



# CONVERGENCE - III

Additional English Textbook

As per NEP 2020

Semester - III

**Published by:**  
Bengaluru City University Press  
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**CONVERGENCE - III:** Additional English Textbook for all the III 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

It is a matter of immense pleasure for me to be a part of the Bengaluru City University family as its Vice Chancellor. I take this opportunity of welcoming students from all parts of the world, joining the university in undergraduate as well as postgraduate programmes. Most of such students have moved away from the folds of their family and nation to another in their quest for knowledge. One needs to feel that they are just moving away from one family to another. Their teachers, seniors and peers, all together form an extended family to offer timely guidance, support and thereby help each one to move ahead in life as professionals in the field they have opted.

In the continuing task of nation building, Bengaluru City University is trying to promote excellence in higher education for a vibrant and inclusive society through knowledge creation and dissemination. It is making sincere efforts to contribute to the society by providing the right kind of human resources. It is striving hard to impart quality education to meet national and global challenges, towards accomplishing its mission. For students, the degree represents certification of competence, and a passport to advanced education or gainful employment and prosperity. They have an important role to play in the development of the nation and hence have to handle their future with confidence and competence.

The University is pursuing a holistic approach as education bereft of values is meaningless and not worthy of promotion. Education is meant to inculcate right values among students to produce socially sensitive citizens; thus, it encourages not only curricular activities, but also co-curricular, extra-curricular and extension activities. I can say with legitimate pride that the University has achieved far more than just the modest target set at the time of its inception, by producing trained human resource to serve the country in all walks of life and by contributing to the knowledge base.

The main objective of the University is to provide higher education by global standards. Highly experienced and well-qualified faculty members, continuously engaged in the maintenance and enhancement of student-centric learning environment through innovative pedagogy, form the backbone of the University.

Bengaluru City University is dedicated to providing congenial academic environment for nurturing young minds to take on the challenges posed by globalization and advancements in different areas of knowledge. In consonance with the vision of country's top leadership as reflected in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the university focuses on producing trained human resource which has extensive knowledge, modern skills, diverse abilities, leadership qualities, entrepreneurial abilities, and strong cultural and ethical values. Importantly, the courses offered are very carefully designed keeping in view the functionality of output to bridge the gap between higher education and employment.

BCU is now well placed to capitalize on its formative years and we reiterate our endeavour to provide premium quality education accessible to all and an environment for over-all personality development.

Being the Vice-Chancellor of Bengaluru City University, at this important juncture in its evolution, I take great pleasure in welcoming the students to achieve knowledge and virtue through multidisciplinary learning opportunities, with emphasis on an all-round personality development. Looking forward to the fresh ideas and energy you bring to our campus and I am confident that your stay at BCU will be a rewarding journey.

I congratulate the Text Book Committee on its humongous efforts in the preparation of the material, which includes a variety of Language (Grammar) Components for sharpening conversational skills. My profound thanks to the Director, Bengaluru City University Press and their dedicated personnel for bringing out the text book methodically and promptly. My heartfelt thanks to the Chairperson and all the members of the Text Book Committee who have taken pleasant pain to explore various themes and grammar components. I hope the text will highly motivate the teachers and the students to make the best use of it and develop literary sensibility as well as linguistic skills.

**Prof. Lingaraja Gandhi**  
**Vice-Chancellor**  
**Bengaluru City University**

## PREFACE

English has the status of the Associate Official Language in India. Simultaneous with the growth of Indian languages after Independence, English continues to be a link language between the States and the Centre, besides being a vast treasure-house of literature and a purveyor of global information and technology.

It occupies an important place in college curricula, as a language in most states and an optional one in a few. Increasing number of students and many others are voluntarily learning English, several opting to study in English medium schools. With the diversity of learners from different family backgrounds, English teachers need to use a combination of several methods, but not any one method rigidly. While some basic principles of language absorption have to be kept in view, the techniques of imparting communicative skills in English should be as varied as the learners themselves. There is plenty of talk about the importance of English, but very little relevant guidance on how to teach it in these changing times. This text book highlights the fundamental principles and problems of learning English as a later language and outlines several methods of teaching it effectively.

Teachers of English will find the information topical and beneficial in their day-to-day teaching. Extensive guidance is provided on how to organize remedial work and language teaching on up-to-date lines. There are useful and illustrative suggestions on Conversational English and some basic sentence patterns.

To make this edition as accessible and continuously relevant as possible, it is available in both print and electronic formats. We hope this volume will be a valuable reference for teachers, and a useful resource for educators.

I feel obliged to share my knowledge, analysis, and conclusions for this edition. The language component is designed to perfect and hone the soft skills of students, pertaining to effective verbal expression and communication. It is hoped that the students would make best use of it and understand the importance of acquiring fine language skills while engaging with a verbal medium like literature.

I thank the Vice Chancellor and Registrar of Bengaluru City University for their consistent support. I thank all the members of this Committee for their humongous effort, and the publisher who helped us to bring out the text book on time.

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## Objectives of the Text Book

Under the auspices of Bengaluru City University, Convergence - II offers Additional English as a Second Language to students coming from various sections of the country and outside. Considering the ethnic and linguistic diversities of the students taking up this paper, the design is to help students build on their Communicative skills in English, which are very much required in a heterogeneous country like ours, with many Indians being multi-lingual.

The objectives of the present syllabus are to:

1. preserve India's multiculturalism through multilingualism;
2. invest in the development of Written and Spoken English skills;
3. broaden the general awareness about the world around by exploring various aspects of language.

*Text Book Committee*

## **Contents – Convergence III**

### **Literary Component**

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| 1. The Ugly Politician – <i>R.K. Laxman</i>                    | 10 |
| 2. Excerpts from The Diary of a Young Girl – <i>Anne Frank</i> | 17 |
| 3. 9 Jakhoo Hill – <i>Gurcharan Das</i>                        | 26 |

### **Language Component**

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 1. Note Making                                | 77  |
| 2. Report Writing                             | 87  |
| 3. Life Skills and Social Activities          | 94  |
| 4. Basic Sentence Structures                  | 97  |
| IA Mark Allotment &<br>Question Paper Pattern | 101 |
| Model Question Paper                          | 102 |

### **Chapters retained from Confluence III**

1. Wilshire Bus – *Hisaye Yamamoto*
2. Let's Unite – *Syed Saud*
3. When it Rains in Dharamsala – *Tenzin Tsundue*
4. Yasodhara's Lament – *Ranjini Obeyesekere*

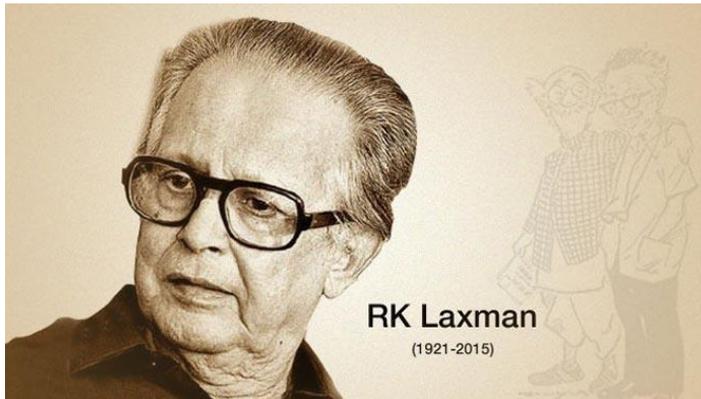
## THE UGLY POLITICAN

- R. K. LAXMAN

### *Pre-reading Activities:*

- i. *Have you heard or read about sketch story? How is it different from other writings?*
- ii. *Comment on the following quotes:*  
*“I was really too honest a man to be a politician and live.” Socrates.*  
*“Our great democracies still tend to think that a stupid man is more likely to be honest than a clever man, and our politicians take advantage of this prejudice by pretending to be even more stupid than nature made them.”— Bertrand Russell.*  
*“He knows nothing; and he thinks he knows everything. That points clearly to a political career.” — George Bernard Shaw*
- iii. *What do you think about politics and politicians?*

Rasipuram Krishnaswamy Laxman, popularly known as R. K. Laxman was born October 24, 1921, Mysore [now Mysuru], and died on January 26, 2015 in Pune,



India. He was the youngest of seven siblings, and he developed an affinity for drawing at an early age. While at Maharaja’s College in Mysore, he illustrated stories by his novelist brother, R.K. Narayan, in The Hindu newspaper. He subsequently turned to creating political cartoons for local newspapers. He worked at the Free Press Journal in

Mumbai (Bombay) with Bal Thackeray, who was a cartoonist before founding the Shiv Sena political party. In 1951 Laxman moved to The Times of India, where he created ‘You Said It’, a comic strip, which adorned the newspaper’s front page into the 21st century. This daily comic strip chronicled Indian life and politics through the eyes of the “common man,” a bulbous-nosed bespectacled observer dressed in a dhoti and a distinctive checked coat who served as a silent point-of-view character for readers. He published numerous short stories, essays, and travel articles, some of which were collected in The Distorted Mirror (2003). He also wrote the novels The Hotel Riviera (1988) and The Messenger (1993) and an autobiography, The Tunnel of Time (1998). In addition, numerous collections of Laxman’s cartoons were published. In 2005 he was awarded the Padma Vibhushan, India’s second highest civilian honour.

*The Ugly Politician* depicts the manner in which politicians behave and how a comic artist perceives him/her. Laxman has very skillfully crafted and delineated the character of politician which is imbued with his trademark of wit. This is published in *The Distorted Mirror* under sketches genre.

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The situation in the country has become so hilarious that the dividing line between the caricature and the caricatured has almost disappeared. Alarming, the politicians walk, talk and behave as though they are modeling perpetually for the cartoonist. Who knows, perhaps cartoons do exercise some sort of subtle influence on their manners and even looks, reducing them to the cardboard characters they have become in real life.

People curious about my work often ask me how I get the ideas for my cartoons. My reply usually is that the politicians work for me—or something on those frivolous lines.

Somehow, the word ‘politician’ has come to mean anything but what he fancies himself to be: someone wise, dignified and dedicated. On the other hand, the image that actually forms in our mind is that of a somewhat pompous, comical figure more like the character in a cartoon.

These qualities get magnified if the politician happens to be a successful one and a minister. In this role he really sweats to keep the cartoonist ceaselessly busy. The unsuccessful ones keep themselves active by holding demonstrations in front of ministers’ houses and offices shouting angry slogans, burning the effigies of men in power, going on indefinite fasts (unfortunately they are never for more than a couple of days at a stretch), *gheraoing* unprotected individuals, etc.

All this is carried out, of course, to eliminate the ills in our system and bring justice to the common man. Further, they also know various other ways to hold back inflationary prices, overcome shortages of essential commodities and correct defective demarcations of their state borders. These involve smashing railway carriages, reducing buses to ashes, organizing bandhs and stoning restaurants. Such behaviour might look suspiciously like the pathetic results of deep frustration. But no; we are told it is politics at work in a true democracy.

Since this style of opposition to the establishment has to be largely conducted under the open skies, it could be quite a trying business, especially if age and the elements are against one, as it often happens. Naturally, temptation grows steadily stronger under such conditions to defect to the tantalizing side of the rulers;

there the defector always has a good chance of being received hospitably and given a berth in the Cabinet. From there he could carry out the onerous task of removing poverty and misery sitting on a plush chair in air-conditioned comfort without being baked in the sun or getting soaked in the rain.

But, unfortunately, not all defections lead to ministership. Invisible pressures of caste, groupism, parochialism and just ordinary favouritism might stand in the way of an innocent defector becoming even a deputy minister. In such a case, he hastily does a right or left about-turn and sets about to work assiduously towards toppling the government with the hope of heading it himself. Often the tactics pay off and he starts enjoying the fruits of office till such time as he himself is toppled. As it is rather inconvenient to be thrown out of power every other day the risk is usually mitigated by the potential troublemaker being absorbed into the Cabinet quickly – and thus pleasantly silenced. But this has become very much like the attempts of a drowning man, who tries to gulp down the ocean to keep himself afloat.

Come to think of it, there is no opposition party in this country, really! Those at the Centre seem to preserve their ‘enemies’ just to project to the world the picture of a fair-minded democratic system. That is why I always find it more fun to concentrate on people in power. They are more exposed, vulnerable, commit uproarious blunders and unabashedly get involved in scams from which they emerge cheerfully unscathed. People enjoy seeing such antics of the ministers caricatured because they get a vicarious kick out of hypocrisy and pomp ridiculed, ego punctured.

In the early days of our Independence I was filled with tremendous hopes like everyone else for the future. Having relentlessly attacked the foreign rulers and packed them off finally, I saw, suddenly, a whole nation free from all social injustices, economic disparities, police brutality, protests and violence. I decided to treat our own men at the helm of affairs with reverence and understanding. So, while they were engaged in various nation-building activities, I settled down with my brush to help our leaders in their tasks.

I was young. Jawaharlal Nehru, of course, was my hero. While drawing I began to bestow care on him at the risk of even sacrificing the element of satire which is the soul of the art of caricature. I used to make his lower lip less protruding in my cartoons, gave height to his stature, put the white cap at a jaunty angle and nearly succeeded in making him look a combination of Captain Marvel and Superman of comics fame. Thus, I armed him to face boldly the gigantic challenges of our economic, social, political and linguistic problems of the post-Independence times. All went well for a few months.

But, gradually I began to sense the satirist in me stirring uneasily every time I saw my own cartoons in the paper whose headlines and columns screamed for an altogether different kind of reaction from the cartoonist. Nehru's policies and utterances seemed incongruous with the saviour's image I was trying to cast him in. The business of preserving his image, pampered and glorified, began to be embarrassingly tough. So, I liberated myself one day by throwing away his famous cap and exposing his bald pate with its fringe of white hair. To his figure I added a little paunch too and, above all, became deeply indebted to him for becoming one of the staunch suppliers of ideas for me during his time.

After the transformation of Nehru, others slid effortlessly into their places to serve me: K.M. Munshi, G.L. Nanda, Jagjivan Ram, S.K. Patil, R.A. Kidwai, etc. Particular mention here must be made of Morarji Desai and V.K. Krishna Menon for sparing no effort to help me gain some modest success and popularity in my career.

I have often wondered why ministers look the way they do –as if they belonged to a totally different species. Luckily, I had an opportunity to examine this phenomenon at close quarters. I was a witness to the actual transformation of an ordinary simple sort of a fellow into a minister. To the surprise, shock and despair, variously, of all who knew him, a friend of mine, a quiet, self-effacing man, became a minister.

The very first change which was conspicuous after becoming a minister was his acquiring enormous wealth within record time. He went about his business surrounding himself with a mob of like-minded people and became quite inaccessible even to his old friends. Nevertheless, he kept in touch with the masses through his photographs in the dailies and through loudspeakers from which his voice blared from the Olympian heights of decorated platforms on which he was found at public functions day after day. The range of subjects this erstwhile jaggery merchant could hold forth on at such gathering astonished me. He would speak with a ring of authority in his voice on subjects varying from the virtues of salted biscuits to the vulnerability of the Indian Ocean to foreign domination, from the need to remove poverty and kick the capitalist in the pants to Bharatanatyam, fertilizer and the threat of the CIA. No matter what the subject of his speech, he always managed to convey the impression at the end that he had been disappointed with the people for not sacrificing enough for the country besides frustrating his own efforts to take the nation to its salvation.

Even his appearance changed. He became comfortably rotund and his starched cap and jacket gave him an air of superiority which began to seem misleadingly real. His eyes, which had an innocent charm and honesty in his pre-ministerial days, now remained fixed thoughtfully on the row of glittering coat buttons resting on his paunch.

He was at the height of his career at this time: he looked extraordinarily prosperous, invincible, triumphant and powerful, like a conqueror. And even I, a cynical fellow, could not help but feel a twinge of inferiority in his presence.

However, fate struck! There was a Cabinet reshuffle because of the usual petty infighting and my friend was unceremoniously dropped. It was shocking to see him literally reel under the impact of the news and suddenly shed all appearances and roll on his expensive carpet bemoaning his fate. Through tear-drenched eyes he looked at the few of us who had gathered around him and told us with touching sincerity what a wonderful man he really was and what bloody crooks his colleagues were who were still ministers nibbling away at the opportunity to make money and more money. He held out dark threats that one day he would indeed expose the chief minister himself whom he said he had served loyally till then.

After ranting thus for hours, he finally recovered from the blow and cheerfully declared that he was indeed happy he was out of the Cabinet and that he looked forward to living like a free man without the worries and responsibilities of a minister. He confided to me that he had modest means to support himself and his family: two cinema theaters leased out, a three-star hotel, four bungalows rented to foreign companies in his wife's name and a few other sources of income.

'You look so happy now! Supposing you are included in the second list tomorrow? Would you turn down the offer or would you sacrifice your happiness and accept a Cabinet post?' I asked.

He seemed confused for a moment. 'Ah, you cannot put it that way. I will serve my country in whatever capacity I am asked to,' he replied with a deep expression of humility, pressing his palms together humbly. That moment he was a cartoon personified!

By and large this is the stuff the species called the minister is made of. He wants to be a minister as long as he lives. He wants to be a minister as long as he lives. He will not step down from office under any circumstances. If, occasionally, a minister is forced to retire because of age or political expediency, you will find him biding his time in the wings exerting subtle pressures ranging from abject appeal to open blackmail to get into the Cabinet again. In extreme cases, of course, erring, irresponsible ministers are got rid of appointing them governors of states.

All this I view with a sense of humour as politicians provide abundant grist to the cartoonist's mill. But there are moments when I panic: the way things are getting I fear the day is not far off when politicians will do the cartoonist out of his job by taking over the business of making people laugh directly or more likely, through a corporation.

I can hear, at this point, the ministers protesting and saying that this is just another instance of exaggeration and misreporting by the press. I can imagine them following it up with an official denial somewhat to the effect that ‘the Government has no plans to amuse the public directly and that it would continue to do so only through the medium of the cartoonist’.

### Glossary:

**frivolous** –playful

**effigies** – (mock) dolls, models

**gheraoing** – a protest in which a group of people surrounds a politician, building etc. until demands are met

**inflationary** – causing increase

**tantalizing** – provoking, teasing

**onerous** – arduous, burdensome

**parochialism** – selfish, narrow-mindedness

**assiduously** – diligently, attentively

**toppling** –collapsing

**mitigated** – lessened

**uproarious** – hysterical, funny

**unscathed** –untouched

**vicarious** – indirect, distanced

**hypocrisy** – insincerity

**paunch** – potbelly

**staunch** – loyal

**conspicuous** –obvious

**CIA** – Central Intelligence Agency

**starched** –conventional, formal, prim and proper

**erring** –blundering

### Comprehension I:

#### Short Answer Questions:

1. What image of ‘politician’ is formed in our minds?
2. How do unsuccessful ministers keep themselves active?
3. Who has a good chance of being received hospitably and for what?
4. Why does the Centre protect their ‘enemies’?
5. Give two examples of wit from the lesson.
6. In what way did the writer express his care while drawing Nehru?
7. On what aspects did the former jaggery merchant speak with authority?
8. List the modest means of livelihood of the author’s friend?
9. Mention the reason for the author to panic?

**Comprehension II:****Paragraph Answer Questions:**

1. How does the author sketch the 'politician'?
2. Explain defector and defections.
3. What is the reason for the author to see his own cartoons in the paper? How did he react?

**Comprehension III:****Analytical / Discussion Questions:**

1. "People enjoy seeing such antics of the ministers caricatured because they get a vicarious kick out of hypocrisy." Substantiate.
2. Write a character sketch of the friend of the author.
3. Comment on how R. K. Laxman sketches reality through his writing.

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***EXCERPTS FROM***  
**THE DIARY OF A YOUNG GIRL**  
 - ANNE FRANK

***Pre-reading Activities:***

- i. *What do wars do to people and economy?*
- ii. *Dictatorship survives on extreme power and fear. Discuss.*
- iii. *Do you think auto biographical writing can reveal important social truths?*

**About the Author**



**Anne Frank**, in full **Annelies Marie Frank**, (born June 12, 1929, Frankfurt, Germany—died February/March 1945, Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, near Hannover), was a Jewish girl who kept a diary in which she documented life in hiding under Nazi persecution. She is a celebrated diarist who described everyday life from her family hiding place in an Amsterdam attic. She is one of the most-discussed Jewish victims of the Holocaust (the systematic killing of six million Jewish men, women, and children and millions of others by Nazi Germany and its collaborators during World War II). She gained fame posthumously with the 1947 publication of *The Diary of a Young Girl* (originally *Het Achterhuis* in Dutch), in which she documents her life in hiding from 1942 to 1944, during the German occupation of the Netherlands in World War II. Her diary is considered as one of the world's best-known books in war literature.

**Background**

Anne was born in Frankfurt, Germany. In 1934, when she was four and a half, her family moved to Amsterdam, Netherlands, after Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party gained control over Germany. She spent most of her life in or around Amsterdam. By May 1940, the Franks were trapped in Amsterdam by the German occupation of the Netherlands. Anne lost her German citizenship in 1941 and became stateless. As persecutions of the Jewish population increased in July 1942, they went into hiding in concealed rooms, which Anne calls the ‘secret annex’ behind a bookcase in the building where Anne's father, Otto Frank, worked. Until the family's arrest

by the Gestapo (official secret police of Nazi Germany and in German-occupied Europe) on 4 August 1944, Anne kept a diary she had received as a birthday present, and wrote in it regularly. Following their arrest, the Franks were transported to concentration camps. On 1 November 1944, Anne and her sister, Margot, were transferred from Auschwitz to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, where they died (probably of typhus) a few months later in February or early March 1945.

Otto Frank, Anne's father, the only survivor of the Frank family, returned to Amsterdam after the war to find that Anne's diary had been saved by his secretary, Miep Gies. He decided to fulfill Anne's greatest wish to become a writer and publish her diary in 1947. It was translated from its original Dutch version and first published in English in 1952 as *The Diary of a Young Girl*, and has since been translated into over 70 languages.



Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, the secret hiding place she and her family lived during the Holocaust.

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## **JUNE 20, 1942**

Writing in a diary is a really strange experience for someone like me. Not only because I've never written anything before, but also because it seems to me that later on neither I nor anyone else will be interested in the musings of a thirteen-year-old schoolgirl. Oh well, it doesn't matter. I feel like writing, and I have an even greater need to get all kinds of things off my chest.

"Paper has more patience than man." I thought of this saying on one of those days when I was feeling a little depressed and was sitting at home with my chin in my hands, bored and listless, wondering whether to stay in or go out. I finally stayed where I was, brooding. Yes, paper does have more patience, and since I'm not planning to let anyone else read this stuff-backed notebook grandly referred to as a "diary," unless I should ever find a real friend, it probably won't make a bit of

difference.

Now I'm back to the point that prompted me to keep a diary in the first place: I don't have a friend.

Let me put it more clearly, since no one will believe that a thirteen year-old girl is completely alone in the world. And I'm not. I have loving parents and a sixteen-year-old sister, and there are about thirty people I can call friends.

I have a throng of admirers who can't keep their adoring eyes off me and who sometimes have to resort to using a broken pocket mirror to try and catch a glimpse of me in the classroom. I have a family, loving aunts and a good home. No, on the surface I seem to have everything, except my one true friend. All I think about when I'm with friends is having a good time. I can't bring myself to talk about anything but ordinary everyday things. We don't seem to be able to get any closer, and that's the problem. Maybe it's my fault that we don't confide in each other. In any case, that's just how things are, and unfortunately they're not liable to change.

This is why I've started the diary.

To enhance the image of this long-awaited friend in my imagination, I don't want to jot down the facts in this diary the way most people would do, but I want the diary to be my friend, and I'm going to call this friend Kitty.

Since no one would understand a word of my stories to Kitty and if I were to plunge right in, I'd better provide a brief sketch of my life, much as I dislike doing so.

My father, the most adorable father I've ever seen, didn't marry my mother until he was thirty-six and she was twenty-five. My sister Margot was born in Frankfurt am Main in Germany in 1926. I was born on June 12, 1929. I lived in Frankfurt until I was four. Because we're Jewish, my father immigrated to Holland in 1933, when he became the Managing Director of the Dutch Opekta Company, which manufactures products used in making jam. My mother, Edith Hollander Frank, went with him to Holland in September, while Margot and I were sent to Aachen to stay with our grandmother. Margot went to Holland in December, and I followed in February, when I was plunked down on the table as a birthday present for Margot.

I started right away at the Montessori nursery school. I stayed there until I was six, at which time I started first grade. In sixth grade my teacher was Mrs. Kuperus, the principal. At the end of the year we were both in tears as we said a heartbreaking farewell, because I'd been accepted at the Jewish Lyceum, where Margot also went to school.

Our lives were not without anxiety, since our relatives in Germany were suffering under Hitler's anti-Jewish laws. After the pogroms in 1938 my two uncles (my mother's brothers) fled Germany, finding safe refuge in North America. My elderly grandmother came to live with us. She was seventy-three years old at the time.

After May 1940 the good times were few and far between: first there was the war, then the capitulation and then the arrival of the Germans, which is when the trouble started for the Jews. Our freedom was severely restricted by a series of anti-Jewish decrees: Jews were required to wear a yellow star; Jews were required to turn in their bicycles; Jews were forbidden to use street-cars; Jews were forbidden to ride in cars, even their own; Jews were required to do their shopping between 3 and 5 P.M.; Jews were required to frequent only Jewish-owned barbershops and beauty parlors; Jews were forbidden to be out on the streets between 8 P.M. and 6 A.M.; Jews were forbidden to attend theaters, movies or any other forms of entertainment; Jews were forbidden to use swimming pools, tennis courts, hockey fields or any other athletic fields; Jews were forbidden to go rowing; Jews were forbidden to take part in any athletic activity in public; Jews were forbidden to sit in their gardens or those of their friends after 8 P.M.; Jews were forbidden to visit Christians in their homes; Jews were required to attend Jewish schools, etc. You couldn't do this and you couldn't do that, but life went on. Jacque always said to me, "I don't dare do anything anymore, 'cause I'm afraid it's not allowed."

In the summer of 1941 Grandma got sick and had to have an operation, so my birthday passed with little celebration. In the summer of 1940 we didn't do much for my birthday either, since the fighting had just ended in Holland. Grandma died in January 1942. No one knows how often I think of her and still love her. This birthday celebration in 1942 was intended to make up for the others, and Grandma's candle was lit along with the rest. The four of us are still doing well, and that brings me to the present date of June 20, 1942, and the solemn dedication of my diary.

### **JULY 8, 1942**

“At three o’clock (Hello had left but was supposed to come back later), the doorbell rang. I didn’t hear it, since I was out on the balcony, lazily reading in the sun. A little while later Margot appeared in the kitchen doorway looking very agitated. “Father has received a call-up notice from the SS,” she whispered. “Mother has gone to see Mr. van Daan” (Mr. van Daan is Father’s business partner and a good friend.) I was stunned. A call-up: everyone knows what that means.

Visions of concentration camps and lonely cells raced through my head. How could we let Father go to such a fate? “Of course he’s not going,” declared Margot as we waited for Mother in the living room.

“Mother’s gone to Mr. van Daan to ask whether we can move to our hiding place tomorrow. The van Daans are going with us. There will be seven of us altogether.” Silence. We couldn’t speak. The thought of Father off visiting someone in the Jewish Hospital and completely unaware of what was happening, the long wait for Mother, the heat, the suspense – all this reduced us to silence.”

### **JULY 9, 1942**

“Here’s a description of the building... A wooden staircase leads from the downstairs hallway to the third floor. At the top of the stairs is a landing, with doors on either side. The door on the left takes you up to the spice storage area, attic and loft in the front part of the house. A typically Dutch, very steep, ankle-twisting flight of stairs also runs from the front part of the house to another door opening onto the street. The door to the right of the landing leads to the Secret Annex at the back of the house. No one would ever suspect there were so many rooms behind that plain grey door. There’s just one small step in front of the door, and then you’re inside. Straight ahead of you is a steep flight of stairs. To the left is a narrow hallway opening onto a room that serves as the Frank family’s living room and bedroom. Next door is a smaller room, the bedroom and study of the two young ladies of the family. To the right of the stairs is a windowless washroom with a sink. The door in the corner leads to the toilet and another one to Margot’s and my room... Now I’ve introduced you to the whole of our lovely Annex!”

### **AUGUST 21, 1942**

“Now our Secret Annex has truly become secret. Because so many houses are being searched for hidden bicycles, Mryou Kugler thought it would be better to have a bookcase built in front of the entrance to our hiding place. It swings out on its hinges and opens like a door. Mr Voskuijl did the carpentry work.

(Mr Voskuijl has been told that the seven of us are in hiding, and he’s been most helpful.) Now whenever we want to go downstairs we have to duck and then jump. After the first three days, we were all walking around with bumps on our foreheads from banging our heads against the low doorway. Then Peter cushioned it by nailing a towel stuffed with wood shavings to the door frame. Let’s see if it helps!”

### **OCTOBER 9, 1942**

“Today I have nothing but dismal and depressing news to report. Our many Jewish friends and acquaintances are being taken away in droves. The Gestapo is treating them very roughly and transporting them in cattle cars to Westerbork, the big camp in Drenthe to which they’re sending all the Jews. Miep told us about someone who’d managed to escape from there. It must be terrible in Westerbork.

The people get almost nothing to eat, much less to drink, as water is available only one hour a day, and there's only one toilet and sink for several thousand people. Men and women sleep in the same room, and women and children often have their heads shaved. Escape is almost impossible; many people look Jewish, and they're branded by their shorn heads. If it's that bad in Holland, what must it be like in those faraway and uncivilized places where the Germans are sending them? We assume that most of them are being murdered. The English radio says they're being gassed. Perhaps that's the quickest way to die. I feel terrible. Miep's accounts of these horrors are so heartrending... Fine specimens of humanity, those Germans, and to think I'm actually one of them! No, that's not true, Hitler took away our nationality long ago. And besides, there are no greater enemies on earth than the Germans and Jews."

### **OCTOBER 20, 1942**

"My hands still shaking, though it's been two hours since we had the scare... The office staff stupidly forgot to warn us that the carpenter, or whatever he's called, was coming to fill the extinguishers... After working for about fifteen minutes, he laid his hammer and some other tools on our bookcase (or so we thought!) and banged on our door. We turned white with fear. Had he heard something after all and did he now want to check out this mysterious looking bookcase? It seemed so, since he kept knocking, pulling, pushing and jerking on it. I was so scared I nearly fainted at the thought of this total stranger managing to discover our wonderful hiding place..."

### **NOVEMBER 19, 1942**

"Mr Dussel has told us much about the outside world we've missed for so long. He had sad news. Countless friends and acquaintances have been taken off to a dreadful fate. Night after night, green and grey military vehicles cruise the streets. They knock on every door, asking whether any Jews live there. If so, the whole family is immediately taken away. If not, they proceed to the next house. It's impossible to escape their clutches unless you go into hiding. They often go around with lists, knocking only on those doors where they know there's a big haul to be made. They frequently offer a bounty, so much per head. It's like the slave hunts of the olden days... I feel wicked sleeping in a warm bed, while somewhere out there my dearest friends are dropping from exhaustion or being knocked to the ground. I get frightened myself when I think of close friends who are now at the mercy of the cruelest monsters ever to stalk the earth. And all because they're Jews."

### **MAY 18, 1943**

“All college students are being asked to sign an official statement to the effect that they ‘sympathise with the Germans and approve of the New Order.’ Eighty per cent have decided to obey the dictates of their conscience, but the penalty will be severe. Any student refusing to sign will be sent to a German labour camp.

### **FEBRUARY 3, 1944**

“I’ve reached the point where I hardly care whether I live or die. The world will keep on turning without me, and I can’t do anything to change events anyway. I’ll just let matters take their course and concentrate on studying and hope that everything will be all right in the end.”

### **JULY 15, 1944**

“It’s utterly impossible for me to build my life on a foundation of chaos, suffering and death. I see the world being slowly transformed into a wilderness, I hear the approaching thunder that, one day, will destroy us too, I feel the suffering of millions. And yet, when I look up at the sky, I somehow feel that everything will change for the better, that this cruelty too will end, that peace and tranquility will return once more. In the meantime, I must hold on to my ideals. Perhaps the day will come when I’ll be able to realize them.”

### **Glossary**

**Musings:** a period of reflection or thought.

**Brooding:** Engaged in or showing deep thought about something that makes one sad, angry, or worried.

**Listless:** Lacking energy or enthusiasm.

**Confide:** Tell someone about a secret or private matter while trusting them not to repeat it to others.

**Lyceum:** Education institution in Europe

**Decrees:** An official order that has the force of law.

**Solemn:** Characterized by deep sincerity.

**Mryou Kugler:** Person who was working for Otto Frank in 1933, helped him his company out of Nazi hands.

**Miep:** Miep Gies was the secretary who worked for Anne Frank’s father.

**Heartrending:** Causing great sadness or distress.

**Mr. Dussel:** Albert Dussel, a dentist who later joins Anne Frank’s family to hide from Nazis.

**Bounty:** A sum paid for killing or capturing a person or animal.

**Pogroms:** An organized massacre of a particular ethnic group, in particular that of Jewish people in Russia or eastern Europe.

**Comprehension I****Short Answer Questions:**

1. Why does Anne think that writing in a diary is a strange experience?
2. What were the reasons that made Anne keep a diary?
3. What does Anne call her diary? What did it mean to her?
4. Why did Anne's family immigrate to Holland?
5. What was the cause of anxiety for Anne's relatives in Germany? How did they deal with it?
6. What restricted the freedom of Jews after the arrival of Germans?
7. What notice did Anne's father receive? Why did it worry Anne and her mother?
8. Why did Anne's mother go to Mr. van Daan?
9. What was the hiding place called? Where was it located?
10. Why was escaping the concentration camp impossible according to Anne?
11. Why would the military knock at the door everyday?
12. Why was the bounty announced by Nazis?
13. What were the college students asked to sign?
14. What reason does Anne give for her feeling of helplessness? How does she deal with it?
15. What makes Anne keep her hopes alive?

**Comprehension II****Paragraph Answer Questions:**

1. Write a note on why Anne began to write a diary.
2. What were the circumstances that made Franks to shift to Holland? How did it impact them?
3. What were the prohibitions that were laid on Jews after the arrival of Germans?
4. When did Otto Frank receive a call-up notice? How was the news received by the family?
5. Describe the Secret Annex where Anne's family were hiding?
6. Write a note on the concentration camps as described by Anne in her diary.
7. How were students treated by the Germans? What does it tell us about the Nazis?
8. Write a note on how Anne tried to be hopeful in the face of adversity.

### Comprehension III

#### Analytical / Discussion Questions:

1. Anne's diary captures not only the personal struggle of a young girl but the social and cultural atmosphere in Hitler / Nazi occupied Holland. Elucidate.
2. Describe the challenges Anne's family faced during the hiding in Secret Annex.
3. Describe the way Anne portrays the horrors of Holocaust experienced by thousands of Jews.
4. 'In spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart' - Write a note on how Anne maintains hope and faith in mankind in the face of adversity and violence.

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## 9 JAKHOO HILLS

- GURCHARAN DAS

### *Pre-reading Activities:*

- i. *What does the word morality mean to you?*
- ii. *Discuss the Indo-China War.*
- iii. *Discuss the social changes that happened in India after Independence?*

### **Preface**

Gurcharan Das's play '9 Jakhoo Hill' is a modern Indian play in Indian English. The plot of the play is placed in Jakhoo hill, Shimla in 1962, it basically talks about the changing order in society, where the old middle class gives way to the new middle class.

The play has multiple themes apart from the changing order; it also talks about the downward trends of moral ethics of the new middle class, the wishful nature of the new middle class, and the hold of Indian mothers on their sons.

It's the story of Ansuya and her family who belong to the old middle class and Deepak and Chitra who belong to the new middle class. The most striking feature of contemporary India is the rise of a confident new middle class, which is full of energy and drive and is making things happen. It talks about fading class clinging foolishly to spent dreams, and about the incestuous obsession of ageing uncles.

### **Characters**

[In order of appearance]

MAMU (KARAN CHAND)

CHITRA

DEEPAK

AMRITA

RAI SAHEB

ANSUYA

*The action of the play takes place over two days around Diwali in 1962, in an upper middle class house at Jakhoo Hill in Shimla. The play is in four acts, divided by an interval during Act 3 when Ansuya and Deepak leave for her room.*

ACT ONE

[Opens on Karan]

KARAN: Thank you for coming this evening to watch the unfolding of the events at 9 Jakhoo Hill, Simla. The play is set in 1962. It revolves around two families of Lahore and what happened to them after Independence, or, more correctly, after the Partition—that great tearing apart, which reduced people to elemental, fearful creatures; desperate to survive, clinging to the vestiges of dignity.

Well, these two families survived. One of them consists of a lady from a fine old family, her young daughter and her brother. Her husband died in the riots; they lost all they had in Lahore and came away to Delhi, where they had a couple of mills and a big, sprawling house in the Civil Lines. But she and her brother were no managers and, after their father died a few years later, they were all at sea. As the losses mounted, they had to sell the mills, then their house, and they moved to Simla—to 9 Jakhoo Hill, once their summer residence.

This was all they had been left with, and a meagre income from bonds and shares, much too inadequate for their way of life.

The other family is of a young man, a successful executive in Bombay and his mother, who endured the terrors of Partition, and moved to Mumbai, where the mother, with an obsessive devotion, ensured that her son got the best education and then a good job in a good company. She has a husband, but he doesn't count, so you won't see him.

*(Enter in a separate area, Chitra and Deepak, carrying luggage. They sit on a bench.)*

Here they are, waiting at Kalka station for their connecting train to Simla. This is Deepak, the young man. He's a bright, cheerful young man, eager to get on, and very, very conscious of his mother. His mother, Chitra, is a survivor: street-smart, calculating and unconcerned about her ways. She has one item on her agenda: to push her son up.

*(Enter Amrita, in the upstage area, adjusting her sari, examining herself in a mirror, and obviously getting ready to go out for the evening.)*

The other family now: Amrita, over there, was born into a distinguished family, as I said, into a world of grace, refinement and good taste, and, of course, great wealth. That world is gone, but she clings to her memories.

*(Doorbell rings. Amrita goes to the door and receives Rai Saheb, and ushers him to the sofa, chatting and collecting her purse, shawl and umbrella.)*

Gentle and caring, she is trying to cope. She is talking to a family friend, Mr. P.N. Rai, ICS, a Secretary to the Government of India, who is one of that breed which is more British than the British. As you will see, he plays a major role in the events that follow.

*(Amrita calls for Ansuya and the latter enters. Amrita tells her she is going out; she and Rai Saheb leave. Ansuya is left looking out of the French windows.)*

And that girl there is Ansuya, Amrita's daughter. She was not born to lead a staid, conventional life. Lonely, withdrawn, but with an almost fierce vitality, she wants to live fully and passionately.

Finally, there is her uncle, Amrita's brother, Karan Chand. *(Looks around on stage, sees no other actor. Turns to audience with a sheepish smile.)*

Me... I incurred my father's wrath by becoming a teacher and taught for a while at the University. But the crisis in our family obliged me to give up my job and, after a hopeless attempt to run the mills, I gave up ... well, just gave up, to live with my sister and with Ansuya, my niece ... Ansuya, who was the centre of my ... but we must get on with the story.

*(Lights fade out on the two areas of Chitra – Deepak and Ansuya.)*

I must take you back now to *(looks at newspaper on the table)* the twenty-fourth of October, 1962, just before Diwali. The Chinese have invaded India and every day the papers are full of sad, humiliating news of Indian defeats. It is breaking Nehru's heart. The country hasn't yet realized that it is dangerous to put dreamers in power. It saddens me, as it does many of us, because we once believed in the same, hopeless dreams.

This is the living room of our home, 9 Jakhoo Hill. Tatty? Well, it is: it reflects our condition, but you can see that it was once an elegant room, like the house itself. The house was about a way of life; the way we were. It is nearly midnight. So, let's start the story.

*(Full lights on the drawing room. The furniture, drapes and upholstery— all conspire to convey the impression that the occupants have seen better times. There is a large, old-fashioned radio prominently placed on stage left. It has been a damp October, but the fire at the back makes the room appear cosy. Mamu is sitting near the fireplace on an easy chair, next to a standing lamp. He has a shawl around his shoulders and is engrossed in the final moves of a chess game. He is forty-eight years old. There is another chair directly opposite him, which is empty. It is late, almost midnight. The bells of Jakhoo Temple can be heard in the distance. Ansuya enters with a cup of tea. She is twenty-six, intelligent but impulsive. She wears a comfortable salwar-kameez.)*

ANSUYA: Here is some tea, Mamu. It will warm you.

MAMU: *(Without looking up)* Knight to queen six. It's a mate. I'm afraid ... um ... you can't move anywhere. *(Taking the tea)*

ANSUYA: But you always win. *(She goes up to him affectionately, puts her arm around his neck. She sneezes.)*

Mamu, you must do something about your cat. It drank the milk again today. I had to make tea with powdered milk.

MAMU: *(Drinking the tea...)* It tastes all right.

ANSUYA: But we can't have the cat drink our milk every day. MAMU: It's late, and your mother still hasn't come back.

ANSUYA: Is that surprising? Dinner rarely gets to the table before eleven at the Rai Saheb's, even on a normal day. *(Frowning)* Besides, Amma will be desperately trying to recapture her past.

MAMU: The past always looks better because it isn't here. Why didn't you ... er ... go to the party?

ANSUYA: *(Wearily)* You know the types at Rai Saheb's parties—you can always predict what they are going to say. There's a war on, but they'll be laughing drinking and talking about everything else except what matters. Simla contains two types of people—those who are bored and those who are bores.

MAMU: *(Laughs.)* But you never go out, Ansu.

ANSUYA: I hate parties, Mamu. I feel as if I'm on display like a sari at Leela Ram's shop. I can tell by their looks. *(And she mimicks)* 'Such a nice girl, Ansuya Malik—I wonder why she hasn't got married?' It is humiliating, Mamu.

MAMU: *(Hesitantly)* Shall we ... um ... have another game?

ANSUYA: *(Petulantly)* No, no. I'm tired of playing.

MAMU: *(Hurt)* With me?

ANSUYA: Look at us. It's the night before Diwali and here we are, killing time, playing chess. Of course, there's no question of celebrating this year, but it's not just the war. Mamu, do you remember the excitement at Diwali when Papa was alive? The servants bumping into each other, beating carpets, scrubbing the floors, cleaning the drapes—everyone was in a hurry and the house was full of confusion. There'd be new clothes for everyone. And comings and goings and puja. I used to be so excited. I could hardly sleep. What has happened to us, Mamu?

MAMU: Well, for one thing, we don't have the money.

ANSUYA: And why don't we have the money?

MAMU: You're not going to start on your mother again.

ANSUYA: Yesterday, she gave Bhola a thousand rupees to get married, when the others haven't been paid for months.

MAMU: She is generous, Ansu.

ANSUYA: But someone has to run the house. (*Suddenly her eyes are filled with tears.*) And now, even this house will have to be sold.

MAMU: Shh!

ANSUYA: (*Getting angry*) Who are we trying to fool!

MAMU: Shh! The walls have ears.

ANSUYA: Thank God! Amma was in the bath this morning when the broker came.

MAMU: (*Afraid*) What happened?

ANSUYA: I had to turn him away.

MAMU: Oh no!

ANSUYA: Yes, everyone knows.

MAMU: How humiliating!

ANSUYA: (*In tears*) Everyone knows that the house is going to be sold, except the owners.

MAMU: (*Consoling her*) Now, now, Ansu, don't be upset.

ANSUYA: That is Simla for you! The whole town knows everything in twenty-four hours if it is raining, and in twelve hours if it is not. (*Pause*)

Mamu, I want to go away. Away from this drab life. All we ever do is talk and talk. And we eat, and we sleep, get up in the morning and do the same again. I want to do something.

MAMU: Are you tired of me?

ANSUYA: I'm tired of the life we lead.

MAMU: I thought maybe ... maybe I had said something that offended you.

ANSUYA: You always twist everything.

MAMU: Well, it is just you and me here. So I thought ...

ANSUYA: It's got nothing to do with you. Don't be so touchy, Mamu. I want to get out. I am getting old.

MAMU: I'm the one who is old, and of no use to anyone. Look at me. Don't I look old?

ANSUYA: No.

MAMU: Doesn't this ... grey and this bald patch suggest that I am old? Don't I sort of fade into the background, like old furniture?

ANSUYA: No, you look fine.

MAMU: (*Eagerly*) Do I?

ANSUYA: Yes.

MAMU: (*Eagerly*) Really? Tell me that I'm still young.

ANSUYA: (*Impatiently*) Yes. (*Pause*) Shall I tell you what I really want? (*He nods*) You'll laugh at me.

MAMU: Tell me.

(*She goes and takes a book from the fireplace*)

ANSUYA: (*Whispering*) I want to go far, far away, to a place where no one knows me. I want to work ... and ... work where everyone is busy and no one asks questions. (*Pause*)

Mamu, there's something bursting out of me..

MAMU: What's that book?

ANSUYA: This? Oh, it is a guidebook. On Bombay. Deepak sent it to me.

MAMU: (*His eyes widening*) You want to go and work in Bombay!

(*She nods.*)

MAMU: Deepak, Deepak! All you do is talk about Deepak.

ANSUYA: (*Defiantly*) So what?

MAMU: I ... I don't like him.

ANSUYA: Why?

MAMU: I don't know ... he's selfish ... and I'm afraid you'll get hurt. (*Pause.*)

ANSUYA: Well, he's coming tomorrow.

MAMU: I know he's coming tomorrow. Why is he coming tomorrow?

ANSUYA: Because Amma invited them and ... and I want him to come.

(*Defiantly.*) So?

MAMU: Now, look here, Ansuya.

ANSUYA: Yes, Mamu?

MAMU: (*Checks.*) You're grown up now. Do you have to keep calling me 'Mamu?'

ANSUYA: But you are my Mamu.

MAMU: Nothing. Just that when we talk, I completely lose myself in our world.

Then you say 'Mamu,' and I suddenly wake up and there's a gap.

ANSUYA: A gap?

MAMU: I begin to feel old and responsible and your uncle. It was different when you were little, and you held my finger when we went for a walk.

ANSUYA: All right. I'll try, Mamu.

MAMU: There you go again ...

ANSUYA: *(Laughs)* Oops! But what am I to call you?

MAMU: Call me by my name. Call me 'Karan.'

ANSUYA: *(Self-consciously.)* All right, I'll try, K ... Kar ... *(she cannot say it.)*

Mamu, I can't help it. When I see you, 'Mamu' comes out.

MAMU: I see. So I'm nothing more than a 'Mamu' to you?

*(She looks embarrassed. He tries to hide his own embarrassment.)*

ANSUYA: Dear Mamu, you are fond of me.

MAMU: More than my life.

ANSUYA: *(Laughing)* You're so dramatic. *(Sound of footsteps)*

*(Vivaciously)* Oh, she's come! She's come! *(She opens the door)* Amma, is that you?

*(She stops herself as she sees Rai Saheb ahead of Amrita. Rai Saheb - 'Bunty' to his friends—man of the world, handsome, and a successful member of the Indian Civil Service (the ICS). He is in his mid-fifties (but could pass for a younger man), sports an ascot, a tweed jacket, and a pipe. The sort of person who speaks Hindustani with an Oxford accent. He has a distinguished look, helped in part by his silver-grey hair at the temples. Amrita, Ansuya's mother, is a year older than her brother, Karan. She wears an elegant silk sari.)*

RAI SAHEB: Ansu, I say, you owe me ten chips.

ANSUYA: Oh, hello, Bunty Uncle! Why do I owe you ten chips?

RAI SAHEB: Because Dinky finally ditched Sushma.

ANSUYA: No! Poor Sushma!

AMRITA: And they were so much in love!

ANSUYA: Indian boys are spineless.

RAI SAHEB: *(Gloating.)* As I predicted ... Dinky's mother did not approve.

AMRITA: And they made such a lovely pair.

ANSUYA: But didn't Dinky put up a fight?

RAI SAHEB: Worse, Dinky's got engaged to some rich 'bhenji' from Amritsar.

ANSUYA: Someone he's never met?

MAMU: It's the old story. Boy meets girl. Boy conquers girl. Boy abandons girl.

*(Pause.)*

RAI SAHEB: Which reminds me have you heard? Our troops have abandoned Tawang. Biji Kaul is lying sick in bed in Delhi and the Chinese are just going to walk right in. I told them in Delhi that this would happen; but, of course, Mr. Krishna Menon has to have his own way.

ANSUYA: It's all so frightening.

AMRITA: The wind is blowing again.

ANSUYA: (*Goes to the window*) It looks like it's going to rain.

AMRITA: Simla will be nicely washed and cleaned for Chitra and Deepak tomorrow.

ANSUYA: Amma, I'm so excited that Deepak is coming. We're going to have Diwali after all.

MAMU: We don't need Deepaks to have a Diwali.

ANSUYA: Mamu!

AMRITA: Why don't you come over tomorrow evening, Bunty, and meet our guests?

RAI SAHEB: If there is good whiskey and pretty women, I never say no.

AMRITA: Good!

(*To Ansuya, enthusiastically*)

Ansu, Rai Saheb is taking the young people to a picnic on Friday. Of course, you'll go?

ANSUYA: No.

AMRITA: I know—you can take Deepak with you.

RAI SAHEB: There will be Dinky and Nina, and Bubbly and Flukey and ... I say, do you know that the Khannas' ayah is pregnant?

ANSUYA: (*Fascinated*) What? Who is the father?

RAI SAHEB: (*Smiling*) Naughty, naughty! When I mentioned it to Colonel Khanna this evening, he, of course, went red. (*He laughs.*)

And if the Colonel hadn't been in his best third peg, bum bum ho ho mood...

AMRITA: Shame on you, Bunty, gossiping like this.

RAI SAHEB: (*To Ansuya.*) Well, my dear?

ANSUYA: What?

RAI SAHEB: The picnic. (*Clearing his throat.*) I'll manage the Governor's Rest House, in case it rains. (*Uncomfortable pause.*)

ANSUYA: No, thank you, Bunty Uncle.

RAI SAHEB: I say, come to think of it, one rarely sees you in the Mall these days.

ANSUYA: (*Smiling ironically*) One never sees me in the Mall these days.

RAI SAHEB: (*Tempo increasing as he speaks*) But what is there to do in Simla, my dear—except go to the Mall every evening; find your friends eating ice cream at Scandal Point; drag them to the Green Room for the latest gossip; rush to Rivoli for the new picture; plan picnics to Anandale and Mashobra; and throng to the Sunday morning for bingo and beer!

MAMU: (*With irony*) A remarkable way to live, don't you think, when our jawans are dying on the front?

RAI SAHEB: (*As if noticing him for the first time.*) Eh, I say ... The professor speaks! (*Turning to Amrita*) I say, is it true about your house?

AMRITA: (*Turning pale*) What about this house?

RAI SAHEB: (*Realizing his mistake*) No, nothing.

AMRITA: (*In a loud, unnatural voice*) What about this house, Bunty?

RAI SAHEB: I must be mistaken.

AMRITA: (*Almost screaming*) Bunty, what about this house?

RAI SAHEB: (*Sheepishly*) Well, that it's up for sale.

AMRITA: (*In tears*) Who says it's up for sale? Filthy lies!

RAI SAHEB: (*Trying to make up*) You know Simla, my dear. There's nothing else to do but gossip. Why, when I heard it, my reaction was, 'What nonsense!'

AMRITA: (*Recovering*) Bunty, have some coffee?

RAI SAHEB: (*Looking at his watch*) No, thank you, my dear; must be getting along, if I don't want to get caught in this storm. I say, ta-ta, cheerio. Happy Diwali and all that!

(*Exit*)

ANSUYA: (*Mimicking him, as she closes the door behind him.*) 'I say, ta-ta, cheerio, Happy Diwali and all that.'

AMRITA: (*Giving her a disapproving look*) Ansu!

ANSUYA: (*Mimicking*) 'I say, one rarely sees you in the Mall these days.' (*Mamu laughs.*)

AMRITA: Stop it! It's not nice.

ANSUYA: The conceit of the man, Amma!

AMRITA: How do you like my new sari?

(*And she turns around to show it to everyone*)

MAMU: It's beautiful!

ANSUYA: It should be. It's the most expensive sari in Simla.

AMRITA: And how do you know?

ANSUYA: Because Leela Ram's man delivered it this afternoon.

AMRITA: And you saw the price?

ANSUYA: Someone has to think of money, Amma.

AMRITA: (*Animatedly*) The Colonel complimented me on it, and Mrs. Dewan kept looking at it the whole evening.

(*To Ansu*) Oh Ansu, it's not right to stay by yourself all evening long, evening after evening. Why don't you go out at least once in a while?

ANSUYA: No.

AMRITA: (*Angrily*) Then you won't get married.

ANSUYA: I don't care.

AMRITA: Of course you do.

ANSUYA: These boys don't want to marry me, Amma.

AMRITA: How do you know?

ANSUYA: Because no boy has the guts to marry without a dowry. Look at Dinky.

We all thought that he would marry ...

AMRITA: (*Defensively*) I suppose it's my fault that you don't have a dowry?

ANSUYA: Amma ...

AMRITA: If your father hadn't squandered all that money away ...

ANSUYA: He did not. (*In tears*) Why do you keep saying that?

AMRITA: Your grandfather married off nine daughters like princesses.

ANSUYA: (*Wearily*) What's the use, Amma!

AMRITA: You're stubborn, like your father. Proud and vain ...

ANSUYA: Why blame him? Look at yourself.

AMRITA: (*Cut to the quick*) What!

ANSUYA: (*Defensively*) Well, look at what's happened to the mills ever since he died.

AMRITA: Mind what you say, girl!

ANSUYA: All we keep doing is selling off our properties.

AMRITA: We have debts to pay off. (*About to break down.*) You don't understand these things.

ANSUYA: And now, even this house will be gone.

AMRITA: No ... it won't.

ANSUYA: Everyone seems to know about it except us.

AMRITA: (*Pointing to the drapes*) See those drapes, Ansu? Your father brought them from England, and they were the talk of the town that season. Oh, the parties we used to have, Ansu! The servants were forever polishing the silver. Why, the whole of Nehru's first Cabinet must have dined here some time or another.

ANSUYA: It's over, Amma; this house is as good as gone.

AMRITA: No! (*Covering her ears with her hands*) I don't want to hear about it.

ANSUYA: But, Amma, you can't keep running away ...

AMRITA: (*In tears*) Don't say it!

ANSUYA: Amma, please, you've got to ...

AMRITA: (*Beginning to cry*) Well. I've done my best. What more do you want me to do? It's too much. It's not fair!

(*Ansuya goes and embraces her.*)

ANSUYA: Oh Amma, don't cry! Please, my darling Amma. Don't cry!

(*Fade*)

## ACT TWO

[Stage Centre. Spotlight on Karan, the narrator.]

KARAN: They say you never get a second chance to make a first impression. So, what sort of impression have we made on you? Pretty lot, our family. No one's happy. But then, most families are like that, aren't they? Yes, all families want to be happy, but they live in a way that they can't help but be unhappy.

What is happiness, anyway? You are dropped into the world one fine day, and you are snuffed out another, without so much as a warning. And in between, you try to snatch a few moments of happiness ... and discover too late that it wasn't happiness after all. And it doesn't matter whether you are at the top or at the bottom of the social scale.

*(Pause)*

As you can see, our life had a certain rhythm, a certain quality, even as we were slowly getting poorer. It is this rhythm which was shattered when Deepak and Chitra came into our lives.

*(Lights come on gradually. The same room.)*

It is the next morning, around noon. It is bright and fresh, the way Simla feels after a shower. The sun is peering in from the open window. From the window, you can glimpse the Himalayas in the distance; a bit hazy today, but usually you can see the white peaks gleaming in the sun.

*(He takes the newspaper from under his arm.)*

The paper has arrived with more dismal news from the Eastern front.

Tawang has just fallen and General Thapar says we are preparing to put up a stand at Se La. And I can smell the blood! 'Fallen,' 'put up a stand'...

They think they can fool us with their words. Nehru and Krishna Menon are merely living out their illusions of grandeur. Tchhah! *(Speaking privately, in a hushed tone.)*

Oh! I forgot to introduce a rather important character: she plays a significant role in the events that follow, even if it is behind the scenes. She is Sandhya Rani, Queen of the Night—my cat. But, let's get on with the story.

*(A song from an early 60s film is playing on the radio. Mamu is sitting near the window, with the paper, tapping his foot to the music. Amrita enters with a cup of tea. She stands looking affectionately at Mamu for a while, seeing that he is lost in the music. After a while, Mamu notices her and turns down the volume with a smile.)*

MAMU: I ... er ... practically fell in love with Waheeda Rehman after seeing that picture. She had such beautiful eyes! (*Hesitates*)

Ansu's eyes ... er ... are a bit like hers, don't you think?

(*Amrita frowns. Mamu continues to hum the last bars of the song.*)

We saw it at the Rivoli, remember? (*Pause*)

AMRITA: What time is their train coming?

MAMU: (*Looking at his watch.*) They should be coming any minute now. (*Mamu switches off the radio. Pause.*) Why are they coming?

AMRITA: What do you mean?

MAMU: Well, Chitra always has ... um ... a reason ... Has she ever come just to visit? ... er ... What does she want this time?

AMRITA: (*Dismissing him*) You're impossible. When did Ansuya go to the station?

MAMU: She must have left ... er ... an hour ago.

AMRITA: (*Worried*) I hope there's enough milk in the house. Deepak loves his glass of milk at bedtime. (*Coughs*)

I wish you would do something about your cat, Karan. She finished the milk again last night. She sheds hair all over the house. (*Coughs.*)

I'm sure she has given me this cough.

MAMU: 'The trouble with a kitten is that it eventually becomes a cat.'

AMRITA: It is unnatural to be so fond of a cat. If you had married, you would have had a wife to look after, instead of a cat.

MAMU: (*Laughing at himself*) I am too old to be married.

AMRITA: (*Severely*) Whose fault is it that you did not marry when the best matches were available? After a brilliant college career, and then you got into the ICS ... You could have married any girl, but no, the ways of ordinary people were not good enough for you. The sun shines only once in life, Karan.

MAMU: Have I changed a lot since then?

AMRITA: Yes, you have, Karan Chand. You were young and handsome then. Now, you have aged. And you talk all the time, like old people. Of the Partition, of Lahore ...

MAMU: These kids will never know what it meant to grow up in Lahore—the poetry, the music, the intellectual discussions ... Ah, it was heaven to be young in Lahore!

AMRITA: See what I mean? Karan, you live in the past. And you complain. There's a bitterness in your voice.

MAMU: Why does Ansuya write so often to Deepak?

AMRITA: Why? What's wrong with that?

MAMU: Nothing. It's just that she's become so secretive.

AMRITA: He is a nice young man, Karan.

MAMU: It could be serious, you know.

AMRITA: Hush, they are just good friends.

MAMU: No.

AMRITA: How do you know?

MAMU: I just know, that's all.

*Sounds outside. Excited voices. Chitra enters, followed by Ansuya and Deepak. Deepak touches Amrita's feet. Amrita and Chitra embrace. Mamu's eyes are fixed on his niece.*

*Deepak, twenty-seven, squarely built, is full of energy and ambition. He is talented and smooth, but he is also under the excessive influence of his mother. Having had to come up the hard way, he has cultivated the social graces, including a public-school way of speaking English ('What the hell, yaar,' 'Give him ten chips, yaar.')*

*He is one of those persons who will succeed in the eyes of the world. He has already done well for himself, and knows he is good. He has a composed voice, shining eye and a bright smile. He is self-possessed and good-natured. One of those persons who looks amiably perplexed at an unpleasant situation, as though he can't understand why anyone should be angry with him.*

*Chitra, his mother, is slightly younger than Amrita. She is attractive in a fleshy and flashy sort of way. Wears synthetic saris, too low to be tasteful. She is coarse, has no qualms about taking advantage of people and will go to any lengths to make sure her son succeeds in life. She speaks with Punjabi mannerisms ('Helloji,' 'Thank youji'.)*

AMRITA: Ah, here they are, here they are.

CHITRA: Didi!

DEEPAK: Happy Diwali, everyone!

CHITRA: Bhai Saheb, Namaste!

AMRITA: (*Genuinely happy*) Come here, my son, let me look at you.

How handsome you've become! Why, half the girls in Bombay must be after you.

(*She puts her arm around him.*)

MAMU: And their mothers, too.

(*Deepak sneezes*)

CHITRA: Watch it Deepak, you'll catch a cold in this weather. Banian pai hain na?

DEEPAK: (*Glaring at his mother.*) Ma ...

CHITRA: He's still my baby. (*Sniffing the air*) I smell a cat. (*Deepak sneezes again*) My God! Deepak has an allergy to cats.

ANSUYA: Mamu's cat!

CHITRA: There is a cat!

AMRITA: Karan, here, has a cat, instead of a wife.

MAMU: When things go wrong in this house, it's usual to blame the cat. Er  
... mind you, my cat has insomnia.

CHITRA: Insomnia?

DEEPAK: It means that it 'can't sleep,' Ma.

CHITRA: I knew cats got sick, but I never knew one which suffered from not  
being able to sleep ... what was that word?

DEEPAK: 'Insomnia,' Ma.

CHITRA: Didi, how will Deepak sleep, with a non-sleeping cat in the house?

MAMU: I'll keep the non-sleeper in my room.

CHITRA: Oh, thank you, Karanji.

AMRITA: We'll make sure he locks it away for your entire visit.

DEEPAK: (*Going to the window*) I say, what a view, yaar!

ANSUYA: Even though I look at it every day, I don't tire of the Himalayas.

CHITRA: Arre Didi, yeh kamra kuchh badla-badla-sa nahin lag raha?

(*Looking around*) What's happened? It's so empty.

DEEPAK: (*Taking a deep breath*) But the smell is the same. I still remember the  
wonderful smell of this house.

AMRITA: (*Embarrassed*) You'll want some tea.

ANSUYA: I'll get it, Amma.

CHITRA: (*Callously*) What happened to the big painting on this wall?

(*Sudden silence. They look at each other in embarrassment.*)

AMRITA: (*Lying, not convincingly*) It's gone for being restored.

ANSUYA: Amma! Why don't you tell her the truth?

(*Pause.*)

It was sold in an auction.

CHITRA: Why?

ANSUYA: (*Glaring*) We needed the money.

CHITRA: (*Looking around*) Even the chandeliers are gone? You must have got a  
lot of money for those, ji. How much?

(*Another uncomfortable pause. Deepak is particularly uneasy.*)

ANSUYA: (*Trying to control herself*) We did not. We didn't even get a tenth of  
what they were worth.

CHITRA: The painting—how much did it bring?

DEEPAK: (*Sternly*) Ma!

(*Chitra is quiet.*)

AMRITA: You must be feeling tired and dusty. You will both want to bathe after  
such a long journey. I'll ask the cook to bring two baltis of hot water.

CHITRA: Baltis, Didi? What happened to the boilers?

ANSUYA: They too were sold—by mistake.

DEEPAK: For heaven's sake, Ma. Stop this crude talk.

CHITRA: Lekin Didi, aap ko yeh sab karne ki kya zaroorat hai? Aapke pas to itni millen hain, itni zamin hai!

ANSUYA: (*Containing herself bravely*) The mills and the lands are sold.

DEEPAK: (*With finality*) Ma!

(*Turning around to the others with a smile.*)

I say, how are we going to celebrate Diwali with this war and the blackout and everything?

(*Enthusiastically, to Ansuya*) Let's think of something, yaar. Tell you what, I'll quickly have a bath and then we'll go down to the Mall, all right?

AMRITA: (*To Chitra*) Chitra, how do you like living in Bombay?

CHITRA: I like it very much, ji. There are so many parties. We're invited out a lot because Deepak is doing so well. His boss says that he is the smartest boy they have had in years.

AMRITA: (*Genuinely proud*) Deepak was always so intelligent.

CHITRA: He makes one thousand, two hundred and eighty-six rupees per month, Didi!

DEEPAK: (*Glaring*) Ma!

CHITRA: Just look at him, getting embarrassed before his own family. And his name was in the papers the other day.

MAMU: Yes, you sent us the cutting.

DEEPAK: (*Embarrassed*) Trust her, sending cuttings to the whole world.

AMRITA: (*Genuinely pleased*) She's proud of you, son.

CHITRA: (*In a hushed voice*) We rushed here, Didi, because Deepak's company is bidding for a licence, and the big Government uffsar is here, in Simla.

AMRITA: Who?

DEEPAK: P.N. Rai, Aunty. He is the Secretary in the Ministry. He hasn't given us an appointment in Delhi for weeks.

CHITRA: If Rai Saheb says 'yes,' Deepak's company will get the licence. And he's a friend of yours, Didi.

AMRITA: Of course! Bunty is coming over this evening. Deepak will meet him.

CHITRA: Bunty?

DEEPAK: That's what Mr. Rai's friends call him, Ma.

CHITRA: Didi, will you also put in a word?

AMRITA: Once he meets Deepak, it won't be necessary. Such a charming boy.

CHITRA: Oh, thank you, Didi! (*Deepak smiles gratefully*)

MAMU: (*To Deepak, confidentially*) Tell us, Deepak, will your company have to bribe him for the licence?

DEEPAK: *(Taken aback)* I ... I ... I say, what sort of question is that?

AMRITA: Oh, Karan, you're impossible! *(To Chitra)* Come dear, you should wash and get comfortable. And I shall send you tea upstairs.

CHITRA: Thank you, Didi.

*(Chitra and Deepak leave. Ansuya, sensing that she has hurt her mother, goes up to her.)*

AMRITA: *(In tears)* Why did you have to go and blabber about the auction? I would have slowly told her in my own way.

MAMU: But Chitra knew the moment she stepped into the house.

ANSUYA: What difference does it make, Amma, what she thinks? We have to learn to live without our mills and our lands.

*(Pause)*

And now, even this house will be gone.

AMRITA: *(Hysterically)* No. It won't.

ANSUYA: *(As if she is comforting a child)* We can't afford it, Amma.

AMRITA: *(In a dream)* It's the only beautiful thing we have.

*(Musing)*

When your father brought me here for the first time, how everyone fussed over us. You were born here, and this is where you spent your happiest days. It is for your children and their children.

*(Uncomfortable pause, while Mamu watches Ansuya closely, looking her up and down)*

MAMU: And in whose honour are we all dressed up today?

ANSUYA: *(Blushing)* I thought it was Diwali, and we were having visitors - so I decided to wear a sari.

MAMU: Achcha, I'm off to the Mall.

AMRITA: Why don't you pick up some whiskey for this evening? *(Mamu and Ansuya exchange glances.)*

MAMU: Whiskey?

AMRITA: Scotch.

*(Mamu and Ansuya again look at each other)*

ANSUYA: Amma, it's expensive.

MAMU: Why can't he drink Indian whiskey?

AMRITA: *(With finality)* No. Scotch.

*(Exit Amrita. Mamu shrugs his shoulders, exchanges a glance with Ansuya and leaves. Pause. Deepak enters from the other side. He sneezes.)*

ANSUYA: You poor thing!

DEEPAK: *(Sneezing)* I swear, yaar, it's a weird cat. I just ran into the non-sleeper. There it stood, quiet, composed, with a disapproving look; it watched me with a cruel expression, as if it were watching a mouse.

ANSUYA: I sometimes think it has more life and free spirit than any of us.

*(Pause. She moves away to the window.)*

You know, Deepak, I'm angry with you.

DEEPAK: Arre ... Why?

ANSUYA: I thought you came to Simla to see me. What's this about Rai Saheb and licences?

DEEPAK: I have come to Simla to see you, Anu. *(Goes up to her)*

But then I discovered that Rai Saheb was also up here, and I told Ma, why not combine business with pleasure.

ANSUYA: And I'm 'pleasure,' am I?

DEEPAK: No, yaar. I didn't mean it like that.

ANSUYA: What did you mean?

DEEPAK: I say, yaar, don't be upset. Ma blabbered it out. I meant to slowly...

ANSUYA: Stop blaming your mother for everything.

DEEPAK: Ma's too much, yaar. She is more ambitious for me than even I am for me. Sometimes I get tired of her going on and on about me, even before perfect strangers. Why, on the way up to Simla, we stopped for breakfast at ... what's that place called?

ANSUYA: At Barog?

DEEPAK: Yes.

ANSUYA: *(Laughing)* Everyone stops there!

DEEPAK: There she was, mother dear, at Barog, whispering to the waiter, making sure her little boy's puri-alu were nice and hot. Let the rest of the world eat it cold, but for her little boy, it has to be nice and hot!

*(He takes a deep breath)*

Anu, sometimes she smothers me so that I can hardly breathe. *(Pause)*

ANSUYA: I am sorry. It is just that I've been so looking forward to your coming. I have been counting the days.

DEEPAK: So, tell me?

ANSUYA: I wait for your letters. You don't know what it is like here. I'm tired of Amma and Mamu going on and on about the good old days. Honestly, sometimes I feel like going to bed at eight o'clock in the evening.

DEEPAK: Oh, I say, there's the old radio. *(And he goes towards it)*

Shall we put it on?

*(He examines the knobs.)*

ANSUYA: *(Embarrassed)* We only have old things. Mamu and Amma still cling to them, and try to hold on to the past.

*(She laughs sadly. Deepak turns the radio on. Soft, romantic music is heard, from one of the films of the early 1960s. Deepak goes to the window and takes a deep breath.)*

DEEPAK: You know, Anu, I can still smell the one summer I spent in this house as a boy.

ANSUYA: And you have grown up and become an important man ...

DEEPAK: Arre chhodo!

ANSUYA: ... and we've stayed the same. Even this house ... *(Realizing)*  
... oops!

DEEPAK: What about the house?

ANSUYA: I'm not supposed to say it.

DEEPAK: Say what?

ANSUYA: Well, everyone knows it anyway, and I can't hide anything from you.  
Even this house is up for sale.

*(Trying to laugh)* 'The End,' as they say in the pictures.

DEEPAK: Why?

ANSUYA: *(Irritated)* To pay our debts—what do you think, for our health?  
*(Pause)*

DEEPAK: But the house need not be sold, you know.

ANSUYA: Don't talk about it before Amma.

DEEPAK: About what?

ANSUYA: About the house.

DEEPAK: You shouldn't have to sell it. *(Suddenly)* I'll tell you what!

ANSUYA: What?

DEEPAK: *(Speaking like a professional manager)* Why not convert it into an exclusive season hotel? It is the perfect spot - Jakhoo Hill, the highest point in Simla, isn't it? 'Jakhoo Hotel for the discerning.' It would cost a bit to refurnish, but I'm sure we could get a loan from the bank. Give it to a professional company to manage it. 'Jakhoo Hotel, managed by the Taj.' The Oberois have the Cecil and the Clarks, but I'm sure there couldn't be enough hotel rooms here during the season. And I'm sure the Taj people would love to get their hands on a property like this. In fact, I know some of their senior chaps. I can speak to them. It will be the perfect answer for you. Open it in April and close it in October, and you could use it for the rest of the year. And, I tell you, in two years, you could pay back all your debts and keep the house, too.

ANSUYA: Amma would never agree.

DEEPAK: You must speak to her, yaar.

ANSUYA: She won't.

DEEPAK: All right, then I will.

ANSUYA: *(Softly)* Don't! Don't you see this house means all that is beautiful and happy in her life—the gaiety of her younger days. *(Long, embarrassed pause)* Deepak?

DEEPAK: Huh?

ANSUYA: Tell me about Bombay?

DEEPAK: What about Bombay?

ANSUYA: Does Bombay have a big heart?

DEEPAK: Eh?

*(Ansuaya excitedly goes and picks up the guidebook from the shelf and reads.)*

ANSUYA: Tell me about Chowpatty and Malabar Hill and ... (Deliberately) ...

Cum-bal-la Hill! How nice the names sound. Ma-la-bar Hill, Cum-bal-la Hill!

*(She pronounces the names by elongating the 'a' vowel and she gets enormous pleasure in doing so.)*

DEEPAK: Bombay is like any other city, yaar.

ANSUYA: Bombay is not mean?

*(Deepak is puzzled.)*

If you scold a servant here, the whole town gets to know by the evening. As we sit here, they are gossiping about our house.

DEEPAK: But Anu, Bombay can be heartless and indifferent.

ANSUYA: I'd rather have the indifference than our great hospitality, which

suffocates you in the end. You don't have Mrs. Kumar ... (and she mimicks.) ... 'I wonder what's wrong with that girl,' or Mrs. Mehra ...

'Arre, what a fast girl!' I dream of going to Bombay and those places that have such musical names!

*(She sings.)* Cum-bal-la Hill, Ma-la-bar Hill, Cum-bal-la Hill ... *(And she's lost.)*

DEEPAK: Wake up, Miss Malik, we're on Jakhoo Hill, Simla, and not Cumballa Hill, Bombay. It is Diwali and what are we going to do?

ANSUYA: Oh Deepak, what can we do? There's a war on. There's a total blackout.

DEEPAK: Why don't we light one candle and one phuljari and celebrate our own, secret Diwali on the verandah after dark—just the two of us?

ANSUYA: Shall we?

DEEPAK: Come on, Ansu, just one candle and a few phuljaris!

ANSUYA: Oh, Deepak, you are going to bring Diwali into this house! *(Deepak goes close to her.)* I am so glad you are here.

*(He puts his arm around her. She puts her head on his shoulder.)*

DEEPAK: Oh, Ansu ... *(They embrace.)*

ANSUYA: I have missed you. *(They kiss.)*

DEEPAK: Me too! *(Long kiss.)*

ANSUYA: Oh Deepak!

*(Fade)*

ACT THREE

[Stage Centre. Spotlight on Karan, the narrator.]

KARAN: A Moorish proverb says, 'Every beetle is a gazelle in the eyes of its mother.' Deepak is not your ordinary beetle, and between you and me, neither is he a gazelle. But what matters is that to Chitra, he is a gazelle. Oh, what power is motherhood! If a son is not careful, he can easily grow pale under its weight. The father? The father is merely a banker provided by nature. Seriously, isn't the mother-son bond a paradox? It needs the most intense love from the mother, yet this very love must help the son become free and grow away from the mother.

*(Pause. Picks up the Bombay guidebook left on the table by Ansuya.)*

Is it surprising that Ansu was attracted to Deepak? After all, he was handsome, he was doing well, and he lived in Bombay. She yearned for the voicelessness of the big city. A great city can be a great solitude.

Ansu wanted to disappear in a crowd of strangers. A big city may be squalid, even callous, but it is also more tolerant of our fellow men. *(Pause.)*

In the scenes that follows, I regret that you will not see Mamu at his best. But then, jealousy humiliates us and exacts a heavy price.

*(As the lights come on slowly, Karan looks at his watch.)*

It is six-thirty in the evening. Dusk has set in, which is not unusual for Simla at this time of the year. It has been raining intermittently since the afternoon. There is no further news from the front, but the radio bulletin at 6.00 p.m. said that President Kennedy in America has offered to send equipment and supplies to India. This should lift the morale of our jawans in the Eastern sector.

*(Pause.)*

As you can see, the living room of 9 Jakhoo Hill looks visibly different. It is cheerful and bright and there is a festive feeling in the air. Something about that boy: he has infected everyone in the house with his bright good humour, even the Mali, who has just arranged those flowers over the fireplace. You can tell that RaiSaheb is expected from the bottle of Scotch whiskey which is conspicuous on the table there on my left, surrounded by glasses and some bottles of Indian whiskey. Everyone is in his room, dressing up. But wait, what is Mamu doing, pacing about frantically?

*(Mamu is pacing up and down. Lights change. He bumps into Ansuya.)*

MAMU: *(Frantic)* Where have you been?

ANSUYA: *(Cool)* In and out. MAMU: With Deepak?

*(She nods.)*

MAMU: Why does everything have to change just because he has come?

ANSUYA: I feel so happy!

MAMU: We were happy before he came. ANSUYA: He is so alive.

MAMU: *(Defensively)* What about us, Ansu? We were alive together, weren't we?

ANSUYA: This is different, Mamu. Only my mind is alive when I'm with you.

With Deepak, my whole being is awake. And I can't control myself. It is as if I am being pulled.

MAMU: Ansuya, you can't ... *(Loudly)*

Oh no!

ANSUYA: *(Concerned)* What is the matter? MAMU: I've got something in my eye.

ANSUYA: What is it? Sit down, Mamu. *(He sits down on the sofa.)*

Let me see.

MAMU: It's in my left eye.

*(She sits on the arm of the sofa and helps him.)*

ANSUYA: Don't move ... keep still ... now. There, does that feel better?

MAMU: *(Nods)* My eyes are not the same as they used to be. *(She begins to get up.)* I like holding your hand, Ansu. It feels so warm. *(He kisses her hand.)*

Ansuya, there's something I've been wanting to tell you ...

ANSUYA: Sh ... don't say anything. Keep still, Mamu.

MAMU: Please Ansuya, this concerns you and me ...

ANSUYA: Mamu?

MAMU: I've been meaning to tell you for some time ...

ANSUYA: Mamu!

MAMU: I must tell you now ...

ANSUYA: No! *(Pause)*

You've been good to me, Mamu. I don't want to spoil it. It is Diwali, I'm happy.

MAMU: *(Sad)* Well, I am not. *(Pause)*

Look at me. I've lived all my life with books and ideas. And here I am, stuck with shallow people like the Rai Sahebs and Deepaks of this world. I have no one to talk to ... except you, and even you are drawing away from me. I am beginning to feel like a complete failure.

ANSUYA: You say it as though it were my fault.

MAMU: No, no, my sweet Ansuya.

*(He grabs her by the arm.)* It's just that I can't bear to lose you.

ANSUYA: Sh ... Deepak and the others will come in.

MAMU: Why has Deepak come?

*(Sounds of footsteps)*

ANSUYA: Mamu, please! *(Breaking away from him)* There's Deepak!

*(Enter Deepak. He is suited and booted, the picture of confidence, but he is a little disconcerted by what he sees.)*

DEEPAK: I ... I didn't mean to interrupt.

ANSUYA: You did not. We were just waiting for everyone. Do sit down, Deepak.

DEEPAK: *(Uneasily)* Well, ah ...

*(To Mamu)* Karan Uncle, how do you like the university?

MAMU: Which university?

DEEPAK: Where you teach.

MAMU: What do you want me to say?

DEEPAK: Well ... ah ...

MAMU: Are you making polite conversation, or do you really want to know?

DEEPAK: Well ...

MAMU: If you want to know the truth, I hate it.

DEEPAK: I'm sorry.

MAMU: 'Sorry?' Why are you 'sorry?' Do you want to know why?

DEEPAK: Yes.

MAMU: No, you don't.

DEEPAK: *(With a good natured smile)* I don't?

MAMU: Deepak, you are ambitious. All you want to do is to get on in life.

You don't really want to know about the dark side of things.

ANSUYA: *(Uncomfortably)* Mamu, this is not the place ...

MAMU: You are not even aware what the words you use really mean. Do you really care what 'love-hate,' 'beautiful-ugly' 'true-false' are all about?

ANSUYA: Mamu, please!

MAMU: *(Ignoring her)* There's nothing wrong with that. But, let me give you a tip. Don't waste your time over small talk. Do you really care about my university?

DEEPAK: *(Puzzled)* Well ...

MAMU: Of course you don't. So then, let's talk about what you really care about.

DEEPAK: *(Affably)* Certainly.

MAMU: Let's talk about Ansuya.

ANSUYA: Mamu, for God's sake.

MAMU: Tell us about your interest in Ansuya.

DEEPAK: *(Suspiciously)* What about her?

MAMU: Well, I thought it would be nice to know how you feel about her. I am her uncle, after all.

ANSUYA: *(In tears)* Mamu, you're spoiling everything.

MAMU: I don't want to embarrass you. I'm fascinated by the methodology of your mind ... by the pragmatic calculation which a successful business executive makes in taking a decision about another human being. It's purely an intellectual interest, mind you, nothing personal ... an interest in a certain type of human being, who is rational, self-interested and—what's the word ... optimising.

DEEPAK: *(With a puzzled smile)* You don't seem to like me or the work I do.

MAMU: Deepak, I am fascinated by the business world and how it works.

DEEPAK: Sir, I am proud of what I do and the company I work for. You may think what you like, but I believe we care more about our people than many academics do for their students.

MAMU: Hold on ...

DEEPAK: *(Continuing)* I mean, we care about our customers, our suppliers, our employees, because for us it is a matter of survival. I can't remember a single professor of mine at college who cared for me in the same way.

MAMU: Now, hold on ...

*(Knocking at the door. Ansuya is relieved.)*

ANSUYA: There is Rai Saheb.

*(Shouting)* Amma, Rai Saheb is here!

*(Ansuya opens the door. Rai Saheb comes in, looking tweedy, distinguished, and the pukka 'brown sahib.' Chitra is dressed to kill.)*

AMRITA: *(Off-stage)* Oh no, is he here already? And I'm not quite ready.

*(Entering with a bowl of flowers)* Bunty, Happy Diwali!

RAI SAHEB: Happy Diwali!

AMRITA: Just smell these gorgeous October roses! Aren't they lovely?

RAI SAHEB: Not half as lovely as you, my dear! I'm not early, am I?

AMRITA: No. You know how it gets dark early in Simla these days. Bunty, I want you to meet Chitra, a family friend of ours from Lahore. And this is her son, Deepak.

CHITRA: *(Manufacturing her biggest smile)* Namaste, Rai Saheb! Aap ke baare me to bahut suna hai!

RAI SAHEB: Nothing good, I hope!

DEEPAK: *(Shaking hands)* Hello, I'm Kapur, sir.

AMRITA: *(To Rai Saheb)* Deepak is a fine young man, Bunty, doing famously in a company in Bombay.

RAI SAHEB: Which company?

DEEPAK: TCK, sir.

ANSUYA: Deepak's from the big city, Bunty Uncle.

RAI SAHEB: Well, we are not exactly villagers.

ANSUYA: Delhi is a village by comparison.

AMRITA: *(To Rai Saheb)* Chitra here grew up with me in Lahore; her father was Papa's legal aide, and they lived in our compound at Lahore.

RAI SAHEB: *(To Ansuya)* Ansu, my dear, you are looking positively radiant.

AMRITA: You will have your usual, Bunty? With soda?

RAI SAHEB: A splash of soda, thank you.

MAMU: Scotch for the Brown Sahib.

AMRITA: And for you, Deepak?

DEEPAK: The same, thank you, aunty.

AMRITA: Chitra?

CHITRA: Tea for me, ji.

AMRITA: Karan?

MAMU: Indian whiskey with water will do for me, thank you. I'll get the drinks.

*(He gets up to make the drinks.)*

AMRITA: *(Frowning at Mamu)* You know my brother. He must be different.

ANSUYA: I'll get the tea, Amma.

*(Exit)*

AMRITA: *(Graciously changing the subject)* It has been an unusually damp October, especially after such a lovely summer.

RAI SAHEB: *(Winking naughtily)* Do you know, I caught Bubbles at it last Friday? Imagine, Bubbles Chopra, wearing chappals on the Mall! Poor man, he was mortified when he saw me, and tried to sneak away. I went up to him and I said, 'Could I buy you a pair of shoes, old man?'

*(And he roars with laughter. Deepak and then Chitra join in.)*

MAMU: *(Mimicking him)* 'I say, old chap, what is wrong with chappals?' *(Amrita frowns at him.)*

RAI SAHEB: Nothing ... in your bedroom. *(Continues to laugh)*

MAMU: The whole country wears chappals, Rai Saheb. *(Ansuya enters with a tray of tea. Deepak begins to sneeze.)*

ANSUYA: Mamu's cat!

CHITRA: The cat will be the death of this boy.

AMRITA: Poor Deepak! Karan, you and your cat. Lock it up!

MAMU: What can I do if she sneaks out? She watches Deepak like a mouse.

RAI SAHEB: *(Laughing)* Ha! Ha! Like a mouse. If we cross Karan and his cat, it would improve Karan, but it would deteriorate the cat. Ho, ho, ho!

AMRITA: Really, Bunty! *(To Deepak)* Are you better, son? You know this boy, Bunty, he is doing brilliantly in Bombay.

CHITRA: (*Interrupting*) Rai Saheb, this boy never opened a book in his life and he always came first.

DEEPAK: (*Embarrassed*) Ma, please!

CHITRA: (*Not to be stopped*) Rai Saheb, jab yeh chhota sa tha, tab se bahut seedha tha. Hamesha apna doodh peeta tha, school se seedha ghar laut aata tha, not like other boys. He always combed his hair ...

DEEPAK: Ma!

CHITRA: Listen to him, ji. After all I do for him. You know, he likes rice. So on Sundays, I make him Basmati rice, which costs five rupees a kilo, while I eat the one rupee, char anna variety from the ration shop. And this is my reward, ji.

DEEPAK: (*Almost screaming*) Ma! (*To Rai Saheb*) I am sorry, sir.

MAMU: Deepak and his Ma!

ANSUYA: (*Giving Mamu a dirty look*) Mamu!

RAI SAHEB: (*Patronizingly*) Hmm. What school did you go to, young man?

DEEPAK: (*Charmingly*) I went to St. Mary's in Bombay, sir.

MAMU: You don't have to say 'sir' all the time. This isn't an office, you know.

AMRITA: (*Rescuing Deepak.*) He's just a well-brought-up boy. He respects his elders.

MAMU: Why don't you say 'sir' with a question mark at the end? Like this: 'Sir?' Interesting, isn't it? 'Sir?' ... leaves a doubt in the mind.

AMRITA: Stop it, Karan Chand.

DEEPAK: Well, ah ...

RAI SAHEB: (*Patronizingly.*) What does your father do? (*Uneasy pause.*)

DEEPAK: (*Defensively.*) Oh, he is a businessman.

RAI SAHEB: And what is his business?

CHITRA: (*After a brief pause.*) Buying and selling, ji.

RAI SAHEB: Buying and selling what?

(*Another uncomfortable pause.*)

DEEPAK: (*Crestfallen.*) He runs a general store.

RAI SAHEB: (*Contemptuously.*) Oh, a shopkeeper. Where is his shop?

CHITRA: Deepak lives on Malabar Hill with the gentry.

RAI SAHEB: Yes, I see, but where is the shop?

DEEPAK: (*Quietly.*) At Ghatkopar, sir.

CHITRA: But we live in Deepak's big flat on Malabar Hill.

RAI SAHEB: (*Suddenly beaming at Chitra.*) On Malabar Hill? And where have you been hiding yourself, my dear? Here we have a beauty in our midst and no one knows about it.

CHITRA: (*Blushing.*) Oh, I just came this morning, ji.

RAI SAHEB: (*Flirting.*) Well, you must come to the Club and meet everyone.

CHITRA: (*Gushing.*) Oh yes ji, I'd love to meet, ji.

RAI SAHEB: (*Putting his arm around her.*) How about a drink for you, my dear?  
Don't tell me you are going to keep drinking tea the whole evening.

CHITRA: (*Reluctantly.*) Well, you know Rai Saheb, I don't drink really.

RAI SAHEB: (*Flirting.*) There's always a first time. Come along, my dear, just to keep us company.

CHITRA: (*Giggling.*) Well, if you say so ji, just a tiny bit. RAI SAHEB: Come!  
(*And he takes Chitra with him towards the drinks table. He still has his arm around her.*)

Come, we'll go to the Club this evening. (*Chitra giggles.*) It's settled, then.

ANSUYA: Let's go outside, Deepak. It's dark now.

DEEPAK: (*Reluctantly.*) Later, Ansuya.

ANSUYA: (*Feverishly.*) But it's lovely outside. Come!

RAI SAHEB: (*Smiling.*) Ansu, my dear, why not celebrate it with a drink?

ANSUYA: (*Crossly.*) No.

RAI SAHEB: Let's have some music. (*To Chitra.*) You do dance, don't you, my dear?

CHITRA: You can teach me, ji.

RAI SAHEB: Amrita my dear, don't you have anything danceable? How about a fox-trot?

AMRITA: I'll put on the music.

(*As the music comes on, Rai Saheb swings and does a few steps, humming to himself and starts demonstrating the steps to Chitra.*)

RAI SAHEB: Amrita, why don't you bring your guests to the party at the Government House? (*Silence.*)

AMRITA: (*Hurt.*) Is there a party at the Government House?

RAI SAHEB: Yes, tomorrow evening.

AMRITA: (*Hurt.*) We haven't been invited.

RAI SAHEB: (*Covering up.*) Really? Not possible. Someone's slipped up. (*Rai Saheb takes Chitra in his arms and begins to dance with her.*)

AMRITA: Besides, those parties aren't worth going to any more.

CHITRA: You move so nicely, ji.

RAI SAHEB: Just follow me.

CHITRA: (*Hesitantly.*) Oh, I don't know these steps, ji ...

RAI SAHEB: It's easy, see. One, two, three; one, two, three ...

CHITRA: (*Getting into the swing.*) Oh! You move so smoothly. You make it so easy.

RAI SAHEB: (*Seductively.*) I like the way you move.

CHITRA: I like the way you move, too.

MAMU: They like the way they move.

AMRITA: Aren't they cute, like youngsters?

*(Rai Saheb now holds Chitra closer and they dance tightly together)*

RAI SAHEB: You are warm, my dear.

CHITRA: You too.

RAI SAHEB: I like it.

CHITRA: Me too.

AMRITA: They are dancing like they've danced together before.

MAMU: It's a familiar game ... they both know it.

RAI SAHEB: You're not shy.

CHITRA: I'm ... I'm not?

MAMU: It's an old ritual ... as old as man and woman.

DEEPAK: *(Shocked.)* What! Don't say that about my mother.

MAMU: Are you surprised?

DEEPAK: *(Angry.)* Yes.

ANSUYA: Deepak, let's go out on the verandah now. Come!

MAMU: *(Desperately.)* Ansu, please don't go out!

ANSUYA: Mamu, what's wrong?

MAMU: *(Frantic.)* I don't know what's come over me. I'm afraid something ... something is going to happen.

AMRITA: What's wrong, Karan?

ANSUYA: Come on, Deepak! Let's go!

MAMU: *(Pleading.)* Please don't go out, Ansu!

DEEPAK: *(Sneezing.)* Let's go, yaar! I need to breathe ... away from the cat.

ANSUYA: *(Singing.)* Cum-bal-la Hill! Ma-la-bar Hill!

*(Exit Deepak and Ansuya.)*

AMRITA: Karan, you are behaving very strangely.

MAMU: Don't you see, she is vulnerable. She has been lonely for so long.

Anyone, anyone who comes along could ... Oh, the hell with it! *(Stomps off to his room.)*

RAI SAHEB: *(Dancing close.)* Let's go out for a while.

CHITRA: Mm ... if you wish.

RAI SAHEB: Let's go. *(They stop dancing and go to the others.)*

Amrita, my dear, we'll nip over to the Club and I'll bring your lovely guest back soon ... very soon.

*(Fade on Amrita alone on stage, as she switches off the music, picks up a pack of cards and starts playing Solitaire. Spot on Deepak and Ansuya in the veranda.)*

ANSUYA: *(Sullen.)* You were really 'lagaoing' an impression on him, weren't you?

DEEPAK: If I get this licence, it will be a big thing for my career, yaar.

ANSUYA: (*Sulking.*) You are ambitious!

DEEPAK: (*Appeasingly.*) What the hell, yaar!

ANSUYA: Be yourself!

(*Pause.*)

DEEPAK: (*Pensive.*) I suppose you are right.

ANSUYA: (*Gently.*) And don't be ashamed of your father. (*Pause.*)

Come, don't look sad. You have too much dignity.

DEEPAK: (*Suddenly energetic.*) Let's light the candle, yaar.

(*They light a candle and then one sparkler each. As the candle and sparklers are lit, lights are slowly dimmed.*)

ANSUYA: (*Glowing.*) Oh Deepak, it's beautiful!

DEEPAK: And now the sparklers.

ANSUYA: (*Vivaciously.*) Deepak, your mood is infectious. I'm already happy.

DEEPAK: Give me a match, yaar.

(*Deepak starts lighting sparklers and gives them to Ansuya.*)

DEEPAK: Hang on ... I'll light this.

(*He lights another one, while Ansuya makes patterns in the air with the sparkler.*)

ANSUYA: I don't think I'll be able to sleep tonight. (*Deepak is busy lighting diyas. She sings.*) Cum-bal-la Hill, Cum-bal-la Hill! (*Looking out.*)

Here I am, in this beautiful world, with the stars and the smell of the pine trees and the hills. Why can't I be this happy all the time?

(*Pause.*)

Deepak, you know, you remind me of my father. You smile like him. You have his same sense of life ... and hope.

DEEPAK: (*Pensive.*) How life changes! You were the spoiled daughter of a rich father, remember?

ANSUYA: (*Wistfully.*) No rich father, no spoiled daughter, no house, nothing. It's all over!

DEEPAK: (*Suddenly serious.*) Ansuya, come with me to Bombay.

ANSUYA: (*Stunned.*) To Bombay?

DEEPAK: Yes ...

ANSUYA: (*Overjoyed.*) Do you mean it?

DEEPAK: Yes.

ANSUYA: Oh, but I couldn't. What will they say?

DEEPAK: (*Hesitantly.*) I have a large flat and ...

ANSUYA: Do you really think I could go? (*Frowning.*) But what will I do?

DEEPAK: You can work. You could start by converting this house into a hotel. I'll fix up appointments with the hotel people. I can see it, 'Jakhoo Hotel.'

ANSUYA: (*Frowning.*) But I can't do anything. I can't even type.

DEEPAK: I'll help you.

(*In a professional manager's tone.*)

We shall ask them to restore the house and the entrance will look just as it did fifty years ago. They'll put in modern bathrooms, of course. We can position it as an exclusive, low volume, high margin venture.

ANSUYA: (*Joyfully.*) I don't know what those words mean, but it sounds so exciting, Deepak! I'll ask Amma. I shall work hard in Bombay.

(*Going close to him.*) Oh, it is a beautiful dream.

DEEPAK: (*Holding her in his arms.*) It's going to come true.

ANSUYA: You mean it!

DEEPAK: Come here. (*They kiss.*)

ANSUYA: I still can't believe it. (*They kiss again.*)

Come, let's go back to the others.

DEEPAK: Shh! Not yet.

ANSUYA: I'm afraid of your mother.

DEEPAK: Come, let's go to your room.

ANSUYA: It's late. It isn't right.

DEEPAK: Ansu, I need you in Bombay. It's lonely with just Ma and ... and sometimes she gets too much. She sits on my back like a monkey. She's turned my father into a vegetable. And she's going to do it to me too.

ANSUYA: Shh!

DEEPAK: I need you to ... to save me from her. (*Pause.*)

Come, let's go to your room.

ANSUYA: No.

DEEPAK: Come on, yaar.

ANSUYA: Do you really think we should?

DEEPAK: Yes.

ANSUYA: (*Getting up to go.*) I don't trust myself. I ... I mean, I'm so drunk with all this happiness and ...

DEEPAK: (*Softly.*) Let's go.

ANSUYA: I can't believe this is happening.

DEEPAK: (*Tenderly.*) Everything is going to be all right.

(*Exuent and fade. Lights come up on the drawing room. It is two hours later. Rai Saheb and Chitra have returned.*)

AMRITA: How was the Club?

RAI SAHEB: (*Uncomfortably.*) Fine, fine. (*Looks bored.*)

I say, I need another drink. (*Pours himself one.*) Come on, let's do something. Let's play a game.

AMRITA: Oh Bunty, you and your silly games.

CHITRA: Didi, bachche kahan gai?

AMRITA: They were on the verandah a while ago.

MAMU: What could be keeping them?

RAI SAHEB: What shall we play?

AMRITA: They must have gone for a walk. It's stopped raining.

CHITRA: (*Frantically.*) My Deepak! He'll catch a chill.

RAI SAHEB: Or the cat will catch Deepak.

CHITRA: Ji?

MAMU: Cats are known to have killed people.

CHITRA: Hey Ram!

AMRITA: Stop it, the two of you!

CHITRA: (*Nervously.*) My Deepak, he has disappeared. That boy will be the death of me.

AMRITA: Calm down, they will be here soon.

MAMU: (*To Amrita.*) You are too easy going, leaving them alone like that.

AMRITA: Shame on you, Karan. A liberal person like you, talking like this.

MAMU: Anything can happen between two young people.

RAI SAHEB: My dear, that is the fun of being young. What's in a little hanky-panky ...?

(*And he gives Chitra a whack on her bum.*)

CHITRA: (*Giggling.*) Rai Saheb! You are naughty.

RAI SAHEB: Come on, let me fill your glass, my darling.

CHITRA: (*Slightly high.*) Just a tiny bit.

RAI SAHEB: I know, we'll play charades.

MAMU: Oh no!

(*Fade. Deepak and Ansuya emerge on the veranda, looking dishevelled.*)

DEEPAK: Hurry, they will be looking for us.

ANSUYA: I love you, Deepak.

DEEPAK: Comb your hair. (*Nervous.*) Here, use my comb.

ANSUYA: (*Combing her hair.*) I don't want to go in. I want to stay with you.

DEEPAK: What will they think, yaar? I told you we shouldn't have stayed in the bedroom for so long.

ANSUYA: I love you, Deepak.

DEEPAK: Come on!

(*Fade. Lights come up on the drawing room. The seating order for the next scene is important. It is vaguely a circle. Deepak and Ansuya enter. They take positions in a clockwise order as follows: Deepak, Chitra, Rai Saheb, Ansuya, Amrita and Mamu. Mamu will change his position midway, between Chitra and Rai Saheb.*)

RAI SAHEB: So, it's decided. We're going to play 'Truth or Dare.'

AMRITA: Here they are!

CHITRA: *(To Deepak.)* Mere bachche!

RAI SAHEB: *(With a smile.)* Your 'bachcha' is fine. You're both just in time. We were going to play 'Truth or Dare.'

AMRITA: For heaven's sake, Bunty! It's a game girls play in boarding school.

DEEPAK: *(To Rai Saheb.)* How do you play it?

RAI SAHEB: Dinky, Chippy and their crowd play it all the time. We sit in a circle. You are asked, 'Truth or Dare?' If you choose 'truth', you are asked a question and you must answer it truthfully.

DEEPAK: And if it is 'dare?'

RAI SAHEB: Then you are dared to do something. And we go round the room; the ones who put the questions go clockwise and those who reply go anti-clockwise.

DEEPAK: Who starts?

RAI SAHEB: You.

DEEPAK: Me? *(Laughs.)* All right.

*(Turns to Mamu.)* Karan Uncle, Truth or Dare?

MAMU: This is silly! I don't want to play.

AMRITA: Come on, Karan, it's only a game.

MAMU: No.

RAI SAHEB: Be a sport, Karan Chand.

MAMU: No.

RAI SAHEB: Then it's your turn, Amrita.

AMRITA: Me? Must you begin with me?

RAI SAHEB: Yes, we are going anti-clockwise, remember?

AMRITA: *(To Deepak.)* Then ask me an easy question, son.

DEEPAK: All right, Aunty. Truth or Dare?

AMRITA: Truth.

DEEPAK: Let me think. All right Aunty, what do you want more than anything in the world?

*(Pause. Amrita thinks.)*

RAI SAHEB: Come on, my dear.

AMRITA: Let me think, Bunty.

*(Stark silence. All eyes are on Amrita. Suddenly, there are tears in Amrita's eyes.)*

AMRITA: I ... I don't want to lose this house.

RAI SAHEB: Good! That was a truth. But only half a truth. *(Amrita gets up, wipes her eyes, goes to the window.)*

AMRITA: I've always loved to look out of this window. God knows, I love this house.

*(To Ansuya.)* Your father and I used to sleep in the big room upstairs. I used to wake up, my heart full of happiness each morning. And I'd rush down and look out of this window. Once we were here in January and we were caught in a snowstorm. It was all white outside. Oh, Ansu, it was heaven! *(Pause.)* I wish I could forget the past. If there is one good thing left in our lives, it is this house.

DEEPAK: Aunt, you could turn the house into an exclusive season hotel... just six months a year ... and you could still enjoy it the rest of the time.

AMRITA: My dear, forgive me. But I don't think that you know what you are talking about. *(She bursts into tears.)*

DEEPAK: I'm sorry, Aunt, I didn't mean to upset you ...

ANSUYA: Darling Amma, don't cry! *(Goes to her and embraces her.)* Nothing will happen to this house.

AMRITA: *(Weeping.)* If only I had looked after things better ...

ANSUYA: *(Wiping her mother's tears.)* Shh ... Amma!  
*(Turns to the others.)*

RAI SAHEB: I say, Ansu, let's carry on with the game. It is your turn. Chitra my dear, your turn to ask the question.

CHITRA: I pass.

RAI SAHEB: What?

CHITRA: Pass.

DEEPAK: Ma, ask her a question!

CHITRA: Oh, all right. Haan Ansu, Truth or Dare?

ANSUYA: Truth.

CHITRA: What do you want more than anything in the world, Ansu?

ANSUYA: *(Matter-of-factly.)* I want to go to Bombay.

CHITRA: Bombay? Why?

ANSUYA: I don't have to answer that. I already gave my 'truth'.

RAI SAHEB: She's right. It's Deepak's turn.

ANSUYA: No, it's your turn, Bunty Uncle. You are on my right.

MAMU: *(Shifting to the empty chair on Chitra's right.)* It's all right. I'll ask, Rai Saheb.

RAI SAHEB: Wait, that isn't fair! That's not your position. You've moved.

MAMU: It's your turn to ask a question and it's also your turn to reply. You can't very well ask yourself a question.

RAI SAHEB: Oh, very well. *(Pointing to Deepak.)* But let him go first.

ANSUYA: But it's not his turn.

DEEPAK: *(Confidently.)* Certainly I'll go, sir.

RAI SAHEB: (*Pointing to Ansuya.*) You ask him, my dear.

ANSUYA: But it's not my turn to ask.

DEEPAK: (*Decisively, to Ansuya.*) Come on, Anu, I'm ready.

ANSUYA: Oh, all right. (*Pause.*) Truth or Dare?

DEEPAK: Truth.

ANSUYA: Deepak, what is it that you want more than anything in the world?

CHITRA: Wait, I know the answer, ji.

RAI SAHEB: Let him speak for himself, my dear.

CHITRA: I'm his mother, after all. I should know.

MAMU: That's the problem.

CHITRA: What is the problem, ji?

RAI SAHEB: Nothing.

(*To Deepak.*) Answer the question.

DEEPAK: Well, I want to be a success at my job.

RAI SAHEB: False.

CHITRA: It's true!

RAI SAHEB: It's false.

CHITRA: How do you know?

RAI SAHEB: You can tell he's lying.

CHITRA: You are calling my son a liar?

RAI SAHEB: Ask him.

CHITRA: Kyon Deepak, was it a lie?

ANSUYA: Was it, Deepak?

DEEPAK: (*Hesitating.*) Well ...

RAI SAHEB: (*Triumphantly.*) So, False! The turn stays on you. (*Pause.*)

Well? (*Silence.*) Well? (*Silence. To Ansuya.*) Ask him again, dear.

ANSUYA: Deepak, what do you want more than anything in the world?

DEEPAK: You, of course.

CHITRA: More than your mother?

DEEPAK: That's not the question, Ma.

MAMU: Well, in a sense it is. If you want Ansuya more than anything or anyone, then you do want her more than your mother.

DEEPAK: (*Laughing.*) I'm not going to fall into that trap.

CHITRA: How could you, Deepak?

DEEPAK: Oh, I want you equally, Ma.

CHITRA: Rahne de, rahne de! Just look at him. You know what my fault is, ji? I am too good. Even if I get slapped in return, I can't stop being good.

RAI SAHEB: (*With irony.*) You're good, my dear.

MAMU: Deepak's had his turn. It's Rai Saheb's turn to answer now.

RAI SAHEB: Oh, very well.

MAMU: Are you ready?

RAI SAHEB: (*Nods.*) Hmm.

MAMU: Truth or Dare?

RAI SAHEB: Truth, of course.

MAMU: Will you take a bribe in awarding the licence to Deepak's company?

(*Stunned silence.*)

RAI SAHEB: I say, what sort of nonsense is this? I don't have to answer this stupid question.

(*Silence. He looks around for support.*) Come on, what the hell's going on?

AMRITA: (*Uncomfortably.*) Bunty, you certainly don't have to answer that question. I don't like this game.

MAMU: He started the game, Didi.

RAI SAHEB: I didn't think you would start insulting people.

AMRITA: Stop this childish nonsense.

RAI SAHEB: I don't have to stand this insolence.

MAMU: It's part of the game.

DEEPAK: Shall we stop the game, sir?

RAI SAHEB: Shut up, boy! You're out of your depth.

MAMU: Well?

ANSUYA: Bunty Uncle, why don't you merely say 'no' or 'yes' and we'll move on?

RAI SAHEB: But, but ... This is preposterous!

MAMU: What's preposterous?

RAI SAHEB: It's a matter of principle.

MAMU: What principle?

RAI SAHEB: (*Pompously.*) Do you know whom you are speaking to? You are insulting the Government of India.

MAMU: Ah ... we are high and mighty, aren't we!

RAI SAHEB: I say, this is supposed to be light-hearted stuff. We're meant to talk about secret love affairs and fun things like that.

MAMU: You'd like that. You'll proudly tell us of your sexual escapades. We are not talking of Sunday morning bingo, or 'elevenses' with the memsahibs, or cocktails in the Green Room, Rai Saheb. We're talking of licenses and hard cash!

RAI SAHEB: Steady on, old chap!

MAMU: The hypocrisy of the bureaucrat!

RAI SAHEB: We merely carry out policy.

MAMU: Ah, but 'we' love the policy. It gives us the power to have the likes of Deepak grovel before us: 'Yes, sir,' 'No, sir.'

RAI SAHEB: I admit it's awkward—this licencing business. But someone has to do it!

MAMU: Ah, but it's such a profitable business!

RAI SAHEB: Enough of this insolence! The answer to your question is "no"!

*(Pause.)* All right! It is now my turn to ask you a question, my friend.

MAMU: Wait a minute ...

RAI SAHEB: Not my fault that you changed positions. We're going clockwise, remember?

AMRITA: Stop this game, you silly boys.

ANSUYA: It is Mamu's turn.

MAMU: We've had enough of this game. Why don't you play something else?

RAI SAHEB: Don't be a coward, Karan.

MAMU: No.

RAI SAHEB: Just when it is getting interesting?

ANSUYA: Come on, Mamu. It's only a game.

*(Mamu senses the mood and reluctantly agrees.)*

MAMU: *(Looking at Ansuya.)* All right, you asked for it.

RAI SAHEB: Truth or Dare?

MAMU: Truth.

RAI SAHEB: Remember, Karan, if you don't speak the truth, the turn stays on you. Ready? *(Mamu nods.)* What is your biggest regret? *(Pause.)*

MAMU: Er ... that ... um ... that I'm not a good teacher.

RAI SAHEB: False! You are a good teacher.

MAMU: *(Protesting weakly.)* No ... it's true ... I read from the notes I made fifteen years ago. My students don't care for me.

ANSUYA: That's not true, Mamu. You are a great teacher.

MAMU: Was.

RAI SAHEB: So, 'False.' The turn stays on you, Karan. Don't lie this time. It's going to get more difficult, old boy.

MAMU: Don't 'old boy' me.

RAI SAHEB: Ready?

*(Mamu nods reluctantly.)* What is your greatest wish?

MAMU: Behold, ladies and gentlemen, before you is the portrait of a failure. No, no ... a classic failure. The question is: why do some men succeed while others fail?

RAI SAHEB: We don't need a lecture, Professor.

MAMU: *(Ignoring him.)* Take my case, for example: a drowning man ...

AMRITA: What are you talking about, Karan?

RAI SAHEB: He's been drinking?

*(To Mamu.)* Don't be dramatic, dear boy. Just answer the question.

MAMU: Shut up!

CHITRA: *(Unbelieving.)* He told Rai Saheb to 'shut up'!

DEEPAK: Shut up, Ma!

CHITRA: (*Hurt.*) My son tells me to ‘shut up?’

DEEPAK: Shh!

MAMU: (*Continuing as if there was no interruption.*) The Question is:

Why is Deepak a success and I a failure? A very good question. As a young man, I stood first at the University; I got into the ICS. But I chose to become a scholar and to teach. Because I had ideals and I wanted to pass them on to young people. Today, I could have been a loathsome diplomat, perhaps even a junior ambassador to some minor country. At least, I would have had some respect. I feel cheated.

(*Pause.*)

What is the moral of the story? Don’t have ideals. Go for worldly success.

(*Pause.*)

But, surely that isn’t right? When a young person cannot stand the way things are, then he must question the social order. The world is unjust. There is such misery and pain. I wanted answers to those questions. And what did I become? A dusty professor, of no use to anyone.

ANSUYA: That’s not true, Mamu. You created a whole generation of idealistic young people.

MAMU: No, my students only wanted to pass exams. All they did was to copy my lecture notes. Of what possible use is an armchair intellectual to the world? All talk and no action.

(*Bitterly.*) The result? No one wants me anymore ... except my cat.

ANSUYA: That’s not true, Mamu. You gave me all that’s good in me.

RAI SAHEB: This is against the rules of the game. You can’t help him, Ansuya.

ANSUYA: You don’t understand. He needs me.

MAMU: (*Calmly.*) Well, maybe that is the way it was meant to be. I sat here tonight on Diwali night, and I watched you, Ansuya. I watched you and Deepak. And I looked at myself. You were looking to the future, I was looking to the past. It finally snapped! (*Pause.*)

Tell me, you wise people, what should I do with my life? Should I shoot myself?

RAI SAHEB: Stop being dramatic.

AMRITA: I don’t like this game.

DEEPAK: This is embarrassing.

RAI SAHEB: It is sickening.

(*Realizing.*) But he still hasn’t answered the question. Are you listening, Karan Chand? Answer the question.

MAMU: (*Afraid.*) I ... I’m not going to answer that question.

(*The tempo increases.*)

ANSUYA: I'm afraid, Amma. Let's stop the game, Bunty Uncle.

RAI SAHEB: We can't wait all night, Professor Saheb.

MAMU: No ... no.

ANSUYA: I think we've gone too far this time.

RAI SAHEB: Well?

MAMU: (*Looking at Amrita, then at Ansuya.*) I don't know ... do we have to go through with this? (*Turning to Ansuya.*)

AMRITA: (*Worried.*) What is going on?

ANSUYA: I don't like what's going on.

RAI SAHEB: Do you know what it is?

ANSUYA: I don't like it.

DEEPAK: (*Puzzled.*) What's going on, yaar?

ANSUYA: (*Scared.*) Stop the game!

DEEPAK: (*Worried.*) What the hell, yaar?

RAI SAHEB: (*Silencing everyone.*) Shh! Answer the question, Karan Chand. What is your greatest wish? (*Pause.*)

Is it for something in this room? No? Then is it for someone in this room? It is, isn't it? Who is it? It's not Amrita, it's not Deepak, it's not Chitra, it's certainly not me. Then who is it? Say it, Karan Chand! Say it!

MAMU: I ... I ... Ansuya, don't go to Bombay ... don't leave me!

RAI SAHEB: Got you!

ANSUYA: Mamu! What are you saying?

(*Everybody starts speaking at once. They make exaggerated gestures to each other throughout the ensuing dialogue between Ansuya and Mamu, until Ansuya's outburst, when there is a sudden silence.*)

AMRITA: What's this?

RAI SAHEB: Dirty old man! This is incestuous. I always knew it.

DEEPAK: (*Out of his depth.*) I say, yaar ... What the hell's going on, yaar?

CHITRA: Shameful! With his own niece!

AMRITA: Are you mad, Karan?

MAMU: Ansu, forgive me. You must not leave me, please!

ANSUYA: Why are you doing this, Mamu?

MAMU: Ansu ...

ANSUYA: (*Screaming.*) No, Mamu, no!

MAMU: I ... I ... can't live without you.

ANSUYA: Stop it, Mamu.

MAMU: Ansuya!

ANSUYA: (*Outburst.*) No! I'm Deepak's! (*Sudden silence. Ansuya begins to cry.*)

CHITRA: Deepak's?

ANSUYA: You made me say it, Mamu. I love Deepak.

CHITRA: Yeh kya ho raha hai?

DEEPAK: I'll explain, Ma. Later.

ANSUYA: I'm sorry, Deepak. I had to say it.

MAMU: It's because he's young.

ANSUYA: Mamu!

RAI SAHEB: Filthy, I say. Abusing his own sister's trust.

MAMU: (*Wailing.*) No, no! Oh God! Not that! I never ...

AMRITA: (*In a strange, high-pitched voice.*) I want everyone to be quiet. Please.

This is my house, my brother and my daughter. I will speak. You fine people, what are you trying to do? We have lost everything. Why are you trying to destroy my family? It's all that I have left. We've lost the way we lived. But there was a time ... oh yes, there was a time. But it is gone now. All we have left is ourselves, the three of us. Why must you judge us? We have suffered, and we drew close to each other in our suffering. You are trying to take even that away ... (*Pause.*)

Yes Chitra, the chandeliers, the paintings are gone. For you, they were things—things to be bought and sold for money. But for us, they were our life and the way we lived. We were happy once upon a time, and we didn't ask for any more.

(*Pause.*)

You Bunty, you have shattered everything. Yes, behind your laughter, respectability and pretence, I suddenly see you as you really are. And I do not like what I see! I thought you were a friend.

(*Pause.*)

I feel lost. I feel I am breaking bit by bit. But don't worry for me: I shall do what is right. I am tired now. No more games, please. I want everyone to leave. I wish to be alone with my family.

(*Exit Rai Saheb, Chitra and Deepak.*)

Why did you have to spoil it all, Karan? You have to leave now. You cannot live in this house any longer.

ANSUYA: (*Going to her.*) Amma ...

AMRITA: Help me to my room, Ansu.

ANSUYA: Come, Amma, come.

(*Ansuya takes her mother inside. Fade.*)

## ACT FOUR

[Stage Centre. Opens on Karan, the narrator.]

KARAN: It's a dangerous game these girls play in boarding school. The next time you have company, I wouldn't play this game, if I were you. I know, games are a good way to get people off our hands—especially people to whom we have nothing to say. Sometimes, even ourselves. But, do you see the perils of playing games with people? All of us take pride in being practical, realistic people. As realists we have our feet planted solidly on the ground and we plod along, fulfilling our duties, busy with our daily routine. And, at the end of the day, what have we lost? We have lost the essence of life itself. That is why Ansuya was such an unusual girl. She was willing to take risks with herself: with her emotions, with her life. She wanted something out of the ordinary, something different—and she wanted love, in all its lurid splendour and terrible proportions.

And Deepak? Well, it's not as if he did not love Ansuya; he did, in his own way. But his vision of himself was cradled by that apocalyptic mother-figure, Chitra. I suppose we all want love, like Ansuya. We all want romance to touch our lives at least once in our lifetime. Because, love is, among other things, the best way to escape the primal loneliness we were born to suffer. It is the one thing that makes our strange situation in the world acceptable. Yet, we don't want too much of it, lest it becomes a necessity, like alcohol. And, where there is love, there is pain, a mighty pain. For love isn't love, unless it is vulnerable. And its loss is a terrible thing. Those who say that death is worse, just don't know. Mamu found that out as he left the house the next morning. He wished he could die, and the almost intolerable torment was that he did not.

*(Picks up the newspaper.)*

Meanwhile, as the Chinese were digging in for a thrust at Se La and Bomdilla, we are pointing fingers at each other. General Kaul and General Thapar didn't see eye to eye on strategy. Krishna Menon was not sure that we needed American aid. Do you know something? Some of us talk too much and act too little. It is the afternoon of the next day. A bright, fresh, sunny afternoon. The house is still, taut with tension *(Sniffs again, taking short breaths.)*

From the aroma in the kitchen, it appears that it is almost tea-time. It's so quiet that you can hear yourself breathing. Wait, someone is talking in the drawing room.

*(As the lights come on.)* It is Deepak and Ansuya.

*(Fade on Karan. Exit.)*

ANSUYA: (*Withdrawn, distracted.*) I took Amma to her room and then I must have dozed off in the chair beside her. I was half asleep and then I was dreaming ... I can't be sure, but it was a bad dream. Mamu kept calling me. I was at the bank and he was in the lake, or was it a river? He kept calling me to save him.

(*She begins to cry.*) He was drowning and I couldn't reach him. Oh, it was horrible. He kept calling me.

DEEPAK: (*Soothingly.*) It was only a dream.

ANSUYA: You know dreams; things get mixed up. I took off my clothes and I jumped into the water. It was cold. The wind was blowing. The blanket kept slipping off.

DEEPAK: Was there anyone else in your dream?

ANSUYA: Yes.

DEEPAK: Who?

ANSUYA: I don't know. I don't remember, but I was scared.

DEEPAK: There was no one there.

ANSUYA: There was. I was naked and I didn't want anyone to see me. The blanket kept slipping.

DEEPAK: (*Changing the subject.*) How are the others?

ANSUYA: Amma has been alone in her room all day. Mamu was up all night and, early this morning, he quietly left for the station. I'm afraid for him. My poor, dear Mamu.

DEEPAK: What time did his train leave?

ANSUYA: Ten o'clock. (*Pause.*)

I am afraid. What will I do if something happens to him?

DEEPAK: Don't worry. Nothing will happen to your Mamu.

ANSUYA: You have such a lovely voice, Deepak. It is so sure and confident. It gives me strength.

(*She goes up to embrace him. He withdraws slightly.*)

DEEPAK: Ma should have been back from the club by now.

ANSUYA: You and your mother ...

DEEPAK: It is late. She should have been back. How long do these lunches last, yaar?

ANSUYA: What about us, Deepak? When are we going to tell everyone?

DEEPAK: Tell what?

ANSUYA: About my going to Bombay.

DEEPAK: I have to speak to Ma.

ANSUYA: But I have to ask Amma too.

DEEPAK: Wait, let me speak to Ma first.

ANSUYA: You sound scared.

DEEPAK: No, yaar.

ANSUYA: What's wrong? You were so sure last night. Deepak, tell me about Bombay and your ideas about the hotel. It will cheer us both up.

DEEPAK: I'm tired, Anu.

ANSUYA: What's the matter?

DEEPAK: Nothing.

ANSUYA: I want to hold you.

*(She goes close to him. Again, he withdraws.)*

DEEPAK: I'm tired.

ANSUYA: Let's go to Bombay.

DEEPAK: What's the hurry, yaar?

ANSUYA: Let's go away quickly.

DEEPAK: Why?

ANSUYA: I don't want to lose you.

*(Sounds of footsteps outside.)*

DEEPAK: That must be Ma.

*(Deepak gets up at once, straightens himself. Ansuya gets up to leave. Chitra walks in with a brisk step. She is high, looks pleased with herself, and speaks louder than necessary)*

CHITRA: Oh, there you are, Deepak. Oh, and Ansuya too. You know Deepak, I almost fell over that cat. Bahut chalak hai. It seemed to laugh at me. Maine bhi use zor se thudda mara. Saali bhaag gayi. *(Hiccup.)* A wonderful man, Rai Saheb! *(Hiccup.)*

DEEPAK: You've been drinking again, Ma!

CHITRA: Kya mard hai, Deepak! I tell you, you won't find another one like him. No wonder he is such a big government officer *(She pronounces it 'gourmint ufsar.'* Giggles and recalls her dance steps from the previous evening.) One, two three; one, two three. Oh Deepak, kya life hai, kya manners! *(Hiccup.)*

DEEPAK: And now you're drinking during the day?

CHITRA: *(Winking.)* Oh-ho, thodi si to pi hai!

DEEPAK: And what's happened to your clothes, Ma?

CHITRA: *(Smiling.)* A bit crushed, are they?

DEEPAK: They're a mess.

CHITRA: *(Her eyes light up.)* Son, it is done. Your future is pucca, and your licence meri mutthi mein hai!

DEEPAK: You did not ... Oh Ma, you shouldn't have ... I would have taken it up with Rai Saheb myself in course of time.

CHITRA: Kya hua maine kar diya? Ek hi to baat hai. But Deepak, that is not all ...

I have some very big news for you! Oh, main to khushi se paagal ho jaungi!

DEEPAK: What is it, Ma?

CHITRA: Deepak, I have found a girl for you.

DEEPAK: What?

CHITRA: Haan beta! Maine tere liye bahut hi vadhiya kudi dhoondh li hai!

DEEPAK: Ma, what are you saying? I... I've given my word to Ansuya.

CHITRA: Kya? Ansuya? Yeh kya bak raha hai?

DEEPAK: Ma, I've given my word to Ansuya.

CHITRA: But last night you said ...

*(Looks at Ansuya and draws Deepak aside, away from her.)*

Last night you said that you were only talking.

DEEPAK: I had to say that to keep you from blowing up.

CHITRA: Achcha! To keep me from blowing up? Well, I am going to blow up. I am going to blow up! How dare you commit to this ...?

ANSUYA: Deepak, I am afraid.

CHITRA: You sneaky thing! Jab se hum is ghar mein aaye hain, tu mere bete par dore dalne ki koshish kar rahi hai!

DEEPAK: Ma, please!

ANSUYA: That's not true.

CHITRA: I know her kind. Oh, madam, look at yourself. How old are you? Haan? How old are you?

ANSUYA: Twenty-six.

CHITRA: Well, let me tell you, you look thirty! Too old for my son!

DEEPAK: Ma, what are you saying!

CHITRA: Tu beech mein mat bol! Money hungry, that is what she is.

ANSUYA: I don't want anything.

CHITRA: Oh really? Don't want anything? Well we want, madam, we want! Look at you! No hips! No hips! How are you going to give us a son? Haan? No hips!

DEEPAK: *(Screaming.)* Stop it Ma, stop it this instant!

ANSUYA: *(Weeping.)* I can't take this anymore!

*(Exit.)*

CHITRA: Stop it Ma? All these years I've been teaching you: don't marry beauty; don't marry for love; marry a rich girl!

DEEPAK: But I love her, Ma.

CHITRA: He doesn't listen to me. 'Don't marry a beauty; don't marry for love ...'

DEEPAK: Yes, Ma, I heard you '... marry money.' But, on the train up here; you said yourself that you wanted me to think of marrying Ansuya.

CHITRA: That was before I found out that they had become poor.

DEEPAK: Ma, I'm doing well. What do we need more money for?

CHITRA: Oh-ho, we always need more money. There's never enough. Oh, tu kya jaanta hai, what it is like to grow up poor. What do you know what it was like to be tenants of these people in Lahore? Kisi ke tukdon par palna, tu kya jaanta hai? After Partition, what do you know what it was like to be a petty kiranawalla's wife in Ghatkopar?

*(Disgust in her voice.)* Ghatkopar!

DEEPAK: *(Cutting her short.)* I know. I know all that. Don't start it again.

*(Pause.)*

Ma, don't you care about what I want? Don't you care about my happiness?

CHITRA: Oh beta, I care only about your happiness. I always have. Jab tu itna sa tha, to din raat ek kar ke tujhe padhaya-likhaya. Khud bhookhi rah kar tera pet bhara. Tujhe is layak banaya jahan tu aaj khada hai ...

DEEPAK: And this is happiness?

CHITRA: *(Animatedly.)* Achcha beta, yeh gussa chhod de. Don't you want to know who I've found for you?

DEEPAK: *(Wearily.)* No, Ma.

CHITRA: Yeh changa munda hai! After all I have done for him ...

DEEPAK: *(Wearily.)* You'll tell me anyway.

CHITRA: All right, I will tell you. Deepak, Rai Saheb has a niece. I think she is just the right match for you!

DEEPAK: Who?

CHITRA: Rai Saheb's niece! Look Deepak, you won't find another match like her. Beta, beta, thande dimag se soch. My guess is the dowry is not going to be under two lakhs. And maybe they will also give a car, a fridge and an air-conditioner. Uff! Main to khushi se paagal ho rahi hoon! I don't think I shall be able to sleep tonight, Deepak.

DEEPAK: *(Bored and tired.)* What about the girl, Ma?

CHITRA: Hain?

DEEPAK: What about the girl?

CHITRA: I didn't meet her.

DEEPAK: She forgot the girl.

CHITRA: Beta, I have seen her photo. Now look, they are in a rush. We shall have to act fast. *(Pause.)*

Well, aren't you going to say anything?

DEEPAK: *(Matter-of-factly.)* I'm tired, Ma.

CHITRA: *(Stunned.)* You are tired?

DEEPAK: Yes, Ma, I'm tired.

CHITRA: Achcha! Here I have been slaving for him—and the burra saheb is tired. (*Hurt.*)

I thought you would be jumping. Think of your future, son. When they find out about her in your company, you will probably get a double promotion.

DEEPAK: (*Barking.*) To hell with my promotion, Ma. I want Ansuya.

CHITRA: Yeh phir shuru ho gaya!

DEEPAK: It's my one chance for an honest life. She is a fine person, with ideals, Ma.

CHITRA: Oh-ho, that girl is only after your position and your job. She has trapped you, you simpleton. Deepak, think of your future. She doesn't have a naya paisa to her name. You're on the way up, son. Your star is going to rise. You need a rich girl to help you climb up. Her family are on the way down. She should be satisfied with a municipal clerk.

DEEPAK: (*Resigned.*) You will never understand ...

CHITRA: I want my son to rise above the stink of his father's life.

DEEPAK: No, Ma.

CHITRA: (*Sarcastically.*) No, Ma? Theek hai beta, theek hai. Aaj to tu bahut sayana ho gaya hai na? Apni Ma se bhi zyada! Theek hai. You bring up a boy with all your love you snatch from the father to give to the son.

DEEPAK: You were wrong to do that.

CHITRA: (*Not comprehending.*) You bring him into the world in suffering. You feed him from your own breast. You stay awake at nights so that he can sleep. And when he wets the bed, you pick him up and put him on the dry side and yourself sleep on that wet side. You wear the same dirty rags, so that he can go to school.

DEEPAK: Enough, Ma!

CHITRA: No! Do you know what I have done for you today?

DEEPAK: What?

CHITRA: Main abhi kahan se aa rahi hoon, tujhe pata hai?

DEEPAK: Yes, yes, I know. You went to the Club with Rai Saheb.

CHITRA: Haan. Rai Saheb ke saath gai zaroor thi. But not the Club. To his house. Ek ghanta unke saath bita kar aa rahi hoon! Samjhe?

DEEPAK: What? You mean ...?

(*The realization of what she has done dawns on him.*)

No, Ma! No!

CHITRA: Oh, yes!

DEEPAK: (*Horried.*) No, Ma!

CHITRA: Oh, yes, Ma!

DEEPAK: God!

CHITRA: What a mother will not do for her own son! And this is my reward, ji. After all my sacrifice, I get a pauper for a daughter-in-law. It is a fate worse than death. Tu ja, ja—us hoor pari ke saath gulchharre uda. Just do one thing before you go—take me to the ghat and perform my funeral! *(And she begins to howl. Slowly the howling gets louder.)*

DEEPAK: Quiet Ma, please!

CHITRA: *(Sitting down and wailing)* Main to lut hi gayi! Lut hi gayi!

DEEPAK: Shh ... please!

CHITRA: Aa, beta, aa! Let me tell you something. We'll get only one pandit, and save money! In the morning he will marry you, in the evening he will burn me. Beta, there's a knife lying there. Bring the knife, and cut my throat with it.

DEEPAK: *(Suddenly losing control.)* Quiet, Ma!

*(Deepak collapses on the floor near his mother. Clearly, something has snapped within him.)*

You'll have your way! You always have!

*(Lights begin to change gradually as Deepak changes into a little boy.)*

Ever since I was a little boy. I was a regular teachers' pet, the kind everybody hates. I would come running home from school, clutching 80 per cent marks in my hand, the good little boy, endlessly in search of the key to that deep and inscrutable mystery, the approval of his mother. Oh, yes, I was Ma's good little boy.

*(He mimicks his mother.)*

'Who is the best little boy any Ma ever had? Who does Ma love more than anyone in the world?' Me!

*(Turns away from Chitra. The lighting has become a cold, white spot, as Deepak becomes a little boy.)*

I'm seven. Ma cooks for me, Ma cleans for me, Ma stays up late at night for me, Ma cares for me when I am sick. Ma waits for me after school and when I come home, she asks, 'Who is the best little boy any Ma ever had? Who does Ma love more than anyone in the world?' 'Me, me.'

*(Sobbing. Chitra gets up, goes behind Deepak, takes his head in her lap. Slowly, he comes out of his trance.)*

Look, Ma. I'm giving up Ansuya! I'm giving her up and my one chance for happiness. I'm doing it for you. And I feel sick to my stomach.

CHITRA: Mera beta.

DEEPAK: I've lost, Ma! I've lost.

CHITRA: Mera raja beta.

DEEPAK: Am I a coward, Ma?

CHITRA: Yeh tu kya kah raha hai?

DEEPAK: You taught me to go after success, Ma. And I did. You forgot to warn me there might be others in the way. I'm your puppet, Ma. Pull the string. Pull it harder. Choke me.

CHITRA: Mera achha beta. Mera raja beta.

*(Fade. Next evening. The same scene. Ansuya is helping Amrita pack. There are boxes and wrapping paper and string all over the floor.)*

ANSUYA: Pass me some paper, Amma.

AMRITA: Here! Do you think we should take this Bengal pottery vase with us?

ANSUYA: No, Amma dear. We should take only the nice things.

AMRITA: Yes. You're right. So many things accumulate in a house over the years.

*(Pause.)*

Ansu, it is wonderful to see you up and about like this.

ANSUYA: When is the truck coming?

AMRITA: Saturday morning, Ansu. With the way things are, I cannot bear to live in this house any longer.

ANSUYA: Did I say anything in my sleep, Amma?

AMRITA: Everyone was so worried. Poor Dr. Nath, such a darling man! He stayed by your bed all night.

ANSUYA: How embarrassing, Amma.

AMRITA: I spent the night with you. With Karan gone, it was suddenly so lonely. I've never felt so alone in my life, my child.

ANSUYA: Amma, we need some more strings.

AMRITA: It's there, right behind you. *(Pause.)*

I must learn to laugh and cry at the same time. It's the only way I can hide the fact that I know the difference between the way things are and the way they might have been.

*(She gets up, goes to the window, and looks out.)*

Ah, my sweet Ansu. I am going to miss Simla. I used to be intoxicated, just breathing its air. There was something about every day—whether it was sunny or raining.

ANSUYA: You can still have Simla, Amma.

AMRITA: It will not be the same, will it, my darling?

ANSUYA: No, it won't. *(Pause.)*

AMRITA: Ever since this morning, the brokers started to hound me about the house. I was so confused. I didn't know who to turn to.

ANSUYA: Pass me some more paper, Amma.

*(Amrita picks up the paper and gives it to her. She hugs her daughter.)*

AMRITA: Oh Ansuya, I'm so glad you are well.

ANSUYA: But, when I woke up, there was no Deepak in the house. *(Smiles sadly.)*

The fool, he could at least have said goodbye. *(Pause.)*

AMRITA: They dined at Rai Saheb's last night and left this morning.

ANSUYA: *(Pause.)* Did he get engaged last night?

AMRITA: Ansu ...

ANSUYA: Did he, Amma?

AMRITA: You must forget him, child.

ANSUYA: Did he get engaged?

AMRITA: Yes.

ANSUYA: So, the Rais finally did manage to find poor Neena a husband.

*(She turns to hide her tears.)*

AMRITA: My sweet Ansuya. There, there ...

ANSUYA: The truth is, Amma, I think this is what Deepak really wanted.

Don't blame his mother. For Deepak, it was always his career above everything.

*(She goes towards her daughter. But Ansuya withdraws. She slowly gets up and goes towards the window. Long pause. Slowly and resolutely, she turns around to face her mother. The tears are gone. She comes forward with a deliberate step, with a raised head, to centre stage.)*

ANSUYA: Don't worry about me, Amma. Yes, I broke down last night. But it will never, ever happen again...*(Pause.)*

I've been thinking, Amma. All day, I've been thinking. I'm going to be strong. I'm going to look after you. This house will never be sold! That's why I threw out the brokers this afternoon.

AMRITA: *(Smiling.)* Ah, that explains why they suddenly went away.

ANSUYA: You might as well put up a 'Not for Sale' sign outside. I am going to follow up on Deepak's idea. I'm going to Bombay. I am going to talk to the people at the Taj. And, I'm going alone.

AMRITA: But ...

ANSUYA: No 'buts,' Amma. Now, you must leave it to me. We are not going to stand helplessly by and become poor. I am now taking charge. I shall prove to you that I can do it. I shall not rest until you are secure. I want you never to worry about money, ever again.

AMRITA: Oh, my child, you give me so much strength.

ANSUYA: I've learned a lot in these three days, Amma. I used to believe that people like us couldn't do anything. But I'll show them. Yes, Deepak showed me the way. I shall make it happen.

*(Suddenly, she has tears in her eyes.)*

AMRITA: What is it, my darling?

ANSUYA: Amma?

AMRITA: Yes, my child?

ANSUYA: I ache for Deepak.

AMRITA: I understand, Ansu.

ANSUYA: Amma?

AMRITA: Yes?

ANSUYA: I'm in pain.

AMRITA: My child.

ANSUYA: It hurts too much.

AMRITA: I know.

ANSUYA: Amma?

AMRITA: Hm?

ANSUYA: Will the pain go away?

AMRITA: In time, my child.

ANSUYA: I love him so much.

*(Pause.)*

In the midst of our desperate, killing boredom, Deepak came like a rainbow.

AMRITA: It is going to be quiet with just the two of us.

ANSUYA: Yes.

*(Pause.)*

No, Amma. You mustn't say that. It's not going to be quiet. We have work to do. We are not going to cry. We are going to build. I shall show you the way.

AMRITA: *(Wearily.)* Yes, we mustn't look back. I suppose we'll have to live in Delhi now.

ANSUYA: Now pass me those books, Amma.

AMRITA: Perhaps it won't be so bad, after all.

ANSUYA: We need a bigger box for the books, Amma.

AMRITA: Yes ..., yes ....

*(Fade.)*

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## EPILOGUE

[Stage Centre. Karan, the narrator.]

**KARAN:** So there it is: a story, among so many, of the Partition of the country, but more, of partitions in the mind. What more can I say?

The Chinese withdrew from India after three weeks, for reasons no one understood. Seventeen months later, Nehru died. I was in Nagpur when it happened. With him died many of our dreams. Not only ours, but those of half of India's as well. And an era came to an end.

Things were never ever the same for our splintered family. People like us - Amrita, Ansuya and I - we became creatures of the past. The Deepaks and Chitras of the world took charge of the future. Deepak became the Managing Director of his company and he gave glittering parties, over which Chitra, and not his wife, presided as the hostess.

I became a writer after I was ... after I left the house. This play was written last year. As you can see, it's autobiographical. And I wouldn't be honest if I didn't admit that writing it helped me to get her out of my system.

Oh yes, our house did become a successful hotel, thanks to Ansuya. She worked tirelessly, like someone possessed, to make Deepak's idea come true. It solved Amrita's money problems, finally. But none of us ever went back there again.

9 Jakhoo Hill, our home, was lost forever.

Thank you, once again, for having come to see the play. Good night.

### **Glossary**

**Embarrassing:** making you feel uncomfortable

**Strings:** to hang up a line of things with a piece of string

**Inscrutable:** not showing any emotions

**Intoxicated:** emotionally excited

### **About the Play**

The play begins two days before Diwali in 1962 in an upper-middle-class house at 9 Jakhoo Hills in Simla, when the country was at war with China. The play is divided into four acts. Karan Chand is the narrator of the play. He introduces the two families around which the whole play is woven. The whole play revolves around the two families of Lahore and what happens to them after independence.

One of the families is a conventional middle-class family consisting of Amrita, her brother Karan Chand (Mamu), and Amrita's young daughter Ansuya. She is twenty-six years old is an impulsive but intelligent girl who, "was not born to lead a staid, conventional life. Lonely, withdrawn, but with an almost fierce vitality, she wants to live fully and passionately".

The other family comprises, Deepak, twenty-seven years old young man and a successful business executive settled in Bombay. He, "...is full of energy and ambition... talented and smooth, but is also under the excessive influence of his mother.

In a nutshell, 9 Jakhoo Hill highlights a number of socio-economic and political issues of post-independent India. It also focuses on the changing value system of society. It depicts the new middle class, who wants to become rich at any cost, and the old middle class, who is still clinging to their ethical values. The play gives us an insight into the post-independent Indian aristocratic society, where emotion does not have any value.

Money plays a very important role in the life of people. Das' plays have contemporary themes, it influences every walk of life. His play does not follow the conventional model but it allows the audience to think more rationally and critically.

### **About the Author**

**Gurcharan Das** (born 3 October 1943) was born in Lyallpur, British India (now Faisalabad, Pakistan). His father was an engineer with the government of Punjab. The family lived in Lahore at the time of the partition of India in August 1947 when they had to flee for their lives. They arrived as refugees in Shimla, and this is where the young boy grew up.

In 1952, the family moved to Bhakra Nangal; in 1953, to Delhi, where he went to Modern School. In 1955, his father was transferred to Washington DC, to represent India in talks with Pakistan on the sharing of the waters of the rivers of Punjab, mediated by the World Bank. He went to high school in Washington D.C. In 1959, he won a scholarship to Harvard University. He graduated from Harvard in 1963 with honors in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics. He is an Indian author, who wrote a trilogy based on the classical Indian goals of the ideal life. At the end of 1994, after a 30-year career in six countries, he took early retirement to become a full-time writer.

**Comprehension I****Short Answer questions:**

1. Who is Ansuya in the play '9 Jakhoo Hills'?
2. When and where did the play take place?
3. Who was Rai Saheb and highlight on his luxurious life style?
4. Was Deepak always listening to his mother in the play?
5. "That girl is only after your money, position & she trapped you, you simpleton" whom was it addressed to and why?
6. How did Deepak influence Ansuya on business deals?

**Comprehension II****Paragraph Answer Questions:**

1. Analyse and explain the celebration of liberal values in the works of Gurcharan Das.
2. Comment on the influence of Indo-China War in the play.
3. Describe the character Ansuya as a new woman.
4. Analyse the declining social and moral values as depicted in the play.
5. Describe the value concerns and contemporary Indian drama as portrayed in the play.
6. Analyse the transitional values and social order as depicted in the play.

**Comprehension III****Analytical / Discussion Questions:**

1. '9 Jakhoo Hill' explores changing values, and human conflicts in the play. Justify.
2. Throw light on the Thematic Reflections in Gurcharan Das's '9 Jakhoo Hill'.
3. Justify 9 Jakhoo Hill as a timeless portrayal of love and greed.
4. Compare the characters of Amrita and Chitra in the play '9 Jakhoo Hill'.
5. Comment on the first point of crisis in the play '9 Jakhoo Hill'.
6. The Play '9 Jakhoo Hill' is the realistic representation of two classes in the post-Independent India
7. Comment on the relationship between Mamu, Ansuya & Amrita.
8. Ansuya and Deepak represent different aspects of the youth and their dreams. Discuss.

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# 1. NOTE MAKING

## Objective/s:

- To learn how to organise thoughts and make notes
- To know how to keep a record of the ideas of a speaker/writer
- To master internalizing new ideas or information, etc.

Note making is an important skill for a student. In order to make notes effectively we need to be active listeners or readers. Though listening and reading are receptive skills, we must think actively when we listen or read, to be able to decide:

- what to note
- what form the notes should be in
- for what purpose we are making notes
- how we are going to use them later

Effective notes have certain characteristics. They:

- are accurate
- contain all the essential information
- show the overall progression of ideas
- can be used effectively in the future
- include comments or responses
- are a summary and not a word-by-word reproduction of the original

## Different methods of Note Making:

Notes can be organised in different ways. The layout, symbols, short forms and abbreviations vary according to individual preferences. However, two methods are used most often:

1. Linear notes
2. Flowcharts

- In **Linear notes** information is organised in the order of importance using listing, numbering, lettering, and so on. There are various listing systems such as Arabic numerals, decimal system, upper case Roman numerals, lower case Roman numerals, capital letters, small letters, etc.

**Example 1:**

When you are making a presentation, your posture can affect the quality of your voice. The way you stand, the position of your head, neck and shoulders and feet and so on are important. Check that your feet are parallel and are apart, and your weight is slightly forward on your feet. Make sure that your knees are relaxed; if you are tensed, your back will suffer. Pay special attention to your head. Look straight ahead and don't push your neck out or drop on to your chest. I had a man come to see me once as he was constantly losing his voice. It was all due to his habit of sticking his neck forward which was putting pressure on his throat. He sounded quite squeaky when he spoke. What he should have been doing was keeping his ears in line with his shoulders. Your head should feel as though its floating on top of your body! So watch that.

Now most of us feel nervous before we speak in public. You'll feel better if you spend some time dealing with the tension. It's a good idea to try and think about what it is that's making you feel this way. That way you can have some control over it. Next, try and locate the area of tension in your body. Often, it's your neck or shoulders. Then concentrate on massaging these parts and consciously trying to relax them. Believe me, it works!

Let's think about what you say, now. To maximize your performance, make sure you are well prepared. Look over your note, practice what you want to say, preferably out loud, and then, perhaps most important of all, try to feel you really want to share your subject with your audience. If you feel and share your enthusiasm with them, you're more than half-way there. Remember that how people feel about you and what you are saying to them will depend on your body language, there are three main behavior types: passive, aggressive and assertive. You can use any of the three types, although I think the assertive posture is one that suits most occasions best.

The passive body type has a withdrawn posture. You may fidget a bit with your hands and hair. In fact, I remember a well-known politician who whenever he was speaking would constantly massage the top of his head. So, beware of those funny little mannerisms. They can become intensely irritating to an audience.

If your posture is aggressive, however, you tend to be quite rigid. You could be constantly swinging your leg or crossing your arms and clenching your fists and the audience will feel uncomfortable. Your voice will often sound harsh or sharp and your audience may then feel quite aggressive towards you and that's something you don't want if your aim is to get them to see your point of view.

That brings me to the assertive posture. Now you're standing straight, feeling comfortable and calm with your arms hanging loosely at your sides. In this position there is a minimal tension and your voice is full, clear and varied. You're a delight to listen to.

Finally, a few dos and don'ts when it comes to looking after your voice, especially before giving a speech. It's a bit obvious but avoid smoky areas, and alcohol, too. Drink plenty of fluids, especially fruit juice or even coffee or tea and keep your throat moist while you're speaking. Also, interestingly enough, stop eating too many dairy products when you have a cold. It can make you sound worse and also don't forget to use your lips and tongue carefully to make the words stand out clearly.

And just a final reminder: We can't always control the room we are speaking in. so, if a plane goes over, don't shout. Wait till it's gone. Don't battle with things you can't do anything about. If your throat feels uncomfortable, try not to cough violently or clear your throat. Just swallow instead. It doesn't always work but it's much better for your voice.

### LINEAR NOTES:

#### 1. Posture:

The way you stand, the position of your head, neck, shoulders and feet.

Important - can affect quality of voice.

1.1 Feet: parallel and apart; knees relaxed, will affect back if tense

1.2 Head: look straight ahead, do not push neck out or drop it on shoulders, ears in line with shoulders

#### 2. Nervousness:

2.1 Common to all speakers

2.2 Control: think about what cause nervousness

2.3 Locate area of tension (often neck and shoulders)

2.4 Massage these parts, to relax them consciously

#### 3. Preparation:

3.1 Thorough preparation maximizes performance

3.2 Practice your presentation aloud

3.3 Be enthusiastic

#### 4. Body language

4.1 Three main behaviour types: passive, aggressive, assertive

4.1.1 Assertive: (a) stand straight (b) arms hanging loosely at the sides (c) voice, clear and varied

4.2 Assertive posture is the right posture, evokes positive response

#### 5. Voice

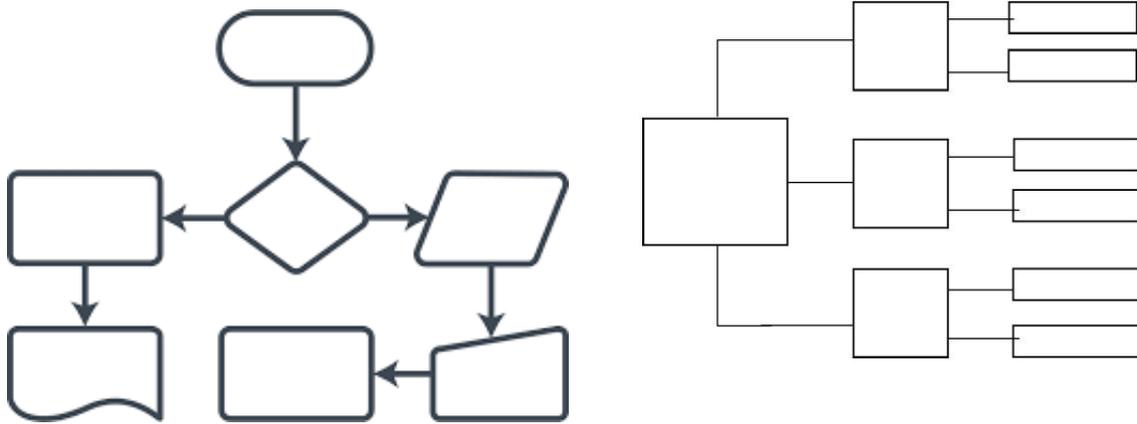
5.1 Avoid smoky areas, alcohol, dairy products (especially – cold)

5.2 Drink plenty of fluids to keep the throat moist – fruit juice, coffee, tea

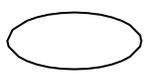
5.3 Use tongue and lips for clear enunciation

- A **Flowchart** is a type of diagram that represents a workflow or process. It gives in point-form the sequence of tasks, events or steps in a process that should be followed when making something. It shows the steps as boxes of various kinds, and their order by connecting the boxes with arrows. It is used in analyzing, designing, documenting or managing a process or programme in various fields.

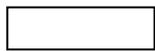
The following are samples of different flow charts:



The four basic symbols for creating a flowchart are as follow:



The Oval or terminator is used to represent the start and end of a process.



The Rectangle is your go-to symbol once you've started flowcharting. It represents any step in the process you're diagramming and is the workhorse of the flowchart diagram. Use rectangles to capture process steps like basic tasks or actions in your process.



The Arrow is used to guide the viewer along their flowcharting path. While there are many different types of arrow tips to choose from, we recommend sticking with one or two for your entire flowchart. This keeps your diagram looking clean, but also allows you to emphasize certain steps in your process.



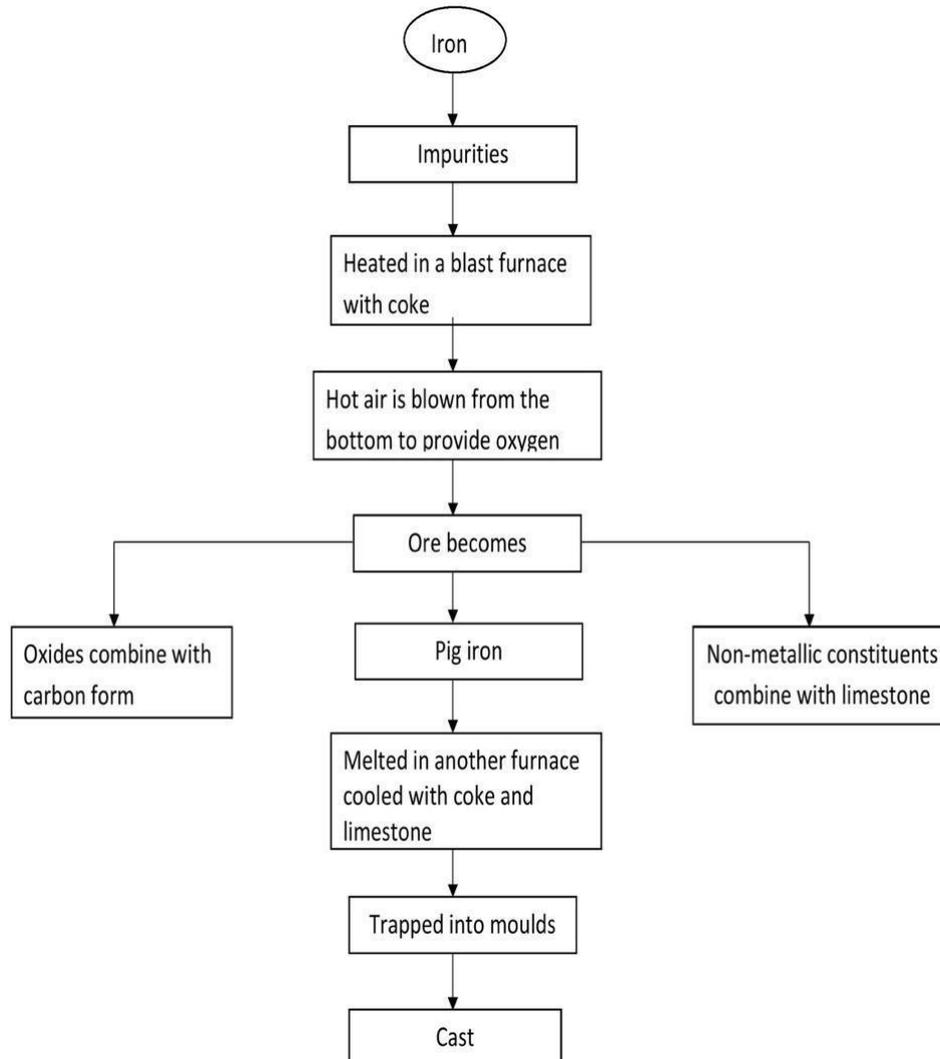
The diamond symbolizes that a decision is required to move forward. This could be a binary, this or that choice or a more complex decision.

Example 1:

The earth contains a large number of metals which are useful to man. One of the most important of these is Iron. The Iron ore which we find on the earth is not pure. It contains some impurities which we must remove by smelting. The process of smelting consists of heating the ore in a blast furnace with coke and limestone and reducing it to metal. Blasts of hot air enter the furnace from the bottom and provide the oxygen which is necessary for the reduction of the ore. The ore becomes molten, and its oxides combine with carbon from the coke. The non-metallic constituents of the ore combine with limestone to form a liquid slag. This floats on top of the molten iron and passes out of the furnace

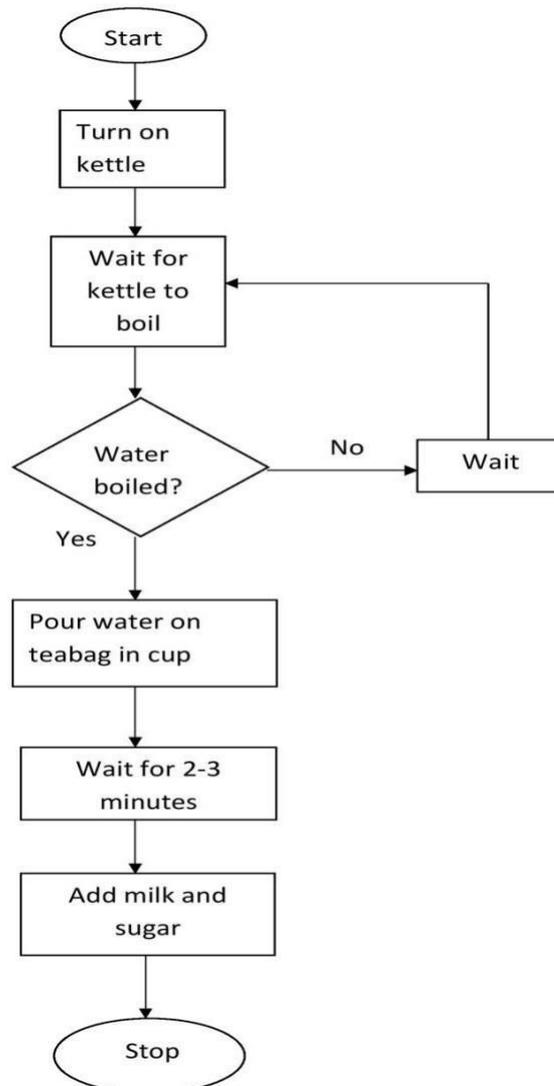
through a tap. The metal which remains is pig iron. We can melt this again in another furnace – a cupola – with more coke and limestone and tap it out into a ladle or directly into moulds. This is cast iron.

### FLOWCHART



**Example 2:**

Here are a few instructions to make a cup of tea. Turn on the kettle and wait for the kettle to boil. Make sure that the water is boiled. Once it is boiled, pour water on the teabag in the cup. Then wait for 2-3 minutes. Now, it's time to add milk and sugar. The tea is ready to serve.

**FLOWCHART**

### **TASK A - Make Linear notes for the following articles:**

1. Do you want to look younger and more beautiful? Are you interested in slowing down the ageing process? Yes? I am not going to suggest any magic cure or any new ointment. I know there are many creams, lotions and ointments in the market that promise to make your skin as fair as possible in ten days or even less. You buy and use them and realize that most of them don't give you any results. I have a better solution to the problem. Listen to this carefully.

Wholegrains, fruit and vegetables are low in calories, high in fibre and packed with nutrients. If you eat a diet rich in these items, you will soon be able to slim your hips and slow down the ageing process.

Have you ever wondered what changes your complexion? When your diet lacks vitamin A, skin cells on the face die and the dead cells pile up on the skin's surface. These dead cells block the pores on your skin and prevent the glands from moisturizing your skin. And then you start using moisturizing creams. Do you know that such creams don't moisturize your skin/ all that it does is prevent the loss of moistures from your skin. You may ask me, 'what's the solution to this?' Simple. Try eating carrots and drink orange juice. They help dead cells shed easily. And your glands then begin to moisturize your skin. If your skin is dry and flaky, don't rush for an ointment. Instead, try eating a carrot. It is rich in fibre and will fill you up fast. If your diet lacks vitamin A, try eating papayas and sweet potatoes.

Now, let me tell you about ageing. It's inevitable that you age as you grow. But you can slow the process if ageing with the right diet. What's the right diet? A diet rich in vitamin C. I know your next question. Where do I get vitamin C from? Not from tablets. Eat plenty of juicy oranges, grapefruit and crisp red and green peppers. These not only add variety and flavor to your diet, but also help you stay trim. They are all great sources of vitamin C, an antioxidant vitamin, which experts say aids in inhibiting free radicals. Vitamin C helps to keep the skin elastic and supple. While oranges are a good source, green peppers and dark leafy greens such as spinach are also excellent sources of this important vitamin. Eating food rich in this vitamin can slow down the rate at which your skin tissues lose elasticity, thereby helping you maintain smoother and more youthful skin for years to come.

If you wish to have a trim figure, you should opt for low or non-fat dairy products such as skimmed milk, curd and low-fat cheese. But there's a big beautifying benefit too: calcium found in all these food items tones and

strengthens the skin and assists vitamin C in the production of collagen. Skimmed milk may be the best source for calcium. But there are plenty of other sources such as broccoli, spinach and canned salmon. Nuts are rich in magnesium but be careful; they are rich in calories and fat too which will soon add weight to your body. Instead, try half a banana or wholegrain bread.

As we age, our skin becomes less elastic. But if you season your food with garlic, you'll do a lot of good to your skin. Garlic is a source of selenium, a mineral that enhances the resilience of your skin.

2. There are many types of families. The smallest family is that of two persons such as a husband and wife, a parent and a child, or a brother and a sister. Such units are different kinds of nuclear families. Nuclear families usually consist of parents and their children. However, it can include adopted children too. When a person from such a family gets married, another nuclear family is formed. In practice, however, no nuclear family is totally independent or isolated. In most societies the extended family is the norm.

What is an extended family? The term extended family refers to any family that extends beyond the nuclear family. This type of family includes grandparents, aunts, uncles, or cousins. For example, when a married couple lives with the husband's parents or grandparents and shares their household, the nuclear family becomes an extended family.

Another type of family, quite common in the West and fast emerging in India, is the modified extended family. When couples marry, they live separately from their parents but still maintain close ties with their families. They call each other, visit each other often and help each other whenever necessary.

A fourth type that was common recently in India but is fast turning out to be rare is what is called the joint family. In such a structure, parents, children and grandchildren, uncles, aunts and cousins live under the same roof as a single family the joint family system is not common in most parts of the world.

3. The first thing to remember is that nobody is born a poor listener. There are many factors that lead to poor listening. The first reason for poor listening could be that the listener is not interested in the subject or the topic being discussed. In such cases, the listener does not make an effort to listen to and understand the content. As a result, he or she does not understand what the speaker is talking about. If you're not interested in history, you may not listen attentively to lectures on history.

Some listeners are partial listeners. They do not listen fully to the speaker's words. Again, this results in inadequate understanding. So, the second factor may be partial listening.

Some speakers speak very fast. Have you had an occasion when you found it difficult to understand someone because he or she was speaking too fast? That's the third factor – fast pace of delivery by the speaker. After listening to the speaker for a while, if you realize that you are not able to cope with the pace, you give up and stop listening. This can happen in classroom lectures. So, remember to speak at a pace at which the listener is comfortable.

Let's now talk about a fourth factor. What do you do when you do not understand what the speaker says? If you remain quiet or pretend that you have understood, you are making a mistake. Your failure to ask for clarifications can cause inadequate comprehension. It's interesting to learn why people don't ask for repetitions or clarifications. Some are shy, so they don't ask questions. Some do not have the chance to ask for a repetition because the speaker speaks continuously. Some do not ask questions or voice their doubts because they are unsure of their language competence. In all these cases, the listener stands to lose. So, do not make the mistake of not asking questions or seeking clarifications.

Sometimes, the physical environment around you can make listening difficult. If there's too much external noise, it can affect listening. Similar difficulty is experienced when there is loud music or loud noise from a machine.

Lastly, you can be a poor listener if you are engaged in other activities while listening to someone. You would have seen people doing other things while talking on the phone. Some continue reading the mail on the computer, while some others continue watching television while talking to someone on the phone. In both the cases, their attention is divided between the two activities they are involved in. This hampers their listening.

### **TASK B - Make Flowcharts for the following procedures:**

#### 1. Recipe of Eggless Vanilla Cake

Make sure all the ingredients are at room temperature. Grease a 7 or 8 inch pan. Line it with parchment paper. Preheat the oven to 170C for at least 15 mins. If using a pressure cooker, add 1 heated cup salt to a cooker. Spread it evenly and place a plate. Place a trivet or ring. Remove the gasket and whistle. Cover it.

Heat on a medium high flame for 10 to 12 mins. Fluff up the all-purpose flour in the jar with the help of a fork. Using a spoon fill 1 and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of all-purpose flour to measuring cups. Level them with a straight edged knife or spoon.

Remove 2 tbsp flour from 1 cup and  $\frac{1}{2}$  tbsp flour from  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup. Add the removed flour back to the jar. Next fluff up the corn flour in the jar and measure 2 and  $\frac{1}{2}$  tbsp corn flour and add it to the cups. Sieve them together at least 3 to 4 times this helps the cake to turn light. Your cake flour is ready. To make cake batter, place a sieve over a large mixing bowl. Add 1  $\frac{1}{4}$  all-purpose flour or cake flour to a sieve. Next add 1 tsp baking powder. Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp baking soda. Then add  $\frac{1}{8}$  tsp salt. Sieve them and repeat it thrice. If you do not plan to frost the cake, then you may need another 3 to 4 tbsps powdered sugar. Mix well. Pour condensed milk, approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a 400 ml can.

Next pour  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water. Pour  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup melted unsalted butter. Add in vanilla extract. Pour vinegar and mix well until just combined. Make sure there are no lumps. The mixture will begin to react immediately due to vinegar and you will see bubbles. Avoid over mixing it at this stage. Transfer the batter to the cake pan. Knock it gently to the counter a few times. Place it in the center rack in your oven. Cover and bake for 45 to 55 mins on a low flame. When the cake is done, a skewer inserted comes out clean. Transfer the cake pan to a cooling rack and let cool for 15 mins. Later invert it on a wire rack. Remove the parchment paper and allow it to cool completely. Soft, moist and delicious eggless vanilla cake is ready.

## 2. Soap Making

The absolute easiest way to make soap is by using a pre-made soap base. Melt-and-pour soap comes in either cubes or blocks and you can choose from clear (glycerin), goat milk, and standard bases. All of the chemistry is finished for you before you even open the package which means less to be wary of. Also, more to have fun with! To use it, all you do is cut it into small pieces and melt it either in the microwave or over low heat. When it's melted you can add scents flowers, and exfoliates (like pumice, oatmeal, or ground coffee). You can also add very small amounts of extra oil, like melted shea butter or sweet almond oil to melt-and-pour soap bases for added conditioning. Color can also be added to melt and pour soap at this point before you pour the batter into molds. Spray the tops with alcohol to reduce air bubbles and create a smooth finish. As soon as it's hard, pop the bars out of the molds and use them immediately.

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## PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports inform management about the status of a project. Submitted regularly throughout the life of the project, they let the readers know whether work is progressing satisfactorily – that is, within the project’s budget and time limitations. To write an effective progress report, follow the usual process.

Evaluate your audience’s knowledge and needs. Determine how much they know, what they expect to find in your report, and how they will use the information. Select the topics you will cover. The standard sections are:

- Introduction
- Work Completed
- Work Scheduled
- Problems encountered

Here is a template of Progress Report

**To:**

**TITLE:**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE/INTRODUCTION:**

Mention the title, period covered and the purpose of the report  
This section addresses three questions:

- i. Why the report was written
- ii. Who it was written for
- iii. What the scope of the report is

**Work Completed:**

**Work in Progress:**

**Work to be completed/Work Scheduled:**

**Anticipated problems:**

Name:

Position:

Date:

**Sample:**

**ABS Constructions**

**To:** Richards

**From:** John

**Subject:** Progress Report on Construction Work

**Introduction**

This report is a monthly update of the construction project. Currently, the project is in the construction phase, and the project management team raised a few issues. These issues are: a) the residents' noise complaints b) slip and fall incident that injured one worker. The team formulated action plans to resolve these issues.

**Purpose/Scope**

The report records the progress made on the construction work during the time period from July 01 to July 30, 2020. It covers the details of the work completed to date, the work yet to complete, and the problems encountered with this assignment. The scope of this report is the project's timeline and the current issues that require immediate actions.

**Work Completed**

Planning and clearing of construction site are completed. The introduction and several short paragraphs of discussion are included at the end.

**Work Scheduled**

An organized rough draft is prepared. It is planned to a) schedule the loud construction activities in the morning and maintain a 90 dBA noise level. b) conduct a daily safety briefing before the construction work begins. The work is expected to be completed by October 10, 2020.

**Problems Encountered**

The following issues were encountered throughout the month of July:

1. The residents complained about the loud construction activities.
2. There was a slip and fall incident that resulted in minor injury of one worker.

Name: John

Position: Project Supervisor

Date: 20 August 2020

### **TASK A: Status / Progress Reports**

1. You are The Chief Civil Engineer assigned the work of supervision of Bengaluru Metro's Electronics City Rail Project. Write a status report with the following details:

- a) Completion of the work
- b) Scheduled plan
- c) Delay in the completion of Namma Metro Projects

2. You are an officer working for PWD. You have been entrusted with the task of construction of a public library. Write a status report to The Chief Engineer by using the following hints:

Survey and planning is complete - foundation work started - delay due to heavy rains - work likely to be completed by December, 2022.

3. You are the Senior Manager of Tata Chemicals. Write a report on the status of a project taken up by the team members addressing it to The Chief Executive of Tata Group of Industries. Include the updates on the development of the project, milestones reached by the team: achievements/accomplishments, source of motivation for the team, etc.

### **PROJECT REPORT**

A project report or a research paper is an investigative, written report based on the information compiled from a variety of sources. The purpose of the project can be to investigate examine, clarify, defend, explore or reappraise the subject. The process of research is a vast and voluminous one and preparation of a report involves arranging the information gathered in a condensed and systematic format.

The steps involved in the research project are as follow:

- I. Statement of the problem (a detailed discussion of the problem)
- II. Purpose/Objective of the study (reasons for taking up work)
- III. Scope of the study (the range and depth of the issue to be covered)
- IV. Methodology (sourcing of information, how and where to get)
- V. Conducting the research/investigation
- VI. Findings and Recommendations/Conclusion.

**Hints:**

1. The draft of the report can be laid out as introduction, body and conclusion.
2. Make use of end notes and foot notes to explain or illustrate exclusive words.
3. While writing the conclusion, restate your statement of problem and point out how it is substantiated logically from the analysis and discussion of data.
4. Check the report for
  - a. sense, fluency and completeness of sentences.
  - b. grammatical construction of sentences.
  - c. correct spelling, capital letters and punctuations.

Here is a template for Project Report

**To:**

**TITLE****TERMS OF REFERENCE/INTROCUCTION**

This section addresses three questions:

- i. Why the report was written
- ii. Whom it was written for
- iii. What the scope of the report is

**SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY****PROCEDURE**

In this section, the writer explains the procedures used or the processes involved. For example, visits to places/sites, interviews with people and so on.

**FINDINGS**

This is the main part of the report because it gives facts and evidence collected by following the procedures.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The inferences drawn from what is mentioned in the previous section are presented here.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

This section is optional. If the writer has been asked to make suggestions or recommendations, they will be presented here.

Name:

Designation:

Date:

**Sample:****Charming Entertainers**

Aditi Krishna

(adkri@charmingentertainers.com)

October 10, 2021

**To:** The Chief Executive**Title:** The Six Shorts Project

**Introduction:** The Six Shorts Project was launched in the month of May 2021. The project allowed six filmmakers to make a short film within a month from May to August. All short films are available online and half of the proceeds went to their chosen charity.

**Objectives**

1. Raise funds by monetizing the videos on YouTube.
2. Gain at least 1 million views per video.

**Scope**

Each of the short films underwent preparation, production, and completion phase.

**Methodology**

Every film was shot in 4K resolution and teasers were uploaded on social media to gain hype from the public.

**Procedure**

The Project was launched by the company in partnership with Volvo Productions. This project aimed to help the charities in need by making short films with relevant themes. One short film is uploaded on the YouTube channel of the company from May to August.

The Project is planned as two phases:

1. Preparation -Writing the script, casting the actors, location scouting, and securing partnership deals.
2. Production and Completion-Shooting, reshooting, editing, promoting, and releasing the films.

**Findings**

The findings were as follows:

1. The budget differs for every filmmaker depending on the genre of their work.
2. Strong weather and lack of safety measures caused a one-week delay to the project.

**Conclusions**

The project was successful. Each of the films gained a million views as of August 31, 2021. The filmmakers have donated a portion of the project's proceeds to their chosen charity.

**Recommendations**

1. Ensure that safety measures are placed for the production team in every location.
2. The company should do more projects that tackle relevant issues while helping others.

Name: Aditi Krishna

Designation: Assistant Director

Date: 10 October 2021

**TASK B: Complete Project Report**

1. You are a student representative of BLA college, you are aware of the lack of canteen facility in your college. Write a report using the following hints:

- To the Student Welfare Officer
- Majority of the students come from different parts of the city
- Most of them do not carry lunch nor can they afford to eat outside
- Need for canteen is very much felt by most of the students.

2. The admissions for B.Sc. Degree course is decreasing in recent years. As the college principal give a report to the Management, using the following hints.

- To the Managing Committee
- Reasons for poor admissions
- Sources of the data

Recommendations:

- Give scholarship to needy students.
- Improve infrastructure facilities.
- Assure them of job placements.

3. A brand of soap Medifix has not been doing well in sales for the past two years. 'New Age' agency is asked to conduct a market survey and make recommendations. As the team lead, write a report using the following hints:

- The methods of collecting data
- Opinion of the public

Recommendations:

- Improvement in quality required
- Intensify promotion of sales
- Change the brand ambassador

### 3. LIFE SKILLS AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

**Objective/s:**

- To make one comprehend the significance of strategising and goal setting
- To instill critical and creative thinking.
- To encourage rational thinking and self-awareness

Critical thinking is an ability to analyse and construe information in a logical manner. In other words, it is vivid, coherent, logical, and independent thinking. It is a process of ameliorating oneself by gauging, analyzing, evaluating in what way we think. It is thinking on purpose – mindful communication, problem-solving, and liberty from prejudice or egocentric predisposition. We can apply critical thinking to any kind of subject, problem, or situation. It is an important factor, highly responsible for influencing and recognising behaviour which may be used to lead a well- balanced life.

Another important aspect of thinking is – Creative, a novel way of perceiving or doing things. It is an amalgamation of four components- fluency (new ideas), flexibility (easy shift of perspective), originality (inventing or uniqueness), and elaboration (progression). These four components help us to make decisions in a constructive style. It intends to teach us how to make decisions and a healthy assessment of diverse opportunities/ alternatives, and the impact these different decisions are likely to have. Inculcating Critical and Creative thinking, assists us in dealing with difficult situations.

**TASKS**

1. a. Define your goal.
- b. Make a list of short-term and long-term goals (minimum 5 goals for each)and set a timeline/final deadline to meet meet your goal.

Short-Term Goal	Timeline	Long-Term Goal	Timeline

2. List the arrangements to be made for hosting your parents' 25<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary. Emphasise on prioritization of the things to be done, keeping two weeks' time frame in mind.


3. Your 4th semester final examinations are in the month of January, and at the same time your sibling is getting married. Now, you ought to plan a strategy in such a way that you can enjoy your sibling's wedding, as well as prepare and perform well in your examinations.


4. Make a list of your Strengths and Weaknesses in the table below:

My Strengths	My Weakness

5. Write ten attributes of people who are respectful:

		Gratitude		
	Modest			

6. Describe a situation when you helped the following:

- a. a friend or sibling
- b. an old person or grandparents
- c. a neighbour
- d. a stray animal

7. What can we do individually and collectively to act responsibly towards human beings, animals and plants?

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## 4. BASIC SENTENCE STRUCTURES

### Objective/s:

- To know the components of basic sentence structures
- To develop the knowledge of organising our ideas and thoughts
- To enhance the skill of communicating effectively

Language is made up of words which work together to form sentences, which in turn form paragraphs. We may be able to organise our thoughts, but are we able to express them in an effective manner? Well, proper sentence patterns help us to do just that.

Sentences are simply collections of words - Subject, Verb, Object & Complement.

**Subject** is usually a Noun or Pronoun, the doer of the action. The subject answers the question 'who' in a sentence.

**Verb** is a word or group of words indicating the action, event or state.

**Object** is a word or group of words receiving the action of the verb; there are two types of Object – Direct and Indirect.

**Complement** tells more about the subject or the object; it can be a noun or its equivalent, or an Adjective.

These basic components work together to create endless varieties of sentences.

### 1. SUBJECT-VERB

#### Examples:

- The boy plays.
- Jack eats.
- Sara sings.

### 2. SUBJECT-VERB-ADJECTIVE

#### Examples:

- Lisa is pretty.
- They are nice.
- I am sad.

### 3. SUBJECT-VERB-ADVERB

#### Examples:

- Maria laughs loudly.
- The dog jumps high.
- Apples are everywhere.

#### 4. SUBJECT-VERB-NOUN

##### Examples:

- I am the teacher.
- Jon is a carpenter.
- The boy is a student.

#### 5. SUBJECT-VERB-OBJECT

##### Examples:

- The girl pets the cat.
- I love apples.
- Bill kicks the ball.
- They are baking cookies and cakes.
- She teaches English.

5. A. Sentences with a Subject, Verb and one Object, can be constructed by following these steps:

a. Put the subject and the adjectives such as 'fat', 'thin' etc. or any words describing the subject at the beginning of the sentence.

b. Put the verb and some adverbs such as 'often', 'usually' etc. after the subject; except when there is a negative auxiliary.

Ex. *Jack usually eats breakfast in the kitchen.*

*Cats **do not** (negative auxiliary) usually sleep at night.*

c. Put the object of the verb, the adjectives or other words describing the object and the adverbs describing the verb at the end of the sentence.

#### Subject – Verb – Direct Object

SUBJECT	VERB	OBJECT
Paul	often eats	biscuits.
Mary	ate	two apples quickly.
My father & mother	are eating	mangoes now.
The tall girl	has eaten	a watermelon.
That little boy	will eat	some bread soon.

B. Some verbs can be followed by two objects without an ‘and’ connecting them. One of these objects is called the ‘Direct Object’ and the other the ‘Indirect Object’. Below is the pattern of a sentence containing both direct object and indirect object:

**Subject – Verb – Indirect Object – Direct Object**

SUBJECT	VERB	INDIRECT OBJECT	DIRECT OBJECT
I	gave	my sister	a birthday present.
My parents	always tell	me	stories.
We	have lent	him	some money.
They	are asking	the teacher	some questions.

C. Sometimes a Preposition is put in front of the indirect object. The pattern of such sentence is:

**Subject – Verb – Direct Object – Preposition – Indirect Object**

SUBJECT	VERB	DIRECT OBJECT	PREPOSITION	INDIRECT OBJECT
My friend	has sent	a letter	to	me.
His parents	bought	a computer	for	him.

*Note: A Phrase is a group of connected words, but it is not a complete sentence because it is missing a subject and/or a verb. Phrases are just one component that makes up a complete sentence.*

*A Clause contains a subject (actor) and a verb (action). There are two types of clauses:*

*a. An independent clause is a complete thought. It can stand alone as a complete sentence.*

*b. A dependent clause (a.k.a. subordinate clause) cannot stand alone as a complete sentence (even though it may contain a subject and a verb). It begins with a subordinating conjunction (because, when, while, after... and many more).*

**TASK A:**

**Rearrange the words in correct order to make complete sentences:**

1. the robbers yesterday / the police / caught
2. has just written / a letter / the tall man
3. the students / have solved / some Mathematics problems
4. her aunt tomorrow / will visit / Mary
5. usually / she is / stubborn / not
6. enjoyed / the movie / the audience
7. always / their work / complete / they / on time / don't
8. the short man / has bought / some crayons from the stationery shop / his son
9. the policeman / has just shown / the driver / his driving license
10. brought / me / a bouquet of flowers last week / my uncle
11. the shopkeeper / the customer / is paying / two hundred dollars
12. holidays / goes / on / often / Paul
13. he / his brother / the secret / has never told
14. a postcard from Japan / sent / her / her best friend
15. has ever given / any help / the blind woman / no one in the street

**TASK B:**

**Rewrite each of the following sentences by placing the word in brackets before the indirect object:**

1. The dog owner gives his dog a bone every day. (to)
2. My mother has already taken my father a cup of coffee. (to)
3. She found me a seat in the concert last Sunday. (for)
4. We bought our uncle a pair of gloves on his birthday. (for)
5. Judy has baked me some chocolate cookies. (for)

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**Additional English  
Internal Assessment Mark Allotment**

First Test	10
Second Test	10
Assignments	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>

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**III Semester Question Paper Pattern**

**Time: 2.5 hours**

**Max. Marks: 60**

**SECTION – A (Literary Component – 25 marks)  
Prose / Poetry / Short Story**

- I. Answer any five questions in a phrase / sentence (5 out of 6) 5x1=5
- II. Answer any two questions in about 80 to 100 words (2 out of 3) 2x5=10
- III. Answer any one of the following in about 2 pages (1 out of 3) 1x10=10

**SECTION – B (Literary Component – 15 marks)  
Drama**

- IV. Answer any one question in about 80 to 100 words (1 out of 3) 1x5=5
- V. Answer any one of the following in about 2 pages (1 out of 3) 1x10=10

**SECTION – C (Language Component – 20 marks)**

- VI. Note Writing 1x5=5
- VII. Report Writing 1x5=5
- VIII. Life Skills and Social Activities 1x5=5
- IX. Basic Sentence Structures 1x5=5

### III Semester Additional English Model Question Paper

Time: 2.5 hours

Max. Marks: 60

#### SECTION – A (Literary Component - Prose / Poetry / Short Story)

**I. Answer any FIVE questions in a phrase / sentence: 5x1=5**

1. To which country does Esther Kuroiawa belong?
2. In the poem 'When it rains in Dharamsala', what do the poet and landlady have in common?
3. In what ways are people divided in the world?
4. What does Yasodhara compare her husband to?
5. What restricted the freedom of Jews after the arrival of Germans?
6. On what aspects did the former jaggery merchant speak with authority?

**II. Answer any TWO questions in about 80 to 100 words: 2x5=10**

1. Why do you think the speaker is unable to cry in the poem 'When it Rains in Dharamsala'?
2. 'may God have mercy on us – what will we partition next'. Substantiate with reference to the poem 'Let's Unite'.
3. What is the reason for the author to see his own cartoons in the paper? How did he react?

**III. Answer any ONE of the following in about 2 pages: 1x10=10**

1. How does the story 'Wilshire Bus' address the issue of alienation and loneliness of migrants in a foreign land?
2. 'Yasodhara's Lament' is about the trauma and anguish of any woman dealing with loss and despair, in a patriarchal world. Discuss.
3. Anne's diary is a significant document on the Nazi persecution of Jews. Explain.

#### SECTION – B (Literary Component - Drama)

**IV. Answer any ONE question in about 80 to 100 words: 1x5=5**

1. Justify the significance of the title '9 Jakoo Hill'.

1. Describe the character Ansuya as a new woman.
2. Discuss the influence of Indo-China War in the play.

**V. Answer any ONE of the following in about 2 pages:**

**1x10=10**

1. '9 Jakhoo Hill' explores changing values, and human conflicts in the play. Justify.
2. Comment on '9 Jakhoo Hill' as a timeless portrayal of love and greed.
3. Write a note on the theme of play.

**SECTION – C**  
**(Language Component)**

**VI. Make Notes either in Linear Format or Flowchart, for any ONE of the following passages:**

**1x5=5**

a) The Internet is a huge computer network. It connects millions of computers to each other across the world. Any two computers connected to the internet, wherever they are, can exchange information. The internet is a fast and efficient way for information to travel around the world. This is why it is sometimes called the information superhighway.

With a computer connected to the Net, you can send electronic messages to other users. This is perhaps one of its widest uses. It is also useful to hold electronic conversations which are very often called 'chat'. The internet allows you to transfer computer files from one computer to one or many computers.

Many people use computers for learning or study purposes. They use it to search and find information on thousands of different subjects. These days, the internet is also used for buying and selling goods. This is known as 'e-commerce' or 'e-com' in short. Today, banks do not want their customers to crowd the bank counters. So, more and more banks and financial institutions are encouraging their customers to conduct all their transactions through the Net. It is also possible to book tickets for travel by rail, road and air using the Net. The number of people connected to the internet and the volume of information going through it is increasing at an amazing rate. It is bringing about a change in how and where people live and work. People are beginning to work from their home, do their shopping, visit libraries, select and watch videos, all through the Net.

OR

b) Have you ever come across anyone who's lost his or her memory after an accident or a shock? This loss of one's ability to remember is called amnesia. Very often, a person who is affected by amnesia forgets who he is or where he is. Sometimes a person loses old or even recent memories. Sometimes the loss may be partial or total.

What are the causes of amnesia?

To understand it's caused, it is necessary to understand the function of the human brain in relation to memory. Where is memory stored in the brain? If you thought all your memory is stored in one bank, you're wrong, memories of information, experiences and people appear to be stored in different parts of the brain. And any condition that interferes with the function of this system can cause amnesia. One of the frequent causes of amnesia is ageing. As we grow older the heart's function as well as the walls of blood vessels undergo a change. The heart does not pump enough blood to the brain cells or sometimes the blood cells do not receive certain nutrients in sufficient measure. This leads to dead brain cells in small portions of the brain. Long and short-term memories are stored in different portions of the brain, and many older people can recall events that took place years ago, although they may be unable to remember what they ate at their last meal. The inability to store or learn new information may also occur with advanced age. Several degenerative diseases of old age can cause profound amnesia. Primarily in older men, transient global amnesia causes severe loss of memory for minutes or hours. Can anything be done about it? Hardly anything. This is a progressive condition about which little can be done.

**VII. Write a Report on any ONE of the following topics:**

**1x5=5**

a) You are the Chief Engineer of BMRCL. You have been entrusted with the completion of Metro work from Yelachenahalli to Nice Road. Write a status report in a prescribed format with details of

- Work completed so far
- Work to be completed
- Reasons for the slowdown of the work

OR

b) Tourism is a rapidly growing industry in India, foreign tourists are being attracted. The Department of Tourism asked Kumar Travel Consultancy, Bangalore to conduct a survey of last three years visit of foreign tourists in South India and to submit a report. Write a Report using the following hints in appropriate format:

- To the Commissioner, Department of Tourism, New Delhi
- Method of collecting data
- Different types of tourists and the purpose of visit
- Opinion of the places/facilities/food items

Recommendations:

- Air India services to be improved
- Safeguarding the foreign tourists
- Quality of food items must be improved

**VIII. Life Skills & Social Activities**

**1x5=5**

a) List five different ways to search for jobs or internship.

OR

b) Explain important criteria for choosing your career.

OR

c) Mention the personality traits of your role model and identify any three traits which you would like to imbibe.

**IX. Rearrange the words in correct order to make complete sentences:**

**5x1=5**

a) to / the / company / goods / Vietnam / exports.

b) was / performance / impressed / with / quite / his / I.

c) in the / are / building / city / in pink colour / painted / most of the

d) the temple architecture / form an / sculptures and paintings / of / essential part

e) like / digital / while / prefer / wristwatches / mechanical ones / others / some people

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