greek trickery to be on your guard against it? I suspect the Greeks, even when they appear to be offering gifts." As Lacoon was speaking, some Trojans appeared, dragging a captive between them. It was a young Greek boy. The Trojans promised to spare his life if he answered their questions truthfully.

"My name is Sinon," said the young Greek. "My countrymen have abandoned me because I committed a trifling offence. The wooden horse is a peace-offering to Athene. The gods told us that if you Trojans took possession

The Greeks who were left behind built a huge wooden horse which was hollow.

of it, then we would lose the war. We have made the horse huge so that you cannot carry it into the city."

On hearing this, the Trojans eagerly began to drag the enormous horse into Troy. They placed it in the main square so that everyone could see it as a sign of their victory. They spent the rest of the day celebrating and feasting. At last, exhausted from the festivities, they went to their homes and fell into their beds.

When the city was quiet, the armed men who were hidden inside the horse were let out by Sinon. They opened the gates of Troy and let in their companions, who had returned from the island under the cover of darkness. The Greeks set fire to the city, and the Trojans died in their beds. Menelaus hastened to the palace, found Helen and took her back to Sparta. Troy had fallen and the city was completely destroyed.

Adapted from The Iliad *by Homer*

Words to Know

Nereides: In Greek mythology, the Nereides were water nymphs who protected sailors and fishermen.

slight: insult

obscurity: hidden from people

discord: disagreement

Athene: Greek goddess of wisdom and war

Hera: queen of the gods, goddess of marriage and birth

Aphrodite: goddess of love and beauty

oracle: a priest or priestess in ancient Greece who interpreted messages from the temple deity and told the people what would happen in the future

Poseidon: god of the sea

presentiment: a feeling that something bad is going to happen

vulnerable: here, unprotected (and therefore capable of being wounded)

Read and Answer

A Answer these questions.

1. What happened when Eris, the goddess of discord, threw the golden apple among the guests?
2. How was Hector deceived by the enemy?
3. How did the Trojan horse lead the Greeks to victory?
4. Did the oracle's prophecy regarding Paris come true? Elaborate.

B Answer with reference to the context.

1. They went to Zeus with their problem. Zeus was not willing to decide such a difficult matter. He sent the goddesses to Mount Ida.
   a. Name the goddesses who went to Zeus with a problem.
   b. Which matter did Zeus refuse to decide upon?
   c. Why were the goddesses sent to Mount Ida?
2. Before Achilles was born, the Fates had told his mother that he would die young.
   a. How did Achilles's mother try to safeguard him against the prophecy of the Fates?
   b. Was she able to protect him completely?
   c. How did Achilles die?

C Give reasons for the following.

1. Paris was brought up in obscurity.
2. Patroclus persuaded Achilles to lend him his armour.
3. The Trojans dragged the horse into Troy.
4. The wooden horse was placed in the main square of Troy.

D Think and answer.

1. There is an old saying 'Beware of Greeks bearing gifts.' How do you think this saying originated? Can you relate this saying to this story?
2. Who was Sinon? How did his role in the Trojan War seal Troy's fate?

Do and Learn

The story of the Trojan War is from the epic, *The Iliad*. An epic is a very long poem that narrates a story. There are other forms of storytelling too. Can you identify nine forms of storytelling in the wordsearch? One has been done for you.

M	A	P	F	A	B	L	E	Q	P
Y	A	L	L	E	G	O	R	Y	A
T	N	U	S	D	V	T	R	B	R
H	E	A	F	T	S	D	L	A	A
B	C	C	N	O	V	E	L	L	B
A	D	Z	W	P	A	P	A	L	L
L	O	T	B	A	L	I	G	A	E
U	T	U	P	A	T	C	E	D	D
N	E	L	E	G	E	N	D	V	B
T	D	D	R	A	M	A	D	T	Q

My Reading List

Here are some classic books you might want to read.

1. Malgudi Days – R K Narayan
2. Animal Farm – George Orwell
3. Lord of the Flies – William Golding
4. To Kill a Mockingbird – Harper Lee
5. A Tale of Two Cities – Charles Dickens
6. Pride and Prejudice – Jane Austen
7. Three Men in a Boat – Jerome K Jerome

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