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BENGALURU CITY UNIVERSITY

SCEPTRE – II

ADDITIONAL ENGLISH TEXTBOOK

(Under the State Education Policy [SEP] – 2024)

SEMESTER – II

ALL SECOND SEMESTER COURSES
COMING UNDER THE FACULTY OF ARTS, COMMERCE AND SCIENCE
OF THE
BENGALURU CITY UNIVERSITY

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Bengaluru

SCEPTRE – II

Additional English Textbook for all II Semester Courses coming under the faculty of Arts, Commerce and Science of the Bengaluru City University (BCU) is prepared by the Members of the Textbook Committee, Bengaluru City University.

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FOREWORD

Bengaluru City University's primary goal is to provide high-quality education. Providing pupils with interesting and educational reading material is one way to deliver a high-quality, targeted education. For the benefit of the vast intellectual community at the University, we have produced extensive course materials for those seeking undergraduate degrees here.

It is an enormous work that cannot be completed by one person to develop the book, ensure correctness, and prepare it in a way that best meets the demands of the student, both academically and practically. It takes a team effort and many important contributions from many people. The compilers of this book are seasoned academics who are aware of the demands placed on students. It has also been carefully examined to eliminate any mistakes. The BCU-affiliated English Department faculty members have been a great help with editing.

The contents of this book are selected in consonance with the vision of State Education Policy (SEP) 2024, where the University focuses on producing trained human resource which has extensive knowledge, modern skills, diverse abilities, leadership qualities, entrepreneurial skills, and strong cultural and ethical values. Most significantly, the curation of this text offers a nexus between higher education and employment market.

The University is currently in a good position to capitalize on these early years, and we reaffirm our commitment to offering top-notch instruction to students from diverse backgrounds; and fostering an atmosphere that enhances the development of each student's unique personality. As the Vice-Chancellor of Bengaluru City University, I take great pride in welcoming students to pursue virtue and knowledge via interdisciplinary study possibilities, with a focus on developing their whole personality.

I am excited about the new perspectives and enthusiasm you will bring to our school. I commend the Text Book Committee for their enormous work in putting together the content, which covers a range of language components to brilliant literary pieces. My sincere gratitude to the Director of Bengaluru City University Press and to all the staff for releasing the textbook on time and with method. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Chairperson and the Members of the Board for their enjoyable and thorough exploration of numerous subjects and grammatical components. It is my sincere wish that both educators and learners will find great inspiration in the book to utilise it to the fullest and enhance their language and literary comprehension.

Prof. Lingaraja Gandhi
Vice-Chancellor
Bengaluru City University

PREFACE

Why study Language?

Any language study programme should be viewed as a chance to introduce pupils to the sociocultural experiences, traditions, and communication patterns of people from around the globe. Students may use this as a chance to learn more about themselves, their neighbours, and those who live in different countries. One way to help with this is to assign readings to the students, which serve as a record of the history of man and his development over time, both real and imagined.

Naturally, one might wonder why literature is recommended for studying linguistic characteristics of a language. Here, we want to stress that no language training should be designed to be value neutral. Language classes contribute significantly to the intellectual and personal growth of students, acting not only as means of communication but also as development tools. Reading as such will aid the students in their development of mature thought.

It is quite apt to mention the collaborative thinking of Phipps and Gonzales here, where they say, "languages are more than skills; they are the medium through which communities of people engage with, make sense of, and shape the world. Through language they become active agents in creating their environment. This process is what we call 'languaging'. Languaging is a life skill. It is inextricably interwoven with social experience in a living society. And it develops and changes constantly as that experience evolves and changes."

This issue is offered in print and electronic version to ensure maximum accessibility and ongoing relevance. We believe that instructors will find this volume to be a helpful resource and a priceless source of reference.

For this edition, I feel obligated to offer my expertise, analysis, and conclusions. The literary component attempts to make students socially and culturally aware of history and present-day issues, while the language component aims to enhance students' soft skills related to proficient verbal expression and conversation. It is intended that the students would utilise the text to its fullest potential and recognise the value of developing fine language skills while interacting with spoken materials such as literature.

I express my gratitude to Vice-Chancellor and Registrar of Bengaluru City University for their unwavering support. I would like to express my gratitude to the publisher for helping us release the textbook on schedule and to all the committee members for their enormous efforts.

Dr. T. N. Thandava Gowda
Chairperson – UG Board of Studies
Bengaluru City University

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OBJECTIVES OF THE TEXT

The proposed literary pieces are written by **Indian writers**. While the first textbook of Additional English offered a considerable insight into non-European and non-Indian literature, the present text offers a penetrative study into Indian literature. This covers a wide range of literature written in English and translations into English. The aim of this textbook is to get students acquainted with literature of the land, and people's equations with a multicultural space.

The grammar section is curated to cater to enhancing students' employability skills. The workbook orients the students in task-based grammar learning which is required in many job sectors.

- **Dr. Suhasini B. Srihari**

NOTE TO THE TEACHER

Course Title – L1 – ADDITIONAL ENGLISH	
Teaching Hours: 4 Hours Per Week	Course Credits: 3
Formative Assessment Marks: 20	Internal Assessment
Summative Assessment Marks: 80	Duration Of Exam: 3 Hours

The new Additional English syllabus for undergraduate courses of Bengaluru City University broadly aims to develop the literary sensibilities and enhance the intermediate language skills of students across four semesters. The course materials reflect this holistic approach. The II Semester textbook hence has the following components:

a. An anthology with poems, short stories, essays (prose) to develop literary sensibilities.

b. A workbook to comprehend English grammar at intermediate level.

The present textbook embodies the history of land, the persisting issues in our country and our equation with diverse cultures. The selected literary pieces offer a penetrative insight into themes of religion, caste, land and culture. Students are introduced to these pieces to ensure an outcome based on sensitivity and compassion. The selection of literary pieces is such that each writing represents a particular state. This allows for interaction in a heterogenous classroom and makes it more learner-centered.

LITERARY COMPONENT

Pre-reading Activities accompany each selection to help students understand the context of the subject matter. A range of questions are included in the post-reading portion to help with factual, inferential and evaluative understanding. The main purpose of these instructional questions is to get students talking in class and provide them a platform to voice different viewpoints.

Glossary component is included in every selection. This aids the students to develop their vocabulary and comprehension of new words. The component also functions as a significant tool to showcase different forms and the range of possible meanings of words in context.

Further Reading section is provided at the end of every selection. The suggestive texts are included to stimulate the interest of students in related reading contexts and provide scope for sustained reading.

LANGUAGE COMPONENT

The grammar section includes writing skills at the intermediate level. This is curated to ensure an employment-based curriculum that will help students to explore various work fields such as content writing and editing jobs. Directing at the intermediate language building skills, the selected grammar topics enhance the students' LSWR (listening, speaking, writing and reading) skills, which further initiates context-based language learning.

- **Dr. Suhasini B. Srihari**

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LITERARY COMPONENT

SORRY JAFFER

- VOLGA

Pre-reading Activities:

1. Reflect on a time when you had to apologise for something significant. How did it make you feel? What challenges did you face in seeking forgiveness?

2. What kinds of conflicts (internal or external) do you think might arise in a story that involves an apology? How do you think these conflicts will be resolved?

Introduction to the Writer:

P. Lalitha Kumari, known by her pen name Volga (or Olga), is a distinguished Telugu writer renowned for her powerful and thought-provoking works. Born in 1950 in Andhra Pradesh, India, Volga has carved a niche for herself in modern Indian literature with her compelling narratives that often explore themes of gender, caste and societal norms.

Volga's writings are celebrated for the presence of deep empathy and incisive critique of social issues. Her stories frequently address the struggles of marginalised communities, particularly focusing on the experiences of women and their fight for dignity and equality. Her writings have the ability to capture the nuanced realities of everyday life while challenging traditional norms; this has earned her a significant place in modern Telugu literature.

Her best-known pieces are 'Sorry Jaffer' and 'Kavitha Kalyani', which demonstrate her ability to skillfully combine social insight and captivating storytelling. Beyond her work, Volga has made a significant impact on literature by actively advocating for women's rights and social justice. As a result, she is well-known in both literary and social worlds.

About the Text:

'Sorry Jaffer' by Volga (P. Lalitha Kumari) is a poignant short story that delves into themes of communal harmony, cultural conflict, and social responsibility. Set against the backdrop of 1990s India, the narrative explores the strained relationship between two families of different religious backgrounds.

The story revolves around Ramarao, a middle-class Hindu man, and his interaction with Jaffer Ali, a Muslim friend who comes seeking shelter for his daughter, Naseema. Through the lens of Ramarao's family dynamics and their interactions with Naseema, Volga examines the complexities of communal prejudices and the often-unspoken tensions that arise from them.

If Ramarao did not read the newspaper from top to bottom every Sunday morning, he would not be able to enjoy anything that day. The only two luxuries Ramarao had were to get up late on Sundays and read the paper completely. But Parvati could not tolerate even those.

'Go to the bazaar, you can read later. You won't finish the paper before everyone buys and takes away all the tender meat in the shop. We die trying to cook the tough meat you bring home when you go late.'

Ramarao was used to that background music from the kitchen through his reading of the paper. After reading the paper, he turned to 'Nagaramlo Eenadu' to catch up on the local

city news. There was only news of a few gatherings or meetings, but he had to go through each column.

'A demonstration against war on the tank bund – this would be good to join.'

Each time he thought about participating in some demonstration or the other, but when it would be time to go, something pulled him back. This was a habit he had nurtured for twenty-five years. It was better before the children were born. He used to read books, and he would sometimes go to gatherings and meetings. Ramarao did not have any free time after the two children were born. The two of them grabbed all his time.

Ramarao would look at his two sons and would feel proud for their sake, and for his own. The older son had finished his engineering a year ago, got married and took his wife with him. The second son was in the final year of engineering college. In six months' time, he too would follow his brother's path. For them to have reached this stage, Ramarao and Parvati had taken a significant amount of trouble.

Though Ramarao stopped studying after passing the secondary school leaving certificate, he had educated his sons in the manner they desired. For their sake, he sacrificed his own desires. For some years, he'd worked non-stop from 7 a.m. to 10 p. m. Apart from his regular employment, he took on ten extra jobs. Parvati too had a small job in a private company. Both their goals were the same – that their sons ought not to lack anything. Both the children had good food, clothes of their choice and seats in the best schools in the city.

After the older son left for the States, they were able to breathe a little easier. Parvati gave up her job, and Ramarao was looking forward to applying for a voluntary retirement scheme once his younger son left for studying abroad. After all this time, when he looked around, the world seemed to have changed a lot. It was as if all the books he had read in his childhood had become outdated. A youngster had joined his office recently, and he would come up to him now and then, talking about some local issue. 'Sagar will surely participate in the demonstration against the war today,' thought Ramarao.

'At least we are not doing anything wrong or immoral – that by itself is a virtuous way to live in these wretched times. If an opportunity to do good comes in front of us, we will do so. Otherwise, we will stay out of the way…' As Ramarao tried to pacify his soul with those thoughts, Parvati came and pulled away the paper from his hand.

When Ramarao was about to leave, the phone rang, and he picked it up. Parvati, who was about to go into the kitchen, hit her forehead with her palm. She stood in front of him, signalling for him to finish the call quickly. But noticing Ramarao's face slowly turning red and glowing with happiness, she stopped gesticulating.

'Jaffer Ali of the old days! How come he remembered us now?' Parvati too was happy.

Ramarao's happiness was like water flowing from a natural spring. It had been more than fifteen years since he had last seen Jaffer Ali. 'We think the distance between Karimnagar and Hyderabad is just two hundred miles, but it's more than fifteen years,' he thought.

'He's arriving tomorrow morning with Naseema. Don't cook meat today. Tomorrow, make either chicken or mutton biryani, your choice. Tell me what provisions you need, and I'll buy them right away,' Ramarao was bubbling with enthusiasm.

***

Ramarao had come to Hyderabad when he was seventeen. He distinctly remembered the date. He got off the train on 4 November 1964. Searching for a job, he had roamed all over

the city, and instead of saying he was in search of a job, one could perhaps say he was trying to discover Hyderabad! For someone who had come from a village near Tenali, everything in Hyderabad was extremely strange. Therefore, without getting on to a bus, he took on the job that nobody had given him, of surveying all the lanes and by-lanes of Hyderabad.

It was then that he met Jaffer Ali. It seemed as if in those days, Sundays would dawn for Ramarao only so he could go to Abids. The great festivity in Abids of the high-scale sale of old books. For Ramarao that was a great feast.

He would walk through the procession, pretending to be a prince. Even reading the titles of books used to be such a pleasure, and there was no need to say what it felt like when he touched them. If he could own these books, it would be like finding a great treasure. Forgetting everything, he would roam about those streets till evening. The distress of not having found a job would be assuaged by finding an old book he was looking for. Seeing Ramarao with his old books, his maternal uncle, whose home Ramarao was briefly staying at, would think he looked like someone holding an appointment letter.

On 26 February 1965, Ramarao, who was walking through the streets of Abids, stopped in front of a shop that sold old books. A book was beckoning to him. As his eyes lit up, he picked up the book. He ran his fingers across the title on the cover: *Ameena – Gudipati Venkata Chalam*.

A friend of his had talked a lot about this book. He had said that no matter how much of Chalam's writings one might have read, it was a waste if one had not read this book. Now Ramarao felt as if the moon had come down from the sky and fallen into his hands. He had to buy this book, and the quarter-rupee coin was eager to rush out of his pocket.

'How much is this book?' he said in Telugu out of habit. As he bit his tongue and was trying to put the words together in Hindi, the young man shouted, 'Eight annas.'

'You can give it to me for four annas – it's a small book after all,' he said. Ramarao knew how to bargain.

'Small book? It's a book by the same Chalam. It's foolish to argue about this being a small or a big book!' screamed the young man.

Ramarao was impressed that not only did the young man know Telugu but he also knew of Chalam's stature. Taking out two coins from his pocket, he said, 'This is all I have. If I had more, I would have given even two rupees. I have many of Chalam's books, but not this. I asked you to lower the price because I am unable to let go.'

It was now the young man's turn to be perplexed. He said, 'Okay, take it.' He handed over the book, taking only a quarter of a rupee.

'What's your name?' asked Ramarao.

'Jaffer Ali.'

That was how the two met. After that wonderful exchange, Jaffer Ali and Ramarao would meet every Sunday. Jaffer Ali taught Ramarao Urdu, a language completely new to him. Ramarao polished the little Telugu that Jaffer Ali knew. Jaffer Ali and Ramarao tried to outsmart each other – with Jaffer saying that life was pointless if Ramarao didn't read Urdu poetry, and Ramarao countering him by saying if Jaffer didn't read Sri Sri and Chalam, it was better to throw himself into the Hussainsagar Lake and die. But, they both resolved to live and did so while enjoying each moment.

One such Sunday night, Ramarao went with Jaffer Ali to his house. His father was bedridden, and so his mother, who was in good health, took on the entire burden of the household. It was Shashatazi Begum herself who told Ramarao all about their family. Their family had moved from Khammam to Hyderabad nearly twenty years ago. The father intervened to say that they had, in fact, come a year after the union forces had moved in. He had started a business selling old books on a small scale and built it up before he became bedridden. It was evident that Jaffer Ali, born after four daughters, was the apple of their eyes. Jaffer Ali's sisters were all married, and they lived in the Khammam and Warangal districts. Jaffer Ali did not have many relatives in Hyderabad.

Ramarao had never eaten meat curry the way Jaffer's mother prepared it. Having tasted it that night, he said he would come to eat every Sunday. In fact, he went there every Sunday for the next two years. And what could be said about Ramzan time, he ate haleem to his heart's desire!

After eating to their fill, they would rest in the small space at the back of the house. They would lie down beneath the starlit sky, singing songs.

Youth, poetry, moon, stars, - what else did one need? They would sing Telugu and Hindi songs, recite Urdu ghazals and Telugu poetry till around 2 a.m., get tired and sleep. The same routine continued till Ramarao was married in 1970. After that, their Sunday night meetings stopped. Jaffer Ali got married two years later.

Parvati and Fatima too became friends. The responsibilities of both friends increased after marriage. While Ramarao pursued a degree course privately and wrote departmental tests to get a promotion in his job, Jaffer Ali got busy in trying to build up his business. Both had children and got busy with the children's studies, the illness of parents, medicines, hospitals, deaths – time sped on swiftly. The friends would only get to meet during Ramzan, Bakrid, Dasara and Deepavali.

Jaffer Ali had four girls, and Ramarao was progressing steadily at his job. however, Jaffer Ali's business was steadily faltering. Jaffer Ali, who had never asked Ramarao for any assistance, now helped Ramarao in a big way. He made Ramarao buy a house that he knew was selling dirt cheap in Mehdipatnam. Around the same time, he sold his own house and moved into a rented house.

Jaffer Ali wound up his business finally and decided to leave Hyderabad to become a partner in a furniture shop that his brother-in-law was setting up in Karimnagar. Before he left, Ramarao invited Jaffer's family home for a sumptuous dinner. The two friends met after many days, went to the terrace, and spent time recalling old times and singing old songs. They teased Fatima and Parvati, holding them responsible for their not having been able to sing together.

They went on to discuss the futures of their children, who were sleeping. After moving to Karimnagar, Jaffer Ali never looked back. The luck he had not seen with books was found among wooden pieces. He built a house, got three of his daughters married, and he was able to get his fourth daughter, Naseema, educated.

She had completed her B. Com. degree, written bank exams and obtained a modest job. Jaffer Ali was coming to see Ramarao now, after twenty years, as he wanted to help Naseema settle in the city to start her new job.

Throughout that Sunday Parvati and Ramarao talked only about Jaffer Ali, especially reminiscing about the time Jaffer Ali helped them get married at the registrar's office after

convincing the elders of their relationship. Jaffer Ali arrived on Monday morning with Naseema, who looked like a white moon in a black burkha. After enquiring about everyone, Parvati got down to cooking. For breakfast, vadas and chicken curry were being prepared.

In the meanwhile, their second son Vinay came rushing into the kitchen, saying, 'Amma! Who are they? Why have they come to our house?' The irritation was clear on his face.

'It's Jaffer Mamayya, ra, you've forgotten him! He's the same Mamayya who taught you how to take the marrow out of meat bones when you were a child,' Parvati said excitedly.

Vinay knitted his brows in irritation.

'You've forgotten. You were a little rascal then, maybe five or six years old. They went away after that to Karimnagar.'

'Okay, why have they come now?'

'What's it, ra? Why do you keep asking that? They've come to see us after such a long time! Jaffer Mamayya has come for Naseema, to help her set up for her new job in the bank on the next street,' Parvati explained, still puzzled about her son's behaviour.

'In all of Hyderabad, don't they have any Muslim relatives or friends? Why have they come to our house?'

Parvati was dumbfounded. She could not begin to gauge her son's intention. 'What is the problem if they have come to our house?'

'I don't like it. How can Muslims stay in our house?'

She stared at Vinay in astonishment.

'How many days will they stay?'

'I don't know,' she said somewhat weakly.

'Send them away soon. It won't look good if my friends see them. In any case, why does Father have Muslim friends?' he said, leaving abruptly.

Parvati's heart was pounding. She wanted to speak to Ramarao right away, but she restrained herself and got down to making the vadas.

After breakfast, Jaffer Ali and Naseema went to the bank after gently refusing Ramarao's offer to accompany them. Ramarao had applied for a day's leave. Breakfast had been heavy and he was feeling drowsy.

Just as he was about to close his eyes, Parvati, who was looking for an opportunity to find him alone, rushed in, 'You know what our son is saying?'

'No.'

'He told me, "Send the two of them away quickly. I don't like Muslims. Why does Father have Muslim friends?"' Parvati blurted out, feeling relieved after unburdening herself.

Ramarao was perplexed for a while, his wife's words slowly sinking in. Then, his heart started pounding. Shaking his apprehensions aside, he said, 'Let that oaf say whatever he likes.'

'Why does he speak like that?' Parvati asked, disturbed by Vinay's attitude.

'Arrogance.'

'Why does he not like Muslims? During a cricket match, even if the Pakistanis play very well, he abuses them,' Parvati recalled, beginning to see a pattern in her son's behaviour.

Though Ramarao did not like cricket, Parvati did, and she would watch it with her sons. Among all the cricketers, she liked Wasim Akram the most. When she had once openly expressed her admiration for him, Vinay had had a big fight with her. He was persistent that

she should change her opinion. 'I don't know, ra, I like him. He plays well. And he also seems like Amir,' said Parvati.

'Aamir, who? You mean Aamir Khan?' It tormented Vinay to know that his mother not only knew this Amir but liked him too. Her admiration for Wasim Akram anyway angered him.

'Amir is the hero in *Maidanam*, a novel by Chalam.'

Vinay knew his mother was crazy about books. He had not studied the Telugu language. For the sake of a modern education, he'd been educated in schools that didn't teach Telugu. Not knowing what to do about that evasive Amir character, he simply gritted his teeth. But on that matter, both mother and son would keep fighting. And Parvati would take it in good spirit. She had always thought about it as Vinay's passion for the Indian cricket team, but never had she imagined it to be religious fanaticism.

Ramarao had never imagined that the growing religious fanaticism in the country would come and squat right in his own house. He became anxious about the fact that he had not noticed anything amiss in his son's behaviour these days. When he was still thinking about it, Jaffer Ali came back after having ensured that Naseema had gone for her first day at work. Ramarao was overwhelmed with affection while looking at his friend and his anger towards his son increased. He thought that he would try and encourage a friendship between the two and drive away his son's aversion. 'Little oaf. He may have got into bad company. This cricket is also messing up people's perceptions!' Thinking so, he left the matter at that.

Chatting away about this and that, the two friends had lunch, and by the time they'd had a nap and woken up, Naseema had come back. She was talking excitedly with Parvati. 'If there was a girl in the house, how lively would things be here!' Ramarao thought happily. It was just then that Vinay returned. Ramarao was shocked to see him. On his son's forehead was a long, red kumkum bottu.

'Why all this?' he asked, annoyed.

'It's my wish. I like it this way,' Vinay retorted harshly. Ramarao did not know what to say with Jaffer Ali standing right in front of him.

'This is your Jaffer Mamayya, ra. When you were a child, he used to carry you around.'

Vinay looked at Jaffer, nodded and went into his room. Ramarao was upset that his son had not joined them for dinner.

Later that night, everyone except Vinay went to the terrace. No matter how much they pleaded with him, Vinay did not join them. After Naseema and Parvati went to their rooms saying they were sleepy, Ramarao shared his thoughts with Jaffer. 'Our fellow seems to have been completely spoilt, ra. He doesn't like your being in our house – because you are Muslims.'

Jaffer Ali was initially shocked, but then he laughed. 'Why only your son, ra? The entire country is spoilt. They're all calling us Muslims traitors. Hasn't a lot changed after Babri Masjid?'

'I am incapable of setting the country right, but I need to set right my son. I need to control this madness.'

'It's tough. You can't do it.'

'Why do you think this has happened? Do you remember how pleasant our friendship was when we were his age! How both of us liked each other's tastes!'

'We seem to understand what's going on, and the we don't! And other than blaming wretched politics, we seem unable to do anything.'

'I need to change our fellow.'

'Try.'

'Why is your daughter wearing a burkha? Your wife doesn't wear one.'

'Well, these days she wears one too.'

'Is that so?' moaned Ramarao.

'I am thinking of going back tomorrow morning. I thought if I could leave my daughter with you for a month, she could find either a room to rent or enrol at a hostel. But what shall we do now? I have relatives here. Shall I leave her with them and go?' Jaffer Ali asked hesitantly.

'No, no! Just because our son talks nonsense, do you think I'll let him have his way? Naseema will stay with us this month. I will see if she can get a room in this locality. There must be some hostels here as well. Let's see. Don't say anything more – it is settled,' Ramarao said firmly.

'Okay, as you wish. But if you have any problems, call me. I'll come and sort it out,' Jaffer Ali said feebly.

Their hearts became heavy. Hearts which ought to have become light, intoxicated with the memories of old times were groaning with pain. 'Why must things be this way? The situation that was unfolding in front of them became clear. But what could they do? Can't we protect our own children from the wretchedness of these times?' Questions. More questions.

Ramarao was finding it difficult to control his anger towards his son. From the beginning, it was his nature only to see the good and not the evil around him. Even if he did see some evil, it was his nature to ignore it and distance himself from it. He was one of many middle-class folks who would put their heads down and walk away after noticing something terrible, even if they were aware of both good and evil.

Jaffer Ali went back to his village the following day.

When Vinay saw Naseema leave their house wearing a burkha, he felt as if his body was smeared with chilli powder.

He went up to his mother and asked, 'How long is this girl staying here?' He did not notice his father behind him.

'What do you mean, how many days? She's going to be staying with us. What's your problem?' Ramarao asked, a tremendous anger building up in his voice.

'It's disgusting to see her leave our house in a burkha!'

'Don't be crazy. She'll do as she likes, how do your feelings figure in all this?'

'Why do you have these Muslim friends?'

'Why not? Do I have to seek your permission now to make friends?' When his father raised his voice and widened his eyes in anger, Vinay left the house.

That evening, Vinay returned wearing large bottu again, and walked about the whole house.

It annoyed Ramarao, but he decided not to say anything because it was pointless. In truth, Ramarao was not capable of saying things firmly to his sons or ordering them to do his bidding. He had not felt the need to behave this way in all these years. He had got used to listening to his sons' desires and fulfilling them, never feeling the need to get angry with or worried about them as they had always excelled in their studies. Apart from their education, he

had not paid attention to anything else. Calming his upset mind, he screamed, 'Parvati! Serve us our meal. Let's all eat together.'

'I won't eat now,' Vinay screamed even louder.

'Will you too not eat, Naseema?' asked Parvati anxiously.

'I'll eat, Aunty,' said Naseema.

'Serve him too,' Ramarao yelled.

Finally, all four of them sat at the table.

With her long black hair loose and wearing a white nightie, Naseema looked like an angel. Ramarao felt disgusted at Vinay who was eating without raising his eyes to look at her. 'Has this fellow become as insensitive as a rock that he won't look up when a beautiful girl is sitting in front of him?' he wondered.

Ramarao looked at Naseema. She too was not looking in Vinay's direction. 'Vinay, why don't you show Naseema around Hyderabad this Sunday?' he asked discreetly.

'Don't I have anything better to do?' Vinay said, without lifting his head.

'Why can't you?'

'Do I have to take that burkha and roam around town?' he said sarcastically.

Ramarao didn't know how to react with Naseema right in front of him.

'I won't go with your son, Uncle,' said Naseema.

'Why?'

'If I roam around with your son and that huge bottu…' Naseema stopped.

Ramarao laughed out loud. 'You've given him a good answer! Well done, girls ought to be like that.'

Vinay looked daggers at Naseema, and she looked up, smiling. Ramarao thought Vinay would fall for that smile. Vinay continued to be angry.

'If only I had the authority, I would have got this fellow and Naseema married,' Ramarao said to Parvati.

'Of course, you don't have such authority,' she said, thinking of their elder son's marriage.

'Can't we change this fellow, Parvati?'

'I have no such confidence,' Parvati said.

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Vinay's behaviour made it clear that he did not like Naseema's presence in the house. He would not go in her direction even by mistake. He started to return home late at night. If Parvati asked him about it, he would say, 'Hasn't your friend's daughter taken over this house? Have her move out first.'

One day, Ramarao stayed up till his son returned to speak to him. Vinay walked into the house at midnight and switched on the TV without having dinner.

'Orey, I need to speak to you,' Ramarao said from his bedroom.

'Just a minute, Nanna, after I watch this song.'

Listening to his son's response, Ramarao went up to him. Some movie song was playing on the TV. Even as he tried to get his thoughts together, Ramarao's attention was drawn to the TV screen. A group of saffron-robed people were singing bhajans, chanting 'Hare Rama, Hare Krishna' on top of Charminar. Ramarao felt very uncomfortable. The song was all right, but the visuals were horrifying. What would Jaffer Ali think if he saw this? Couldn't they find any

other place to record the video? Did they have to go up the Charminar chanting 'Hare Rama'? He too had seen some movies spewing hatred towards Muslims and felt terrible about it, but he never imagined what he had seen in the movies would become a part of his household.

After the song was over, having turned off the TV, Vinay asked, 'What is it, Nanna?'

Ramarao did not feel like speaking to his son at that point. 'This fellow will turn into a fanatic just like those on TV! And none of them will feel remorse or think that they are at fault. I've been avoiding such people in my office all this while, but how do I stay away from my son?' His mind was completely disturbed, and he looked at his son, who was looking strangely at him, and said, 'Nothing, go and sleep.' Then, he too went to bed. But Parvati could not keep quiet. She hoped that if Naseema stopped wearing her burkha, her son's dislike of her might lessen because these days, the minute Vinay opened his mouth, he would only utter the word burkha.

Two days later, while untangling Naseema's knotted hair and oiling it in the evening, Parvati asked, 'Your mother did not wear a burkha, Naseema. Why are you wearing it?'

'Aren't we Muslims, Aunty?'

'So?'

'Just like you wear a bottu, we wear the burkha,' she explained simply.

Parvati was lost for words. 'Don't you feel uncomfortable?'

'No, Aunty. I've got used to it.'

Fatima had not liked the burkha. But Naseema! Parvati tried again, 'It's not airy, isn't it? What if you take it off?'

'How can we take it off, Aunty? Aren't we Muslims? We have to wear the burkha or how will one know the difference between you and us?'

'Should one know the difference between you and us, Naseema?'

'There is a difference, isn't there, Aunty? And as long as there is a difference, it is bound to be evident.'

'Your mother and I have lived without feeling the difference, right?'

'My mother doesn't wear a bottu, and she doesn't wear a mangalasutram either. There's a lot of difference between my mother and you.'

There was both truth and falsehood in Naseema's words. There would be differences. How could there be no differences? But there was a difference between the old times and now in the perception of those differences.

'I'm not sure, but maybe if you remove the burkha and be like us, it would be so good,' blurted out Parvati.

'But I won't say you will look good if you wear a burkha like us, Aunty.'

Naseema's remark hit Parvati hard. There was certainly a difference between Naseema and herself, but Parvati could not put a finger on it. Parvati was not able to understand.

A situation of you and us.

A situation where one thinks of you and us as one.

A situation where one thinks you and us as different.

Parvati was caught up in a situation where she was unable to untangle those knots. It seemed complicated. She continued to comb Naseema's hair, smoothening out the knots.

'You think that this change is only one-sided. But is that really so, Aunty?'

She had no response to Naseema's questions that she could openly express. But things had indeed changed. When their elder son Akhil got married, they had been able to see the changes clearly. Parvati and Ramarao had got married at the registrar's office, and the total expenses were forty rupees. During Akhil's wedding, they had accepted the selling of the bride even though they had not liked it. Their son had taken a ten-lakh dowry. 'The girl's parents are not like you. They do believe in gods, they have fear and respect towards them. You have no option but to perform the marriage as per the sastras,' the son had said. They did everything including the ritual of the Satyanarayana vratam. To perform this, Akhil had even brought in a small mantapam for keeping idols inside the house. While Parvati was content to keep it clean, her younger son put flowers there and offered prayers. Changes had occurred. Not that they had not occurred. So what right did she have to question Naseema?

'Baba told me that you don't entertain questions concerning caste and religion in your home,' Naseema said, breaking into Parvati's train of thought.

'Yes, we don't entertain them.'

'Yet, your son doesn't like me living in your house, Aunty. Why is that so?'

Parvati was startled.

'It's not like that. maybe he has not spoken to you properly. He doesn't speak to girls. He is like that,' she said, faltering.

'No, Aunty, he spoke to me quite clearly.'

'Saying what?'

'That he doesn't want me to stay in this house, that I should leave as soon as possible.'

Parvati felt it would be better if the earth swallowed her up there and then.

'I am here because I think Uncle and you would be upset, but I don't like being here either, Aunty.'

'Vinay has not thought about the fact that his parents would be upset, but this girl had thought about us,' Parvati thought, feeling there was indeed a difference between them.

'Yes, Amma! If you go away, Uncle and I would be very upset. You should stay here till you find a hostel.' Parvati drew Naseema close to her.

'Father had told all of us so much about you. Though we had not seen you, we sisters like you a lot, and we have respect for you.'

Parvati felt like weeping at her and Ramarao's inability to make their children respect Jaffer Ali. Later, when she shared this with Ramarao, she wept.

Ramarao was unable to comprehend the chain of events. Somewhere, something had gone wrong. Other than listening to their children, making sure their desires were fulfilled, why had they never talked to them about their own likes and dislikes? Other than building a world around their children, why had they failed to build a world for themselves? Where was the world that they had for themselves before the children were born? Why had they not drawn their children into that world? But where was the time to do these things? They were simply rushing, rushing all the time. Why had their children not imbibed the culture that they themselves had imbibed?

'How do you bring a riff-raff like this into the house? How do I put up with you?' On the day Ramarao's grandmother had told him this, he refused to eat, did satyagraha and did not stay away from his resolve till his grandmother invited all his friends the following day and served them food. Why was he so helpless now in front of his son?

Was standing up to your own children not as easy as standing up to your elders? Had he had that kind of strength then because society was conducive to these ideas? Wasn't the present society not providing him enough strength? Where indeed was the right kind of society? The one that he had forgotten, or the one that did not care for him? The society that he had forgotten to observe, while he had employed his wings merely to protect his young ones!

Ramarao remembered the young fellow in his office. His mind was restless. He could not bear the restlessness as he thought he had left that part of him behind in his youth. The only restlessness he had felt once his sons were born was the anxiety during their exams. And so, to be calm and contain his anger towards his son was proving to be difficult.

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Naseema went to various working women's hostels. The only response she got even after a week's search was that there were no vacancies.

'Even if there was a vacancy, I think they don't want to take me in, Aunty,' she said to Parvati.

'Why do you think so?'

'I'm a Muslim, right? I think there are no Muslims in those hostels.'

'Cha … would hostels function if they have such a practice?'

'Why not? Aren't the majority of people in our country Hindus? In fact, very few Muslim girls go for jobs. Those staying in a hostel are fewer still. I must find out if there is a hostel for Muslim girls. If not, perhaps someone should start one,' said Naseema firmly.

When Parvati had been a degree student in Guntur Women's College, she had stayed in a hostel. There had been about ten Muslim women in that hostel, and they had all lived happily together. Referring to that Parvati said, 'All must live together like that. Should they live separately?'

'If we are to live as a separate group, we will get vacancies. Then there will be no questions of feeling that we were left out because we were Muslims. So it's better to be separate!'

Parvati did not know how to respond. Naseema was upset. Parvati did not know her pain. She did not know how to comprehend it.

Two days later, Naseema rented a room in the old city, near Sultanshahi.

'Ayyo, why so far away?' asked Ramarao.

'I don't know, Uncle, I feel happy there. All our people are there.'

'Our people' – Jaffer Ali had not thought of that expression. Naseema was thinking in this manner. Jaffer Ali had come looking for Ramarao after twenty years. Vinay acted as if he was sitting on a bed of thorns during the fifteen days Naseema stayed with them. He made Naseema feel uncomfortable.

Ramarao had love for Jaffer Ali and Naseema. Vinay had only anger. What was all this?

It had not occurred to Ramarao that he had not thought about various matters when he ought to have thought about them.

To Ramarao and to a lot of people like him, it would also not occur that because they had not thought about things, because they had not responded at the right time, events like Rathayatra, Babri Masjid, and Gujarat had happened. They had not recognized the fact that it had been a long time since those had become news to while away their time every morning.

They felt that their responsibility ended with their expressing their feelings with phrases like 'Arerey' or 'Ayyayyo' or 'Abba' or 'How atrocious!'

They did not think that not having doused the fire that had been ignited could bring about a little disquiet in their houses.

Not knowing how to tackle such disquiet, they were rattled.

Ramarao escaped facing such disquiet in fifteen days. Naseema moved into her hostel room. Jaffer Ali expressed his gratitude on the phone, but he did not visit them again.

Ramarao would be pained whenever he remembered this episode, but then he would put it behind him. This became a habit with him.

But it had not been possible for him to hold on to his anger towards his son. He consoled himself thinking that his son was after all a young oaf.

Vinay was happy that Wasim Akram had been removed from the Pakistan cricket team. His problem with his mother got resolved thus. Parvati announced that she had lost even her interest in cricket and remained calm.

Ramarao felt that there was no point in having any disagreement with his son who was going away to America in six months. Ramarao was not a religious fanatic. A secularist. He could not do anything but tell himself, 'Sorry, Jaffer Ali!'

Translated from Telugu by Alladi Uma and M. Sridhar

Glossary

1. **Nagaramlo Eenadu**: a Telugu newspaper circulated in Andra Pradesh (now in Telangana)
2. **tank bund**: an area or secondary containment system around storage tanks or storage drums used to hold flammable or toxic liquids
3. **retirement**: the action or fact of leaving one's job and ceasing to work
4. **immoral**: conflicting with generally or traditionally held moral principles
5. **virtuous**: having or showing high moral standards
6. **wretched**: of poor quality; very bad situation
7. **pacify**: quell the anger, agitation, or excitement of someone
8. **gesticulating**: use gestures, especially dramatic ones, instead of speaking or to emphasise one's words
9. **spring**: a place where water or oil wells up from an underground source, or the basin or flow formed in such a way
10. **provisions**: an amount or thing supplied or provided
11. **enthusiasm**: intense and eager enjoyment, interest, or approval
12. **Abids**: a major commercial center in Hyderabad, India
13. **distress**: extreme anxiety, sorrow, or pain
14. **assuaged**: make an unpleasant feeling less intense
15. **Gudipati Venkata Chalam**: an Indian Telugu language writer and philosopher; he was considered to be one of the most influential personalities in modern Telugu literature
16. **stature**: importance or reputation gained by ability or achievement
17. **perplexed**: completely baffled; very puzzled
18. **outsmart**: defeat or get the better of someone by being clever or cunning

19. **bedridden**: confined to bed by sickness or old age
20. **intervened**: take part in something so as to prevent or alter a result or course of events
21. **Ramzan**: Ramzan is another name for Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, during which many Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset each day
22. **haleem**: a type of stew that is widely consumed in South Asia, the Middle East and Central Asia
23. **ghazals**: a lyric poem with a fixed number of verses and a repeated rhyme, typically on the theme of love, and normally set to music
24. **swiftly**: at high speed; quickly
25. **faltering**: losing strength or momentum
26. **sumptuous**: splendid and expensive-looking
27. **reminiscing**: indulge in enjoyable recollection of past events
28. **knitted**: tighten one's eyebrows in a frown of concentration, disapproval, or anxiety
29. **dumbfounded**: greatly astonished or amazed
30. **gauge**: judge or assess a situation, attitude, or feeling
31. **pounding**: the sound, feeling, or action of something beating repeatedly
32. **restrained**: prevent someone or something from doing something; keep under control or within limits
33. **blurted**: say something suddenly and without careful consideration
34. **apprehensions**: anxiety or fear that something bad or unpleasant will happen
35. **oaf**: a man who is rough or clumsy and unintelligent
36. **admiration**: respecting someone and to give a warm approval
37. **persistent**: continuing to do something or to try to do something even though it is difficult or other people want you to stop
38. **tormented**: experiencing or characterised by severe physical or mental suffering
39. **evasive**: tending to avoid commitment or self-revelation, especially by responding only indirectly
40. **gritted**: to press or rub the teeth together
41. **fanaticism**: a person who has very extreme beliefs that may lead them to behave in unreasonable or violent ways
42. **aversion**: a person or thing that arouses strong feelings of dislike
43. **kumkum bottu**: The kumkum bottu or tilak is a very significant item in Hindu ceremonies, applied to the forehead during worship
44. **retorted**: say something in answer to a remark, typically in a sharp, angry, or witty manner
45. **Babri Masjid**: Babri Masjid was a mosque in Ayodhya, India – it has been claimed to have been built upon the site of Ram Janmabhoomi, the legendary birthplace of Rama
46. **enrol**: to put yourself or someone else onto the official list of members
47. **feebly**: in a way that lacks strength or force
48. **wretchedness**: the state of being unpleasant or of low quality
49. **insensitive**: showing or feeling no concern for others' feelings
50. **discreetly**: in a careful and prudent manner, especially in order to keep something confidential or to avoid embarrassment
51. **looked daggers**: glare very angrily at
52. **spewing**: be poured or forced out in large quantities

53. **remorse**: deep regret or guilt for a wrong committed
54. **Satyanarayana vratam**: a ritual performed to seek blessings for prosperity, wealth and happiness
55. **imbibed**: absorb or assimilate ideas or knowledge
56. **riff-raff**: people, or a group of people, regarded as disreputable or worthless
57. **conducive**: making a certain situation or outcome likely or possible
58. **atrocious**: of a very poor quality; extremely bad or unpleasant act
59. **disquiet**: a feeling of worry or unease
60. **fanatic**: a person filled with excessive and single-minded zeal, especially for an extreme religious or political cause
61. **secularist**: someone who believes that religion should not be involved with the ordinary social and political activities of a country

Comprehension I: (Short Answer Questions)

1. Why did Parvati insist Ramarao to go to the bazaar early?
2. How did Parvati react to Ramarao reading the newspaper on Sunday mornings?
3. What sacrifices did Ramarao and Parvati make for their sons' education?
4. Why was Ramarao excited about Jaffer Ali's visit?
5. What role did old books play in Ramarao and Jaffer Ali's friendship?
6. How did Ramarao and Jaffer Ali spend their Sunday nights when they were bachelors?
7. How did Vinay react to Jaffer Ali and Naseema's visit to their house?
8. What does Jaffer Ali suggest as a solution for Naseema's accommodation?
9. How does Vinay respond to Ramarao's suggestion of him showing Naseema around Hyderabad?
10. At the end of it all, what does Ramarao tell himself, instead of having a disagreement with Vinay?

Comprehension II: (Paragraph Answer Questions)

1. How does Ramarao's habit of reading the newspaper reflect his personality and priorities?
2. Describe Ramarao's feelings towards his sons and the sacrifices he made for their education.
3. What is the significance of Jaffer Ali's unexpected visit, and how does it affect Ramarao and Parvati?
4. How did Jaffer Ali and Ramarao influence each other's literary tastes and cultural knowledge?
5. How does Vinay's reaction to Jaffer Ali's visit reveal his prejudices, and how does it affect Parvati?
6. How does the conversation between Ramarao and Jaffer Ali reflect the underlying social and religious tensions present in the story?
7. How does Ramarao's reaction to Vinay's behaviour highlight his internal conflict between his principles and his son's actions?
8. Explain how the interactions between Parvati and Naseema reveal the complexities of cultural and religious identity.
9. Compare and contrast the relationship between Ramarao and Jaffer Ali with that of Vinay and Naseema.

10. Analyse the conclusion of the story.

Comprehension III: (Analytical/Discussion Questions)

1. Elaborate on the generational and cultural divides between the relationship of the father and son.
2. Discuss the theme of religious intolerance as presented in the story.
3. Explore the symbolism of food in the story, and its role in promoting cultural exchange and bonding.
4. Contemplate on how the story reflects the social changes in India in the backdrop of secularism and communal harmony.
5. Comment on the moral and ethical dimensions, that are dealt in the story, with specific reference to friendship, loyalty, and religious tolerance.
6. Analyse Parvati's internal struggle regarding Naseema's burkha and her own cultural practices.
7. Discuss the impact of historical and contemporary societal issues on the characters' attitudes and behaviour.

Further Reading:

1. *Venu* by Pratibha Ray
2. *Maathe Mantramu* by Narayan Rao
3. *The Inheritance* by Anjum Hasan
4. *The Interview* by Aravind Adiga
5. *The Last Train to Mahakali* by Jerry Pinto
6. *The Room on the Roof* by Ruskin Bond
7. *The Other Side of the Road* by Khushwant Singh
8. *A Devoted Son* by Anita Desai
9. *Karma* by Khushwant Singh
10. *The Very Old Man with Enormous Wings* by Gabriel Garcia Márquez
11. *The Rocking-Horse Winner* by D. H. Lawrence

THE PARLIAMENT OF LIARS

- **GANESH LAL VYAS**

Pre-reading Activities:

1. Have you voted during the State and National Election? Yes or No? Discuss.
2. How do you think one should select the eligible candidate who could be our probable leader?
3. According to you, what are the factors that influence the voters during elections?
4. Narrate any incident/anecdote related to politics or politicians.

Introduction to the Poet:

Ganesh Lal Vyas 'Ustad' (1907-65) was one of the most revolutionary poets of Rajasthan. Although, he didn't have a thorough formal education, he was well-read. He wrote in English, Urdu, Hindi and Rajasthani.

From the beginning, his life had been like the crust of the earth. He was born in a traditional Brahmin family of Jodhpur, and married a non-Brahmin much against the wishes of the family and community. Albeit he was an ardent rejector of feudalism, he began his service career in a feudal lord's household. In Bombay, where his father went in search of a job. he worked as a jockey boy. Incidentally, one day he happened to meet B.C. Harrimann, the editor of *Bombay Chronicle*, in Deccan Queen. Mr. Harrimann was impressed by the candid talks and open manners of Vyas and appointed him. It was in Mr. Harrimann's office that Vyas learned English language and literature, politics and journalism.

In the year 1930, Ustad joined the Salt Satyagrah Movement and he was lodged in jail at Beawar. When he was released, he went to Indore. In Indore, he observed the life of labourers and studied the works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. In 1938, along with Jai Narain Vyas, he founded the Marwar Lok Parishad. In 1942, all the members of the Lok Parishad including Ustad, were sent to Jalore jail.

The poems written during this period nettled the government but inspired his rural audience. As a result, the wave of the freedom movement spread at a tremendous pace in the countryside. The poems of Ustad and his friends were brought out as books – *Garibon ki Awaj* (The Voice of the Poor) and *Bekason ki Awaj* (The Voice of the Underpriviledged). However, these books were immediately proscribed.

Post independence, Ustad's poetry attained new heights. The only source of Ustad's writings today is *Jan Kavi Ustad* published posthumously, by the Rajasthan Bhasha Prachar Sabha, Jaipur. On 29th October, 1965, Ustad died in poverty but not in obscurity.

About the Poem:

'The Parliament of Liars' showcases the new generation leaders, who have not worked for the betterment of people and nation but are power mongers, greedy and self-centred. The poet blatantly calls such leaders as liars and connotates them with various negative adjectives to highlight their crookedness. The poem can be considered as a wake-up call or an emergency siren about the saddening scenario of Indian politics. It would not be unfair to say that the poem mirrors a corrupted reality bearing a universal tone.

The real fighters are lost forever
but
these pseudo leaders of a new vulgar kind
with a little power
are lost in black-marketing;
this whole assembly is a pack of liars!

Keep awake
for
these paramours of permits soon forget their promises;
good old men are far from this new infernal world
only swindlers can suffer it!

Be away from them
for
these chameleons without forgiveness
change colours a hundred times a day;
their blood teems with parasites
and on their account
this poor ox is starving!

Don't be taken in by them
for
these paramours of permits
roll in harems, and
because of them
the unsullied khadi of Bapu has disappeared from hamlets
and emits odious smells.
They must eat up all green grass!

Don't be tricked by them
for
these impostors, cheats
donning cloaks of piety
bilk the ignorant masses
and make money
in the name of Gandhiji!

Don't send them at all
to seats of power
for
this witchery of votes will strip us naked:
these bullies and bandits of new blood
have kidnapped even the two bullocks!

They have duped the public
this new blood practices all forms of trickery,
even Nehru's vision is jaundiced;
this house, therefore
is bound to tumble down!

Beware
hollow drums always sound well.
Hollow are now the followers of Truth.
Congress manifestos are full of tall talk.
If you vote them to power
you will get only kicks in return!

But one day
hypocrisy is exposed.
They were caught red-handed, taking bribe!

Translated from Rajasthani by V. K. Sharma

Glossary

1. **pseudo**: insincere
2. **vulgar**: inappropriate, crude, unrefined
3. **black-market**: illegal trade, people who are involved in violation of restrictions related to political, military, or espionage with improper purpose
4. **paramours**: passionately, illicit, unlawful
5. **infernal**: resembling hell
6. **swindler**: a person who cheats
7. **teems**: to abound (with)
8. **parasites**: a person who lives on other people's efforts or expense and gives little or nothing back
9. **harems**: the private section of a household, traditionally forbidden to male strangers
10. **unsullied**: not defiled, tainted
11. **hamlets**: a small village or a group of houses
12. **odious**: strong dislike, aversion, despicable, mean
13. **impostors**: one who attempts to mislead by using an assumed/false name or identity
14. **donning**: to dress; put on clothing
15. **cloak**: a blanket like covering which conceals
16. **piety**: reverence and devotion to God
17. **bilk**: to deceive; cheat
18. **witchery**: an art of witchcraft; allure; charm
19. **bandits**: one who robs/cheats others lawlessly
20. **bullocks**: the party symbol of the undivided congress
21. **new blood**: a person or people newly brought in to a project or organisation, a new member

22. **duped**: a person who has been deceived
23. **jaundiced**: prejudiced, envious
24. **manifesto**: a public declaration of principles, policies, or intentions, especially that of a political party
25. **hypocrisy**: hiding the real character or inclination

Comprehension I: (Short Answer Questions)

1. List the adjectives used by the poet to address the 'new' leaders.
2. Why does the poet ask us to be awake?
3. What has disappeared and from where because of these liars?
4. How do the impostors try to cheat us and under whose name?
5. What does the new generation leader practice and what is the result of it?

Comprehension II: (Paragraph Answer Questions)

1. Describe the qualities of the liars as highlighted in the poem.
2. Explicate the significance of the line 'these bullies and bandits of new blood/have kidnapped even the two bullocks!'
3. Why does the poet beseech the public not to elect the 'leaders' and what will be the impact of it on the public?
4. Illuminate the two different worlds presented in the poem.

Comprehension III: (Analytical/Discussion Questions)

1. "Hollow are now the followers of Truth." Comment.
2. Explicate the relevance of the poem in 21st century global politics.

Further Reading:

1. *Mango Seedling* by Chinua Achebe
2. *The Ugly Politician* by R.K. Laxman
3. *The Revenge of Power: How Autocrats are Reinventing Politics for the 21st Century* by Moises Naim

EAST AND WEST

- RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Pre-reading Activities:

1. What difference have you observed in Western civilisation and Eastern civilisation? Discuss.
2. "Oh, East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet." – Rudyard Kipling – What is your opinion about the writer's remark? Discuss.

Introduction to the Writer:

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) was a Bengali poet, short story writer, song composer, dramatist, essayist, and painter. He was a major influence in spreading Indian culture to the West and vice versa. As a humanist, universalist, internationalist, and staunch opponent of nationalism, he condemned the British Raj and fought for independence from Britain. In 1913, he became the first non-European to earn the Nobel Prize in literature. His best-known works include *Gitanjali*, *Gora*, and *Ghare-Baire*, while his poems, short tales, and novels were praised for their lyricism, colloquialism, realism, and unnatural introspection.

About the Text:

'East and West' explores the cultural, philosophical and spiritual differences between Eastern and Western societies. In this essay, Tagore delves into the essence of these two worlds, highlighting their unique characteristics and the potential for mutual understanding and harmony.

Tagore begins by acknowledging the distinct worldviews that define the East and the West. He describes the East as a realm deeply rooted in spirituality, tradition, and a sense of unity with nature. In contrast, he portrays the West as a land of rationality, scientific advancement, and individualism. This dichotomy sets the stage for a deeper examination of how these contrasting perspectives can coexist and enrich one another.

Throughout the essay, Tagore emphasises the importance of dialogue between the two cultures. He argues that while the West has made significant strides in material progress and intellectual achievements, it often lacks the spiritual depth and emotional richness found in Eastern philosophies. Conversely, he suggests that the East can benefit from the West's advancements in science and technology, which can enhance the quality of life without compromising spiritual values.

Tagore also addresses the dangers of cultural imperialism, warning against the tendency of one culture to dominate another. He advocates for a respectful exchange of ideas and values, where both East and West can learn from each other. This mutual respect, he believes, is essential for fostering global harmony and understanding.

I

It is not always a profound interest in man that carries travellers nowadays to distant lands. More often it is the facility for rapid movement. For lack of time and for the sake of convenience we generalise and crush our human facts into the packages within the steel trunks that hold our travellers' reports.

Our knowledge of our own countrymen and our feelings about them have slowly and unconsciously grown out of innumerable facts which are full of contradictions and subject to incessant change. They have the elusive mystery and fluidity of life. We cannot define to ourselves what we are as a whole, because we know too much; because our knowledge is more than knowledge. It is an immediate consciousness of personality, any evaluation of which carries some emotion, joy or sorrow, shame or exaltation. But in a foreign land we try to find our compensation for the meagreness of our data by the compactness of the generalisation which our imperfect sympathy itself helps us to form. When a stranger from the West travels in the Eastern world he takes the facts that displease him and readily makes use of them for his rigid conclusions, fixed upon the unchallengeable authority of his personal experience. It is like a man who has his own boat for crossing his village stream, but, on being compelled to wade across some strange watercourse, draws angry comparisons as he goes from every patch of mud and every pebble which his feet encounter.

Our mind has faculties which are universal, but its habits are insular. There are men who become impatient and angry at the least discomfort when their habits are incommoded. In their idea of the next world they probably conjure up the ghosts of their slippers and dressing-gowns, and expect the latchkey that opens their lodging-house door on earth to fit their front door in the other world. As travellers they are a failure; for they have grown too accustomed to their mental easy-chairs, and in their intellectual nature love home comforts, which are of local make, more than the realities of life, which, like earth itself, are full of ups and downs, yet are one in their rounded completeness.

The modern age has brought the geography of the earth near to us, but made it difficult for us to come into touch with man. We go to strange lands and observe; we do not live there. We hardly meet men: but only specimens of knowledge. We are in haste to seek for general types and overlook individuals.

When we fall into the habit of neglecting to use the understanding that comes of sympathy in our travels, our knowledge of foreign people grows insensitive, and therefore easily becomes both unjust and cruel in its character, and also selfish and contemptuous in its application. Such has, too often, been the case with regard to the meeting of Western people in our days with others for whom they do not recognise any obligation of kinship.

It has been admitted that the dealings between different races of men are not merely between individuals; that our mutual understanding is either aided, or else obstructed, by the general

emanations forming the social atmosphere. These emanations are our collective ideas and collective feelings, generated according to special historical circumstances.

For instance, the caste-idea is a collective idea in India. When we approach an Indian who is under the influence of this collective idea, he is no longer a pure individual with his conscience fully awake to the judging of the value of a human being. He is more or less a passive medium for giving expression to the sentiment of a whole community.

It is evident that the caste-idea is not creative; it is merely institutional. It adjusts human beings according to some mechanical arrangement. It emphasises the negative side of the individual – his separateness. It hurts the complete truth in man.

In the West, also, the people have a certain collective idea that obscures their humanity. Let me try to explain what I feel about it.

II

Lately I went to visit some battlefields of France which had been devastated by war. The awful calm of desolation, which still bore wrinkles of pain – death – struggles stiffened into ugly ridges – brought before my mind the vision of a huge demon, which had no shape, no meaning, yet had two arms that could strike and break and tear, a gaping mouth that could devour, and bulging brains that could conspire and plan. It was a purpose, which had a living body, but no complete humanity to temper it. Because it was passion – belonging to life, and yet not having the wholeness of life – it was the most terrible of life's enemies.

Something of the same sense of oppression in a different degree, the same desolation in a different aspect, is produced in my mind when I realise the effect of the West upon Eastern life – the West which, in its relation to us, is all plan and purpose incarnate, without any superfluous humanity.

I feel the contrast very strongly in Japan. In that country the old world presents itself with some ideal of perfection, in which man has his varied opportunities of self-revelation in art, in ceremonial, in religious faith, and in customs expressing the poetry of social relationship. There one feels that deep delight of hospitality which life offers to life. And side by side, in the same soil, stands the modern world, which is stupendously big and powerful, but inhospitable. It has no simple-hearted welcome for man. It is living; yet the incompleteness of life's ideal within it cannot but hurt humanity.

The wriggling tentacles of a cold-blooded utilitarianism, with which the West has grasped all the easily yielding succulent portions of the East, are causing pain and indignation throughout the Eastern countries. The West comes to us, not with the imagination and sympathy that create and unite, but with a shock of passion – passion for power and wealth. This passion is a mere force, which has in it the principle of separation, of conflict.

I have been fortunate in coming into close touch with individual men and women of the Western countries, and have felt with them their sorrows and shared their aspirations. I have known that they seek the same God, who is my God – even those who deny Him. I feel certain that, if the great light of culture be extinct in Europe, our horizon in the East will mourn in darkness. It does not hurt my pride to acknowledge that, in the present age, Western humanity has received its mission to be the teacher of the world; that her science, through the mastery of laws of nature, is to liberate human souls from the dark dungeon of matter. For this very reason I have realised all the more strongly, on the other hand, that the dominant collective idea in the Western countries is not creative. It is ready to enslave or kill individuals, to drug a great people with soul-killing poison, darkening their whole future with the black mist of stupefaction, and emasculating entire races of men to the utmost degree of helplessness. It is wholly wanting in spiritual power to blend and harmonise; it lacks the sense of the great personality of man.

The most significant fact of modern days is this, that the West has met the East. Such a momentous meeting of humanity, in order to be fruitful, must have in its heart some great emotional idea, generous and creative. There can be no doubt that God's choice has fallen upon the knights-errant of the West for the service of the present age; arms and armour have been given to them; but have they yet realised in their hearts the single-minded loyalty to their cause which can resist all temptations of bribery from the devil? The world to-day is offered to the West. She will destroy it, if she does not use it for a great creation of man. The materials for such a creation are in the hands of science; but the creative genius is in Man's spiritual ideal.

III

When I was young a stranger from Europe came to Bengal. He chose his lodging among the people of the country, shared with them their frugal diet, and freely offered them his service. He found employment in the houses of the rich, teaching them French and German, and the money thus earned he spent to help poor students in buying books. This meant for him hours of walking in the mid-day heat of a tropical summer; for, intent upon exercising the utmost economy, he refused to hire conveyances. He was pitiless in his exaction from himself of his resources, in money, time, and strength, to the point of privation; and all this for the sake of a people who were obscure, to whom he was not born, yet whom he dearly loved. He did not come to us with a professional mission of teaching sectarian creeds; he had not in his nature the least trace of that self-sufficiency of goodness, which humiliates by gifts the victims of its insolent benevolence. Though he did not know our language, he took every occasion to frequent our meetings and ceremonies; yet he was always afraid of intrusion, and tenderly anxious lest he might offend us by his ignorance of our customs. At last, under the continual strain of work in an alien climate and surroundings, his health broke down. He died, and was cremated at our burning-ground, according to his express desire.

The attitude of his mind, the manner of his living, the object of his life, his modesty, his unstinted self-sacrifice for a people who had not even the power to give publicity to any benefaction bestowed upon them, were so utterly unlike anything we were accustomed to

associate with the Europeans in India, that it gave rise in our mind to a feeling of love bordering upon awe.

We all have a realm, a private paradise, in our mind, where dwell deathless memories of persons who brought some divine light to our life's experience, who may not be known to others, and whose names have no place in the pages of history. Let me confess to you that this man lives as one of those immortals in the paradise of my individual life.

He came from Sweden, his name was Hammargren. What was most remarkable in the event of his coming to us in Bengal was the fact that in his own country he had chanced to read some works of my great countryman, Ram Mohan Roy, and felt an immense veneration for his genius and his character. Ram Mohan Roy lived in the beginning of the last century, and it is no exaggeration when I describe him as one of the immortal personalities of modern time. This young Swede had the unusual gift of a far-sighted intellect and sympathy, which enabled him even from his distance of space and time, and in spite of racial differences, to realise the greatness of Ram Mohan Roy. It moved him so deeply that he resolved to go to the country which produced this great man, and offer her his service. He was poor, and he had to wait some time in England before he could earn his passage money to India. There he came at last, and in reckless generosity of love utterly spent himself to the last breath of his life, away from home and kindred and all the inheritances of his motherland. His stay among us was too short to produce any outward result. He failed even to achieve during his life what he had in his mind, which was to found by the help of his scanty earnings a library as a memorial to Ram Mohan Roy, and thus to leave behind him a visible symbol of his devotion. But what I prize most in this European youth, who left no record of his life behind him, is not the memory of any service of goodwill, but the precious gift of respect which he offered to a people who are fallen upon evil times, and whom it is so easy to ignore or to humiliate. For the first time in the modern days this obscure individual from Sweden brought to our country the chivalrous courtesy of the West, a greeting of human fellowship.

The coincidence came to me with a great and delightful surprise when the Nobel Prize was offered to me from Sweden. As a recognition of individual merit it was of great value to me, no doubt; but it was the acknowledgment of the East as a collaborator with the Western continents, in contributing its riches to the common stock of civilisation, which had the chief significance for the present age. It meant joining hands in comradeship by the two great hemispheres of the human world across the sea.

IV

To-day the real East remains unexplored. The blindness of contempt is more hopeless than the blindness of ignorance; for contempt kills the light which ignorance merely leaves unignited. The East is waiting to be understood by the Western races, in order not only to be able to give what is true in her, but also to be confident of her own mission.

In Indian history, the meeting of the Mussulman and the Hindu produced Akbar, the object of whose dream was the unification of hearts and ideals. It had all the glowing enthusiasm of a religion, and it produced an immediate and a vast result even in his own lifetime.

But the fact still remains that the Western mind, after centuries of contact with the East, has not evolved the enthusiasm of a chivalrous ideal which can bring this age to its fulfilment. It is everywhere raising thorny hedges of exclusion and offering human sacrifices to national self-seeking. It has intensified the mutual feelings of envy among Western races themselves, as they fight over their spoils and display a carnivorous pride in their snarling rows of teeth.

We must again guard our minds from any encroaching distrust of the individuals of a nation. The active love of humanity and the spirit of martyrdom for the cause of justice and truth which I have met with in the Western countries have been a great lesson and inspiration to me. I have no doubt in my mind that the West owes its true greatness, not so much to its marvellous training of intellect, as to its spirit of service devoted to the welfare of man. Therefore I speak with a personal feeling of pain and sadness about the collective power which is guiding the helm of Western civilisation. It is a passion, not an ideal. The more success it has brought to Europe, the more costly it will prove to her at last, when the accounts have to be rendered. And the signs are unmistakable, that the accounts have been called for. The time has come when Europe must know that the forcible parasitism which she has been practising upon the two large Continents of the world – the two most unwieldy whales of humanity – must be causing to her moral nature a gradual atrophy and degeneration.

As an example, let me quote the following extract from the concluding chapter of *From the Cape to Cairo*, by Messrs. Grogan and Sharp, two writers who have the power to inculcate their doctrines by precept and example. In their reference to the African they are candid, as when they say, “We have stolen his land. Now we must steal his limbs.” These two sentences, carefully articulated, with a smack of enjoyment, have been more clearly explained in the following statement, where some sense of that decency which is the attenuated ghost of a buried conscience, prompts the writers to use the phrase “compulsory labour” in place of the honest word “slavery”; just as the modern politician adroitly avoids the word "injunction" and uses the word “mandate.” “Compulsory labour in some form,” they say, “is the corollary of our occupation of the country.” And they add: “It is pathetic, but it is history,” implying thereby that moral sentiments have no serious effect in the history of human beings.

Elsewhere they write: “Either we must give up the country commercially, or we must make the African work. And mere abuse of those who point out the impasse cannot change the facts. We must decide, and soon. Or rather the white man of South Africa will decide.” The authors also confess that they have seen too much of the world “to have any lingering belief that Western civilisation benefits native races.”

The logic is simple – the logic of egoism. But the argument is simplified by lopping off the greater part of the premise. For these writers seem to hold that the only important question for the white men of South Africa is, how indefinitely to grow fat on ostrich feathers and diamond

mines, and dance jazz dances over the misery and degradation of a whole race of fellow-beings of a different colour from their own. Possibly they believe that moral laws have a special domesticated breed of comfortable concessions for the service of the people in power. Possibly they ignore the fact that commercial and political cannibalism, profitably practised upon foreign races, creeps back nearer home; that the cultivation of unwholesome appetites has its final reckoning with the stomach which has been made to serve it. For, after all, man is a spiritual being, and not a mere living money-bag jumping from profit to profit, and breaking the backbone of human races in its financial leapfrog.

Such, however, has been the condition of things for more than a century; and to-day, trying to read the future by the light of the European conflagration, we are asking ourselves everywhere in the East: "Is this frightfully overgrown power really great? It can bruise us from without, but can it add to our wealth of spirit? It can sign peace treaties, but can it give peace?"

It was about two thousand years ago that all-powerful Rome in one of its eastern provinces executed on a cross a simple teacher of an obscure tribe of fishermen. On that day the Roman governor felt no falling off of his appetite or sleep. On that day there was, on the one hand, the agony, the humiliation, the death; on the other, the pomp of pride and festivity in the Governor's palace.

And to-day? To whom, then, shall we bow the head?

Kasmai devaya havisha vidhema?

(To which God shall we offer oblation?)

We know of an instance in our own history of India, when a great personality, both in his life and voice, struck the keynote of the solemn music of the soul – love for all creatures. And that music crossed seas, mountains, and deserts. Races belonging to different climates, habits, and languages were drawn together, not in the clash of arms, not in the conflict of exploitation, but in harmony of life, in amity and peace. That was creation.

When we think of it, we see at once what the confusion of thought was to which the Western poet, dwelling upon the difference between East and West, referred when he said, "Never the twain shall meet." It is true that they are not yet showing any real sign of meeting. But the reason is because the West has not sent out its humanity to meet the man in the East, but only its machine. Therefore the poet's line has to be changed into something like this:

Man is man, machine is machine, And never the twain shall wed.

You must know that red tape can never be a common human bond; that official sealing-wax can never provide means of mutual attachment; that it is a painful ordeal for human beings to have to receive favours from animated pigeonholes, and condescensions from printed circulars that give notice but never speak. The presence of the Western people in the East is a human

fact. If we are to gain anything from them, it must not be a mere sum-total of legal codes and systems of civil and military services. Man is a great deal more to man than that. We have our human birthright to claim direct help from the man of the West, if he has anything great to give us. It must come to us, not through mere facts in a juxtaposition, but through the spontaneous sacrifice made by those who have the gift, and therefore the responsibility.

Earnestly I ask the poet of the Western world to realise and sing to you with all the great power of music which he has, that the East and the West are ever in search of each other, and that they must meet not merely in the fulness of physical strength, but in fulness of truth; that the right hand, which wields the sword, has the need of the left, which holds the shield of safety.

The East has its seat in the vast plains watched over by the snow-peaked mountains and fertilised by rivers carrying mighty volumes of water to the sea. There, under the blaze of a tropical sun, the physical life has bedimmed the light of its vigour and lessened its claims. There man has had the repose of mind which has ever tried to set itself in harmony with the inner notes of existence. In the silence of sunrise and sunset, and on star-crowded nights, he has sat face to face with the Infinite, waiting for the revelation that opens up the heart of all that there is. He has said, in a rapture of realisation:

"Hearken to me, ye children of the Immortal, who dwell in the Kingdom of Heaven. I have known, from beyond darkness, the Supreme Person, shining with the radiance of the sun."

The man from the East, with his faith in the eternal, who in his soul had met the touch of the Supreme Person – did he never come to you in the West and speak to you of the Kingdom of Heaven? Did he not unite the East and the West in truth, in the unity of one spiritual bond between all children of the Immortal, in the realisation of one great Personality in all human persons?

Yes, the East did once meet the West profoundly in the growth of her life. Such union became possible, because the East came to the West with the ideal that is creative, and not with the passion that destroys moral bonds. The mystic consciousness of the Infinite, which she brought with her, was greatly needed by the man of the West to give him his balance.

On the other hand, the East must find her own balance in Science – the magnificent gift that the West can bring to her. Truth has its nest as well as its sky. That nest is definite in structure, accurate in law of construction; and though it has to be changed and rebuilt over and over again, the need of it is never-ending and its laws are eternal. For some centuries the East has neglected the nest-building of truth. She has not been attentive to learn its secret. Trying to cross the trackless infinite, the East has relied solely upon her wings. She has spurned the earth, till, buffeted by storms, her wings are hurt and she is tired, sorely needing help. But has she then to be told that the messenger of the sky and the builder of the nest shall never meet?

Glossary

1. **innumerable**: countless
2. **contradiction**: a situation or ideas in opposition to one another
3. **incessant**: ceaseless
4. **elusive**: difficult to describe or remember
5. **mystery**: a thing that you cannot understand or explain
6. **fluidity**: the quality of being smooth
7. **exaltation**: a feeling or state of extreme happiness
8. **pebble**: a small smooth round stone
9. **insular**: not interested in or able to accept new people or different ideas
10. **incommoded**: to disturb
11. **conjure**: to make something appear by magic
12. **latchkey**: a key for an outside door or gate
13. **contemptuous**: expressing contempt
14. **kinship**: a feeling of being close or similar to other people or things
15. **emanations**: something which originates or issues from a source
16. **obscure**: not easy to see or understand
17. **desolation**: wretchedness
18. **devour**: to eat something quickly or to do something quickly
19. **incarnate**: a deity or spirit embodied in human form
20. **superfluous**: extravagant
21. **wriggling**: twist your body with small quick movements
22. **tentacles**: a long thin part of the body of some creatures
23. **utilitarianism**: it is a theory of morality that advocates actions that foster happiness or pleasure and oppose actions that cause unhappiness or harm
24. **succulent**: (of fruit and vegetable) full of juice
25. **indignation**: shock and anger
26. **stupefaction**: astonishment
27. **frugal**: careful when using money or food
28. **insolent**: rude and not showing respect
29. **benevolence**: the quality of being kind and helpful
30. **unstinted**: liberal
31. **scanty**: too small in size or amount
32. **chivalrous**: very polite, honest and kind behaviour
33. **atrophy**: to become weaker
34. **attenuated**: to weaken
35. **corollary**: a logical conclusion
36. **impasse**: situation in which no progress is possible
37. **reckoning**: punishment for past actions

Comprehension I: (Short Answer Questions)

1. Who dwells as one of the immortals in Tagore's private paradise?
2. Which country offered Nobel Prize for Rabindranath Tagore?
3. What is the real name of 'a stranger from Europe'?

4. Who is referred to as 'one of the immortal personalities of modern time'?
5. In which country does the old world present itself with some ideal of perfection?
6. East must find her own balance in _____.
7. What is the magnificent gift of the West to the East according to Rabindranath Tagore?

Comprehension II: (Paragraph Answer Questions)

1. Why did Tagore oppose utilitarianism?
2. Describe the main difference between Eastern and Western civilisations according to Tagore.
3. What is Tagore's critique of western materialism?
4. Explain Tagore's vision for a harmonious blend of spiritualism and materialism.
5. Tagore was a strong advocate of universalism. Explain.

Comprehension III: (Analytical/Discussion Questions)

1. Elaborate on Tagore's vision of the 'meeting of the East and West'?
2. Explain how the harmonious blend of East and West can lead to global progress and peace.
3. Elaborate on how Tagore compares spiritual and material aspects of the East and West.

Further Reading:

1. *The East and the West* by Swami Vivekananda
2. *East, West* by Salman Rushdie

THE WAIT

- **DAMADOR MAUZO**

Pre-reading Activities:

1. Discuss Goan culture and society.

2. Have you ever experienced a significant wait for something or someone? How did it feel, and what thoughts went through your mind during that time?

3. How do you handle unexpected changes in your life? What strategies do you use to adapt to new circumstances?

4. How important are family relationships in your life? What role do you think family dynamics play in a story set in a traditional society?

Introduction to the Writer:

Damodar Mauzo is a renowned Indian writer, novelist and short story author known for his vivid portrayal of Goan life and culture. Born on August 1, 1944, in Goa, Mauzo writes primarily in Konkani, but his works have been widely translated into English and other Indian languages, bringing his stories to a broader audience. His narratives often delve into the socio-cultural dynamics of Goa, capturing the essence of its people, traditions and the changing times.

Mauzo's storytelling is marked by its simplicity, depth and keen observation of human nature. His characters are richly drawn, reflecting the complexities of life in both rural and urban settings. He is the recipient of the 57th Jnanpith Award (2022) along with his other prestigious accolades such as the Sahitya Akademi award in 1983 for his collection of short stories, *Karmelin*; and the Vimala V. Pai Vishwa Konkani Sahitya Puraskar award for his novel *Tsunami Simon* in 2011.

In addition to his literary pursuits, Mauzo is an active advocate of the Konkani language and has played a significant role in promoting and preserving Goan cultural heritage. Through his works, Mauzo offers readers an intimate glimpse into the heart of Goa, exploring themes of love, morality and the human condition with compassion and insight.

About the Text:

'The Wait' is a short story that explores themes of miscommunication, pride and the consequences of meddling in others' relationships. Viraj, the protagonist, is unable to concentrate at work because of his unresolved feelings towards Sayali, who avoids him after his sister's harsh judgment about her past. The conflict stems from a misunderstanding initiated by Viraj's sister, who condemns Sayali without consulting Viraj, assuming he would not confront Sayali due to his affection for her. This situation demonstrates how assumptions and lack of communication can strain relationships and lead to unnecessary heartache. The narrative underscores the need for open communication and understanding in relationships, and how unresolved issues from the past can affect present and future actions.

Mauzo's story delves into the complexities of human relationships, societal norms and personal courage. It highlights the pain of misjudgment and the importance of empathy and support in overcoming personal and societal challenges.

It's Sayali's birthday today. On the pretext of wishing her, I dialled her number. She didn't take my call.

I couldn't concentrate on work. Sayali needn't have taken Didi's words to heart. It's not like I ever said anything to her. Did she think that I had prompted my sister to speak? It's possible. But then, she should have sought a clarification from me, which she didn't. That's carrying self-respect and pride too far.

Should I have met her and explained things? The problem would have been solved then and there.

Problem? Didi must have been bothered about these questions. But shouldn't she have asked me for the explanation? Sayali's proposal had, in fact, been brought by Didi's husband, my brother-in-law. I'd liked her the moment I saw her. We began meeting and going out together. Didi, too, had approved of Sayali. But later, when she'd asked around, she came to know about the 'affair' from her college days.

'Didi, shouldn't you have checked with me before asking her? I knew about it,' I told my sister.

'You were besotted by her. Would you have confronted her?'

'So, you decided?'

'Yes. I asked her directly if my brother deserved damaged goods!'

I felt as if I had been stabbed in the heart. I could only imagine what poor Sayali must have experienced. If only Didi had told me that she was going to speak with her.

At first, I didn't even realize that Sayali was avoiding me. She didn't come to meet me at our usual place. She didn't take my calls. Worried, I called her manager. That was when I got the news. 'She says that you guys have broken up.'

Didi phoned to tell me, 'Forget about her now. I will bring better proposals for you, girls more beautiful than her. Don't worry.'

Notwithstanding the fact that she was my elder sister, I exploded, 'Be careful, Didi. You misjudged Sayali. And how much do you actually know *me*? Do you know about my friendship with Sandra in college? Were you okay with that? Several times when the two of us were alone, we came pretty close to each other. Despite suspecting it, why didn't you stop me?'

'But, you're a man…'

'Shut up, Didi! If a guy does it, it's a conquest. But in the case of a girl it's a scandal? Get this, Didi, I will not marry any girl but Sayali. I will remain a bachelor. And further, from this day on, you will no longer be a part of my life!' Saying this, I disconnected the call. I had spoken in the heat of the moment, but it had come from my heart. I was furious with my sister.

Five months had gone by since then. I was trying to forget Sayali. But the unrelenting memories, it seems, were just waiting for an excuse to resurface. I remembered her birthday, and early in the morning of that day, Facebook kindled hope. 'Greetings on Facebook lack warmth. They are impersonal,' Sayali had herself said once. Personal or impersonal, I decided that I would at least call to say happy birthday. Let Sayali behave impersonally, I thought, but I was sincere. That was why I had rung her. But no, she did not respond. I was feeling sour now, and a foul mood took over.

There was a knock on my door. A young man entered the cabin.

'Yes?' Involuntarily, my forehead must have creased.

He seemed confused. 'Did I disturb you? I wanted to discuss something.'

I didn't want my business to suffer because of my mood. In any case, things were not going too well. I pulled my chair closer to the table and, indicating a chair, said, 'Please take a seat.'

'I am Walter Pereira,' he began hesitantly. 'Sir, last year I had booked a row house.'

'What project is that?' I asked, opening my laptop and browsing through the files.

'Matkar Mati, Fatorda.' Normally, the quirky name Matkar Mati would have elicited a smile from me, but not today.

'Don't worry. By next May, you will get possession.'

'No, sir, I have no complaint. I have come to request you to cancel my booking.'

'It's rather late for that, Mr Pereira!'

'I know, Sir. But I have difficulties. My taxi business is not doing well. And the bank is creating problems regarding the loan.'

It's true that these days, we are seeing more cancellations than bookings. But we have to persuade these customers to persevere, else it won't be long before our business shuts down. But to reassure the customer, first, I have to be in a good, confident mood!

'Mr Pereira, it is true that at present we are in a recession. But it's a temporary phase. Frankly, this booking is a good deal for you. The rate has gone up substantially from the time you booked. It's an excellent investment. Have patience. You'll....'

'But, sir, if you get another customer for it...'

'Mr Pereira, there are many customers. They knock on the door with carpetbags of money in their hands. However, they are outsiders. If we put our prime assets in their hands, we Goans will be the ones at the losing end. Have confidence, Mr Pereira.'

As soon as I flashed the Goan identity card, Mr Pereira's countenance underwent a perceptible change. The way ahead was easier. The problem was that I wasn't in the mood.

'Listen, Mr Pereira, I am committed to putting a valuable asset in your hands. And if you require a loan, we will help you. Don't rush things. Go home and relax. Think things over dispassionately and see me again next week.' I got up as I said this. He shook my hand and went off, promising to return soon.

For the last five months, it had become my habit to remain in the office till six or seven in the evening. But today I rose from my seat at five. Of late, business, too, was down. After RERA – the Real Estate Regulatory Authority – came into being in Goa, Matkar had decided that we should concentrate on completing the existing projects and not rush into new ones. Fresh customers weren't exactly queueing up at our doors. I phoned Miranda to tell him I was going, and left the office.

When I reached the car, I realized that I had forgotten my keys on the table. As I was retrieving my key-pouch, the phone on my table rang. It was Matkar. 'Hi, Viraj, some good news. There's a property in Raia. The landlord is in need of money. We could get it cheap. He's asked us to come and take a look at it. Are you free now?'

Matkar could not see the frown on my face, but he might have surmised the situation by my silence.

'Forget it, Viraj. If we respond immediately, he may think that we want it badly. We'll go tomorrow. Get ready by ten. Matkar put the phone down.

I hadn't decided where to go. I found myself parking my vehicle. I was surprised at myself. Did I bring the car here, or did the car bring me here? Since we began dating, we used to regularly come to this secluded place. Parking the car some distance away, we would sit here and talk endlessly. The spot was so beautiful-almost as if nature had created it especially for us. When we discovered it, I was overwhelmed.

A narrow pathway at the edge of an abandoned stone quarry led up almost till the peak of the hill, where we saw a flat rock, about five or six feet in width. One couldn't say whether it had been carved by nature or fashioned by man. Lying hidden in grass and creepers, it had probably escaped people's attention and even of the cowherds grazing their cattle. It felt like a diamond especially preserved for us. I had spent many hours at this spot with Sayali. After our separation, I remained entangled in those memories. But coming here felt akin to removing the scab of a wound with a fingernail, which results in blood oozing out. When I could bear it no longer, I stopped coming here.

Today is Sayali's birthday – let's pull out the scab and let some blood flow. I took the pathway to the top of the hill. Barring the tinkle of the bells on the cows grazing far in the distance, everything was quiet and peaceful.

First, I pulled some creepers to the side. The grass had grown thick. I'd just tugged at some clumps when a lizard slithered out and, leaping on the creepers, ran off. It reminded me of what had happened on Good Friday. Since it was a holiday, we had come quite early. As we were sitting down, a lizard ran off. Sayali got frightened and clung to me. 'Not here! Let's go. There are snakes here...' Sayali was petrified.

'That isn't a snake. It's a lizard. Poor fellow!'

'It scared me so much. And you're feeling sorry for it?'

'My dear, today is Good Friday. Kids go around killing them on this day. He must be running helter-skelter for his life.' And later I told Sayali the tale that I'd heard in my childhood. It seems that the lizard was instrumental in betraying Jesus to the Jews. From then on, Christian kids in the village would call them Jews and hunt them down, especially on Good Friday.

When I sat on the cushion of creepers, I remembered Sayali even more intensely. I took out my mobile phone, opened the picture gallery and sat looking at her photo.

As the sun went down the horizon and its rays softened, I suddenly heard a rustling sound. That was definitely not a lizard. Parting the creepers in front of me, I peered through. Could it be a wild animal? I thought I should leave. Just then, I saw there, a man and a woman entangled with each other. I had no idea when they'd come and got started.

They weren't far from me. I could see what they were up to quite clearly. Normally, such a sight might have aroused my feelings. But that day my mind was in turmoil with thoughts of Sayali and our distance from each other. I felt detached from the scene being played out.

They tossed about for a quarter of an hour. Then the man got up and looked around in all directions, as if to make sure that no one was around. I held my breath. What if they spotted me? They would feel so embarrassed! But I was well hidden by the curtain of vines. He gestured, and she stood up. They smoothed out their clothes. I could now see their faces clearly. The man, in his thirties, seemed vaguely familiar.

She looked at her watch. He pulled her close.

'Let's go, it's getting late,' she seemed to be saying.

'Tomorrow?' This time I heard him.

She kept silent.

Once again he said, 'Tomorrow!'

Then she stepped down and began to walk. I let out the breath I'd been holding in. Allowing some time to go by, I began to walk down before darkness descended.

I had gone there to rustle up memories of Sayali, but while engrossed in them I'd seen something I hadn't bargained for. I didn't know the young lady. Had I known her, I might have assailed myself with questions. Yet, I could clearly recall her face and her figure. The young man seemed familiar too. I had seen him somewhere. He'd said, 'Tomorrow.' So, they would meet again tomorrow then! Where? I wondered. At the same place? But then, where was the guarantee that they would actually meet despite this promise? Such things happen all the time. Would Walter Pereira, who came to meet me in the office today, promising to come back, actually return? Once before, too, another man… Hold on! Could this be that same guy? No! It was actually him. That's why he seemed familiar.

Around two months ago, he had come to meet me in the cabin. 'Sir, I need a two-bedroom flat. Not too big, but not too small either.'

'Will a one BHK do?' I was assessing him.

His problem was that his parents lived with him. His elder brother, married, lived separately. The house he was living in had a single bedroom, which they all shared. The hall being small, things were difficult. He'd recently got engaged and planned to marry soon.

'Try to understand my problem, Sir. I can't think of moving my parents out of the room they've been used to for so long. Nor have they offered to do so. If I get married, I won't have a place to sleep in that house.'

At that time, I didn't know whether to laugh or cry at his plaintive words.

'Sir, even a second-hand, two-BHK flat will do. If an inexpensive one is available quite soon, I'd be interested,' he'd said.

I didn't have one that fit his budget. So I told him, I'll check and get back to you.'

He said, 'I'll come back tomorrow,' and left.

Actually, shouldn't this guy have arranged for a place to stay before fixing his marriage? I had thought of asking him, 'How will you manage with anything less than a two-bedroom flat?' But good manners had stopped me. That day in the thicket, I felt happy at the answer I'd received. After all, it is human nature to find solutions to problems. This young man had found a way out of his problem!

What I'd seen was not shameful or even immoral. A needy couple had found a way out for themselves. I felt relieved. I began to sense a sort of empathy with the two of them. As if a load had been lifted off my mind, I felt buoyant. And Sayali, who had been away from me for the duration of this incident, appeared before my drowsy eyes and veiled my face with the coverlet of sleep.

When I woke in the morning, I decided to address the problem. It was true that at that time I could not give the young man the support that he wanted, but now – if he was still in dire need of help, I would provide him with a helping hand. But who was he? Where did he live? What did he do for a living? I had no idea. I must find out those details.

By the time I had breakfast and set out for office, it was past nine. While still on the way, I got a call from Matkar. 'Good morning, Viraj. A problem has cropped up. My driver is

not well. He won't be coming today. And Gilbert, that landowner from Raia, phoned to ask us to come fast. Can you please come to my place and pick me up? I'll be ready. We can go straight to Raia.'

It took me about ten minutes to get the car on the road. When I crossed the Ravindra Bhavan traffic circle, there were two buses ahead of me – one trying to overtake the other and not moving fast either. I had to trail behind them till the Linga temple crossroads.

Five months ago, I used to come to this side of town every other day to meet Sayali or pick her up after work. The traffic had irritated me then, too. Once Sayali had remarked, 'Easy solution – become a minister and put everything right.'

Matkar must be waiting on the road for me. Cursing liberally, I was trying to squeeze through the buses and overtake them. Suddenly, the bus ahead of me stopped again. I was stunned and could not help but stare. The young woman from yesterday had stepped out of the bus. Where would she go now? Six months ago, I could have asked Sayali. Her office must be somewhere here. She probably even knows her.

The bus moved ahead but I remained rooted, staring at the young lady. It would be easy to send a message to the young man through her. But now, the cars behind me were honking loudly. What should I do? There was no space for me to park by the side. Walking hurriedly, the woman took about ten steps and – wonder of wonders, entered the same office building that Sayali worked in. My heart skipped a beat. The cars behind me had kicked up such a racket with their blaring horns that I was forced to move ahead.

I picked Matkar up. We went to Raia and met the landowner. After inspecting the property and scrutinizing the papers, Matkar bargained on the price. We took photocopies of the documents and returned to the office. The lunch break had started. In the evening, Matkar said he was going to meet the advocate with the property papers.

Despite the fact that I'd been running around throughout the day, the thought of that youthful man and his wife would just not leave my mind. I pulled out Kumtekar's file. We had taken the property and demolished his old house for a project of twenty-four flats. Next month, the owners would begin to occupy their new flats. We had accommodated Kumtekar temporarily in one of our old two-BHK flats nearby. Matkar himself had said that once Kumtekar moved to the new flat, we would sell the old two-BHK. We could, in fact, sell the flat to this couple. It wouldn't be too expensive for them... I had it all worked out in my mind. But I didn't know where they lived. The young lady worked somewhere near Sayali's office, that much I had learnt. Yesterday, he'd said, 'Tomorrow.' They may go there today. How about meeting them there?

'I don't believe in keeping for tomorrow what can be done today, so I thought of phoning you.' Walter Pereira was on the line. 'The advice you gave yesterday was good, Sir. My father- in-law has offered to loan me some money. Now, I will not cancel my row-house booking.' Walter's phone call seemed like a good omen, and I felt buoyed up.

I got out of the office a little early. Parking my car at a distance, I retraced the path I'd trodden yesterday, and climbed up the hill to the granite rock sofa. If the couple came, how would I broach the subject? Sure, the proposal was to their advantage. But do I tell them that I'd seen them here yesterday? If they came to know that I'd seen their entire performance, they'd be mortified! Or should I go down, greet them as they were leaving and make them the offer? They'd both be so happy! I must also tell Matkar about the two-BHK. As I was taking

out my mobile phone to call him, I saw the couple climbing the hill. I remained seated there and switched off my phone.

He looked ahead as he walked; she kept glancing back every now and then. Since the privacy of four walls had been denied to them, they were making do with an open setting, but away from prying eyes. And I? I was reduced to watching their love and lust like a shameless voyeur!

They sat in the same spot as yesterday. After talking for a while, he drew her close to him. She, too, sprawled on him. Their petting and cuddling went on for ten minutes or so. I couldn't hear much. Only the pounding of my own heart. Even against my wishes, my eyes could see the spectacle before me. This had to stop. They shouldn't have to resort to these escapades.

His hand had reached from her back to her front. The other hand went inside her dress. My breathing accelerated. Deciding that I didn't want to see more, I turned my gaze away. And I was stunned by what I saw! A man, who looked like a goon, was stealthily walking the same path that they had taken. As he climbed through the bushes, only his face could occasionally be seen. His motive didn't seem good. As he came closer, his gestures appeared suspicious. Could he be after the woman?

As I was thinking about alerting them, the man went close to them. I saw a stick in his hands. I even opened my mouth to shout a warning, but the sound was stifled, as if my throat had been constricted. Before I knew it he had landed the stick on the man's back with a heavy thump. He must have come here because of her. Oh God! Was he going to rape her, and would I have to see that too? The youthful man appeared so puny before the brawny attacker. I wanted him to thrash the assailant and chase him away. But before he could even get up, a couple of kicks had landed on his backside. The intruder was getting set to launch another attack.

I felt like running to stop him. If the goon were to see two men against them, he might have fled. I actually stepped forward. But the young man, instead of trying to save the girl, got up and, rubbing his backside with one hand and holding up his pants with the other, started scampering away. I was alarmed. It looked like it was going to be my responsibility to protect her honour. But I knew that I should step forward only if I was prepared to put my life on the line. My legs folded under me. The ruffian caught the woman by her hair and dragged her pitilessly, like a poor lamb to the slaughter. Where would he take her? Had he perhaps scouted around and found a suitable place? Or would he take her elsewhere? Looking at her vulnerability, I was ashamed that my manhood hadn't been awakened even at this sight. I thought of lodging a complaint with the police. But then, how would I explain what I was doing there? Feeling lifeless, I just squatted there.

When it began to get dark, I got up. I negotiated the path to the bottom on shaky legs and deposited my shook-up body home.

As I lay on the bed, I thought of Sayali. If I could unburden myself to her, how light I would feel! With that thought, I suddenly sat up. What if Sayali and I had been there in place of that couple? The mere thought made me break out in a cold sweat. The fate that had befallen the woman and the shame she would have to endure could not be borne silently. Meekly surrendering his wife in the hands of the goon to save his own life was a blunder on the part of the man. He should have lodged a complaint with the cops. But maybe he didn't even have the guts for that! I hoped he would take her back, accepting what had happened. If he had had a

better physique or a suitable house, this wouldn't have happened. Now I had to meet him, and put the proposal of the two-BHK to him.

And the young woman? Hopefully, the goon had released her and she had reached home. She should go and lodge a complaint with the police! Would she do it? The goon should not be allowed to get away with it. I must meet her and tell her to file a complaint. If necessary, I would be her witness. But... if I say I had seen the incident, she would feel even more embarrassed. I could not find a solution to this and decided that I would go and meet her in the morning. I would tell her whatever came to my mind and assure her of my complete support.

I left home early. Before the offices opened, I parked in a corner and sat waiting for her. Five or six months ago, I used to come here very often, to meet Sayali. What would Sayali say if she saw me today? Let her say it. In any case, what is left to be said?

In front of me, the young girl and Sayali were walking together in the direction of the office. Throwing caution to the winds, I stepped out and, before they could enter the building, I stood in front of them. Maybe Sayali thought that I wanted to meet her. But I looked directly towards the girl and said, 'Miss, we do not know each other, but I need to talk with you urgently.'

At the time, I had not noticed her swollen eyes, her bruised cheeks, which had turned blue, and her carelessly combed hair. When I did, I felt even more sorry for her.

She was confused by my sudden appearance and turned towards Sayali with a piteous face. It wasn't right to keep up the tension, so I went straight to the subject. Yesterday evening, I saw that ruffian getting hold of you and dragging you down the hillock. Of late, such incidents of hooliganism have been on the rise. If you haven't complained yet, you can still do it. If you wish, I will help you.'

The words had tumbled out of my mouth fast. Now, with equal alacrity, she made a ball of one end of her dupatta, stuffed it into her mouth and, leaving Sayali and me behind, marched straight into her office. Knowing that I had blown it, I kept staring with guilty eyes in her direction. Sayali, too, would go away in anger, I thought. But she came a little closer and raised her eyebrows in a manner that said, 'What happened?' I was confused but took courage from her gesture.

'Do you have ten minutes to talk?'

'Hold on, I'll be back soon,' Sayali said and went inside. She marked her attendance on the biometric machine and came out.

It had been several months since we had last been to that restaurant. We ordered coffee. Without holding anything back, I related the story. I started with how my mood was off on the day of her birthday, how I had ended up at the quarry, at our meeting place, and told her about yesterday's episode. I narrated everything in detail. Sayali just listened. She did not say a word while I spoke. As I waited to hear what she would say, she just picked up her purse, stood up and, plunging me into turmoil, walked out.

Sayali should not have done this! She had heard everything I had to say and then just walked away. Okay, I understand that she was still angry with me. But she should have had some concern for the poor woman at least! Sayali seemed to have lost some weight. Could she be overloaded with work? I should have asked. But would I have got a response? She'd even cut my call when I tried to wish her on her birthday!

I went to the office, but thoughts of Sayali intruded into my mind. I did not get the satisfaction I wanted after unburdening myself to Sayali. Nor did she show, with even a single word, that she was concerned about me. And why should she be? She must have erased my name from her slate.

In my mind, Sayali was still the same. But did she care about that? I could not concentrate on my work! I'd had coffee with Sayali after many days, many months, actually. We had sat, keeping a distance of a mere foot and a half between us. What a dumb guy I was! Even the talk we had was about third parties! Sayali might be thinking that I was more bothered about the young woman than about her.

Everybody left the office for lunch. But my appetite was dead. The coffee I had had with Sayali felt like it was still stuck in my throat. I had some water, opened my phone and started to browse through Sayali's photos – as if I had no other work. By four o'clock, my head began to throb. I had spent the previous evening with feelings of guilt. I had had a sleepless night. This morning I had put on that despicable performance. And then, that sudden meeting with Sayali – as good as not meeting her at all! My head was throbbing so much, and I was thinking of taking an analgesic when I remembered Sayali cautioning me about them, 'Never take them on an empty stomach.' I thought I'd go home early, have the tablet and sleep. But Matkar had sent a pile of files over. 'Read them when you have time.' In any case, what would I achieve by going home early? I began to flip through the files.

When my mobile rang, I was on the verge of rejecting the call. But I saw who it was, and the throbbing in my head paused. Did I actually get this call? Or had the number been dialled by mistake? I didn't have the strength to face the disappointment. Yet I took the call. 'Hello. What's the problem?'

But Sayali's voice did not sound different. 'If you're not busy this evening, shall we go for dinner?' This sounded like the Sayali of old! Or was I imagining it?

'Are you really asking?' I asked sceptically.

'You think I'm kidding?' The laughing Sayali appeared clearly before my eyes.

'Where?' I was still not fully convinced.

'Come on, Viraj! Aren't *you* going to take me? Take me wherever you want!'

We met as if we were meeting after a couple of days and not after five months. The moment we met, it was as if the distance between us had just melted away. We knotted once again the ties that had bound us.

'You have no idea how much I missed you, Sayali!'

'I know! Didi told me.'

Didi? I had removed her from my head.

'Yes. Didi herself told me how angry you were with her. It seems you told her that you wouldn't get married to anyone other than Sayali. She frankly admitted her fault… Now, please Viraj. She's your sister! Phone her tomorrow itself. She'll be very happy!'

Sayali kept stunning me.

'It seems you said to her that you'd remain a bachelor! I had decided that I would keep you waiting for a year to see if you would really remain single. But this morning you met me, and 1 just could not wait any longer.'

It was past nine thirty. Sayali held my hand tight and said, 'I really admire you, Viraj! I'm talking about what happened this morning. You are too straightforward. Now is the time that you need me.'

'I always needed you,' I said, putting my hand on her hand, 'and will need you in the future too.'

'What do you know about the girl you met this morning?'

'I told you, didn't I?'

'It's not what you think. The one you thought was a goon is her husband.'

I was flabbergasted. 'And, the other guy?'

That's her boyfriend, her lover!' Sayali continued. 'But they were dating long ago. Because he didn't have his own house, he kept postponing their marriage. In the meantime, her parents forced her to get married to that man. But do you know, after what happened yesterday, she's taken a decision. Last night, she left her husband's house and went to her parental home. She'll file for divorce and get married to her boyfriend. That's what they've decided! I've conveyed your offer of the two-BHK to them. They are very happy!'

And then came the last surprise. The waiter brought a birthday cake and placed it before us. The restaurant began to play 'Happy Birthday'. The two of us cut the cake and celebrated Sayali's belated birthday together.

Translated from Konkani by Xavier Cota

Glossary

1. **prompted**: encourage a hesitating speaker to say something
2. **proposal**: an act of formally asking or suggesting somebody for marriage
3. **besotted**: completely in love with someone or something and always thinking of them
4. **confronted**: to make somebody think about, something that is difficult or unpleasant
5. **suspecting**: to doubt, to believe that somebody is guilty of something
6. **scandal**: an action or event regarded as morally or legally wrong and causing general public outrage
7. **bachelor**: a man who is not and has never been married
8. **furious**: extremely angry
9. **unrelenting**: not yielding in strength, severity, or determination
10. **resurface**: to come again to the memory
11. **kindled**: arouse or inspire an emotion or feeling
12. **impersonal**: not influenced by, showing, or involving personal feelings
13. **sour**: feeling or expressing resentment, disappointment, or anger
14. **foul**: an emotion where the person becomes angry or violent very suddenly and easily
15. **creased**: forehead wrinkles which are horizontal lines across the forehead which occur when raising the eyebrows; they are used to convey feelings and human emotions such as fear, surprise and happiness
16. **elicited**: evoke or draw out a reaction, answer, or fact from someone
17. **possession**: the state of having, owning, or controlling something

18. **persevere**: continue in a course of action even in the face of difficulty or with little or no indication of success
19. **recession**: a significant, widespread, and prolonged downturn in economic activity
20. **substantially**: to a great or significant extent
21. **Goans**: a native or inhabitant of the Indian state of Goa
22. **countenance**: a person's face or facial expression
23. **perceptible**: a slight movement or change of state able to be seen or noticed
24. **dispassionately**: in an unemotional, rational, and impartial manner
25. **surmised**: suppose that something is true without having evidence to confirm it
26. **overwhelmed**: have a strong emotional effect
27. **entangled**: to involve in a perplexing or troublesome situation
28. **akin**: essentially similar, related, or compatible
29. **scab**: a dry, rough protective crust that forms over a cut or wound during healing
30. **barring**: excluding something by exception
31. **slithered**: move smoothly over a surface with a twisting or oscillating motion
32. **petrified**: so frightened that one is unable to move; terrified
33. **helter-skelter**: involving disorderly haste or confusion
34. **betraying**: expose one's country, a group, or a person to danger by treacherously giving information to an enemy
35. **horizon**: the line at which the earth's surface and the sky appear to meet
36. **peered**: look with difficulty or concentration at someone or something
37. **aroused**: to stimulate to action or to bodily readiness for activity in excite
38. **turmoil**: a state of great disturbance, confusion, or uncertainty
39. **detached**: separate or disconnected
40. **rustle up**: produce something quickly when it is needed
41. **engrossed**: absorb all the attention or interest of something
42. **assailed**: criticise strongly
43. **plaintive**: sounding sad and mournful
44. **thicket**: a dense group of bushes or trees
45. **empathy**: the ability to understand and share the feelings of another
46. **buoyant**: cheerful and optimistic
47. **veiled**: wearing or covered by a veil
48. **coverlet**: a bed quilt that does not cover the pillow, used chiefly for warmth; bedspread
49. **cursing**: use coarse or blasphemous language to express anger or other strong emotion
50. **scrutinizing**: examine or inspect something or someone closely and thoroughly
51. **retraced**: go back over the same route that one has just taken
52. **trodden**: walk in a specified way
53. **broach**: raise a difficult subject for discussion
54. **mortified**: cause someone to feel very embarrassed or ashamed
55. **prying**: excessively interested in a person's private affairs; too inquisitive
56. **voyeur**: a person who gets sexual pleasure from secretly watching others in sexual situations, or more generally a person who watches other people's private lives
57. **sprawled**: sit, lie, or fall with one's arms and legs spread out in an ungainly way
58. **spectacle**: a visually striking performance or display

59. **escapades**: an act or incident involving excitement, daring, or adventure
60. **goon**: a violent, aggressive person who is hired to intimidate or harm people
61. **stealthily**: in a cautious and surreptitious manner, so as not to be seen or heard
62. **stifled**: restrain a reaction or stop oneself acting on an emotion
63. **constricted**: inhibited; restricted
64. **puny**: small and weak
65. **brawny**: physically strong; muscular
66. **scampering**: run with quick light steps, especially through fear or excitement
67. **ruffian**: a violent criminal or troublemaker
68. **befallen**: especially of something bad happening to someone
69. **bruised**: inflict a bruise or bruises, mark of injury on a part of the body
70. **piteous**: evoking or deserving pity; pathetic
71. **hillock**: a small hill or mound
72. **hooliganism**: violent or rowdy behaviour by young troublemakers, typically in a gang
73. **alacrity**: brisk and cheerful readiness
74. **despicable**: deserving hatred and contempt
75. **analgesic**: a drug acting to relieve pain
76. **throbbing**: feel pain in a series of regular beats
77. **sceptically**: with doubt or hesitation
78. **straightforward**: a person who is honest and frank
79. **flabbergasted**: greatly surprised or astonished
80. **divorce**: the legal dissolution of a marriage by a court or other competent body
81. **belated**: delayed beyond the usual time

Comprehension I: (Short Answer Questions)

1. Why did Viraj dial Sayali's number?
2. What did Didi find out about Sayali's past?
3. What did Sayali's manager tell the narrator?
4. What ultimatum did Viraj give Didi regarding his life?
5. Why did Walter Pereira want to cancel his booking?
6. Where does Viraj find himself going when he left the office early?
7. What was Viraj's plan regarding the young couple and the two-BHK flat?
8. What was Viraj's reaction to the goon's attack?
9. How did the young woman react when Viraj approached her with Sayali?
10. What did Sayali reveal about the young couple?

Comprehension II: (Paragraph Answer Questions)

1. Describe how Viraj's inability to concentrate on work mirrors his emotional state.
2. Comment on the effect of Didi's direct confrontation with Sayali about her past?
3. Analyse how Viraj confronts Didi about her double standards in relationships and the revelation about his personal values.
4. Discuss the strategy Viraj employs to persuade Mr. Pereira to retain his booking, and how this reflects his awareness of their customer base.

5. Describe how the encounter with the couple at the secluded spot contrasts with Viraj's memories of Sayali.
6. Analyse what prevented Viraj from calling out a warning to the couple during the attack.
7. Comment on the internal conflict Viraj experiences while witnessing the attack on the young woman.
8. Elaborate on the realisation Viraj has about his feelings for Sayali while at work.

Comprehension III: (Analytical/Discussion Questions)

1. How does the story explore the theme of miscommunication and its impact on relationships?
2. Analyse how the story addresses the double standards in gender roles and societal expectations.
3. Discuss the role of pride and self-respect in the deterioration of the relationship between Viraj and Sayali.
4. Compare and contrast the relationship between Viraj and Sayali with the one between the man and woman seen by the narrator at the secluded spot.
5. Discuss Viraj's evolving sense of empathy towards the young couple. How does the narrator's perception of morality shift throughout the passage?
6. Evaluate Viraj's self-reflection on heroism and cowardice. How does he judge his own actions, and what does this reveal about his character?

Further Reading:

1. *Interpreter of Maladies* by Jhumpa Lahiri
2. *Malgudi Days* by R.K. Narayan
3. *Arranged Marriage* by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni
4. *The Adivasi Will Not Dance* by Hansda Sowvendra Shekhar
5. *The Lottery* by Shirley Jackson
6. *The Yellow Wallpaper* by Charlotte Perkins Gilman
7. *The Girl Who Ate Books* by Nilanjana Roy
8. *Surface* by Siddhartha Deb
9. *If It Is Sweet* by Mridula Koshy

PAKISTAN

- **INDIRA GOSWAMI**

Pre-reading Activities:

1. Analyse the factors that led to the partition.

2. Discuss the aftermath of the partition and India's independence.

3. Examine the factors that are detrimental to world peace.

Introduction to the Poet:

Indira Goswami (1942-2011), was an Indian writer, poet, professor, scholar and editor, known by her pen name Mamoni Raisom Goswami and popularly as Mamoni Baideo. She was born in Guwahati, Assam, to Umakanta Goswami and Ambika Devi, she was named in memory of Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India.

Goswami was known for her fresh and original style with novel themes. Her readers are given a taste of life outside of Assam through her books and short stories that are set in various parts of India. When taking on the tough social issues of urban life, the harsh lives of labourers, and the plight of widows, Goswami displays great empathy and compassion. Her writings exude confidence, courage and determination.

She was the recipient of the Sahitya Akademi Award (1983), the Jnanpith Award (2000) and Principal Prince Claus Laureate (2008) from Netherlands. A widely acclaimed writer of modern Indian literature, several of her works have been translated from her native Assamese into English, which include *The Moth Eaten Howdah of the Tusker*, *Pages Stained with Blood* and *The Man from Chinnamasta*.

Goswami was also the recipient of Asom Ratna, Assam's highest civilian award, for her contributions in art, literature, culture and social service.

About the Poem:

'Pakistan' is an account of Indira Goswami's perception of Pakistan during her visit in the year 2003, along with a group of writers from the SAARC countries. She sat down in the Anarkali Bazaar and wrote a poem, and named it 'Pakistan'.

'People liked the poem after I recited it at a gathering. To my surprise Dawn carried it in its issue the following day.' she said.

However, even before that trip, she was deeply acquainted with the culture and literature of her neighbouring nation. She once received a parcel from Pakistan, an Urdu translation of her novel *Dontal Hatir Uiwe Khowa Howdah* (The Moth-Eaten Howdah of the Tusker), written on the society centred around the Amronga Xatra in South Kamrup. She was overjoyed by it, and called it a token of love from Pakistan.

In this poem, Goswami reminisces about her visit to Pakistan and has lovely experiences to share, despite the extreme antagonism that the two neighbours harbour for each other. She describes her feelings for the country, calling it a 'celestial land'.

Oh Pakistan, celestial land!
Give us your heart!
And take our heart in return!
Once we shared the same sky!
Sky with the same sun!
We shared the same pain like twins on the battlefield
to remove the dust.

Now our flesh is ripped apart
By that meandering barbed-wire fence!
Oh they have drawn that
dividing line on a flimsy paper!
That line of agony and tears
Can anyone draw that line
In our raw flesh, inside our heart?

Friends! Be happy where you
are…now!
Memory never fades, poets say
distance only purifies it…
We sat under the same tree,
Enjoyed the fragrance of the
same flower
Till that time
like a dagger
cut those rivers into
several pieces! Destroyed the
mountains and flower gardens where
we had played!

And those banks
where we had counted those
fig-coloured waves!
Like the honey laden
lips of the damsels!
We wore the same clothes
We shivered in winter and in summer our
sweat slid down our backs

We enjoyed the same wine
from the poems of Ghalib
Momin and Zauk
We cried together in pain!
Under the blood stained sky.

Oh Pakistan! Celestial land
Give us your heart
And take our heart in return!
No we need not speak now
Only silence speaks in a clear voice.
Oh Pakistan! Silence can bring
the fragrance of a mother's soul
Silence can reveal.
The heavenly beauty of Sutlej,
Chenab, and the Red River
Of the East!
Silence can be loud like
a million voices
Oh Pakistan! Celestial land!
Our eyes misted by the
Smoke of blossoming gun powder!
Our soul wounded by the unknown fires!
May these eyes now witness the
new Sunrise
On the banks of Sutlej,
Chenab, and in the Red
River of the East!
Oh Pakistan, celestial land!
Give us your heart!
And take our heart in return

Glossary

1. **celestial**: belonging or relating to heaven, supremely good
2. **meandering**: a course that does not follow a straight line
3. **barbed-wire fence**: Indo-Pakistani border, the 3,323km international boundary that separates the two nations
4. **dividing line**: the Radcliffe Line, named after Sir Cyril Radcliffe who was commissioned to equitably divide 4,50,000kmsq of territory, into two different countries
5. **flimsy**: thin and easily torn
6. **dagger**: a short, pointed knife that is used as a weapon
7. **damsels**: young, unmarried women
8. **Ghalib, Momin and Zauk**: Mirza Ghalib, Momin Khan Momin and Mohammad Ibrahim Zauq – Urdu poets and scholars during the Mughal era
9. **misted**: covered by something, causing blurred vision
10. **gun powder**: explosive powder used especially in bombs or fireworks

Comprehension I: (Short Answer Questions)

1. What does the poet ask Pakistan to give and take in return?

2. What has ripped our flesh apart?
3. What does the poet refer to Pakistan as?
4. What has misted our eyes according to the poet?
5. Name the three rivers mentioned in the poem.

Comprehension II: (Paragraph Answer Questions)

1. Annotate:

"We shared the same pain like twins on the battlefield
to remove the dust."

2. What does Indira Goswami mean by:

"Friends! Be happy where you
are …now!"?

3. What is the significance of 'silence' according to Goswami? Why must we remain silent now?

Comprehension III: (Analytical/Discussion Questions)

1. What similarities does the poet draw between India and Pakistan?
2. Religion and Culture have become sources of hatred and contempt. Discuss this in the context of this poem.
3. Comment on the imagery used in the poem.

Further Reading:

1. *Midnight's Furies: The Deadly Legacy of India's Partition* by Nisid Hajari
2. *Train to Pakistan* by Khushwant Singh
3. *The Great Partition* by Yasmin Khan
4. *Let's Unite* by Syed Shah Saud
5. *Subh-e-Azadi* (Freedom's Dawn, 1947) by Faiz Ahmad Faiz

MAPPING BANGALORE

- SHASHI DESHPANDE

Pre-reading Activities:

1. What do you think of one's adaptability to a new place and new lifestyle?

2. What is your take on life in a metropolis?

3. How do you think language performs an integral part of your life and culture?

4. Try juxtaposing Bengaluru as a garden city and a technologically advanced city. What is your opinion on a metropolis of this sort?

Introduction to the Writer:

Shashi Deshpande was born in 1938 in Dharwad, Karnataka. Her father was the distinguished Kannada writer and Sanskrit scholar Adya Rangachar, famously known as Sriranga. She had her early education in Dharwad and then moved to Bombay where she took a degree in economics from Elphinstone College. Later she also acquired degrees in Law and English and a diploma in Journalism.

Much of Deshpande's early efforts at creative writing was in the field of short stories. *Legacy and Other Stories* published in 1978 was her first collection of stories. Most of the stories in this collection were written in the seventies. Four more collections of stories are as follows: *It Was Dark and Other Stories* (1986), *The Miracle and Other Stories* (1986), *It Was the Nightingale and Other Stories* (1986), and *Intrusion and Other Stories* (1993). *The Dark Holds No Terrors* (1980), *If I Die Today* (1982), *Come Up and Be Dead* (1983), *Roots and Shadows* (1983), *A Matter of Time* (1996) and *Small Remedies* (2000) are the eight novels written by her that have brought fame and recognition of a magnitude that very few of her fellow Indian English fiction writers can claim.

Deshpande is a recipient of several literary awards. Her fifth novel, *That Long Silence* (1989) won the Sahitya Akademi Award, given by the Indian Academy of Arts and Letters to outstanding works written in any of India's twenty-four major languages in 1990. She is also notable for bringing about a significant shift in the tradition of Indian English literature. Deshpande's writing is clear, simple, and understandable. She avoids too complex language in lieu of simplicity, allowing readers to interact more fully with her stories.

About the Text:

'Mapping Bangalore' is a narration of the nature of the capital city Bangalore in the post decades of independence. The narrator shares her experience of moving to different places in Bangalore in her own inimitable style. She keenly observes the nature, culture, language, neighbourliness of the places she moves in and also records it in a written form. She highlights the unique features by personally mapping Bangalore through the places she has lived in the early years.

She gives a glimpse of the lifestyle of the Bangloreans of those times through her detailed description. She describes how new comers adapted themselves to the atmosphere of Bangalore. "Mapping Bangalore" gives a brief account of the author gaining familiarity with different places and developing attachment towards those places. She also adds on as how her

house then in Bangalore becomes a hub of theatre and literature by listing out some of the prominent personalities visiting them in those days.

When we first came to Bangalore, it was still part of Mysore State; Karnataka would be born a few months later. To us, Bangalore was part of a twinned entity called Bengaluru–Mysuru, the duller sibling, the commoner, as opposed to royal Mysore. Though we came here ten years after Independence, it was still incredibly feudal and loyal to its portly Maharaja and people said 'Namma Maharajaru' reverently, with folded hands. It was a time when more jhutkas plied on the roads than buses and autorickshaws, two-wheelers meant bicycles, girls wore long skirts (rudely called parachutes, because of their billowing capacity) and almost every woman wore flowers in her hair.

The year was 1956. My father had been appointed as Drama Producer in All India Radio. He had come here before us, and perhaps my mother had hoped he would have a home ready for us when we arrived. Instead, we were whisked off to a hotel, the Modern Hindu Hotel at Ananda Rao Circle. We didn't know it then, but we had gone straight to the heart of the city; we were only a stone's throw away from the railway station, from Gandhinagar, and, most important of all, from the area called Majestic, the hub of the city. In the hotel itself, we imbibed the essence of Bangalore—a melange of aromas, of agarbatti and flowers, of coffee and sambar and *sagu* masalas. And there was the distinctive Kannada, peppered with Swamis, Sirs and Ammas. A strange Kannada, we thought it, studded with English words. What was galling was that they thought it was our Kannada that was strange and incomprehensible. In just a few months there would be an influx of government servants from other regions into Bangalore, and the newly created Rajajinagar would soon be flooded with Joshis, Kattis, Kulkarnis and Patils speaking this Kannada. But, to our chagrin, we would remain outsiders until the city found other outsiders to contend with.

To go back to 1956, my father must have realized that a hotel was not the place for his family, for we quickly moved into a temporary home. A colleague of his offered us the use of some rooms on the first floor of a relative's house in nearby Nehrunagar. The road was parallel to the railway line and, sitting on the large balcony above the portico, we could wave to the passengers of the trains that clattered past. I remember the beautiful red polished floor of that house, so typical of Bangalore houses then, of how it shone, almost like a mirror, and how cool it was under our feet when it rained. It was an intriguing household; our host had 'married' a second time to get a child and an astrologer had promised that a child would 'soon come'. Unfortunately, we were not to know if that happened, for in a fortnight or so we left the place and moved into our first real home in Bangalore. This house, in Kumara Park, was like the innumerable Housing Board houses scattered through the city and had, in the landlord's terminology, one 'hall-u', two 'rooms-u', a 'kitchen-u' and a 'bathroom-u'. The entrance was a small, grilled space, from where you could see who your visitors were, as well as watch the world go by. It was also the place where family and visitors shed their footwear when they entered. I remember that when my father once had a reading of his play, which took place in the 'hall-u', someone carried away all the footwear, ours, as well as the visitors,' while the

reading was going on. A whole lot of theatre enthusiasts walked home in their bare feet that evening!

We lived here for nearly two years, but scarcely came to know any neighbours, except our landlord and the couple who lived behind us. People in Bangalore, we realized, didn't believe in neighbourliness; they preferred to stare out of their windows when you passed by, to give you a blank stare when you met. During festival times, however, unknown little girls in long skirts came with invitations. Accepting these invitations meant that we were now met by occasional smiles and my mother with the inevitable inane question, '*Oota aytaa*?' ('Have you eaten?') Nevertheless, the houses were so close that we were often granted intimate glimpses of our neighbours' lives. Living in such close proximity to others was a strange new experience for me; before this, we had lived in Dharwad, where our closest neighbours were beyond shouting distance. It was here that I saw the repetitiveness of women's lives, heard their conversations in the afternoon when their morning chores were done, noting the cadences in their voices as they spoke. Sounds that came back to me years later, when I began writing.

Opposite our home were the tall walls of a boys' hostel, a place which came to life in summer when it was rented out for weddings. Through the long summer months, we listened to film songs in Kannada and Tamil blaring out on the loudspeaker. I soon got to know most of the popular film songs of the day—my introduction to the movie culture in the city. I had come from Bombay, the film city; nevertheless, I was overwhelmed by my first sight of Kempe Gowda Road (K.G. Road to the locals. Bangalore had a penchant for abbreviation. I soon learnt to say K.R. Circle, N.R. Circle, etc.) More amazing than the number of theatres on the road were the posters outside them. Huge outsize posters with lush garlands nailed round the heroes' faces on the first day, heroes with pudgy faces and luxuriant moustaches, some trying to look dashing in tights, cloaks or masks, with swords in their hands. There was the same kind of fleshy opulence about the heroines, who had mounds of flowers in their sleek hair. This was before Kannada activism and fanaticism began; no one questioned the fact that Tamil movies predominated. Only a couple of theatres showed Hindi films. One of them was Majestic, the theatre which gave the entire locality its name. I remember seeing *C.I.D.* there. Kempe Gowda theatre, which also showed Hindi films, was a dark and dingy theatre, but my memories of it are forever coloured by a carefree, debonair Dilip Kumar singing '*Suhana safar ...*' in Madhumati.

This area, Majestic, soon became a part of my life when I joined the Government Law College at the Mysore Bank Circle. Classes were in the morning. In my memory it was always cool and fresh when I walked along Seshadripuram Park, past the school where a huge pandal would spring up during Ramanavami to hold the head-nodding, thigh-clapping music aficionados. Past the usual 'lodge' with men's underwear and wet towels hanging on the railing, on which the young men leaned, calling out comments as I walked past, head held high, trying to ignore them. Waiting for my bus, opposite the Swastik theatre, I could smell flowers from the market behind me, horse dung from the jhutka stand, I could hear the bells from the temple nearby. I'm sure it rained sometimes, it must have been cold and hot as well, but I don't remember ever carrying an umbrella or wearing a sweater. Life was peaceful and innocent and the people

quaintly old-fashioned. Yet, incongruously, there were plenty of wine shops. People here drank, something that seemed to us, coming from Morarji Desai's Bombay, shocking.

By now, I had settled into the rhythm of this city, its gentle pace more familiar, so that I learnt to amble rather than trot. I had begun to cope with the indolence of the people, the 'doesn't matter' attitude, to appreciate the leisurely pace of shopping in the city. When we went to a jeweller on Avenue Road just before my wedding to get some jewellery made, I remember that we sat there for two entire days, my mother and I, picking out the best stones for a necklace, stones of the right shape, size and colour. And this in an open shop, with people on the road walking past, within touching distance of the precious stones! I think of that when I see the dazzling glass-fronted jewellery shops today, swarming with security and closed circuit televisions. Sari-shopping in those days was mainly in Chickpet, with the added attraction of a stop in a Balepet eating place, where you got the best dosas in town. Shivaram Karanth, it was said, stayed here when he came to Bangalore. The Cantonment was another world altogether, foreign territory which we visited occasionally for English movies, for loafing on South Parade (M.G. Road to newcomers!) or Commercial Street, or for rare family treats in Koshy's. Cubbon Park, with its spectacular flowering trees and its air of peace, was a slice of heaven. I can remember a time when my father lost his way in Cubbon Park. It was dark, a fine mist-like rain was falling, and there was not a person or vehicle around. We drove round and round in circles, until he accidentally found his way out.

We moved house an amazing number of times in those early years. Looking back, all the moves seem painless and easy to me. Perhaps they were, for we had minimal possessions and my mother, very competently, and without any fuss, coped with every change. But when my father announced that we were to move to Malleswaram, my heart sank. Until then we had lived mostly in the area around Kumara Park, in the newer and posher areas. Malleswaram seemed incredibly old-fashioned and dowdy. But of course, we did move there; this was to be my father's last move.

Malleswaram was like a snooty old lady; stately houses in large compounds with stone walls looked as if they had been there forever. The names at the gates, to our awe, said 'Zemindar of this' or 'Raja of that'. We never saw any of them, though, nor did anyone take note of us; there were no curtain-whisking neighbours here. Our house was a doll's house among giants. But it was here that my father found his place in Bangalore, our house becoming a hub for theatre, as well as literary people. I can remember Masti Venkatesh Iyengar beaming kindly at me, V. Sitaramiah impeccably dressed in the old Mysore style, Dr Shivaram's booming voice and jokes. The Niranjans, then a young literary couple, visited us and I can remember an even younger Girish Kasaravalli, who came to invite my father to his wedding.

The Sixth Main Road, on which we lived, was a quiet shady street, just a few roads away from the market and temple area on one side and the railway station on the other. The sound of trains hooting when I went to sleep and when I woke up became familiar in a while. In fact, the quaint little station became part of our lives. When I came back with my children, we took them there to see the trains go by. And my parents, in their later years, regularly walked there every

morning, timing themselves by the trains. My bus stop was on Margosa Road, a short distance from the market area. Going to college in the mornings, I walked under a canopy of the gulmohar, passed the ubiquitous old man plucking flowers with the crook of his walking stick from others' gardens, inhaled the aroma of freshly roasted and ground coffee from the one shop that was open at the time. On the rare occasions when I came home a little late in the evenings, the roads were almost deserted and I walked home at a rapid, almost running pace, nervously watching my own shadow growing longer and shorter between the few street lights. Malleswaram was a place where one walked. My friends and I walked every evening to the 18th Cross and beyond, my parents walked to the city railway station, to Gandhinagar and Rajajinagar. We walked to the post office, to the banks, to the market, to the well, one just walked everywhere.

When I left for Bombay after marriage, I little thought I would come back to Bangalore. But fourteen years later, when my husband was offered a job in NIMHANS, we returned. Both Bangalore and I had changed; I was no longer a girl, but a woman with two children. And Bangalore had begun its march ahead, though it was still a steady decorous progress through planned suburbs. We were to live in the NIMHANS campus, a place which had been, as the cemeteries which we passed before we got to it indicated, outside the town. At first, I didn't realize the slight odium attached to living there. 'NIMHANS', I would say to the bus conductor, to be met by a blank stare and then a grinning 'Ucch aspatre-aa? Why didn't you say so?' Nobody, it seemed, was willing to call it NIMHANS; it continued to be 'ucch aspatre' the Mental Hospital. Our houses in the campus were in the midst of nowhere. We tried to civilize our surroundings, we got rid of thorny weeds and parthenium, we grew papayas and bananas, planted a cassia, a sampige. But for long it remained a wilderness. Once, before our houses were fenced in, our neighbour, an early riser, found that he could not get out of his house one morning; it had been bolted from the outside. Looking out of a window, he saw a group of huddled sleepers in the portico. When he called out, one tousled head was raised and a sleepy voice said, 'So jao.' Our neighbour, a man who enjoyed the unusual, did just that. When they woke up, the door had been unbolted and the group of nomads had gone. We had an unbidden guest too, a recalcitrant snake in our backyard, which defied all our efforts to get rid of it and refused to leave. Even the snake-catcher went away, defeated. Finally, we left it alone, being careful not to go there at night. But we saw it once or twice when it came out to sun itself, a beautiful shining cobra.

We were surrounded by hospitals and localities with names I had never heard. Byrasandra, Lakkasandra, Hombegowda Nagar, Audogodi. I was fascinated by the dark broody Christian cemeteries on the Audogodi road where branches of lush trees drooped heavily and protectively over the ancient graves and tombstones. A symbiotic relationship, for the trees grew so huge, they seemed to be enriched by the dead. I promised myself that I would go and wander among the graves one day, read the names etched on the tombstones, find out who those dead were.

But it was not to be. My husband gave up his job in NIMHANS and once again we packed our belongings and set off for another house, this in a distant (it seemed so then) suburb, Banashankari, a place I had never seen. Those were the monsoon months and my memories of

that year are of constant heavy rains, a very rare thing in Bangalore. Our house was damp, dismal and full of cockroaches; once again we were in a row of back-to-back houses, in a street of curtain-twitching neighbours. I took long walks in the evening, during which I saw a new locality taking shape. Houses were coming up everywhere. But my own creativity seemed at a standstill; I could not write. The greatest solace of my life was to go up on the terrace and look at the hills in the far distance, to watch the monsoon clouds and feel the breeze on my face. Far away, I could see a lone bus plying on a road that seemed to lead to nowhere; that way, I was told, lay Padmanabha Nagar, soon to become a new layout. The small street with its cheek-by-jowl houses was claustrophobic and I was glad when we moved out in just a few months, first to a house near Ashoka Pillar in Jayanagar, and then back to Malleswaram, to the apartment my father had built above his house. A totally changed Malleswaram. Unknown cars drove past with people from the new apartment blocks that had come up in the past few years in place of the old bungalows. Only the old bungalow opposite ours held steadfast, its large compound and all the trees in it intact. A new generation of children were throwing stones at the mangoes on the trees along the stone wall. Not urchins now, but students of a school on the next road, who, having no playground, came here during their breaks to play cricket. All morning, while I sat at my table trying to write, I heard raucous cries of 'out', 'not out' or a triumphantly strident 'four!' or 'sixer!' In the evenings my father sat out, looking anxiously at the sky, waiting for rains, fanning himself with a piece of paper. Where were the clouds? Where had the rains gone? And what was happening to the traffic? It was becoming increasingly difficult for my husband to travel all the way to South End Circle and back, something that pushed us into taking a decision: the time had come to possess our own little bit of land in Bangalore.

We built a house and moved to Jayanagar. A suburb where every fifth house had a name plate that said 'Retd Chief Engineer' and where more people spoke Kannada than elsewhere. Like all householders in Bangalore, we planted trees. Frangipani and parijaat within our compound, a neem and gulmohar outside. And as they let down their roots, so did we. By the time the frangipani flowered, the gulmohar stretched across the road and the parijaat shed its flowers to create a white and red carpet every morning, we had learnt to say 'Kamplexu' for the shopping complex, to call the row of parks 'Rose Gardens'. We got to know the places for the best dosas, masala and chutney powders. I travelled every Sunday to Malleswaram to visit my mother. The drive through the quiet roads on Sunday mornings was like a journey to the past. The roads were so familiar I could have driven with my eyes closed. With my mother's death, my links to Malleswaram snapped. Jayanagar was truly home. But like a spider's web, a fine tracery of lines began to connect us to the rest of the city, to family and friends—Defence Colony and Banashankari, Mathikere and Koramangala, Sanjaynagar and J.P. Nagar.

How much land does a man need, Tolstoy asked. A forty by sixty piece of land seemed enough to knit us into this city.

Glossary

1. **entity**: a thing with distinct and independent existence
2. **reverently**: with deep and solemn respect
3. **portly**: of a stately or dignified appearance and manner
4. **billowing**: filled with air and swelling outwards
5. **whisked off**: take away quickly and suddenly
6. **imbibe**: to receive into the mind and retain
7. **mélange**: a varied mixture
8. **aroma**: a distinctive, typically pleasant smell
9. **galling**: causing annoyance or resentment
10. **incomprehensible**: not able to be understood; not intelligible
11. **influx**: an arrival or entry of large numbers of people
12. **chagrin**: annoyance or distress at having failed or been humiliated
13. **contend**: compete with others in a struggle to achieve something
14. **portico**: a structure consisting of a roof supported by columns at regular intervals, typically attached as a porch to a building
15. **intriguing**: fascinating
16. **inane**: lacking sense or meaning; silly
17. **scarcely**: almost not
18. **cadence**: a modulation of the voice
19. **blare out**: announce loudly
20. **penchant**: a strong or habitual liking for something or tendency to do something
21. **opulence**: riches; abundance
22. **sleek hair**: smooth and glossy
23. **activism**; the policy or action of using vigorous campaigning to bring about political or social change
24. **fanaticism**: extreme beliefs that may lead to unreasonable or violent behaviour
25. **debonair**: confident, stylish and charming
26. **pandal**: a large open-sided temporary pavilion often used for large meetings
27. **aficionado**: a person who is very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about an activity, subject or pastime
28. **incongruously**: inappropriately
29. **amble**: walk or move at a slow, relaxed pace
30. **trot**; run at a moderate pace with short steps
31. **indolence**: avoidance of activity or exertion
32. **loafing**: spend one's time in an aimless, idle way
33. **slice of heaven** [idiom]: a state of joy, serenity or bliss
34. **dowdy**: unfashionable and unstylish in appearance
35. **snooty**: showing disapproval or contempt towards others, especially those considered to belong to a lower social class
36. **curtain-twitching**: the activity of trying to find out what your neighbours are doing by looking out of the window without being seen
37. **ubiquitous**: present or found everywhere

38. **odium**: general or widespread hatred or disgust incurred by someone as a result of their actions
39. **recalcitrant**: having an obstinately uncooperative attitude or discipline
40. **parthenium**: is an invasive weed which has multiple negative impacts
41. **unbidden**: without having been commanded or invited
42. **huddled**: crowd together
43. **tousled**: untidy
44. **broody**: arising from deep thought
45. **symbiotic**: denoting a mutually, beneficial relationship between different people or groups
46. **dismal**: gloomy
47. **solace**: comfort or consolation in the times of distress
48. **cheek by jowl**: close together
49. **claustrophobic**: a person with an extreme or irrational fear of confined spaces
50. **urchins**: young children who are poorly and raggedly dressed
51. **trees intact**: fully stocked
52. **raucous**: making loud and harsh noise
53. **strident**: (of a sound) loud and harsh
54. **frangipani**: a tropical American tree or shrub with clusters of fragrant white, pink or yellow flowers
55. **parijaat**: a night-blooming jasmine plant
56. **snapped**: break suddenly and completely
57. **"How Much Land Does a Man Need"**: a short story about greed written by Tolstoy

Comprehension I: (Short Answer Questions)

1. When did the narrator and her family first move to Bangalore?
2. Mention any two things about Bangalore that interested the author.
3. Name the entity Bangalore was part of in the beginning.
4. How distinctive was Kannada in Bangalore?
5. Why did the narrator's family move into a temporary home?
6. What caused annoyance to the narrator while speaking in Kannada?
7. What detail does the narrator share about their first real home in Bangalore?
8. How strange were the people in Bangalore as described by the narrator?
9. What does the narrator mean by 'repetitiveness of women's lives'?
10. Which place became a hub for theatre and literary people as mentioned by the narrator?
11. What gave the narrator a feel of journey to the past?
12. What was the author fascinated about?
13. Mention some of the places the author lived in?
14. List out some of the prominent personalities who visited the author's house.

Comprehension II: (Paragraph Answer Questions)

1. How does the narrator describe the movie culture of Bangalore?
2. How different was Malleswaram when the narrator moved there for the second time?
3. 'Jayanagar was truly home'. Elaborate.

4. Give a brief account of the mapping of the city.
5. Write a note on the following:
    a. author's memories of Majestic and her attachment to the place;
    b. memories of Malleswaram;
    c. life on NIMHANS campus.

Comprehension III: (Analytical/Discussion Questions)

1. Explain how the author chronicles the uniqueness of Bangalore in the essay.
2. Shashi Deshpande's mapping of Bangalore takes us on an excursion through words. Comment.

Further Reading:

1. *Multiple City: Writings on Bangalore* by Aditi De
2. *On Writers, Reviewers and Critics* by Shashi Deshpande
3. *Bengaluru – A Modern Metropolis with an Ancient History* by Vacation India
4. *A Journey from Bendakalooru to Bengaluru via Bangalore* by Srinivas Alavilli
5. *Namma Bangalore: The Soul of a Metropolis* by Shoba Narayan

SANDALWOOD SOAP

- PERUMAL MURUGAN

Pre-reading Activities:

1. What do you know about child labour? Have you seen children below the age of 14 working in hotels or garages or as domestic helps? Discuss.

2. Do you know about the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) of Children Act – 2000, and the Child Labour (Prohibition and Abolition) Act – 1986? Discuss.

Introduction to the Writer:

Perumal Murugan (born in 1966), is a Tamil Professor, writer, scholar and literary chronicler. He has published twelve novels, six collections of short stories, six poetry anthologies, thirteen works of non-fiction about language and literature, and edited many fiction and non-fiction anthologies. *Seasons of the Palm*, which was nominated for the Kiriyama Prize in 2005, *Current Show*, *One Part Women*, *A Loney Harvest*, *Trail by Silence*, *Poonachi*, *Resolve*, *Estuary*, *Rising Heat* and *Pyre* are among the novels that have been translated into English. He has also authored a memoir called *Nizhal Mutrattu Ninaivugal* (2013).

About the Text:

'Sandalwood Soap', is a short story from the collection of *Sandalwood Soap and Other Stories* by Perumal Murugan (translated by Kavitha Murulidharan). The story is about a young boy whose job is to police the toilets in a mofussil bus-stand and urge the users to emerge out sooner. The story narrates a futile attempt of a young boy's plead to be taken back to his hometown.

He couldn't immediately recognize the trembling boy screaming at him: 'Anna! Anna!' The wet floor, the foul smell of the toilets and the young boy clutching his feet felt like something of a conspiracy to upend the regular course of his workday. He thought of all the places he had to visit and the people he had to meet for the day.

Worried, the man slipped his hand into his shirt pocket and picked out a random note. 'Here -' He tried to give it to the boy.

The boy's tears looked like an attempt to elicit some sympathy, and if they were shed in public, it must be for money, the man thought. Young boys and girls clinging to passengers' feet begging for alms were a common sight on his journeys.

The boy looked up at him, distressed. 'Anna! I am from your home town, Anna,' he said. He started crying harder, and the tears kept flowing.

Shocked, he caught the boy and lifted him up. 'What are you saying?'

'I am Sarasakka's son. Don't you recognize me?'

The boy did look like Sarasakka, come to think of it. 'Come,' he said and took the boy outside.

'Annan is from my home town,' the boy told the man collecting money at the table. It appeared more like he was seeking permission than letting the man know. The money collector said nothing, but gave the boy a strange look.

'Come.' The man gave the boy a push, and walked towards the bus stop.

All the nights dawned at some or the other bus station in the city. The man was familiar with the restrooms of every bus station. Each had different faces: the ones without doors, the ones that appeared like doors, the ones hidden by grates, the ones with rundown doors. He would relieve himself without looking at the unflushed toilet basins. No amount of water could flush them clean. But more irritating than that were the voices that urged him to come out when he had just gone in and managed to lock the door. Every restroom had a person especially for this purpose.

He didn't have the patience to remember their names. He could identify the voices – they were old, middle-aged and childlike. All the voices had the same tone and said the same words. 'Sir, come out. Sir, come out.' The way they knocked on doors was also similar – two quick knocks, as if they were seeking help. The tin doors screeched. The doors would be knocked on again before the screeching stopped.

One or two persons were always waiting at the doors. Even before the door to the stall would open all the way and he would step out, they would splash in a bucket of water. The hand holding the bucket would extend itself, seeing a buck or two. One had to pay twice for the toilet: once here, once at the entrance.

How had the boy gotten into this world? His hand, that had caught hold of the boy, was cold now.

The man had come across many people from his home town on his journeys. The meetings would last as long as a cup of tea. They were an opportunity to reminisce about his past life. He spent most of the day on bus journeys. His job involved meeting reticent people in air-conditioned rooms for a few minutes at a time. Those were official, lifeless meetings. The excitement and happiness of meeting people from his remote village, where even minibuses did not go, was intoxicating for him.

Halfway on their way out of the bus station he looked back at the boy. It looked as if he was struggling hard to put one foot in front of the other. The thin light of the dawn and the sodium lights of the station clearly showed the fatigue in his face.

It was as if he was holding the hand of a replica of Sarasakka, and that made him happy. He thought buying a cup of tea might help the boy, and walked towards the tea shop. The farther they went from the toilet, the better he felt about rescuing the boy from what seemed like grave danger. He felt a sense of adventure in his own step.

He ordered tea and looked for a seat for the boy. The shopkeeper brought around chairs outside the shop. He felt like honouring the shopkeeper with a smile for taking the cue and bringing them the chairs. They were probably his first customers of the day.

The boy had stopped crying and appeared relaxed now. He was dressed in underwear meant for adults. The shirt didn't match it. It was too small for him. His tears had dried up and left tracks on his face. He might be twelve years old – still an innocent child. The man might have seen him as a kid, when Sarasakka was either carrying him on her shoulders, or when walking the toddler on the road.

He stroked the boy's hair softly. He thought it would communicate his love and concern to him.

'Anna – take me away, Anna,' the boy said, his voice laden with sorrow and pain. The boy appeared to hope for some relief through him. It was demand that would spoil the man's plans for the day. He had to be careful.

'How did you come here, da?'

'This small question elicited an elaborate response. He had to intervene often and bring the boy back to the actual story. It appeared that the boy was not willing to finish his story soon: he wanted to spend more time with the man. Why had his day dawned like this? Would this be over any time soon? Where else would this lead him? He felt like he ought to check his daily horoscope.

The boy's story could be summed up in four lines. The family hadn't heard a word from his father who had gone to Kerala for work. While Sarasakka was struggling to raise her kids, a man had come to their village on a bereavement visit. Sarasakka had met him and pleaded with him to employ this boy, her son. 'Please provide him some job or other, and save this family.'

The man had seemed to give it deep thought and generously agreed to take the boy with him. He ran several businesses, which included leasing a huge hotel, a cycle stand and the bus stop toilet. 'Work here for now, I will take you into the hotel later,' the employer had said and sent him off to knock on toilet doors.

The boy told this story in different ways, using various expressions. He lined up evidence in support of his story. He would give the man tough competition if he took up the man's own job. The inhumanity of having to smell the odour while endlessly flushing the basins full of faeces, the various forms of faeces, the coins thrown at him by those who came out of the toilets – the boy described everything in detail.

Without warning, he showed both his feet. It appeared he had contracted trench foot, having stood in water for long hours. The feet were covered in blisters.

He could only pretend to look at them keenly. If he actually looked at them keenly, he would not be able to leave the boy alone.

After all this, the boy renewed his demand. 'Anna, take me away from here anyhow. It is as if I have shit stuck to my body. I don't even have soap to wash myself. I can't even eat. I feel nauseous. Please take me to my mother.'

He didn't know how to placate the boy. There was no sound except for the two of them drinking tea. Tea helped him guard himself against the boy. But they finished drinking it quickly, even though he tried hard to drink it slowly.

After lighting a cigarette, he felt more at ease. He could now have a casual conversation with the boy.

'When will they send you to the hotel job?'

'I don't know, Anna. Maybe they don't mean to. Take me to my mother, Anna.'

He had decided what to tell the boy, but took a puff, pretending to think. The boy couldn't handle the silence, and started to speak again.

'They wake me up at three in the morning every day, Anna. From then on, for the entire day, I have to smell the shit. I can't, Anna. Take me away.'

The boy made a barrage of comments along these lines for another minute or two. Each time, he ended it with the same demand: 'Take me away.'

He slowly started to speak his mind.

'Look,' he said. 'I'm working all day today. After this, I have to go to Erode and Coimbatore. It will take me three or four days. I can't go on leave now and take you to our village. I can't take you with me either. Tell me what to do.'

The boy didn't expect the arguments he had kept up for so long to meet such a fate. 'What can we do, Anna?' he asked weakly.

'Shall I tell your employer to send you to work at the hotel?'

The boy immediately rejected the idea. 'He will beat me for letting others know my plight.'

The man realized that the boy no longer considered him trustworthy. He had suddenly become the 'other'. He couldn't accept that the boy had lost faith in him. He tried to earn back his faith by making him a promise.

'I will pass this place again when coming back from Coimbatore. I will take you then. I will try to send word to your mother if I see someone from our village.'

The boy's face shone with hope and clarity, and he nodded his head. 'Don't worry, I will take you back somehow,' he said reassuringly. He had to say that over and over.

'Okay, Anna,' the boy said, satisfied.

The dawn began to break. A shop – probably a hotel or a lottery shop – played the devotional 'Kaaka Kaaka' song. There was nothing left to say.

'Hang on for two or three days; I will make some arrangements.'

'All right, Anna. You must take me, anyhow. It's already late. They will start scolding me. If I don't pour water for even a little while, the basins will become full and frothy.'

The boy had remembered the place to which he was condemned. He had started to think of the person there, and the words he would hear. When the boy started walking away, the man suddenly remembered something he had said. He called the boy back and bought him a bar of sandalwood soap. He thought the soap would be an immediate and easy solution to the boy's problems.

He watched the boy for as long as his smoke lasted. The boy clutched the soap and walked off quickly. Then, work summoned the man.

Certain images kept coming back to the man over the course of the day. The dark-skinned, glowing Sarasakka. Her firm breasts. The mind that warned him about how she was like his sister. The toilet basins that frothed endlessly, even as buckets of water were poured into them. The sandalwood soap in the boy's hands.

More than three months passed. The man had to return to the same city. He remembered the boy when he got down from the bus and walked towards the toilet. Not that he hadn't thought of him before: he had remembered the boy once or twice, in between times. He hadn't had the opportunity to return to his home town. He had felt hesitant to talk about the boy's affairs to people from his home town when he met them by accident. He wondered if he should avoid the toilet and go somewhere else. He didn't have the strength to face the boy.

But his stomach was upset, as usual. The parottas he had eaten mid-journey were doing their job. He couldn't postpone nature's call. He had no choice but to go to the toilet.

He paid the fee, left his bag beneath the table and looked around. The man who was seated across the table was still sleepy.

'Sir, come out. Sir, come out.' He could hear the voices from within the toilet block. None of them sounded like the boy's, but they might be. There were at least one or two persons standing in front of each toilet stall. The person knocking the door was clad in a lungi. It was a relief to imagine that the boy might have left and gone to work at the hotel.

He queued up in front of a stall. Before him was another man waiting for the door to open. The person knocking on the door shouted non-stop: 'Sir, come out! Sir, come out.' When he came closer to the door and knocked, he realized that the lungi-clad person was not an adult. He was the boy. A faded, ordinary lungi had changed his appearance.

He was hesitant to talk to the boy. It would be better to use the toilet and leave without letting the boy know. A voice, deep down, said softly that that would be unfair. He decided to heed the voice.

The boy, meanwhile, had gone to the other corner of the queue, carrying a small bucket filled with water. He didn't want to summon the boy by clapping his hands. He hadn't asked the boy his name when they had met last time. He felt bad about his lack of concern in not even asking for a name despite their long conversation. Even if he had known his name, he didn't think it was possible to use it at this place.

He waited for the boy to come back.

It didn't look like the door he was standing in front of was going to open any time soon. There was another man waiting before him. Each door had at least two people waiting. People kept coming in, looking for queues to join. The boy's voice didn't shake up anyone inside.

A door screeched open with a big sound. A man emerged from a toilet in the middle, holding his dhoti up. He looked like the sort of man who would spend a long time in the toilets. The boy came running to the door and splashed the bucket of water inside. No one knew if the water fell inside the toilet or outside.

The boy extended his hand to the man. His stomach was now relieved, so he didn't fuss much and handed a coin to the boy. The boy was doing a service, after all.

The boy drew closer to his side. His hands knocked on the door as he kept up the refrain: 'Sir, come out.'

The man stretched a bit and touched the boy's shoulder.

'Don't hurry, sir. They will com out soon, please wait,' the boy said, then looked at him and immediately identified him. 'Anna, is that you? When did you come?' He was embarrassed by the boy's surprise and his welcoming tone.

The man standing in front of him turned and smiled faintly. The boy didn't respond.

'Anna, wait!' he said and ran to knock on the doors again. 'Come out, sir.' The words carried a tone of fatigue and command.

It appeared that one door would open soon. The boy stood next to it and called him, 'Anna, come. Anna, come here.'

He couldn't decide whether he had to go or not. Everyone was looking at him. 'Come, Anna, quick,' the boy said. A man emerged, his pants rolled up, from that toilet. He avoided all the eyes by heeding only the boy's voice. His stomach was forcing him to do so too. he walked towards the boy.

'Preferential treatment even for this,' someone murmured. He heard that loud and clear. He hung his head, and didn't look at those waiting before the door. The boy splashed the water carefully this time. The man went into the toilet and locked the door. Until he unlocked the door, there were no knocks, no voices urging him to come out. He was able to empty his stomach in peace. But he was ashamed of the boy's favour for him.

The boy was waiting to welcome him back when he stepped out of the toilet. Placing the bucket on the water tank, the boy held his hands: 'Come, Anna.' He didn't even think of rolling down his pants, and continued to feel too ashamed to look at others as he stepped out with the boy.

'Annan is from my home town. I am going with him for a bit,' the boy told the man collecting the money.

'Where are you going when there's such a rush?' the man sneered.

Unfazed, the boy responded firmly: 'I will be back.'

The boy carried the man's bag and walked out, the lungi flowing past his legs. He held the bag in one hand and the corner of the lungi in the other. The man didn't know what to say to the boy. He thought about how he had not returned to their home town, about how he hadn't sent word to the boy's mother nor returned as promised. He walked beside him, full of guilt.

It was dawn and the boy was brisk.

'Listen to him, like he's a big somebody, as if he's seen the crowd himself,' the boy would ask him questions, but the boy chattered on about the place and its people. He could not comprehend his talk fully. He took the boy to a tea shop and ordered tea.

'How long will you be here, Anna?' the boy asked.

'Just today. I'll leave as soon as the job's over.'

He wanted to update the boy before he could ask him anything. 'I couldn't go home, da.'

The boy smiled. 'Must've been difficult. I know.'

It was very comforting. He hoped that the conversation about this wouldn't last any longer, and it turned out to be that way. After tea, the boy said: 'Anna, come whenever you are here. I will be around.'

He suddenly seemed to remember something and reached into the pocket of his underwear beneath the lungi. After much effort, he pulled them out – crumpled hundred-rupee notes.

'Five hundred rupees. My earnings, apart from the salary. I don't know whether you will go in person or send it through someone. Please give it to my mother.'

The man took the money with utmost respect.

'It'll take another two or three months for me to come home. Please tell my mother I will bring my salary myself then.'

The man nodded his head.

'Please don't tell my mother that I work in the toilets, Anna.' The boy's voice was subdued and face sad when he made this request. 'I won't,' the man promised.

'All right, Anna. It's getting late. I have to go. Don't leave without meeting me whenever you're here,' the boy said. He started to walk away under the lights. From a few steps off, he turned and said in a raised voice: 'I still use the sandalwood soap that you bought for me. It smells good.'

It looked like there was a faint smile on his face.

Translated from Tamil by Kavitha Muralidharan

Glossary

1. **trembling**: be in a state of great worry or fear
2. **foul**: having a disgusting smell or taste
3. **conspiracy**: a secret plan by a group to do something unlawful or harmful
4. **upend**: upside down
5. **elicit**: produce or draw out a response or reaction
6. **alms**: money, food and clothes given to poor people
7. **dawned**: the beginning of something new
8. **grates**: reduce to small shreds
9. **screeched**: loud harsh cry or sound
10. **buck**: a dollar
11. **reminisce**: think or talk about the past
12. **reticent**: not revealing your thoughts or feelings readily
13. **intoxicate**: (of alcoholic drink or a drug) make someone lose control of themselves
14. **fatigue**: great tiredness
15. **replica**: an exact copy or model of something
16. **farther**: (also further) at, to or by a great distance
17. **cue**: a signal or prompt
18. **horoscope**: a forecast of a person's future based on the positions of the stars and planets at the time of their birth
19. **bereavement**: be deprived of a close relation or friend through their death
20. **faeces**: the solid waste passed out of the body of a human or animal
21. **trenched foot**: a painful condition of the feet caused by long immersion in cold water or mud
22. **blisters**: a painful swelling on the skin that contains liquid especially on foot
23. **nauseous**: feeling as if you want to vomit
24. **placate**: make someone less angry or hostile
25. **barrage**: something that comes quickly and heavily as an attack of bullets or a fast spray of words
26. **frothy**: a mass of small bubbles in liquid
27. **clad**: clothed
28. **to heed**: pay attention to
29. **sneered**: a scornful or mocking smile or remark
30. **unfazed**: not worried or confused by something unexpected
31. **scoffed**: treat with contemptuous disregard
32. **chattered**: talk informally about unimportant things

Comprehension I: (Short Answer Questions)

1. Where does the story take place?
2. Why did the boy not accept the money given to him by the narrator?
3. What is the boy's request to the narrator?
4. Whose son is the boy?
5. What had happened to the boy's feet?
6. The narrator returned to the same city after _____ month(s).
   a. three b. four c. one d. six
7. What does the narrator buy for the boy in the end of the story?

Comprehension II: (Paragraph Answer Questions)

1. How does the narrator react to the boy's request?
2. What is the symbolic significance of the sandalwood soap in the story?
3. How does the narrator respond to the boy's revelation about his identity?
4. What was the narrator's promise to the boy? Does he fulfill it?
5. Comment on the ending of the story?

Comprehension III: (Analytical/Discussion Questions)

1. Explain how the story portrays the themes of exploitation and child labour.
2. Elaborate how the story juxtaposes the narrator's and the boy's lives.
3. Discuss the significance of the setting of the story in the toilet. How does the author use sensory details to enhance the description of the setting?
4. Describe the emotional journey of the protagonist in the story. How does he move from a state of indifference to one of concern?

Further Reading:

1. *The Chimney Sweeper* by William Blake
2. *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens
3. *How to Make Peace? Get Angry* – The Transcript of the TED Talk by Kailash Satyarthi

THE MAD

- **K. SATCHIDANANDAN**

Pre-reading Activities:

1. Have you ever felt like no one understood you?

2. Have you ever seen a madman or madwoman? If yes, what do you think of them?

3. What is your take on a hypocritical society? Do you think you live in one such society?

Introduction to the Poet:

K. Satchidanandan is a Malayalam/English poet, dramatist, fiction writer, travel writer, editor, and social and literary critic. He has authored more than 70 original works and 30 volumes of poetry translations from other countries. He held positions as Chief Executive of Sahitya Akademi, Editor of Indian Literature, Professor of English in Kerala, and Director of Translation Studies and Training at IGNOU in Delhi.

He has given lectures and recited poems in over 30 countries across six continents. He has also been the recipient of 51 fellowships and honours, including the Dante Medal from Ravenna, the Sahitya Akademi Award, the Poet Laureate Award from Tata Litfest, the Italy-Poland Friendship Medal, and the Knighthood from the Italian government. In addition to the primary Indian languages, Satchidanandan has 32 volumes of poetry in 18 languages, including Arabic, German, French, Italian, English, Irish, Chinese and Japanese. His most recent English language publications include *While I Write*, *The Misplaced Objects and Other Poems*, *The Missing Rib*, *Not Only the Oceans*, *Positions*, *Words Matter: Writings Against Silence*, and *Singing in the Dark: A Global Anthology of Poetry Under Lockdown*.

About the Poem:

In this poem, the term 'mad' becomes synchronous with 'alienation'. The poem offers a penetrative insight into the world of 'politicisation' of the mad. A critique of the well-structured yet hypocritical society is brought about in the description of the mad. An attempt in comprehending the psyche of the mad, the poet, perhaps, comments on the mad as 'objects of speculation'. The poet portrays the mad as those who are oblivious, or rather, unaware of race, religion, gender, caste or creed. The mad are not even deterred by boundaries, and that their grasp over the functioning of the world is far more gripping than those who claim themselves to be 'sane'.

The mad possess an innocence which is inadept in the governing eyes of the 'normal' people. Here, the poet uses the weapon of self-mockery to attack the contemporary man who finds himself torn between the many currents of capitalism and commodity consumer culture. The poem is a criticism of the socio-political and cultural structures that now exist, which identify the abnormal and the deviant as being against the norm in order to serve their own interests. At the poem's conclusion, the poet persuades us that "The mad are not/mad like us." – he makes us aware of the absurdity of the beliefs and ideologies that govern our society.

The mad have no caste
or religion. They transcend
gender, live outside
ideologies. We do not deserve
their innocence.

Their language is not of dreams
but of another reality. Their love
is moonlight. It overflows
on the full-moon day.

Looking up they see
gods we have never heard of. They are
shaking their wings when
we fancy they are
shrugging their shoulders. They hold
that even flies have souls
and the green god of grasshoppers
leaps up on thin legs.

At times they see trees bleed, hear
lions roaring from the streets. At times
they watch Heaven gleaming
in a kitten's eyes, just as
we do. But they alone can hear
ants sing in a chorus.

While patting the air
they are taming a cyclone
over the Mediterranean. With
their heavy tread, they stop
a volcano from erupting.

They have another measure
of time. Our century is
their second. Twenty seconds,
and they reach Christ; six more,
they are with the Buddha.

In a single day, they reach
the big bang at the beginning.

They go on walking restless, for
their earth is boiling still.

The mad are not
mad like us.

Translated from Malayalam by K. Satchidanandan

Glossary

1. **ideologies**: a set of beliefs, especially one held by a particular group, that influences the way people behave
2. **shrugging**: to raise your shoulders and then drop them to show that you do not know or care about something
3. **gleaming**: shining brightly
4. **chorus**: a group of performers who sing together at intervals in a larger piece of music
5. **patting**: to touch something gently with your hands flat
6. **taming**: making something less powerful, or easier to control
7. **tread**: to put your foot down while you are stepping or walking
8. **big bang**: the single large event, followed by a rapid expansion, that most scientists suggest created the universe

Comprehension I: (Short Answer Questions)

1. What do the mad not have?
2. What exactly are the mad doing when we say they are 'shrugging their shoulders'?
3. What is present in the kitten's eyes?
4. How do the mad tame a cyclone?
5. How do the mad calculate time?

Comprehension II: (Paragraph Answer Questions)

1. Annotate:

    "Looking up they see
    gods we have never heard of."

2. Analyse how the mad are not bound by religion or gender.
3. Comment on the tone and style of the poem. Do you think the poet is trying to invoke sentiments of compassion or is it a blatant self-mockery?

Comprehension III: (Analytical/Discussion Questions)

1. Elaborate on how the poet subtly brings out the reference of alienation in the poem.
2. The poem is a critique of cultural systems. Debate.
3. Discuss how ideologies have come to govern our societies and monitor individuals.

Further Reading:

1. *How to Go to the Tao Temple* by K. Satchidanandan
2. *The Old Gumbie Cat* by T.S. Eliot
3. *I Met a Man Once* by Nissim Ezekiel

LANGUAGE COMPONENT

SLOGAN WRITING

Objectives:

- To hone students' creative skills.
- To enhance their intellect and vocabulary.
- To prompt them to distill complex ideas into concise statements.
- To foster critical thinking.
- To expand their linguistic repertoire.

A 'slogan' is a short phrase that is easy to remember. Slogans are used in advertisements and for campaigns and other organisations who want people to remember what they are selling or saying. A slogan is a brief, catchy statement that is designed to support a particular concept, service, product, or cause. Slogans are the phrases used in influencing public opinion and encouraging participation in the issue they represent. It plays an important role in the field of marketing. These play an influential role in campaigns, marketing efforts and other communication situations as a effective way to express a core idea or value proposition. A slogan is a verbal description of its products and services. It expresses an idea or purpose that persuades the public or a defined target group to interact with a particular business, group or association.

Slogans have been used widely in protests dating back hundreds of years, however increased rapidly in the early 20th century with the advent of mass media and the printing press. Slogans used as a propaganda tool have brought down empires in the past. The basis of this simple propaganda effect was used brutally by Nazi and Soviet regimes as noted in their propaganda posters. In contrast slogans are often used in liberal democracies as well as grassroot organisations, in a campaign setting.

We are also familiar with slogans coined by Indian freedom fighters which had inspired many and awakened a sense of patriotism in the youth: "Inqlaab Zindabad!", "Vande Mataram!", "Bharat Chhodo" or "Quit India", and "Simon Go Back".

How helpful/useful slogans are:

1. Slogans Build Brand Identity

Slogans play a pivotal role in shaping and solidifying brand identity. It enhances brand recall and fosters a strong and enduring connection with consumers. A slogan makes the brand easily recognisable and distinct in the competitive landscape.

2. Slogans Help in Effective Communication

Slogans bridge the gap between a producer and consumer. Slogans communicate the qualities and experiences associated with the product.

3. Slogans Enhance Memorability

Memorability is a hallmark of a successful slogan. Slogans should create an indelible mark in the consumers' mind. A memorable slogan influences consumers in their decision-making process. Slogans should create a lasting impression.

4. Unique Stamp

Slogans contribute in creating a distinct position in the market by helping the brand stand out and guiding consumers to recognise and appreciate the specific qualities that set it apart from competitors.

A good slogan should:

- embrace simplicity.
- ensure memorisation and understanding at a glance.
- establish a deeper connection with consumers.
- shape consumer preferences and influence purchasing decisions.
- ensure clarity in advertising message.

TYPES OF SLOGANS

1. Advertising Slogans

These slogans are strategically employed to promote specific products, services, or marketing campaigns within advertisements.

Examples:

1. Maybelline: Maybe She's Born with It
2. The New York Times: All the News That's Fit to Print
3. Burger King: Have It Your Way

2. Creative Slogans

These are specifically crafted to be clear and easily understood by the target audience.

Examples:

1. Coco-cola: Taste the Feeling (or) Open Happiness
2. Subway: Eat Fresh
3. Apple: Think Different.

3. Business Slogans

These contribute significantly to a brand's identity by emphasising features that distinguish it from competitors.

Examples:

1. MasterCard: There are some things money can't buy. For everything else, there's MasterCard.
2. Disneyland: The Happiest Place on Earth
3. Samsung: Do what you can't.

4. Persuasive Slogans

These act as compelling selling statements, aiming to convince consumers of the brand's trustworthiness and value.

Examples:

1. Toyota: let's go places
2. Walmart: Save Money. Live Better.
3. KFC: Finger-lickin' good

5. Descriptive Slogans

These are short, precise and engaging while highlighting the brand's unique offerings. These slogans describe what your business provides and stands for.

Examples:

1. De Beers: A diamond is forever
2. Nike: Just Do It
3. McDonald's: I'm Lovin' It

6. Commanding Slogans

These are powerful and concise statements intended to persuade consumers to take action. These slogans carry enough weight to convince consumers to make purchases through compelling messaging.

Examples:

1. L'Oreal: Because You're Worth It
2. Lay's: Betcha Can't Eat Just One
3. Capital One: What's in Your Wallet?

Tips for consistently producing catchy, high-quality slogans:

- Keep it short and memorable to leave a lasting impression.
- Consider the tone of writing and explore ways to infuse it into slogan.
- Aim for a concise and impactful message.
- Make it clear.

TASK A: Write slogans for the following topics:

1. To create awareness of de-addiction of drugs.

---

2. To promote peace.

---

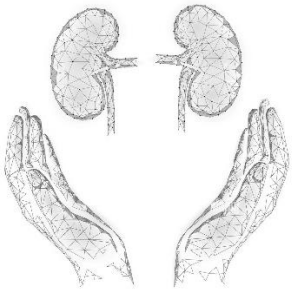
3. To reduce the usage of non-renewable resources.

---

4. To promote health awareness programmes.

5. To spread awareness on physical fitness.

TASK B: Write slogans for the following pictures:



LEAFLET WRITING

Objectives:

- To introduce the art of leaflet writing.
- To enhance the students' intellect and creative dimensions.
- To instill the importance of brief-writing.

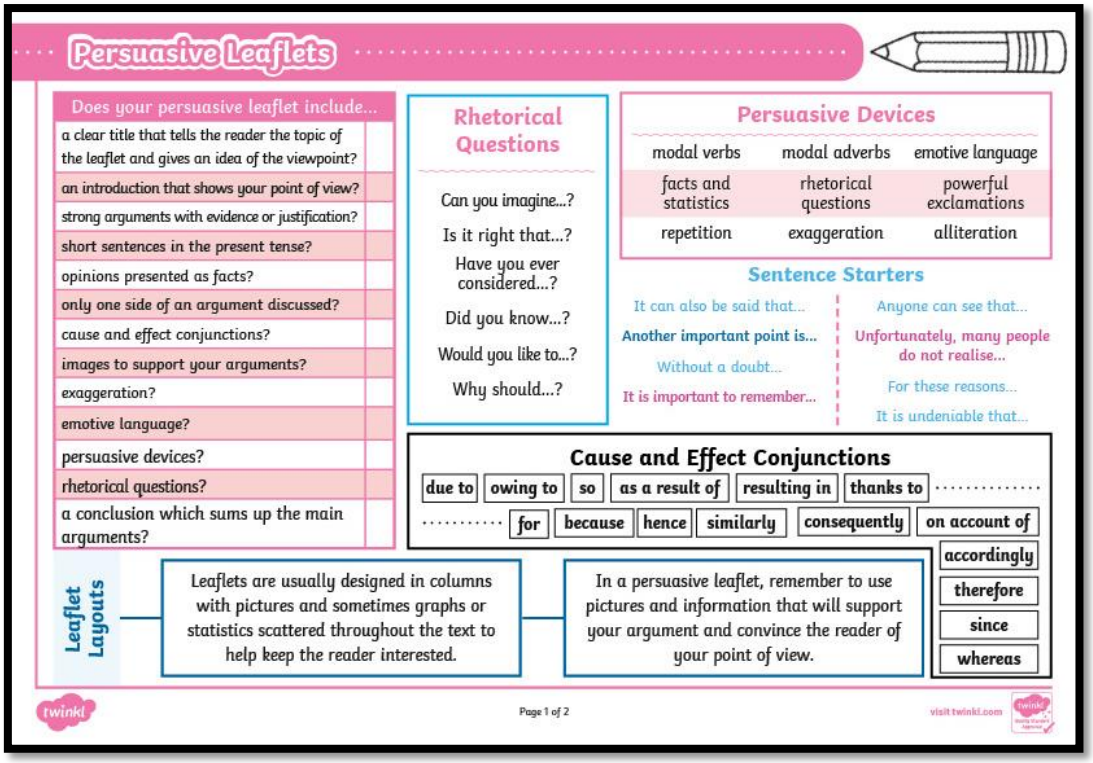
Leaflet is a piece of paper containing information about a particular subject. The 'pamphlet' meaning arose in 1800s, from leaf, or 'page of a book'. The standard size of a leaflet is that of an A6 sheet. In terms of cost too, it is a little expensive. They are mostly printed in colours. They can be circulated by either handing them over to the concerned audience, or attaching them in the local newspapers. Not only this, leaflets are often placed tactically where people are bound to take a look. For example, on tables in restaurants, new showrooms/outlets, launching a new product and many more.

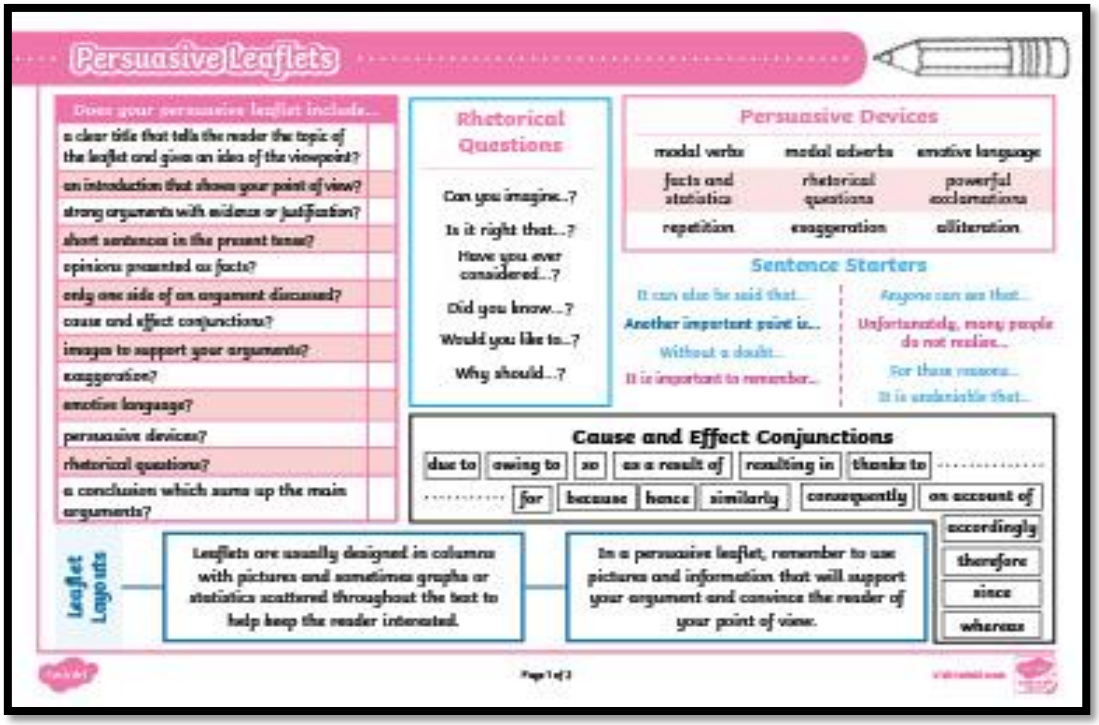
How to write a leaflet?

The following steps can be followed to write a leaflet:

1. Establish the purpose of a leaflet – the chief concern is to promote or create awareness. Moreover, purpose and other necessary details must be considered keeping the target audience in mind.
2. Attractive and effective headlines, and clear sub-headings must be provided to guide the reader through the content.
3. The leaflet must be concise and catchy. It must include the key details such as 'what' (nature of the event, venture, etc.), 'why' (purpose), 'where (venue), 'when' (time), etc.
4. The leaflet should be informative. Use simple words and sentences and avoid using compound and complex sentences. Do not forget to include the company's name, logo and other necessary details.
5. Finish with a call to action by listing out the benefits, uniqueness, and need of it.

The following two tables/charts are for your reference and not necessarily a stated format:





Image(s) Source: https://www.twinkl.co.in

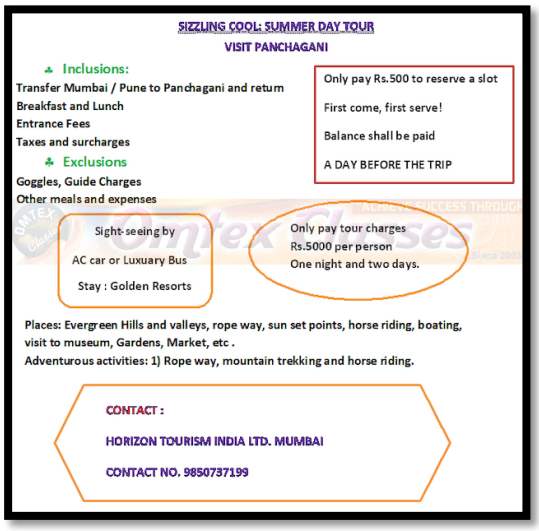
While preparing a leaflet, remember to:

1. Use short, catchy sentences.
2. Use persuasive language and a few rhetoric sentence structures, positive adjectives to urge the audience to take action. Use of language depends on the task, so be creative.
3. Use an appropriate, appealing title.
4. Use bullet points for important details.
5. Use borders, shapes, different fonts and styles, if possible, to get the immediate attention of the reader and keep the drawings, sketches and paintings to minimum.
6. Fill in the essential information only.

The structure and layout of a leaflet includes:

1. Attention grabbing title.
2. Short introduction.
3. Headings in bold letters.
4. Concise, organised sentences, bullet points.
5. Pictures or sketches if required as borders or for other minimal catchy decorations.
6. Urging to take an action.

Samples:



Image(s) Source: https://www.omtexclasses.com

TASKS

1. Prepare a tourist leaflet about a visit to a Bird Sanctuary.

2. Design a leaflet about a government policy of "Beti Padhao Beti Bachao Yojana".

3. Draft a leaflet for a new gymnasium in your locality.

4. Design a boutique leaflet, endorsing handmade garments and traditional designs.

5. Write an appeal to collect donations for 'Blind Relief Fund'.

PROOFREADING SYMBOLS

Objectives:

To introduce the meaning of proofreading and various signs that are involved in the science of proofreading.

To comprehend proof reading signs and make necessary corrections indicated in a document

Any document is first prepared in a draft form. Then, the draft is read and re-read before sending it for printing. Usually, there are several/fewer additions, deletions, and corrections in the draft. The modifications which are made in the draft are indicated by the standard proofreading signs/symbols. So, a proofreader should be skillful and trained in understanding the meaning of these signs/symbols and should be capable of carrying out the rectifications on the draft before it is finalised and printed.

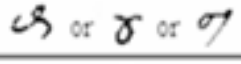
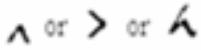
In this unit, you will be taught about the meaning of proofreading, and standard correction signs/symbols. **Proofreading** means correction of errors/inaccuracies in a (given) manuscript, type-script or printed copy before publication. In its broadest sense, proofreading implies every kind of verification, authentication/confirmation of statements appearing in a copy; but more generally the term is applied to the correction of printer's errors. The proofreader will indicate the desired modifications/alterations with an established/standard code of marks which are standardised for general use. Proofreading can also be defined as the means of examining the text carefully to find and correct typographical errors and mistakes in grammar, style and spelling.

Some proofreading signs/symbols are as follows:

Proofreading Symbols – Part 1

Meaning	Symbol in margin	Symbol in text
Caret – general indicator used to mark position of error	No symbol – Only used to indicate the position in text of other symbol set in margin	^ or > or ⌐
Used in text to show deletion or substitution	No symbol – Only used to indicate the position in text of other symbol set in margin	/
Insert full stop	⊙	^ or > or ⌐
Insert comma	⌐	^ or > or ⌐
Insert colon	: or ⊙	^ or > or ⌐
Insert semicolon	; or ;/	^ or > or ⌐
Insert question mark	?	^ or > or ⌐
Insert exclamation mark	!	^ or > or ⌐
Insert hyphen	= or -/ or ⌢ or /H/	^ or > or ⌐
Insert apostrophe	⌢	^ or > or ⌐
Insert quotation marks	⌢⌢ or ⌢⌢	^ or > or ⌐
Insert 1-en dash	I/N or en or /N/	^ or > or ⌐
Inset 1-em dash	I/M or em or /M/	^ or > or ⌐
Insert space	#	^ or > or ⌐
Caps	cap	≡
Small caps	sm cap or s.c.	=

Proofreading Symbols – Part 2

Meaning	Symbol in margin	Symbol in text
Lowercase		
Italic		
Boldface		
Roman type		
Transpose		
Spell out		
Insert slash		
Superior		
Inferior		
Brackets		
Delete		
Delete and close up		
Close up		
Paragraph		
No paragraph		
Let it stand		
Letter(s) not clear		

Proofreading Symbols – Part 3

Meaning	Symbol in margin	Symbol in text
Carry over to the next line	run over	⌞
Carry back to the preceding line	run back	⌟
Question to author to delete	OK/?	Only used in margin next to mark which is being questioned
Wrong font	wf	⬭
Move right	⊐	⊐
Move left	⊏	⊏
Move up	⊓	⊓
Move down	⊔	⊔
Align vertically	//	//
Indent 1 em	◻	◻
Indent 2 ems	◻◻	◻◻
Align horizontally	=	=
Centre horizontally	<> or ><	<> or ><
Centre vertically	◇ or ⋁	◇ or ⋁
Equalize space	eq#	⟋
Something omitted – see copy	out, see copy, p 30	^ or > or ^

Image(s) Source: https://www.excellent-proofreading-and-writing.com

Proofread the following sentences using the proofreading signs/symbols:
Solved Examples:

a. If any word in the document is not clear, it should be encircled and the computer operator should proceed further.
Answer: If any word in the document is not clear, it should be encircled and the ~~C~~omputer ~~O~~perator should proceed further. ≡
In the above example, the initial letters of a designation/title of a job (noun) – 'Computer Operator' – must be in capital letters.

b. Why are you standing here
Answer: Why are you standing here ?

The given example 'b' is an interrogative sentence, so at the end, a question mark must be inserted.

c. Every body – the spectators, the players, the umpire – applauded his performance.
Answer: Every‿body – the spectators, the players, the umpire – applauded his performance.
'Everybody' is a singular pronoun which is used to address or refer to a group of people. In the example 'c', there is a space in the word, so we need to delete the space between the words and write it as a single word, it may be a typographical error.

Tips for Proofreading:

1. Never proofread your own copy.
2. Read everything in the copy straight throughout from the beginning to end.
3. Read copy backward to spot spelling errors.
4. Read pages out of order.
5. Have proofreaders initial the copy they check.
6. Have someone read numbers while you check hardcopy.
7. Take short breaks so you can concentrate more clearly.
8. Make your marks legible and understandable.

TASK A

Indicate corrections using the right proofreading signs/symbols:

1. The companys policies were rewritten.

2. Today in the meeting we shall discuss regarding the intro duction of SEP courses.

3. The success of a Committee depends upon its Members, so they should be chosen with care.

4. What should do she to improve her efficiency in typewriting documents with proofreading symbols?

5. The need for a sound recruitment policy is very important

6. The living beings on planet earth are grouped into species.

7. In an ecosystem there are
   - living beings
   - natural elements

- artificial elements

8. Living beings are for example, animals and plants.

9. Environmentaljustice is justice related to environmental issues.

10. To ensure food sovereignity, decisions made by the community must respect Mother Earth.

TASK B

Answer the following questions:

1. What is Proofreading?

2. Why is Proofreading a necessity?

3. Which symbol do you use when the position of the words is interchanged in a sentence?

4. What signs are used to indicate addition of any punctuation marks?

5. When do we use these signs?

COMPOSING AN INVITATION

Objectives:

- To effectively communicate the details of an event.
- To learn how to create a positive and engaging experience for invitees.
- To prepare students for future academic and professional roles.

Invitations are verbal or written requests made to invite individuals to specific events, formal events, conferences, or even family gatherings. Whether an invitation is sent out in printed or digital format, it should include these details:

1. **What is the occasion?**
   Are you organising a farewell party, a wedding ceremony or if your organisation is conducting a workshop or conference? This fact must be highlighted.
2. **Who is the host?**
   Are you hosting the event or on behalf of your family or your organisation? Mention the name of the family or the institution, or a particular department in your institution.
3. **When and where?**
   The date, time, and place are essential and your invitation will not make any sense unless you mention them. Include a map, along with the address, if necessary. On the other hand, if you are hosting an online event, you should include all the essential links to join virtually. Mentioning the different time zones for guests worldwide is crucial.
4. **Who is the guest/dignitary?**
   For formal invites, it is important to mention the dignitaries invited for the event, along with their designation.
5. **Does the event have multiple sessions?**
   Add details about the planned events/sessions, and the speakers for each of them.
6. Include invitation phrases that are **appealing**. Be as welcoming and friendly as possible to encourage guests to participate. Use catchy sentences like “we would love to have you at [name of the event] and enjoy a wonderful time together”. This will make your guests feel welcomed and inspire action from them.
7. If you need a **response** to the invite, include a telephone number/email address for RSVPs [Respond, if you please.].
8. If you are inviting someone to speak at a conference, your invitation should highlight the **topic**.

Additional Tips

- Keep the language simple and polite.
- Avoid using informal language in invitations.
- Do not use abbreviations and contractions (don't; we'll) except for name titles, such as Mr., Ms., etc.

Samples of Invitations:

Sample 1

Furry Friends Animal Shelter
cordially invites you to the

THIRD ANNUAL PET ADOPTION DRIVE – 2024

SECOND CHANCES

13th December 2024
9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
SR Farmlands, Plot No. 7, Bekal Road, Mangalore

Free basic consultation for your adopted pet, conducted by Paws Veterinary Clinic.

Call +91-98453 xxxxx to register!

Sample 2

Mr. & Mrs. John Wilson
request the honour of your presence at the wedding of their daughter

Sarah Wilson
to
Clark Benson

on **11th December 2024**, at **4 p.m.**
at **Palm Medows Convention Centre, California**

RSVP by **15th November 2024**
xxx.xxx@gmail.com

Sample 3

Karnataka Business & Entrepreneur Forum
invites you to the

12TH ANNUAL BUSINESS SUMMIT – 2025

Inauguration by
SHRI. K. R. NARAYAN
Minister, Business Development, Govt. of India

Keynote Address
DR. ROHINTON BISWAS
Founder & CEO, Matrix Systems, Pune

21st January 2025
10 a.m.
Taj West End, Bangalore
Please ensure that you complete the registration process before 9:30 a.m.

RSVP to Sneha Bhaskar
at +91 98xxx xxxxx or xxx.xxxxxx@gmail.com
by 10th January 2025

Dress Code: Business Formals

TASKS

1. Mrs. Irani and her family is going to celebrate Mr. Irani's retirement. Draft an invitation for this event inviting family and friends.
2. Mr. Khan's family is opening a new restaurant. Draft an invite for family and friends to attend the opening ceremony.
3. Your college is organising an intercollegiate cultural fest, for which you are inviting students from other colleges. Compose an invitation for the event.
4. Elite Hospitals, Bangalore, is organising a Walkathon to raise awareness on autism. Draft an invite for health care professionals and well-wishers to join in.
5. Vibgyor Science Club, Wilson Garden, is organising a three-day workshop on Artificial Intelligence and Data Science. Draft an invite for UG and PG students to participate.

*****

QUESTION PAPER PATTERN

ADDITIONAL ENGLISH
II SEMESTER

Time: 3 hours **Max. Marks: 80**

Instructions:
a. Answer all the questions.
b. Write the question numbers correctly.

SECTION – A
[Literary Component – 60 Marks]
Essay/Poetry/Short Story

I.	Answer in two or three sentences each. [any 5 out of 7 questions]	5x2=10
II.	Answer in about a page each. [any 6 out of 8 questions]	6x5=30
III.	Answer in about two pages each. [any 2 out of 4 questions]	2x10=20

SECTION – B
[Grammar Component – 20 Marks]

IV.	Slogan Writing	2x2.5=5
V.	Leaflet Writing	1x5=5
VI.	Proofreading Symbols	1x5=5
VII.	Composing an Invitation	1x5=5

MODEL QUESTION PAPER
ADDITIONAL ENGLISH
II SEMESTER

Time: 3 hours **Max. Marks: 80**

Instructions:
a. Answer all the questions.
b. Write the question numbers correctly.

SECTION – A
[Literary Component – 60 Marks]
Essay/Poetry/Short Story

I. Answer any FIVE questions in two or three sentences each. 5x2=10

1. Which are the two luxuries that Ramarao enjoys on Sundays?
2. Name two freedom fighters mentioned in "The Parliament of Liars".
3. What is described as a 'collective idea' in "East and West"?
4. In the story, "The Wait", who bought Sayali's proposal to Viraj's family?
5. Name any two poets mentioned in the poem, "Pakistan"?
6. In the essay, "Mapping Bangalore", what aspect of Bangalore's film culture impressed the narrator when they arrived in the city?
7. How do the mad stop the volcano from erupting?

II. Answer any SIX questions in about a page each. 6x5=30

1. How does Ramarao's relationship with his children reflect his sacrifices and personal ambitions?
2. What does the poem, "The Parliament of Liars", suggest about the public's role in the political system?
3. Explain the modern traveller's approach to foreign lands with reference to "East and West".
4. What is the narrator's internal reaction to seeing the man approach the young couple with malicious intent in "The Wait"?
5. Elaborate "meandering barbed-wire fence" as stated in "Pakistan".
6. How did the author's perception of Malleshwaram evolve over time in "Mapping Bangalore"?
7. How does 'home town' resonate differently to the man and the boy in "Sandalwood Soap"?
8. Explain the salient features of the mad in the poem, "The Mad".

III. Answer any TWO of the following in about two pages each. **2x10=20**

1. "Sorry Jaffer" illustrates the deep impact of religious and political tensions in personal relationships. Discuss.
2. Analyse the theme of political corruption depicted in the poem, "The Parliament of Liars".
3. Explain the symbolic meaning of "gods we have never heard of" in the context of the poem, "The Mad".
4. In the context of "Sandalwood Soap", comment on the concept of trust and betrayal as seen in the evolving relationship between the man and the boy.

SECTION – B
[Grammar Component – 20 Marks]

IV. Write slogans for any TWO of the following topics: **2x2.5=5**

1. To promote Social Equality.
2. Empowering women's rights.
3.

V. Leaflet Writing **1x5=5**

Design a leaflet for a pet adoption centre, showcasing available pets for adoption and about the documentation process for potential pet owners.

(or)

Create a leaflet for a travel agency promoting a holiday destination, including travel packages, accommodations, and activities available.

VI. Proofreading Symbols **1x5=5**

1. What is proofreading?
2. What does proofreading primarily involve in terms of manuscript preparation?
3. What types of errors does proofreading aim to correct in a document?
4. How does proofreading help in improving the grammar, style and spelling of a document?

5. What do the following symbols/signs indicate?

VII. Composing an Invitation **1x5=5**

Compose an invitation for your institution's annual sports day celebration.

(or)

Your institution is organising a National Conference on "Sustainable Development", for which you are inviting students, faculties, and research scholars. Compose an invite for the event.