Rising Sun – I
An anthology of Prose, Poetry and Fiction

Board of Editors

EMERALD PUBLISHERS
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Published by
Olivannan Gopalakrishnan
Emerald Publishers
15A, First Floor, Casa Major Road
Egmore, Chennai – 600 008.
☎: +91 44 28193206, 4246994
✉: info@emeraldpublishers.com
🌐: www.emeraldpublishers.com

Price : ₹ 150
ISBN : 9788179664971

Printed at : Aruna Enterprises, Chennai.
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The Art of Reading
Lin Yutang

READING

Reading or the enjoyment of books has always been regarded among the charms of a cultured life and is respected and envied by those who rarely give themselves that privilege. This is easy to understand when we compare the difference between the life of a man who does no reading and that of a man who does. The man who has not the habit of reading is imprisoned in his immediate world, in respect to time and space. His life falls into a set routine; he is limited to contact and conversation with a few friends and acquaintances, and he sees only what happens in his immediate neighborhood. From this prison there is no escape. But the moment he takes up a book, he immediately enters a different world, and if it is a good book, he is immediately put in touch with one of the best talkers of the world. This talker leads him on and carries him into a different country or a different age, or unburdens to him some of his personal regrets, or discusses with him some special line or aspect of life that the reader knows nothing about. An ancient author puts him in communion with a dead spirit of long ago, and as he reads along, he begins to imagine what that ancient author looked like and what type of person he was. Both Mencius and Ts’ao Ch’ien, China’s greatest historian, have expressed the same idea. Now to be able to live two hours out of twelve in a different world and take one’s thoughts off the claims of the immediate present is, of course, a privilege to be envied by people shut up in their bodily prison. Such a change of environment is really similar to travel in its psychological effect.

But there is more to it than this. The reader is always carried away into a world of thought and reflection. Even if it is a book about physical events, there is a difference between seeing such events in person or living through them, and reading about them in books, for then the events always assume the quality of a spectacle and the reader becomes a detached spectator. The best reading is therefore that which leads us into this contemplative mood, and not that which is merely occupied with the report of events. The tremendous amount of time spent
on newspapers I regard as not reading at all, for the average readers of papers are mainly concerned with getting reports about events and happenings without contemplative value.

The best formula for the object of reading, in my opinion, was stated by Huang Shanku, a Sung poet and friend of Su Tungp’o. He said, “A scholar who hasn’t read anything for three days feels that his talk has no flavor (becomes insipid), and his own face becomes hateful to look at (in the mirror).” What he means, of course, is that reading gives a man a certain charm and flavor, which is the entire object of reading, and only reading with this object can be called an art. One doesn’t read to “improve one’s mind,” because when one begins to think of improving his mind, all the pleasure of reading is gone. He is the type of person who says to himself: “I must read Shakespeare, and I must read Sophocles, and I must read the entire Five Foot Shelf of Dr. Eliot, so I can become an educated man.” I am sure that man will never become educated. He will force himself one evening to read Shakespeare’s Hamlet and come away, as if from a bad dream, with no greater benefit than that he is able to say that he has “read” Hamlet. Anyone who reads a book with a sense of obligation does not understand the art of reading. This type of reading with a business purpose is in no way different from a senator’s reading up of files and reports before he makes a speech. It is asking for business advice and information, and not reading at all.

Reading for the cultivation of personal charm of appearance and flavor in speech is then, according to Huang, the only admissible kind of reading. This charm of appearance must evidently be interpreted as something other than physical beauty. What Huang means by “hateful to look at” is not physical ugliness. There are ugly faces that have a fascinating charm and beautiful faces that are insipid to look at. I have among my Chinese friends one whose head is shaped like a bomb and yet who is nevertheless always a pleasure to see. The most beautiful face among Western authors, so far as I have seen them in pictures, was that of G. K. Chesterton. There was such a diabolical conglomeration of mustache, glasses, fairly bushy eyebrows and knitted lines where the eyebrows met! One felt there were a vast number of ideas playing about inside that forehead, ready at any time
to burst out from those quizzically penetrating eyes. That is what Huang would call a beautiful face, a face not made up by powder and rouge, but by the sheer force of thinking. As for flavour of speech, it all depends on one’s way of reading. Whether one has “flavour” or not in his talk, depends on his method of reading. If a reader gets the flavour of books, he will show that favour in his conversations, he cannot help also having a flavour in his writing.

Hence I consider flavour or taste as the key to all reading. It necessarily follows that taste is selective and individual, like the taste for food. The most hygienic way of eating is, after all, eating what one likes, for then one is sure of his digestion. In reading as in eating, what is one man’s meat may be another’s poison. A teacher cannot force his pupils to like what he likes in reading, and a parent cannot expect his children to have the same taste as himself. And if the reader has no taste for what he reads, all the time is wasted. As Yuan Chuanglang says, “You can leave the books that you don’t like alone, and let other people read them.”

There can be, therefore, no books that one absolutely must read. For our intellectual interests grow like a tree or flow like a river. So long as there is proper sap, the tree will grow anyhow, and so long as there is fresh current from the spring, the water will flow. When water strikes a granite cliff, it just goes around it; when it finds itself in a pleasant low valley, it stops and meanders there a while; when it finds itself traveling over rapids, it hurries forward. Thus, without any effort or determined aim, it is sure of reaching the sea some day. There are no books in this world that everybody must read, but only books that a person must read at a certain time in a given place under given circumstances and at a given period of his life. I rather think that reading, like matrimony, is determined by fate or yinyuan. Even if there is a certain book that everyone must read, like the Bible, there is a time for it. When one’s thoughts and experience have not reached a certain point for reading a masterpiece, the masterpiece will leave only a bad flavor on his palate. Confucius said, “When one is fifty, once may read the Book of Changes,” which means that one should not read it at forty-five. The extremely mild flavor of Confucius’ own sayings in the Analects and his mature wisdom cannot be appreciated until one becomes mature himself.
Furthermore, the same reader reading the same book at different periods, gets a different flavor out of it. For instance, we enjoy a book more after we have had a personal talk with the author himself, or even after having seen a picture of his face, and one gets again a different flavor sometimes after one has broken off friendship with the author. A person gets a kind of flavor form reading the Book of Changes at forty, and gets another kind of flavor reading it at fifty, after he has seen more changes in life. Therefore, all good books can be read with profit and renewed pleasure a second time. I was made to read Westward Ho! and Henry Esmond in my college days, but while I was capable of appreciating Westward Ho! in my ’teens, the real flavor of Henry Esmond escaped me entirely until I reflected about it later on, and suspected there was vastly more charm in that book than I had then been capable of appreciating.

Reading, therefore, is an act considering of two sides, the author and the reader. The net gain comes as much from the reader’s contribution through his own insight and experience as from the author’s own. In speaking about the Confucian Analacts, the Sung Confucianist Ch’eng Yich’uan said, “There are readers and readers. Some read the Analacts and feel that nothing has happened, some are pleased with one or two lines in it, and some begin to wave their hands and dance on their legs unconsciously.”

I regard the discovery of one’s favourite author as the most critical event in one’s intellectual development. There is such a thing as the affinity of spirits, and among the authors of ancient and modern times, one must try to find an author whose spirit is akin with his own. Only in this way can one get any real good out of reading. One has to be independent and search out his masters. Who is one’s favourite author, no one can tell, probably not even the man himself. It is like love at first sight. The reader cannot be told to love this one or that one, but when he has found the author he loves, he knows it himself by a kind of instinct. We have such famous cases of discoveries of authors. Scholars seem to have lived in different ages, separated by centuries, and yet their modes of thinking and feeling were so akin that their coming together across the pages of a book was like a person finding his own image...
Introduction

Lin Yutang (1895–1976) was a Chinese writer, translator, linguist, philosopher and inventor. His informal but polished style in both Chinese and English made him one of the most influential writers of his generation. The essay is a part of Yutang’s book *The Importance of Living* written to express his highly subjective, personal feelings after years of studying ancient Chinese texts, and created a wonderfully clear guide to the simple life.

Glossary

**Huang** : Chinese scholars have several names: a personal name, a literary name or courtesy name, and fancy name. Shanku (‘Recluse of the Valley’) is the fancy name of Huang Tinghien (1045 AD-1105 AD). Luchih is his literary name.

**Sung** : the Sung dynasty which lasted from 960 AD to 1279 AD

**Su Tungp’o** : the fancy name (‘Recluse of the Eastern Hillside’) of Su Shih (1036 AD-1101 AD), one of the ‘leisure - class intelligentsia’ for whom Lin Yutang had much admiration. Lin Yutang went through the correspondence between Su Tungp’o and Huang Shanku.

**Insipid** : weak, dull, lifeless

**Shakespeare** : the most celebrated English poet and dramatist (1564-1616) Author of 37 plays such as ‘Macbeth’, ‘Othello’, ‘Julius Caesar’, ‘Antony and Cleopatra’ and ‘Romeo and Juliet’.

**Sophocles** : the famous Greek tragedian (496 BC to 406 BC). ‘Oedipus’ is his greatest work.

**Eliot** : T.S Eliot (1888 – 1965), a major poet, dramatist and critic in English literature

**G.K. Chesterton** : a brilliant essayist (1874- 1936) who became England’s philosopher

**diabolical** : evil, devilish

**conglomeration** : of different things gathered

**quizzical** : expressing confusion and amusement

**Yuan Chunglang** : one of the sixteenth century Chinese writers whose ‘cult of idleness’ has influenced Lin Yutan thinking. One of the 3 Yuan brothers who started the school of self-expression.

**Confucius** : Chinese sage (551-478 BC). Most revered teacher of moral and political wisdom. Reference for parents and ancestors was the important part of his teachings. Lin Yutang regards Confucius as ‘an art artist of life’.

**Anaclets** : the most important collection of Confucius’ sayings
Comprehension

i) Answer the following questions in a paragraph.
1. How does Lin Yutang bring out the difference between the life of a man who does no reading and that of a man who does?
2. What is Lin Yutang’s concept of beauty?
3. What does Lin Yutang comment on the relationship between the author and the reader?
4. When can reading be called an art?
5. Do you agree with all the points made by Yutang? If not, elaborate on the things you disagree with.

ii) Answer the following questions in an essay.
1. How does Lin Yutang bring out the importance of the Art of Reading?
2. Write a critical appreciation of Yutang’s the Art of Reading, keeping in mind your own reading habits.
Lesson No: 2

How I Argued While In England

A.S. Panchapakesa Ayyar

READING

While in England, I was most surprised to see the appalling ignorance there of India and things of India. It was notorious that few people in England ever cared about India. The mere word 'India' was guaranteed to empty not only the House of Commons, but any decent lecture hall in Oxford or Cambridge. China and Japan interested the British more than India. That was but natural, for three reasons. Firstly, there was a disinclination on the part of many democratic Britons to think of this great dependency ruled by a bureaucracy from their democracy, although most of them felt, like H.G. Wells, that the 'Semi-barbarous' conditions of India, it was inevitable. Secondly, several felt India to be an ever-recurring nuisance, in the shape of agitators, round-tablers, etc. Lastly, millions felt that they could never show the real truth about India, and that it would be futile, and a sheer waste of time, to decide between the lurid accounts of missionaries, ex-bureaucrats and Miss Mayos, and the glowing accounts given by young Indians their midst and by the under statesmen of India who visited England for round-table conferences, league delegations etc, and often spoke contradictorily at different places, and, not unoften, denied making the speeches they did, or pretended to have made speeches they never did.

One English lady reporter told me about one of these statesmen, “Oh! Mr. Ayyar! What a man! So moderate and timid, a veritable lamb at the round-table conference, and so extremist and intransigent in his room when I went to interview! How can you explain it”? I said, “There is a story in our books of a certain donkey which used to appear itself in a lion’s skin and roar before private audience of friends in its stable, but used to appear in its own donkey’s skin and bray when lions were about.” She laughed, and said “Excuse me, the phenomenon is present in our land too.” How these old stories make the whole world kin! How stupid of me to think that man was the only donkey!
At a house party in London given by a Quaker lady who belonged to the ‘Friends of India’ society, when I was explaining our fitness for Swaraj, a lady who had finished reading Eleanor Rathbone’s book Child Marriage The Indian Minotaur asked me, “Is it true that Hindu girls marry at the age of twelve and bring forth children at the age of thirteen?” There was a roar of laughter from the rest. “Yes,” I replied. “and I am one of those children. How am I worse than any Englishman born to a lady of thirty? If a wheat crop, as good as the rest, can be raised in three months, instead of nine, why not save the six months.” All laughed again.

“You ought to kill away the millions of cows which crossed to give milk,” said an old man there to me, sipping his tea. “We shall do that once humanity has agreed to kill away the pensioners and the old and the sick who are unable to do any work,” said I, and there was general laughter.

“Don’t you think that the ablest people should rule a country, irrespective of whether they are natives or foreigners?” asked a conservatives party lady. “No, any more than I think that the ablest man should be accepted as her husband by woman ‘Irrespective of whether she likes him or not,” said I.

“Your restrictions on widow remarriage, how hideous they are,” said a man. “There is no legal bar to a widow’s marriage in India now. The system too is not so bad as it looks. Every woman gets her innings, owing to the system of compulsory marriage for women. She cannot complain if she is bowled out,” said I. “Here, in England, millions of women don’t get a chance at all and have to die as spinsters, having lived an incomplete and fractional existence.” “How so?” “Man or woman, when born, is one-third. When they marry they become two-thirds. When they get a child they complete.” “Our spinsters don’t consider that they become only one-third,” said he. “A born blind man will find it hard to estimate his loss,” said I. “But a man who becomes blind will realise it only too well, and cry out, like Milton:-

“Oh dark, dark, dark,
Unutterably dark,
Without all hope of day.”
An Indian, who was a fanatical advocate of the English language as the sole medium of instruction in Indian schools and colleges, said, at a meeting of Indians in London, “How can we manage without English? A Kashmiri, a Madrasi, a Bengali and a Mahratta, meeting a Nagpuri, how will they understand one another without English?” “As they understood one another in the days of Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhwa,” said I. “But we are so good at speaking English,” said he, “much better than any other non-English people.” “Yes,” said I, “because they don’t have to study English to get highest jobs in their country. Suppose a person by compulsion and constant practice has become an expert servant, should he always be a servant?”

Another day, an Indian friend was all excitement and indignation when he narrated a so-called ‘Insult’ to Indians at the air exhibition at Wembly. A man distributed notices in English. Seeing a group of Indians including Tambe Sastri, who speak English better than most Englishmen, he had the temerity to ask, “Any of you know English?” said excitedly. “Why, what is wrong in that”? asked I. “He wouldn’t have expected a group of Russians or Germany, Chinese, or even Persians, to know English, and might have taken the Indians too to be a similar nation knowing its own language.”

In this connection, I must mention a funny incident. An Indian politician gave a lecture about India’s right for freedom before a labour audience, at Birmingham, in his most approved English style. There was tremendous applause at the end. Then a member of the audience got up, and said. “Now, one of you fellows translate for us into English what this gentleman has said so spiritedly in Indian.”

A Chinese gentleman said to me, “In old Chinese medicine, the ashes of three scorpions, dissolved in water given as a potion to cure people of stomach ache! Can you beat that?” “Oh, yes. Even in modern India, the crushed juice of crabs and earthworms is given as a cure for consumption. So too, the juice of sugarcanes grown with dead cobras and poisonous snakes as manure.”

“What are you three hundred millions of Indian doing, fighting with one another?” asked an Englishman of me one day, in 1921. At any rate, we are not murdering one another as you were doing in the Great War,” said I.
At an East India Association gathering, an English friend said to me, “From the days of Queen Victoria’s proclamation Indians have been given equality with the English. Then why are you still dissatisfied”? “You send your viceroys and governors to us. Do we send our viceroys and governors to?” I asked. “What! You want to do that?” said he in astonishment. “Well, we must do that if there is real equality,” said I.

An Irish friend said to me at a Social, at the Irish Society in London, “Once, in the height of our fight for liberty, we issued an appeal, ‘All Irishmen must die for Ireland’, and sent a copy of it to Shaw. He replied, ‘Some few must live for Ireland. I mean to be one of them.’ ”

A communist was preaching in the Indian hostel about free love. “There is no woman who is at heart not hankering after a variety of lovers,” said he. A heckler asked him, “Do your mother, wife and sister hanker like this?” The communist shouted out, “Don’t be personal.” “Well,” said the heckler, “I am personal, and shall always be personal. There is no man or woman alive who is not personal. And I want a wife who will be personal to me.”

An Indian has become intimate with an English girl. He had no intention of marrying her. An Indian friend said to him, “What will be the ultimate result of all this? She will bear you a daughter who will be neglected by you and will grow up in degradation, and may, one day, be seduced by a Negro from West Africa. So, leave off this dishonourable connection at once.” The Indian shed tears at the very thought of his unborn daughter’s fate, and promised to break off. The affair shows, incidentally, that an Indian loves his children more than he does his wife. Dushyanta and Buddha both loved their children more than their wives. At the final parting, before the great renunciation, Buddha wanted to kiss his babe (not his wife!) and desisted lest the wife should wake up.

Once, Dr. Thomas, Dr. Burnett and other great Indologists came to the Y.M.C.A. hostel to clear some doubts from a great Bengali scholar, a samnyasin, who had come there. They began reading some passages from an Upanishad. The samnyasin shut his ears with both his hands, crying out “Siva, Siva! What a horrible mispronunciation! It is equal to a thousand acts of child destruction!” It was perfectly true that the English savants murdered the Sanskrit pronunciation.
But this samnyasin could not have produced a Vedic index, like Macdonnel and Keith, or even written critical essays like Thomas and Burnett.

“Did your Sanskrit poets always uphold a dead conservatism and invariably praise old things?” asked an Oxford Don of me.

“No,” said I. “The greatest of all Sanskrit poets, Kalidas has said, ‘All things old are not necessarily good: nor are things new necessarily bad: the wise enquire and decide themselves, whereas the fools blindly follow the opinion of others!’”

“Remarkably wise that,” said he. “Tell me, had you in India, any conception of liberty for the subject, as against the king, fore the British came there?”

“Oh, yes,” I said. “There was a Tamil saint called Appar. He worshipped Siva. His king, Mahendra Varma Pallavan asked him to become a Buddhist like him, saying, ‘You are my subject, and must obey me. Else, I shall have you beheaded at once.’ Quick came the reply, ‘I am no man’s subject. Nor do I fear death. So, your threat will not work.’ “A very advanced conception that, almost Bolsheik,” said the don. “By the way, had you any conception of socialism or communism? Our doctrine of Lokasangraha, in the Gita, provide for the welfare of every single being in the world, and is the highest socialism imaginable,” said I. “A Tamil poet, Kambar, writing eight f hundred years ago, has said that in Ramrajya, or the ideal state, there is no man who has not got enough, no man who has got more than enough, no man who is not a master of himself, no man who is a master of another.” “It is impossible to exceed that in any scheme of socialism or communism,” said the don. Then his interest in India being roused, he asked me to name the best history of India written by an Indian, so that he might read it. I replied, “Vincent Smith’s history is quite good.” “Oh no, I want to read a history written by an Indian,” said he. “No foreigner can interpret the spirit of a country truly. It applies all the more to a strange country with a unique civilisation like India.” “Unfortunately there is no good history of India written by an Indian yet,” said I. His face suddenly became red with anger and indignation. “You Indians are as brilliant as any Englishmen and you come in hordes to Oxford for the I.C.S., Bar, and what not. Yet, none of you have had enough love for your motherland to write her history. If only I had known that, I would never have admitted any of you here,” said he.
Introduction

A. S. Panchapakesa Ayyar (1899-1963) was one of the early Indian writers in English. He played well the roles of author, editor, translator working on various subjects like fiction, criticism, interpretation, Carnatic music and history, commentaries and biography. He has 108 works in 267 publications in 4 languages to his credit. The essay gives a view of his times in England and the British-Indian relations of the time.

Glossary

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<th>Term</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tr>
<td>appalling</td>
<td>shocking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dependency</td>
<td>a state controlled by another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bureaucracy</td>
<td>governance by ineffective officials who follow rules and regulations in stupid manner</td>
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<tr>
<td>H.G. Wells</td>
<td>an English writer (1866-1946) now best remembered for his scientific romances such as ‘The Invisible Man’ and for his ‘The Outline of History’</td>
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<tr>
<td>lurid</td>
<td>shocking, unfavourable, dark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miss Mayos</td>
<td>Miss Mayo and the likes of her. Her ‘Mother India’, dedicated to ‘the peoples of India’, was a controversial work (1927). Under the caption ‘Drain Inspector’s Report’, Mahatma Gandhi published in his ‘Young India’, his reaction to Miss Mayo’s prejudiced views on Indian society. He described this English lady as “an avowed Indophobe and Anglophile refusing to see anything good about Indians and anything bad about the British and their rule.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>glowing</td>
<td>praise-worthy; colourful, bright</td>
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<td>veritable</td>
<td>real; truthful</td>
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<td>lamb</td>
<td>a young gentle person</td>
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<tr>
<td>intransigent</td>
<td>uncompromising; irreconcilable</td>
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<td>Quaker</td>
<td>member of a Christian religious group (opposes violence and preaches brotherly love simplicity of life), known as the Friends of Soc. founded by George Fox in 1647</td>
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<td>Minotaur</td>
<td>a creature which had the body of a man head of a bull, according to ancient Greek mythology</td>
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<tr>
<td>bowled out</td>
<td>forced to leave the field</td>
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<td>Milton</td>
<td>an English poet (1608-74) who became blind. The quote is from his ‘Samson Agonistes’, a tragedy.</td>
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<td>Sankara</td>
<td>Born in 788 AD at Kaladi in South India, Shankara-charya built a philosophical system, Advaita Vedanta (non-dualist Vedanta), and started religious orders for Hindu monks.</td>
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Ramanuja: Besides Adhi Sankara, Sri Ramanuja and Sri Madhwa are revered as great preceptors (Archaryas) of Vedantic Hinduism. Born at Sriperumpudur in South India, Ramanuja (1017-1137 AD) propagated the visishtadwaita philosophy, taught the path of surrender to reach God and denounced religious practices in the name of caste.

Madhwa: Born at Udipi in South India, Madhwhacharya (1238-1317 AD) preached the doctrine of Dwain’ (Dualism) which believes in the uniqueness and supremacy of Lord Narayana and prescribes Devotion (Bhakti) as the only means to attain the Ultimate Reality.

temery: rashness; foolish boldness
spiritedly: forcefully
the Great War: the First World War (1914-1918). The author here reminds a European of the tremendous casualties (about 2 crore) in the War in which Europeans killed their own brethren.

Victoria's proclamation: an official public statement by Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom (1819-1901) when she took over the reign of British India from the East India Company in 1858.

Shaw: George Bernard Shaw (1836-1950), one of the most distinguished English dramatists. He won world-wide reputation for his biting criticism and brilliant wit. Being an Irishman, he did not lose Irishmen’s pride, humour and self-esteem.

hankering: longing
heckler: one who interrupts a public lecture with unfriendly remarks

Dushyanta: a king of the Puru dynasty, who married Sakuntala. The legend is dramatised in Kalidasa’s ‘Sakuntala’ in Sanskrit literature.

Buddha: ‘The Enlightened’, the sage of the Sakyas; founder of Buddhism; Siddhartha (563? -483? BC). When he left the palace for a holy life of an ascetic, his wife (Yasodhara) and their son (Rahul) were sleeping.

Renunciation: formal act of giving up claim to property or connections

YMCA: Young Men’s Christian Association founded in 1844 by George Williams in London, seeking to analyse not only the spiritual but other talents of the youth.

the Upanishad: While the contents of the Upanishads, the gems of the Vedantic philosophy, appear to be simple narratives of profound truth, even great Indian authorities on Vedantic texts find there many ambiguities and offer different interpretations to the verses. Mispronunciations of the passages in the Upanishads by Western scholars will create a lot of confusion and misunderstanding, the author.
warns his friends interested in Indology.

**Appar**: Born in a Saivite family, Appar (Navukkarasai) became a Jain. When he had a chronic stomach-ache he was converted back to Saivism by his sister; he got relief and began to sing poems in honour of Lord Shiva. On the orders of Mahendravarman, the Pallava ruler (580 - 630 AD) the Jains attempted in vain to torture him. Undaunted, Appar declared, “namarkkum kudiyallam namanai yanchoin”. (To none are we subject, Death we do not fear . . . ) This hymn was an oft-quoted poem by Tamils during the independence movement against British imperialism — a telling example by the author to establish his view that love of freedom is inherent in Indian ethos too.

**Bolshevick**: Marxist; socialist who fought for the establishment of Soviet Republic in 1917

**Lokasangraha**: world-union; welfare of humanity

**the Gita**: the Bhagavad Gita (Divine Song), an episode in Vyasa’s ‘Mahabharat’, a conversation (in 700 verses) dealing with the spiritual quest of man in the context of his practical worldly life

**Kambar**: “vanmai illai or varumai inmaiyal; thinmai illai neri cherunai inmaiyal” Kamba Ramayanam (Tamil)

**Vincent Smith**: one of the early English historians (1843-1920). Vincent Smith who had great impact on the English-educated Indian readers, believed that once the British rule was withdrawn from India she would relapse into political chaos.

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**Comprehension**

**i) Answer the following questions in a paragraph.**

1. Who do men love more? Whose example does Ayyar illustrate?
2. What does Ayyar say about the family life and marriage in India?
3. What is Ayyar’s concept of completeness? How complete are humans when they are born?
4. What should Indians be able to do if they were really equal? Why?
5. Do you agree with Ayyar when he says that it was not an ‘insult’?

**ii) Answer the following questions in an essay.**

1. How does Ayyar bring out his wit and scholarship in his discussion with Englishmen? Elucidate the title.
2. Summarise the important points the author was trying to convey.
It is a strange twist of history that a man who left a fortune to further the ends of peace should have earned his vast wealth by the invention and manufacture of explosives which killed millions of his fellow-men in war.

His name was Alfred Bernhard Nobel. He was born in Stockholm in 1833, the son of Immanuel Nobel, an architect who became bankrupt in the year of Alfred’s birth. Immanuel turned his attention to the manufacture of rubber, first in Finland, then in Russia. In 1842, when Alfred was nine years old, he moved his wife and four sons to St. Petersburg — now called Leningrad.

In a foreign land, Alfred’s education was left in the hands of his mother. He was a sickly boy, pale and thin, with a high and bumpy forehead and pair of large, burning eyes. He grew into a man full of strange contradictions; one who could be sensitive and callous, sociable and aloof, idealistic and cynical. When an explosion wrecked his factory at Heleneborg in 1864, killing his brother Emil, he commented drily: ‘It was not my fault. It was inevitable. How can one expect a new explosive to be created without loss of life?’

The same man was capable of writing poetry... While Alfred was growing up, his father was growing rich, manufacturing explosive mines for use against shipping and selling them to the Russian Government. There were some who called Immanuel a ‘merchant of death’, but he had no care for that. Was he not rich? Did he not live in luxury and have powerful friends at Court? His only anxiety was Alfred’s ill-health. The boy was so frail that his mother had forbidden the usual rough games for children of his age. He spent a great deal of time in bed, devouring books on all manner of subjects and in several languages. By the time he was sixteen he was fluent in English, Russian and French.

A little longer and his father decided that it was time for young Alfred to see a bit of the world. Russia was making ready for war, business was booming, and
he wanted his son to make contact with people abroad. Immanuel was proud of his son’s intelligence and learning. He provided the money and Alfred went off on a two-year tour of Europe and America. He returned to Russia in July, 1852, just before the outbreak of the Crimean War.

The defeat of Russia in that war brought Immanuel to the verge of ruin. His contract with Russian Government had expired; there was a new Tsar, who was not interested in re-armament, and the contract was not renewed. At this critical moment, a fire destroyed Immanuel’s factory.

If disaster was to be averted, money had to be raised by any means, outside Russia. Alfred was sent off w Europe where he had made business connections, to try his luck. He went first to London, but found the British unwilling to invest money in a Russian firm. He had some success in Paris and returned home but in spite of efforts the firm did not survive.

The journey had imposed a great strain on Alfred’s frail strength. He was seriously ill and when he recovered, his mother and father returned to Sweden, taking with them their youngest son, Emil. Alfred remained in St. Petersburg with his elder brothers.

As his health improved, ‘he spent many hours pondering over the problem of breathing new life into the business. It could be done, he thought, with the invention of a new explosive; the Governments of the world were always interested in that sort of thing. These ‘sea-mines’ his father had produced were tin-pot affairs, actually; what was wanted was something infinitely more destructive...

Then came a letter from his father, drawing his attention to something called ‘explosive oil’, discovered by Sobreo in 1847. Professor Sinin, an Italian, had placed a drop of it on an anvil and made it explode by hitting it with a hammer. He had called it ‘nitro-glycerine’, and experiments with it had caused injuries to many. It might be useful, Immanuel thought...

Alfred was not at all discouraged by the dangerous nature of this stuff. He began to experiment. It was made, he discovered, by treating glycerine with nitric and sulphuric acids: at the least shock it exploded with tremendous violence.
This was just what he wanted. But first he must find a sure and simple method of exploding it. Why not use gunpowder? He filled a glass tube with nitro-glycerine, closed it with a stopper and put it in a tin can filled with gunpowder. A wick-fuse was easy to insert. He lit the fuse—a brief pause—a tremendous explosion, far more powerful than anything he had known before.

Excellent stuff! You may imagine how Alfred rubbed his hands in satisfaction. And he was not alone in appreciating, the qualities of this powerful explosive; the Government of Sweden was ready to advance money for more experiments.

Alfred built a factory at Heleneborg, but he was not yet satisfied with the explosive and fully aware of its limitations. It was dangerous to use and difficult to transport; the method of firing the stuff was too clumsy and complicated. Something would have to be done about that. Meanwhile, he would carry on manufacturing it.

He was away in Stockholm when the Heleneborg explosion occurred, reducing the factory to rubble, and killing his brother, Emil. Five other people were killed, and the Government withdrew Alfred’s licence for the manufacture of explosives.

He had to move. Within a month or two he had set up a new factory at Hamburg and, within eight years, he had become an international figure. He had a world-wide market for nitro-glycerine, the most useful blasting agent yet discovered and used by the mining industry everywhere.

There were accidents with the stuff, of course, some of a rather terrible nature. The explosive was transported in shaped zinc containers, which were packed in wooden boxes filled with sawdust. Sometimes the oil ate into the zinc and oozed out of the holes; sometimes it was handled carelessly by people ignorant of its nature. There is even a story of a servant who used it to polish the boots of a Swedish Army officer...

The manufacturing of nitro-glycerine continued. There came a day when a large ship carrying cases of the explosive from Hamburg to Chile blew up at sea, without survivors. Soon after came the ‘New York Incident’. A German
sales-representative left a box of nitro-glycerine in his hotel; the porter, finding that the box was giving off an unpleasant smell, threw it out into the street. There as a shattering explosion. Although there were no casualties, all the windows within a hundred yards of the hotel were broken. Public and Press were naturally indignant; there was an outcry that led to a ban being placed on the manufacture of the explosive in Sweden, Belgium and England. In America a Bill was passed declaring that, in the event of a fatal accident any manufacturer of nitro-glycerine would be charged with murder and liable to death by hanging. All this, of course was rather a nuisance to Alfred. His own factory in Hamburg was destroyed by an explosion and he found himself on the brink of ruin. He must do something to discover a method by which the explosive could be safely moved and stored.

He had a brilliant idea. The soil around Hamburg was rich in a special kind of clay called keiselguhr---earth mixed with remains fossil shells. Quantities of this clay were brought into his laboratory and Alfred poured some ‘explosive oil’ over it. He found that the clay absorbed nitro-glycerine without in any way lessening its explosive power. The clay was allowed to dry, and then powdered, losing nothing in the process, but becoming safe to manufacture and easy to transport. The mixture was patented by Alfred Nobel under two names: ‘Nobel Safety Powder’ and ‘Dynamite’. It remains, today, the safest and most widely-used of all explosives.

Dynamite came on to the market in 1867. Alfred was now on the road to becoming one of the world’s richest men. In America the ‘Atlantic Giant Powder Company’ was formed to manufacture dynamite, with Nobel as the principal shareholder. In Europe there was the ‘Latin Noble Trust’ to control manufacture of the explosive in seven countries. A Commission of Inquiry was held in England to discuss the problem of safety, and Nobel was called before it. He had, he stated, stopped the manufacture of nitro-glycerine as soon as the dangers became apparent; dynamite had eliminated most of the hazards, but he could not hold himself responsible for accidents which occurred due to circumstances beyond his control. Soon after this the British Dynamite Company was formed, and made a profit of one thousand per cent within six years. Other branches of the company were established in many parts of the world.
Immanuel Nobel died in 1872. His last invention was an early-type machine-gun, which he wanted Alfred to manufacture. 'It will make you the master of mankind in war and peace all over the world', he wrote in his last letter.

Alfred, however, had little interest in politics, though his inventions were beginning to play their part in the political life of Europe—seething, at this time, with unrest and revolutionary spirit. Nobel's dynamite bomb was a useful aid in the elimination of unpopular political figures; the first dynamite shells to be used in war were fired by the Germans in 1871 into a densely-populated area of Paris, during the Franco-Prussian War.

Alfred had created another difficulty for Governments by the ease with which dynamite could be obtained and transported. Any politically-minded brawler with a distaste for the reigning authority could walk into any of Alfred's factories, buy a few sticks of dynamite, and walk off with it in his pocket—with unpleasant consequences for someone or other. Governments grew uneasy and passed laws restricting the possession and carriage of the explosive.

Alfred went on with his experiments, seeking an explosive more powerful than dynamite: He succeeded in producing 'cordite' and 'gelignite'—super-explosives which were used in blasting-out the great tunnels of Simplon, Arlberg and St. Gottard, which made possible rapid communication between the countries north and south of the Alps. This was his greatest contribution to the service of mankind. For most people, he was a "merchant of death", the true son of his father. In 1888, he gave the world an explosive powder, smokeless and slow-burning, for use in fire-arms. He called it 'ballistite'.

That is the sum total of Alfred's 'inventions'. But what of his life? What manner of man was he?

He was always delicate, and his health was poor. The nature of his researches subjected him to long hours of trial in the midst of noisome chemical fumes, often causing such dreadful headaches that he threw himself down and rolled about in agony. He had reserves of courage and strength of will which amazed everybody who met him. He would never ask his men to take risks which he would not
face himself. Once, when a quantity of dynamite stuck inside a large cask and the workers were afraid to touch it, he crawled into the cask and calmly scraped out the explosive with a knife.

He had courage, yes. Did he enjoy happiness? Probably not. Was he capable of love? Perhaps... ‘There was a girl’, says Egon Larsen, ‘probably his first and last great love, who died a few months after he had met her. He never spoke about her, never courted another girl, and never married. And the woman who was to exert such a powerful influence on him in his last years was another man’s sweetheart and wife.’

And who was the woman who exerted such a powerful influence on him? She was the Countess Bertha von Kinsky, and came of a wealthy Austrian family which had fallen on bad times. Alfred first met her when he was living in a magnificent palace in Paris, the headquarters from which he controlled his far-flung interests. Bertha applied for a post as his secretary, a meeting was arranged, and proved a pleasant surprise for both parties. She was engaged as a secretary, but in a short time she had become something more. Alfred, for all his wealth, was one of the loneliest men in the world, Bertha, he discovered, was the first human being with whom he could discuss his private life. Their friendship lasted only a short while, for Bertha went off to Vienna to marry young Arthur von Suttner, with whom she was deeply in love. She left at a time when Nobel was away on a business trip to Stockholm, but wrote to him, offering her apologies and telling of the telegram from Arthur which had drawn her to Vienna.

Her husband found employment as the war-correspondent in a big Viennese newspaper, and was sent to cover the war which had broken out between Russia and Turkey. He took Bertha with him, and she saw many things which horrified her and left a lasting impression on her mind. After the war, the two left for Paris, where they called on Nobel. Bertha found him unchanged—a shy, polite little man, with greying hair—and he made them welcome. They talked about books, and Alfred remarked: ‘I like novels with a message—propaganda novels.’

That remark had its effect on Bertha. She thought deeply about the words. What message could exercise an influence over the mind of man, for the good of
The world at large? Her husband had been a war-correspondent; she had direct knowledge of the suffering caused by war. Could she not write a book which should be a call for ‘a world war against war—for peace’?

She wrote a novel—a story which had passion and realism—set against the background of the Franco-Prussian War. It was written in German, and its title was Lay Down Arms! Within a month of publication, the book was translated into several European languages, and its authoress earned wide recognition. It won for her the love and respect of all peace-loving people, and when the Third World Peace Congress met at Rome it elected her its president. She was anxious to know the opinion of one man, however—the ‘Dynamite King,’ who was the most powerful ‘merchant of death’ the world had ever known. She sent a copy of the book to Nobel, and received these few words in reply: ‘I have just finished your admirable masterpiece.’

Bertha was not satisfied with this brief recognition. What a master-stroke it would be, she felt, if she could enlist the active support of the Dynamite King for the international movement whose aim was the outlawing of war. She must see Alfred and talk to him...

The Suttners and Alfred Nobel met at Zurich. ‘Inform me, convince me’, Alfred told Bertha, ‘and I will do something great for your movement.’

For a week she battled with Nobel, using every impassioned argument she could think of. He met every plea with one oft-repeated statement; the only way to establish peace was to go on inventing weapons, each more deadly than the last. He even spoke of aerial bombardment and bacteriological warfare. He was convinced that peace could only come through fear----the tear of war when it had reached an ultimate in horror.

Bertha parted from Nobel without reaching an agreement with him. They were never to meet again. She was sure that she had failed in her task, but she had, in fact, made a great impression on Nobel. He had determined to do ‘something great for the movement’.

Early in January, 1893, the idea of forming a prize fund, out of which an award would be made 'to the man or woman who had done most to advance the
idea of general peace in Europe’, was taking shape in his mind. Two years later he made his will. After his death, the greater part of his fortune, amounting to £ 1,750,000, was to be placed in the hands of Swedish and Norwegian trustees. ‘The annual interest’, said Nobel, ‘shall be awarded as prizes to those persons who during the previous year have rendered the greatest services to mankind. The interest shall be divided into five equal parts, one of which shall be awarded to the person who has made the most important discovery or invention in the realm of physics, one to the person who has made the most important chemical discovery or improvement, one to the person who has made the most important physiological or medical discovery, one to the person who has produced the most outstanding work of literature, idealistic in character, and one to the person who has done the most or best work for the brotherhood of nations, the abolition or reduction of standing armies, as well as for the formation or popularization of Peace Congress.’

Merit and service to mankind were to be the sole considerations on which the awards were to be made. Race, nationality and sex were to be forgotten. The Nobel Prize was destined to become the most coveted for which any man of peace and learning might aspire.

Alfred Nobel died at his desk in November, 1896, of a heart attack. Nine years later, Bertha von Suttner was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace. In our own time, the Nobel Prize has been awarded to such gallant men as Ralph Bunche, Albert Schweitzer and Dag Hammarskjöeld—who had some reward for their service to mankind out of the fortune left by the man who traded in death and destruction.

Introduction

Alfred Bernhard Nobel (1833 – 1896) was a Swedish chemist, engineer, inventor, businessman, and philanthropist. Known for inventing dynamite, Nobel also owned Bofors, which he had redirected from its previous role as primarily an iron and steel producer to a major manufacturer of cannon and other armaments. Nobel held 355 different patents, dynamite being the most famous. After reading a premature obituary which condemned him for profiting from the sales of arms, he bequeathed his fortune to institute the Nobel Prizes. The synthetic element nobelium was named after him.
The Merchant Of Death

Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>callous</td>
<td>having no sympathy for others’ feelings or sufferings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>devouring</td>
<td>eating up quickly and hungrily; reading with a passion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimean war</td>
<td>war between Russia and Turkey in Crimea (1853-1856)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsar</td>
<td>male ruler of Russia; tzar; czar.</td>
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<tr>
<td>glycerine</td>
<td>a sticky liquid made from fats, used in making soap, medicine and explosives</td>
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<tr>
<td>hazards</td>
<td>dangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cask</td>
<td>container for storing liquids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brawler</td>
<td>one who takes part in fight or noisy quarrel, often in public place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ralph</td>
<td>the first Black person to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize (1950)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunche</td>
<td>European medical Schweitzer missionary in Africa; Nobel Peace Prize in 1952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albert</td>
<td>European medical Schweitzer missionary in Africa; Nobel Peace Prize in 1952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dag</td>
<td>Secretary-General of the United Nations, died an air-crash in 1961, posthumously awarded the Nobel Peace Prize</td>
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Comprehension

i) Answer the following questions in a paragraph.

1. Describe Alfred Nobel’s childhood and youth.
2. Bring out the significant traits in the personality of Nobel.
3. What is ‘Lay Down Arms’? How did the book come about?
4. What was your perception of Alfred Nobel before reading the essay? Has it changed in some way?
5. Write a brief note on any two Nobel Laureates you are familiar with.

ii) Answer the following questions in an essay.

1. Write about the influence of Bertha von Kinsky and Alfred Nobel on each other.
2. How did the ‘merchant of death’ become a ‘messenger of peace’?
Ever since the UN Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm in 1972, June 5 is observed annually as the Environment Day. The day is celebrated with activities reaffirming concern for the preservation and enhancement of the environment.

Today the words ‘environment’, ‘ecology’ and ‘balance of nature’ are part of the vocabulary of both the laity and scholars. Until 1972 nobody took an ecologist seriously, especially those who had political or economic power nor was his views sought as he was considered an impractical visionary. But Rachel Carson’s book ‘Silent Spring’ made the government of her country sit up and listen to her ideas. Her hook shocked and disturbed many and to some others, it was clarification and revelation. The facts set out in the book were appalling.

Not many youngsters in this country are familiar with the book ‘Silent Spring’ or its author. Very few know the various facets of her personality. It is only appropriate that the younger generation in this country should know more about Rachel Carson who started an ecological revolution unknowingly.

Yes, Carson was not an environmentalist in the popular sense nor was she a crusader. Yet when she undertook to write her book ‘Silent Spring’ she never said that “here is an opportunity to write a world shaking book”. She was primarily a scientist and a writer. Through her writings she wanted to make the awesome totality of the natural world clear to all readers.

Carson was a woman well-versed in the life sciences. She was a gifted writer and the beauty of her language appealed to many. She became famous for her three books which explained the ocean’s mysteries. Combining scientific accuracy with vivid prose, she presents a fascinating picture of the water kingdom of curious creatures in these books. While receiving the National Book Award in 1952, she said:
“If there is poetry in my book about the sea it is not because I deliberately put it there, but because no one could write truthfully about the sea and leave out the poetry”.

Rachel Carson who was born in Springdale, Pennsylvania, US, on May 27, 1907, grew up in the countryside which offered her a pleasant childhood and plenty of opportunities to observe little animals, birds, plants and flowers in their natural environment. During the summers, she would wander in the farm with her little dog Candy and watch the butterflies, grasshoppers, the daisies, buttercups and meet the little farm animals — chickens, pigs, rabbits and so on.

Reading aloud was a fairly common pastime in the Carson household. Her mother read beautifully and enjoyed doing so. These reading sessions stirred a book-hunger in Rachel and she became an independent reader at the tender age of six. As the years passed, her appetite for the printed word continued to grow. By the time she was ten and in the fourth grade, she was sure she wanted to be a professional writer. Opportunity to try her talent in writing came when ‘St. Nicholas’ a children’s magazine offered to publish writings of young readers. Rachel promptly sent her story ‘A battle in the Clouds’ and it was published. She was only ten at that time. Rachel was thrilled with a cheque of $ 10 and so were the teachers at her school. The second story brought her a gold badge.

In high school, her writings were greatly appreciated by her teachers not only for their technical quality but also for their depth of thought and feeling. The assistant principal regarded her as a genius, so at college it was no wonder Rachel decided to major in literature. She entered the Pennsylvania College for Women (which later changed its name to Chatham College) and there she had doubts about retaining English as her major course of study. She found herself more interested in science, her favourite subject being biology.

A common notion in those days (which prevails even today) was that art and science were hostile to each other. While science was appreciated for the comfort it was bringing to mankind it was accused of taking the beauty and mystery of the natural world by explaining to them in precise cold blooded language. However, Rachel felt that beauty was integral to science and her later writings bore testimony to this fact.
She specialised in Marine Zoology at College, but obtaining a Master’s degree was an uphill task. The great depression and the death of her father made life extremely hard for her. She was in need of a full-time job to maintain her mother and herself. It was difficult to find employment. Added to this was the Male prejudice against women scientists. The male-dominated scientific world left few options for Rachel. But none of these would discourage young Rachel. Marine biology is what she wanted.

A rare opportunity turned up when the Bureau of Fisheries of America decided to broadcast 52 radio talks on fishery and marine life. Rachel got this assignment and completed it successfully.

When it was decided to issue the radio talks in the form of brochures, Rachel was asked to rewrite and edit the broadcast material and give it an attractive literary style. Thus began her scientific literary career.

In 1936, she got the job of junior aquatic biologist after passing the civil services examination: she was the only woman taking the examination. Work at the Fisheries Department made her dream come true. She not only combined both art and science but also wrote about the creatures of land and water. The publications of the department were meant for readers with little or no scientific knowledge. Carson’s talent for communicating science in simple but beautiful language came to the forefront. Soon she started writing for various newspapers which further enhanced her reputation as a science writer.

Her first book about the sea — ‘Under the Sea Wind’, received rave reviews from various quarters. ‘The New York Herald Tribune’ wrote “There is drama in every sentence, she rouses our interest in this ocean world and we want to watch it.” The biologist and undersea explorer, William Beebe said, “Miss Carson’s science cannot be questioned.” He included two of her chapters in his “The Book of Naturalists”. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour and the subsequent World War II diverted the attention of the public and her book was forgotten. However, these events gave a new twist to Rachel’s career. Shortage of meat due to war conditions forced the American government to popularise fish as a substitute for meat.
The task of changing the food preferences of America’s meat-eating millions fell on Rachel. She came out with four pamphlets totalling 200 pages in which she described 65 fresh and a dozen kinds of shell fish. Included in these pamphlets were chapters on the nutritional value of fish and expert advice on how to buy, prepare and serve it. But the greater part of each guide was devoted to the life stories of the fishes themselves. “Before we can buy new foods, we must know what they are”, she wrote.

After the devastation caused by the war, the Fish and Wildlife Service turned its attention to wildlife conservation. Once again Rachel was on centre stage. Under the general title ‘Conservation in Action’ she planned a series of 12 books out of which she wrote four or five herself.

For a quarter of a century her introduction to this series was used by the Fish and Wildlife Service in its publications. It was a general plea for peaceful co-existence with nature:

“Wild creature like men, must have a place to live. As civilization creates cities, builds highways and drains marshes, it takes away, little by little, the land that is suitable for wildlife. And as their spaces for living dwindle, the wildlife populations themselves decline.”

Her second book ‘The Sea Around Us’ appeared in 1950. According to her biographer Philip Sterling, this second book, no less than her first, had a fine poetic quality ‘out quite a different one. If ‘Under the Sea Wind’ was lyrical, ‘The Sea Around Us’ was in epic style. A well-known reviewer wrote, “Once again we have a book from a mind able to fuse poetry and science into that rare commodity known as literature.”

In her third book ‘The Edge of the Sea’ she tells the story of the creatures that live at the edge of the sea (that mysterious region where sea and shore meet); a world which mirrors the “spectacle of life in all its varied manifestations as it has appeared, evolved and died out.” She shows how these creatures shape their lives to the rhythm of the changing tides. Her interests range from “Lilliputian beings swimming through dark pools that lie between grains of sand” to the vast rays and huge turtles of the tropical beaches.
But it was ‘Silent Spring’ which brought Carson into the limelight. She was deeply disturbed by the damage that was being caused to the environment by the new kinds of chemical pesticides and wanted to do something about this. She tried to interest her colleagues and friends in undertaking the book that would be ‘Silent Spring’. When she could not find a suitable and willing person, she realised that she would have to do it. Her own sense of responsibility as a scientist made her undertake this venture. The positive side of the book was of great concern to her as she did not want to write a litany of doom. At the same time she wanted to bring home the fact how the humans can damage the world.

In a jargon-free, simple language that laymen can understand, she explains what is meant by ‘balance of nature’ and shows how disturbing the balance would do us more harm than good. She gives the public a good understanding of the natural order.

With the publication of ‘Silent Spring’ she started an ecological revolution which she had not intended. She found herself at loggerheads with the industrial world and became a target of attack by business interests. Attempts were made to discredit her and her book. The redeeming feature in the whole drama was that the weight of public opinion was on her side.

It should be understood that Carson was not opposed to the use of chemical control in appropriate situations. She criticised the present methods which according to her, were not scientific. She despaired the narrow outlook of specialists who were more bothered with immediate problems and unable to see the whole picture of the intricate processes of nature and society. ‘Silent Spring’ showed that the general public, given the impetus, may have a greater ability to see the whole picture than do some highly trained experts.

Her colleagues and admirers considered her the greatest biologist since Darwin. Like Darwin, she collected a vast range of information — spending four and a half years collecting data from all parts of the world — and processed it so as to give a broad concept of the natural world. She wanted the public to test it against their own observations and develop their own view of mankind’s place in nature.
Introduction

The above article published by ‘Young World’, a Saturday supplement to ‘The Hindu’, on June 4, 1994 to commemorate World Environment Day which is observed on June 5.

Rachel Louise Carson (1907 – 1964) was an American marine biologist, author, and conservationist whose book Silent Spring and other writings are credited with advancing the global environmental movement. Carson began her career as an aquatic biologist in the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, and became a full-time nature writer in the 1950s. Her widely praised 1951 bestseller The Sea Around Us won her a U.S. National Book Award. Her next book, The Edge of the Sea, and the reissued version of her first book, Under the Sea Wind, were also bestsellers. This sea trilogy explores the whole of ocean life from the shores to the depths.

Glossary

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>environment</td>
<td>the natural condition in which man lives; the surrounding conditions that influence organism’s growth and development</td>
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<tr>
<td>ecology</td>
<td>study of the effect of environment on living things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laity</td>
<td>persons without a professional training, as compared with those who have it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>revelation</td>
<td>a (surprising) fact or truth that is made known</td>
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<tr>
<td>appalling</td>
<td>shocking</td>
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<tr>
<td>crusader</td>
<td>one who started a struggle for advancement of an idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daisies, buttercup</td>
<td>attractive, showy, flowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Nicholas</td>
<td>a patron (Christian) saint of Russia; also Santa Claus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hostile</td>
<td>unfriendly</td>
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<tr>
<td>cold blooded</td>
<td>language: showing complete lack of feeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>testimony</td>
<td>any information in support of a fact; proof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uphill</td>
<td>very difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>depression</td>
<td>sadness; a sustained, long-term downturn in economic activity in one or more economies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bureau</td>
<td>a government department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brochure</td>
<td>thin booklet; pamphlet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rave</td>
<td>admirable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Beebe</td>
<td>a widely travelled American naturalist (1877-1962), who constructed a special bathysphere and descended, for the first time, to the deep waters of the Atlantic in 1934 and studied the marine life around the Bermuda Islands.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pearl Harbour: Japan’s attack on American naval base at Pearl Harbour (December 7, 1942) flung U.S.A. into the World War II.
Devastation: complete destruction
Lilliputan: very small; native of Lilliput, an imaginary state in Jonathan Swift’s ‘Gulliver’s Travels’
Opposite: (here) Brobdingnagian or huge
Venture: research project
Litany: a form of prayer in the church in which the priest and the devotees reply, always in the same words
Doom: inevitable destruction
Jargon: special or technical language known only to limited circles.
Loggerhead: always disagreeing with
Darwin: English naturalist (1809-1882); pioneer of experimental biology; author of ‘Origin of Species’ (1859). After wandering round the world for twenty years, he collected enormous biological data and reported that evolution is through the process of natural selection, resulting in the survival of the fittest a scientific theory for which Darwin has been condemned by religious teachers in the West.

**Comprehension**

**i) Answer the following questions in a paragraph.**

1. Write a note on Carson’s interests during her student days.
2. How is Carson compared to Darwin? Write a note on both of them.
3. What was the assignment given to Carson by the Bureau of Fisheries? What did she do?
4. What was the impact of ‘Silent Spring’?
5. Is there any Indian scientist who works on the same lines as Carson?

**ii) Answer the following questions in an essay.**

1. Write about the current environmental scenario.
2. Give an account of Rachel Carson’s life and her achievements.
Because I could not Stop for Death
Emily Dickinson

READING

Because I could not stop for Death –
He kindly stopped for me –
The Carriage held but just Ourselves –
And Immortality.

We slowly drove – He knew no haste
And I had put away
My labor and my leisure too,
For His Civility –

We passed the School, where Children strove
At Recess – in the Ring –
We passed the Fields of Gazing Grain –
We passed the Setting Sun –

Or rather – He passed Us –
The Dews drew quivering and Chill –
For only Gossamer, my Gown –
My Tippet – only Tulle –

We paused before a House that seemed
A Swelling of the Ground –
The Roof was scarcely visible –
The Cornice – in the Ground –

Since then – ‘tis Centuries – and yet
Feels shorter than the Day
I first surmised the Horses’ Heads
Were toward Eternity –
Introduction

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) was a prolific private poet; fewer than a dozen of her nearly 1,800 poems were published during her lifetime. Among the ranks of other such acclaimed poets as Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson is considered one of the most original 19th Century American poets. She is noted for her unconventional broken rhyming meter and use of dashes and random capitalisation as well as her creative use of metaphor and overall innovative style.

She was a deeply sensitive woman who questioned the puritanical background of her Calvinist family and soulfully explored her own spirituality, often in poignant, deeply personal poetry. She admired the works of John Keats and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, but avoided the florid and romantic style of her time, creating poems of pure and concise imagery, at times witty and sardonic, often boldly frank and illuminating the keen insight she had into the human condition. At times characterised as a semi-invalid, a hermit, a heartbroken introvert, or a neurotic agoraphobic, her poetry is sometimes brooding and sometimes joyous and celebratory. Her sophistication and profound intellect has been lauded by laymen and scholars alike and influenced many other authors and poets into the 21st Century.

Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>haste</th>
<th>hurry; urgency; speed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>civility</td>
<td>formal politeness and courtesy in behaviour or speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strove (past tense of strive)</td>
<td>make great efforts to achieve or obtain something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recess</td>
<td>a break (between school classes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quivering slight</td>
<td>tremble or shake with a rapid motion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gossamer</td>
<td>a fine, filmy substance consisting of cobwebs spun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by small spiders tippet</td>
<td>a long fur scarf or shawl worn around the neck and shoulders, especially by women and the clergy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tulle</td>
<td>a soft, fine silk, cotton, or nylon material like net, used for making veils and dresses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cornice</td>
<td>an ornamental moulding round the wall of a room just below the ceiling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surmised</td>
<td>guess; conclude that something is true without having evidence to confirm it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Because I could not Stop for Death

**Comprehension**

**i) Answer the following questions in a paragraph.**

1. What is the central theme of the poem? Elaborate.
2. How is death portrayed in Dickinson’s ‘Because I Could Not Stop for Death’?
3. Write a note on Dickinson’s use of language, syntax and punctuation.
4. Write a note of personifications in the poem.
5. Describe the setting, atmosphere and tone of the poem.

**ii) Answer the following questions in an essay.**

1. Write a critical appreciation of the poem.
2. Attempt to write a short poem, either in your own style or in imitation of Dickinson’s style.
Lesson No : 2

**Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening**  
*Robert Frost*

**READING**

> Whose woods these are I think I know.  
> His house is in the village though;  
> He will not see me stopping here  
> To watch his woods fill up with snow.  

> My little horse must think it queer  
> To stop without a farmhouse near  
> Between the woods and frozen lake  
> The darkest evening of the year.  

> He gives his harness bells a shake  
> To ask if there is some mistake.  
> The only other sound’s the sweep  
> Of easy wind and downy flake.  

> The woods are lovely, dark and deep,  
> *But I have promises to keep,*  
> *And miles to go before I sleep,*  
> *And miles to go before I sleep.*

---

**Introduction**

Robert Frost (1874-1963) is one of the most popular American poets. He wrote in traditional forms using the plain speech of the New England farmer. Most of his poems deal with the landscape and the rural life of New England. Using simple metaphors his poems often move into a transcendental level. The lyric and the narrative were his chief forms. His poetry is well known for its simplicity of language and graceful style. *A Boy’s Will*, his first volume of poems,
was published in England when he was 39. Frost had a wide reading public and won numerous prizes.

*Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* is one of his best poems. It begins with delight and ends in wisdom. It is an expression of joy which the poet felt as he stood watching a familiar sight on a winter evening. Nehru was fond of this poem and had the following lines inscribed on his table.

### Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Woods</th>
<th>forest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He will not:</td>
<td>The owner of the woods has no aesthetic sense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>snow ... with snow</td>
<td>So he has huddled up in his house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queer</td>
<td>strange. The horse does not understand the narrator’s love of beautiful natural scenery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harness</td>
<td>a set of leather straps and metal pieces that is put around a horse’s head and body so that the horse can be controlled and fastened to a carriage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some</td>
<td>the horse thinks that it is wrong to stand in the snow in the darkening evening when one should go home and sleep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mistake</td>
<td>movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweep</td>
<td>movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downy</td>
<td>soft as down (the underfeathers of a bird)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flake</td>
<td>a thin piece (of snow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lovely</td>
<td>beautiful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promises</td>
<td>responsibilities; commitments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miles to go</td>
<td>discharge many duties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before I sleep</td>
<td>before I die.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Comprehension

**i) Answer the following questions in a paragraph.**

1. What is the literal meaning of the poem “Stopping by Woods?”
2. How are the narrator, the owner and the horse contrasted with one another?
3. What is the allegorical significance of the woods and sleep?
4. What does the rider do in the poem?
5. What symbols are used by Frost?

**ii) Answer the following questions in an essay.**

1. ‘Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening’ contrasts the world of beauty with the world of human obligation. – Discuss.
2. Attempt an appreciation of Frost’s ‘Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening’.
Enterprise
Nissim Ezekiel

READING

It started as a pilgrimage
Exalting minds and making all
The burdens light, The second stage
Explored but did not test the call.
The sun beat down to match our rage.

We stood it very well, I thought,
Observed and put down copious notes
On things the peasants sold and bought
The way of serpents and of goats.
Three cities where a sage had taught

But when the differences arose
On how to cross a desert patch,
We lost a friend whose stylish prose
Was quite the best of all our batch.
A shadow falls on us and grows.

Another phase was reached when we
Were twice attacked, and lost our way.
A section claimed its liberty
To leave the group. I tried to prey.
Our leader said he smelt the sea

We noticed nothing as we went,
A straggling crowd of little hope,
Ignoring what the thunder meant,
Enterprise

Deprived of common needs like soap. 
Some were broken, some merely bent.

When, finally, we reached the place, 
We hardly know why we were there. 
The trip had darkened every face, 
Our deeds were neither great nor rare. 
Home is where we have to gather grace.

Introduction

Nissim Ezekiel was born in Bombay in 1924. *A Time to Change, Sixty Poems, The Unfinished Man and The Exact Name* are some of his collections of poems.

Nissim Ezekiel is a poet-critic. He is a Jew. The poem *Enterprise* presents a moral quest. It is about a difficult journey undertaken by a group. As the journey proceeds, the group endures hardships, dissension, division, loss of faith, hope and purpose. It loses its purpose.

Glossary

| Enterprise | bold undertaking |
| Pilgrimage | going to holy place |
| Exalting | Raising |
| Light | not heavy |
| Explored | examined carefully |
| Stood it | withstood it, bore it, endure it, tolerated it |
| Our rage | our passion (here, rage does not mean anger) |
| Put down | wrote down |
| Copious | plentiful, a lot of, abundant |
| Serpents | an image of poisonous-ness. Satan took the shape of a serpent and spoiled Eve. |
| Goats | goats noted for their sensuality. A symbol of lustful men. |
| Stylish prose | Ezekiel had nothing but contempt for writers who were incapable of action |
| A shadow | an enervating feeling |
| Tried to pray | the author does not pray but only tries to do so! |
| The sea | this is in contrast to the desert patch mentioned in line -12 |
| Straggling | scattered; wandering from the main path |
| Little hope | hopeless |
Comprehension

i) Answer the following questions in a paragraph.
1. How does Nissim Ezekiel bring out the difficulties of the journey?
2. Write a brief note on what happened after the desertion of a fellow traveler.
3. How do the pilgrims realize that home is the place where they can have grace?
4. List out the devices used by the poet.
5. Bring out the aptness of the title of the poem.

ii) Answer the following questions in an essay.
1. Attempt a critical appreciation of the poem ‘Enterprise’.
2. Critically evaluate the attitude to life that the poem ‘Enterprise’ embodies.
Notes Towards a Poem that Can Never be Written
Margaret Atwood

READING

I
This is the place
you would rather not know about,
this is the place that will inhabit you,
this is the place you cannot imagine,
this is the place that will finally defeat you
where the word why shrivels and empties itself. This is famine.

II
There is no poem you can write
about it, the sandpits
where so many were buried
& unearthed, the unendurable
pain still traced on their skins.

This did not happen last year
or forty years ago but last week.
This has been happening,
this happens.

We make wreaths of adjectives for them,
we count them like beads,
we turn them into statistics & litanies
and into poems like this one.
Nothing works.
They remain what they are.
III
The woman lies on the west cement floor
under the unending light,
needle marks on her arms put there
to kill the brain
and wonders why she is dying.

She is dying because she said.
She is dying for the sake of the word.
It is her body, silent
and fingerless, writing this poem.

IV
It resembles an operation
but it is not one
nor despite the spread legs, grunts
& blood, is it a birth.

Partly it’s a job
partly it’s a display of skill
like a concerto.

It can be done badly
or well, they tell themselves.
Partly it’s an art.

V
The facts of this world seen clearly
are seen through tears;
why tell me then
there is something wrong with my eyes?

To see clearly and without flinching,
without turning away,
this is agony, the eyes taped open
two inches from the sun.

What is it you see then?
Is it a bad dream, a hallucination?
Is it a vision?
What is it you hear?

The razor across the eyeball
is a detail from an old film.
It is also a truth.
Witness is what you must bear.

VI
In this country you can say what you like
because no one will listen to you anyway,
it’s safe enough, in this country you can try to write
the poem that can never be written,
the poem that invents
nothing and excuses nothing,
because you invent and excuse yourself each day.

Elsewhere, this poem is not invention.
Elsewhere, this poem takes courage.
Elsewhere, this poem must be written
because the poets are already dead.

Elsewhere, this poem must be written
as if you are already dead,
as if nothing more can be done
or said to save you.

Elsewhere you must write this poem
because there is nothing more to do.
Introduction

Margaret Atwood (1939 – present) is the author of more than forty books of fiction, poetry, and critical essays. Considered as one of the most prominent literary figures of modern times, Atwood is a Canadian poet, novelist, literary critic, essayist, inventor, teacher and environmental activist. Atwood and her writing have won numerous awards and honours including the Man Booker Prize, Arthur C. Clarke Award, Governor General’s Award, and the National Book Critics and PEN Center USA Lifetime Achievement Awards. Atwood is also the inventor and developer of the LongPen and associated technologies that facilitate the remote robotic writing of documents.

As a novelist and poet, Atwood’s works encompass a variety of themes including the power of language, gender and identity, religion and myth, climate change, and “power politics.” Many of her poems are inspired by myths and fairy tales which interested her from a very early age. Among her contributions to Canadian literature, Atwood is a founder of the Griffin Poetry Prize and Writers’ Trust of Canada.

Glossary

| shrivels | wither; shrink; dry up |
| sandpits | a shallow box or hollow in the ground, partly filled with sand |
| wreaths | an arrangement of flowers, leaves, or stems fastened in a ring and used for decoration or for laying on a grave |
| litanies | a form of prayer in the church in which the priest a k and the devotees reply, always in the same words; continuous repetition of something |
| grunts | a low, short guttural sound |
| concerto | a musical composition for a solo instrument or instruments accompanied by an orchestra, especially one conceived on a relatively large scale |
| flinching | make a quick, nervous movement of the face or body as an instinctive reaction to fear or pain |
| agony | extreme physical or mental suffering; anguish; pain |
| hallucination | an experience in which you see, hear, feel, or smell something that does not exist, usually because you are ill or have taken a drug |
Comprehension

i) Answer the following questions in a paragraph.
1. Write a note on the title of the poem.
2. What is the central theme of the poem?
3. Who do you think could be the narrator/speaker in the poem?
4. List out the devices used by the poet.
5. Write a note on the repetitions in the poem.

ii) Answer the following questions in an essay.
1. Attempt a critical appreciation of the poem ‘Notes Towards a Poem that Can Never be Written’.
2. Can you identify with the poem? Does it really reflect the situation of the world?
Lesson No: 1

Oliver Twist - Charles Dickens

1. Born In A “Workhouse”

There was trouble in England in the early nineteenth century. The rich people were afraid of a Revolution similar to the one that had happened in France. And they were afraid that some of their own money would be used to feed the hungry and homeless.

They invented the “Workhouse”, and built them in all the small towns. From now on, if the poor wanted help, they would have to live in the Workhouse. The meals were tiny, men were separated from women, and everyone had to work at boring, unhealthy tasks. Life was bad and many people died. Beggars were thrown in Prison.

Oliver’s mother had been found lying in a street of a small town. She was taken to the Workhouse. That same night, she gave birth, looked at her newborn son, and died. So, Oliver Twist was born in a Workhouse.

“One less mouth to feed!” said the doctor, looking at the dead mother as he washed his hands. Then he went to eat a fine dinner.

2. A Lonely Childhood

On Oliver’s ninth birthday, something happened which changed his life. He had finished his tiny bowl of thin soup. He went to stand in front of the master, and said,

“Please, sir, I want some more.”

“What!” cried the man who served up the food. He grabbed Oliver, and hit him with a large spoon.

The boy’s name was Oliver Twist. He did not get that name from his father. Nobody knew who his father was.
Nor from his mother. Nobody knew her name either. She had been found on the street, sick and starving. A kind stranger brought her to a public workshop. She gave birth to the boy. And died there soon after.

Mr. Bumble gave Oliver his name. Mr. Bumble ran the nearby orphans’ home where Oliver was sent. Mr. Bumble was happy to take care of Oliver and all the other orphans. He had good reason to be.

The state paid to clothe and feed each child. Mr. Bumble got the money. And the orphans got rags on their backs and slop in their bellies.

No wonder Mr. Bumble was angry at Oliver. The very thought of a child asking for more to eat! Mr. Bumble saw his money being eaten up. Children’s appetites were too big. Much too big for creatures so small.

So Oliver did not get any more greasy soup that night. He did not really expect to. He had asked for more only because of the other starving orphans. They decided one of them had to speak up for all of them. They drew straws. Oliver lost.

Now it was Oliver alone who had to pay for this terrible crime.

“The boy will be hung someday,” Mr. Bumble said sourly. But Mr. Bumble did not want to wait that long. He wanted Oliver out of the orphans’ home quickly. Before others followed Oliver’s evil ways.

First he locked Oliver away in a dark room. Then he went to Mr. Sowerberry, the local undertaker. He asked Mr. Sowerberry to take Oliver on as a helper.

Both gentlemen were pleased. Mr. Bumble would win praise. He had taken this ten-year-old burden off public welfare. And Mr. Sowerberry had the best kind of helper. A boy he could tell to do anything. And pay nothing.

As for Oliver, the boy had to be grateful. He would learn a good trade. People would need undertakers as long as they kept on dying.

But again Oliver proved to be ungrateful.
First he dared steal scraps from Mrs. Sowerberry’s dear dog. Just because Oliver was close to starving.

Then Oliver did even worse. He punched Mr. Sowerberry’s other helper, Noah Claypole. Right on the Noah’s large red nose. Noah was older than Oliver. Bigger and stronger. And thus worth more to Mr. Sowerberry.

And why did Oliver attack such a fine fellow? Only because Noah was clever enough to make a joke. But Oliver didn’t find the joke funny. It was a joke about Oliver’s mother. Oliver never knew his mother yet insisted on loving her.

Noah’s nose was redder than ever when he went to the Sowerberrys. He told them about Oliver’s brutal attack. They all agreed: next, Oliver would murder them in their beds.

Mr. Bumble was called. Mr. Bumble came. Mr. Bumble said the Sowerberrys had made a bad mistake. They had fed Oliver meat.

Meat made children dangerous.

“Keep him a few days without food,” Mr. Bumble advised. “Then feed him as I did. I Promise you, that will teach him to be good.”

Whether or not Mr. Bumble was right, no one would ever know. Oliver decided not to wait and find out.

That night Oliver made a bundle of all his spare clothes. A coarse shirt and two stockings. He put a stale crust of bread in his pocket which he got as a tip at a funeral.

He crept out of the house into the cold. Then he started walking on the highway. The highway to the great city of London.

Surely Mr. Bumble and Mr. Sowerberry would never find him there. Not among so many people. London was such a big city. Surely there could be a place for Oliver.

Indeed there was. But Oliver did not dream what kind of place it would be.
3. Oliver Goes To London

London was sixty-five miles away. It an easy trip by coach and horses. But not for a cold and hungry boy on foot. It took Oliver six days. Six days of fearing he might be caught. Six days of trying to nap in fields. Six days of begging for water. Six days of farmer’s dogs chasing him. Six days of doors slamming in his face.

Only bread bought with his one penny kept Oliver going. That, and food from a few kind souls along the way.

By the seventh day Oliver still had not reached London. He was in a village a mile from the city. Too tired to go farther, he sat huddled in a doorway. But it gave no shelter. The bitter cold cut into him like a knife.

Then he found what he wanted most in all the world. A friend.

Or rather, the friend found him. This friend was the strangest boy Oliver had ever seen. He was no more than twelve, small for his age. Yet he wore a man’s coat. That coat reached almost to his heels. A man’s hat sat on his head. That hat seemed ready to fall over his not-very-clean ears. The boy found Oliver interesting-looking too. He glanced at Oliver while walking past him. Then he stopped. He came back and looked at Oliver more closely.

“Hello. What’s the problem?” he asked.
“I am very hungry and tired,” said Oliver.
“I have been walking these seven days.”
“Seven days?” said the boy. “On the run from the beak, eh?”
“The beak?” asked Oliver.
“The law,” explained the boy. “You been in the mill?”
“The mill?” asked Oliver.
“Jail,” explained the boy. He grinned. “You’re a green one. You got to learn the rope. And I’m the one to teach you.”
“I’d like it if you would,” said Oliver.

“But first things first,” the boy said. “Bet you wouldn’t mind some eats, would you?”

“I… I wouldn’t,” Oliver admitted.

“Come on, then,” said the boy. He led Oliver to a nearby eating place. There he ordered ham, cheese, bread and something to drink. He paid the bill with a silver coin.

“Plenty more where that come from,” he told Oliver. “Now tell me, what’s your name?”

“Oliver, sir. Oliver Twist.”

“I’m Jack Dawkins,” the boy said. “But them that knows me calls me the Artful Dodger. Dodger, for short.”

“Pleased to meet you, Mr. Dodger,” Oliver said.

“You should be,” said the Artful Dodge. “You’re going to London, right?”

“I am,” said Oliver.

“And you don’t got nowhere to stay,” the Artful Dodger said.

“I don’t,” agreed Oliver.

“No job, either,” the Artful Dodger added.

“No job,” said Oliver.

“Just so happens I know a gentleman,” the Artful Dodger said. “A kind gentleman who loves to help out boys like you. And I am going to do you a great favor. I am taking you to that very same gentleman.”

The Artful Dodger got to his feet. He burped and patted his stomach.

“Look sharp now, Oliver,” said the Artful Dodger. “We’re off to London town.”
4. Oliver Meets Fagin and His Boys

Oliver had thought London was a city of beautiful houses and wide avenues. But the Artful Dodger led him through narrow dirt streets lined with filthy buildings.

“This is London?” Oliver asked.

“Part of it,” the Artful Dodger said. “Welcome to Saffron Hill.”

It was night. The shutters of the shops were closed. But drinking places were open everywhere. People who had had too much to drink lay outside them. Or maybe they had nowhere but the streets to sleep.

“Makes you grateful for a good roof.” said the Artful Dodger. He stopped at the most run-down block. He banged on the door.

A voice shouted down, “Who’s there?”

“Me,” the Artful Dodger shouted back.

“Who is with you?”

“A new one,” the Artful Dodger replied.

“Come on up,” the voice said.

“Got to give them warning,” the Artful Dodger told Oliver. “They don’t trust strangers. Lot of nasty fellows around here.”

The Artful Dodger opened the peeling door. Oliver followed him up a shaky stairway. They went down a dark hallway to another door, a steel door. The Artful Dodger opened it.

“Oliver, meet the kind gentleman I told you about,” the Artful Dodger said.

The kind gentleman was standing by a fireplace. He was toasting sausages on a long fork. He turned. His smile showed yellow teeth above a matted red beard.
“Just cooking supper for my lads,” he said. “You’re welcome to join in, my dear boy.”

There were four boys in the dark, dirty room. None was older than the Artful Dodger. Oliver already could see how kind the gentleman was. It had to cost him a pretty penny to care for these boys. Clearly he spent no money on himself. He wore a stained bathrobe and torn slippers.

“Oliver, meet Fagin,” the Artful Dodger said. “Fagin, this is Oliver Twist.”

Fagin made a low bow.

“Charmed to meet you, my dear,” he said. He wrapped a sausage in a piece of black bread, then gave it to Oliver.

“Thank you, sir,” said Oliver.

“A polite boy, a grateful boy,” said Fagin. He turned to the others. “You all can take a lesson from him.” Then he said to Oliver, “And you can learn a lot from them.”

Supper was very greasy but very good.

“Before bed, we play a game,” Fagin told Oliver after supper. “Watch a while. Then you can join in.”

Fagin dressed himself in a fancy suit. In the pockets he put wallets, watches, and silk handkerchiefs. Then he started walking in a circle. He looked up at the ceiling and hummed to himself.

One by one the boys crept up behind him. The first slipped his hand into Fagin’s pocket. He took out a watch. The next got a wallet. The third reached for a handkerchief. And got his hand slapped by Fagin.

“Clumsy, clumsy,” Fagin said. “Won’t do at all. Try harder.”

Fagin began walking again. This time the boy did better and won a fond pinch on his cheek.
“Very, very good,” Fagin said. “You’ll make your fortune yet.”

When it was the Artful Dodger’s turn, he managed to grab a wallet and a watch and a handkerchief.

“You’re a clever one,” said Fagin. “Always said it, always will.”

At last Oliver was allowed to share the fun. Fagin let a handkerchief hang halfway out of his pocket. “See if you can take it without me feeling it.”

Oliver crept up. Holding his breath, he slid the handkerchief out lightly. Fagin clapped his hand to his empty pocket.

“You got it! Wonderful. Here’s a prize for you.” He gave Oliver a coin. “Keep on this way,” said Fagin. “Someday you’ll be a great man.”

Oliver wondered how. Could playing this game really make him a great man? But he was sure the kind gentleman knew more than a boy.

“Bedtime, my dears,” Fagin declared. “Tomorrow’s a working day.”

“Please, sir, what do they work at?” Oliver asked.

“Oh, they fix watches,” said Fagin, holding up one. “And mend wallets, handkerchiefs, too. Of course, young boys make mistakes. These handkerchiefs, for instance. Charley Bates over there sewed on the wrong initials. Tomorrow Oliver, perhaps you can help take them off.”

“Oh yes, sir,” said Oliver. “I do want to earn my keep.” Then Oliver turned to the Artful Dodger. “Thank you so much for bringing me there.”

“I thank you too, Dodger,” Fagin said. He rubbed his hands together. “You’ve brought us a real treasure.”
5. Oliver Among Thieves

During the next few days, Oliver saw how much Fagin cared about his boys. Fagin wanted to bring them up right. When they came back with watches, wallets, and handkerchiefs, Fagin patted their heads. And gave them extra sausage.

But sometimes they came back empty-handed. Then Fagin got angry at them. He sent them to bed without supper.

“Hurts me more than you,” he said. “But you must learn not to be lazy.”

Oliver saw more of Fagin’s kindness when two visitors arrived.

One was a tall man with a bad temper and big muscles. His name was Bill Sikes. The strong young woman with him was called Nancy. She was mess-looking but nice. Oliver liked her.

“Nancy grew up with me,” Fagin said. “Now she devotes herself to helping Bill. Bill makes a fine living as a salesman. And Nancy is all set to be his wife someday.”

“Yeah, someday,” Nancy said.

“Enough gab,” Bill said. “How much for this?” He took silverware and silver candlesticks from his sack.

Fagin dropped a gold piece on the table. Bill’s fist made the coin jump. Slowly Fagin let a few copper coins clink down.

“My limit,” Fagin said.

Bill growled. Then he scooped up the money and left with Nancy.

“Lovely couple,” Fagin said. “Wish I could help them more. But you boys are such a burden for a poor man.”

“I know,” said Oliver. “I’d like to do my full share. Please, sir, can I go out to work like the others?”

“A fine boy, a willing boy,” said Fagin. He smiled at Oliver fondly.
When the Artful Dodger heard the news, he said, “Knew you had the right stuff, Oliver. Come with me and Charley. We’ll start you off right.”

Oliver followed them through the streets to a nicer part of London. Well-dressed men and women strolled on clean sidewalks. Then sun was bright. The air was sweet.

The Artful Dodger stopped suddenly. He pointed to a bookstall across the street.

“See that old man with the white hair?” he asked quietly.

“Yes,” said Oliver.

“Perfect!” said Charley Bates.

The man was reading a book with great interest. The Artful Dodger and Charley nodded to each other.

Oliver saw the Artful Dodger slink up to the gentleman. The Artful Dodger’s hand dipped into the gentlemen’s pocket. It pulled out a handkerchief.

For the first time Oliver knew what the “work” of Fagin’ boys really was!

The bookstall owner shouted. “Thief!”

The Artful Dodger and Charley raced around a corner. Oliver saw only one thing he could do. Run!

Oliver ran right into a good citizen. That good citizen stopped Oliver. With the first thing that came to hand. A fist.

Oliver saw stars. Then blackness.

Finally that blackness brightened. Oliver opened his eyes. Yet he was sure he was dreaming.

Either that, or he had died and gone to heaven.
6. Oliver In Trouble But Saved

Oliver woke up in a soft feather bed. A white-haired gentleman stood nearby. The gentleman whom the Artful Dodger had robbed. But he did not look angry. He looked very pleased.

The gentleman spoke to his gray haired housekeeper. “Mrs. Bedwin, the boy is awake.”

“The doctor said he would get better, Mr. Brownlow,” Mrs. Bedwin said. Her voice was happy.

“What have I been sick?” Oliver asked.

“You remember nothing?” asked Mr. Brownlow.

“Only running,” Oliver said.

“Just as well,” Mr. Brownlow said. “The memory would be painful. People saw you running. They thought you were a thief.”

“Your were sent before a judge,” Mr. Brownlow continued. “The meanest judge in London. Judge Fang himself. He was ready to send you to prison.”

Mr. Brownlow smiled. “But the bookseller came in the nick of time. He said it was another boy who stole it. He looked as angry as a dog robbed of a bone.”

“A dog has more human kindness than him,” Mrs. Bedwin declared. “He didn’t care that you were skin and bones. And burning up with fever. Thank heaven Mr. Brownlow could bring you home to be cared for.”

“How long have I been here?” Oliver asked.

“Ten days,” said Mr. Brownlow.

“Have I been sleeping all that time?” asked Oliver.

“Sleeping...and almost worse,” said Mr. Brownlow, “But you’re better. And you will get better still.”
“With good food inside you,” said Mrs. Bedwin.

“And with good clothes to wear. Good books to read. A good school to go to,” Mr. Brownlow said.

“But that cost’s money,” Oliver. “I have none. Just as I have no place to live. Or father or mother. Or even a real name. Just Oliver Twist.”

“I have more than enough money,” Mr. Brownlow said. “And I have more than enough room for you in this house. I live here alone.”

“Alone?” said Oliver. “But what about her?” He pointed to a picture hanging on the wall. A picture of a beautiful young woman.

“That Picture was given to me by an old friend,” said Mr. Brownlow. A shadow crossed his face. “I never knew the woman.”

“It’s odd,” said Oliver. “I feel as if I know her. I feel as if she’s trying to speak to me. Yet I can’t make out a word.”

“You’re still weak from fever,” said Mrs. Bedwin. She put a cool hand on his forehead. Her kind eyes studied his face. “Strange, you look a bit like her.”

Mr. Brownlow looked carefully at him too. “And from another angle, you look like –” He shook head. It does not matter.

“It is a small world,” said Mr. Brownlow. “We are all related in a way. It is enough that you are you. And I will be like a father to you.”

Oliver spent the next few weeks in a new world. A world of love and kindness. He began to forget Fagin’s den of thieves.

Mr. Brownlow’s good friend Mr. Grimwig did not forget.

“That boy came from the underworld,” Grimwig said. “And he’ll go back to it.”

“Never,” said Mr. Brownlow.

“Then why does he not say whom he lived with?” Grimwig demanded.
“He doesn’t want to get that person in trouble,” Mr. Brownlow said.

“That person housed and fed the boy.”

“You believe that?” Grimwig said.

“You must believe in Father Christmas too. Why not test the boy?”

Just then Mrs. Bedwin brought in some books. Mr. Brownlow had bought from the bookstall that morning. The same bookstall where the Artful Dodger had stolen his handkerchief.

Mr. Brownlow wanted to return two books and pay his monthly bill. But the boy who delivered them to Mrs. Bedwin had left.

“Here is a perfect test,” said Grimwig. “Send Oliver to pay your bill and return the books. I bet he will not come back.”

“And if you’re wrong?” said Mr. Brownlow, smiling. He knew how tough his friend liked to talk. He also knew how soft Grimwig’s heart really was.

“Why, I will eat my own head,” Grimwig declared.

Mr. Brownlow chuckled.

Oliver was very happy to be of any use. Mr. Brownlow gave him the money and the books. Off he rushed to the bookstall. And the two men waited for him to return. They waited and waited. Hours passed. Darkness came. And gloom fell on the two old friends. Sadly they wondered what had become of Oliver.
Oliver Twist - Charles Dickens

7. Oliver is Kidnapped

Oliver was back at Fagin’s. Thanks to Nancy. She had tracked Oliver from the courtroom to Mr. Brownlow’s home. Day after day she waited for Oliver to go out by himself. Then she grabbed him.

“Did he give you any trouble?” Fagin asked.

“He tried to,” Nancy said. “A crowd gathered. But I pretended to be his sister.

I said he had run away from home. People believed me, not him.”

“Good girl,” Fagin said. “I trained you well.”

“Yes, you trained me,” Nancy said. “You trained me to lie and steal and worse. I was no older than him.”

“And here’s the reward I promised,” said Fagin. He gave her a gold piece.

“Keep your other promise, too,” Nancy said. She grabbed his wrist and squeezed it.

“Don’t harm the boy.”

“Of course no, my dear,” said Fagin. “You women. So tender when it comes to children.”

“What about your feeling for Bill Sikes?” said Fagin.

“That ain’t tenderness. That’s weakness,” said Nancy with a shrug.

“Well, my weakness is for lads like Oliver,” said Fagin. He patted Oliver on the head. “In fact, I have a special weakness for Oliver.”

“Why him?” asked Nancy.

“That’s for me to know. And no one else to find out,” said Fagin.
Nancy’s eyes narrowed. “Does it have to do with that stranger? The one who came to see you last week? After his visit, you promised gold for finding the kid. Before, it was just silver.”

Oliver saw his chance to speak up. “Sir, I never said a word. Please, let me go back to Mr. Brownlow. I’ll keep quiet. I swear I will.” Oliver swallowed hard. “I swear on my poor mother’s grave.”

“Very touching, my dear boy,” Fagin said “But you know too much. I will never let you go.”

“Then let me send Mr. Brownlow the money he gave me,” said Oliver. “Or else he will think I stole it.”

This made Fagin laugh. “What a clever boy to think of that. I’m glad you know you are now a thief. In the eyes of Mr. Brownlow. In the eyes of the law. In the eyes of all the world.”

Oliver had to bite his lip to keep from crying. Fagin pinched Oliver’s cheek.

“Thank you for the money. And your nice new clothes. Still, you must earn your keep. Learn your trade.”

Fagin smiled. “If you are a thief, you had better be a good one. But you’re in luck. We have a fine teacher for you. The best. Bill Sikes himself.”

“Did I hear my name?” a voice roared.

It was Bill Sikes. His big body filled the doorway. He stomped into the room. He glared at Fagin.

“I don’t like to hear my name spoke. Can be dangerous,” he snarled.

Bill had his big, flea-bitten white dog with him. The dog snarled too. Bill gave it a kick that sent it whimpering into a corner.
“Hear that, Oliver,” Fagin said. “You don’t want to say Bill Sikes’s name to anybody.”

Bill put his huge hands on Oliver’s neck.

“You do,” he growled, “and I’ll rip your head clean off.”

“Go easy on him, Bill,” Nancy begged.

“He ain’t done nothing to you.”

“Stay out of this, Nancy. Or I’ll beat the stuffing out of you,” said Bill. He turned to Fagin. “This the kid you promised me?”

“The perfect one for the job,” Fagin assured him. “Sent by heaven, you might say.” Fagin rubbed his hands together. “You owe me a little something for his help. As agreed.”

“You’ll get your cut after the job,” said Bill.

His hand closed on Oliver’s thin shoulder.

“Time to go to work. Our time. Night-time.”

“Your new life is starting, Oliver,” Fagin said. “Get used to it. It’s the only life you’ll have. Until the day you die.”
8. Oliver Meets Rose

“Here’s a lesson for you,” said Bill Sikes once they left. He pressed a gun against Oliver’s head. “Obey me or else.”

Then Bill dragged Oliver to a big house outside of London. The night was dark and damp. Bill opened a small high window.

“You’re going in that window and straight ahead,” said Bill. “Unlock the front door and let me in. If you get any ideas, remember this.” He tapped his gun against the boy’s head.

Oliver knew Bill was going to rob the house. Or worse. Bill lifted him up and lowered him through the window. He gave Oliver a lantern.

Oliver crept through the hall. He heard footsteps upstairs. And Bill Sikes hollering,

“Come back! Back!” The lantern crashed.

The last thing Oliver remembered the sound of a gun. And pain.

At last Oliver opened his eyes. He saw an angel. Or a young woman as beautiful as angel.

“I’m Rose,” she said. “And this is my aunt, Mrs. Maylie.” Oliver saw an older woman with a sweet face. “And this is our friend, Dr. Losberne. He saved your life after our servant shot you.”

“I don’t think you’ll be robbing people for quite a while,” said the doctor.

“Please, sir,” said Oliver. He was still pale and weak. But he could not bear being taken as a thief. He told his sad story.

Everyone who heard him knew he was telling the truth. “He is so young,” said the doctor.
“Young enough for a better life,” Rose said. “We must show him a better way.”

And Rose and Mrs. Maylie knew a better way. Love and kindness. They nursed Oliver back to health in their country house. There was good food to eat and milk to drink. Dr. Losberne brought Oliver all the books he could read. There were days of play in the sunshine. And evenings, when Rose played the piano.

Only one thing was worrying Oliver. He wanted Mr. Brownlow to know he was not a thief. He asked Dr. Losberne to find him. But Mr. Brownlow and his housekeeper had moved. So had his friend Grimwig. No one knew how or why.

But that was the only cloud in Oliver’s life. The only cloud, for months and months. Until one late summer evening.

The sun was setting. Oliver was in a room facing the garden. He was reading a long book and was getting drowsy. The printed words blurred. He began to half-dream. He saw Fagin again and the Artful Dodger. Bill Sikes and Nancy. Mr. Bumble and Mr. Sowerberry. The dream was getting worse and worse. He forced his eyes open.

Fagin’s face was right outside the window! Another man was with Fagin. Oliver did not know that man. But he knew the look in the man’s eyes. Burning with hate.

“Who?” asked Rose.

“A girl, but more than a girl. I think Nancy about your age,” Oliver said.

Then it was Rose’s turn to show fear.

“A young woman just knocked on the door,” Rose said. “I let her in and asked her name. Her name is—Nancy.”
9. Nancy Helps Oliver

Don’t believe Nancy,” Oliver begged Rose. “She’ll tell you lies. Anything to take me back to Fagin.”

“It’s you that I believe,” Rose promised him. “We’ll face her together. We’ll make short work of her lies.”

But Nancy had not come to tell lies. Her face was pale and frightened.

“Listen to what I say. I risk my life to say it,” she said. “But better my life than the boy’s. He has some hope of a better life. I have none.”

“But you are still so young,” Rose said.

She was shocked by the sadness in Nancy’s voice.

“Young in years,” Nancy said. “But old in every other way. Too old to tell you about Oliver. While there is still something there to save him.”

“I’m listening,” said Rose.

“Listen closely. As closely as I did at Fagin’s,” Nancy said. “I was there when a man came to see him. A young, well-dressed young man.”

Nancy paused. “I had seen him once before. When Oliver was gone the first time. This time I wanted to find out who the man was. And what he wanted.”

“Did you?” Rose asked.

“I did,” Nancy said. “I pretended to be sound asleep in the corner. They thought I had had too much to drink. So they talked freely. And what I heard made me come here.”

“Please, what did you hear?” asked Oliver. Why should a well-dressed man visit Fagin? What could his visit have to do with Oliver?
“Fagin called him Mr. Monks,” Nancy said. “He and Fagin come from different worlds. I could see that. But they’re birds of a feather!”

Nancy sighed. “Monks said it was his good luck to spot Oliver with the Artful Dodger. It was that day at the book-stall. He guessed who Oliver was, right away. And he could tell the Artful Dodger was a thief. Then the police grabbed Oliver.”

Nancy’s voice was sad. “Monks paid the Artful Dodger to lead him to Fagin. He wanted Fagin to turn the boy into a thief. Imagine that! A thief who would end his life in jail.

“But,” continued Nancy, “that nice gentleman came along to spoil Monks’ plan. So Monks paid Fagin to get Oliver back. Next Monks went to an orphans’ home run by a Mr. Bumble. Monks wanted to make sure he was right about Oliver.”

“He knew who I was?” Oliver asked eagerly. “Tell me, who am I?”

“Monks didn’t say,” said Nancy. “He just gave a nasty laugh. And called you his ‘little brother.’”

“What did he mean?” Rose wondered.

“I have no idea, miss,” said Nancy. “But he did say something strange. That you’d give the world to know who Oliver is.”

“Me,” Rose said.

“That’s right, “ said Nancy. “Monks thought it a big joke that Oliver was with you. That it was your house where Bill left Oliver for dead.”


“Worse is to come,” said Nancy.

“Worse?” said Oliver.

“Monks had bought a locket from Mr. Bumble,” Nancy said. “That locket was the last hope of anyone saving Oliver. Monks dumped it in the river. Now
Fagin could feel safe in doing what he wanted with Oliver. Nancy wiped away some tears and continued. “Monks stood by the offer he had made. He would pay Fagin for making Oliver a thief. Monks wanted the pleasure of seeing Oliver in jail. Or on the gallows.”

“Fagin agreed?” said Rose. “I can’t believe anyone is that evil.”

“You don’t know Fagin,” Nancy said. “He’ll do anything for money.”

“Did you find out anything more about the locket?” Oliver asked.

“Nothing,” Nancy said.

“Nothing?” said Oliver. His heart sank. He had felt so close to finding out who he was. Now he was back in the dark.

“But there is someone who may tell you more,” Nancy said.

“Who?” asked Oliver.

“I do not know his name. And he does not know mine,” said Nancy. “That was our agreement. But I can take you to him.”

“Please do!” Oliver exclaimed.

“Yes, please!” Rose echoed.

Rose’s aunt was napping upstairs. They left her a note saying that they would be back soon. Then they found a cab. Nancy gave the driver an address. The man cracked his whip. His horse trotted smartly to a hotel in the heart of the city.

Nancy led them to a room on the third floor. She knocked on the door. It opened. And Oliver thought his heart would burst with joy.

“Mr. Brownlow!” he said.
10. Who is Monks?

Oliver and Mr. Brownlow hugged each other. Then Oliver introduced Rose. First to Mr. Brownlow. Then to Grimwig, who was also there.

“Grimwig thought Oliver was a thief when he did not come back,” Mr. Brownlow said.


“I had different evidence,” Mr. Brownlow said. “The evidence of my heart. The evidence of my eyes.”

“Of course,” Rose said. “Anyone can see Oliver is no thief.”

“I saw even more than that,” Mr. Brownlow said. “When I saw Oliver’s face, I saw another face as well. The face of a man who was my dear friend years ago. And I saw another, too. The woman my friend loved. The woman whose picture he had left with me.”

“The picture of that beautiful lady in my room at your house?” Oliver asked.

“The same,” said Mr. Brownlow.

“I felt as if I somehow knew her,” Oliver said. “Please, sir, what is her name?”

“My friend would not tell me,” Mr. Brownlow said. “He wanted to protect her. You see, his family had pushed him to marry. He was very young. It was a mistake. When he and his wife parted, she went to Europe with their son. A terrible young man. A great disappointment to his father.”

Mr. Brownlow sighed. “My friend stayed here and met the girl he loved. Love made him lie. He told her that he was single and married her. But when she was expecting a baby, he had to stop living that life. He went to Europe to end his first marriage.”
“But first,” continued Mr. Brownlow “he made a will. It gave his first wife and their son half his fortune when he died. The rest would go to the woman he loved and their child.”

“He left me the painting of his love before he sailed. He painted it himself. A surprise for her when he returned.”

“What became of him?” asked Oliver.

“A month later I read in the paper that he had died,” Mr. Brownlow said. “I wrote to his wife in Europe for more news. She did not answer. I tried to find out who the woman he loved was. But I failed.”

“That is all you know?” asked Oliver. He could not hide his disappointment.

“That is all I knew then,” Mr. Brownlow said. “I know more now. After you vanished, Oliver, I again searched for that missing woman. I sensed a bond between her and you. By finding her, I might find you.”

“Did you? Find her...I mean?” Oliver asked eagerly.

“Yes, did you?” Rose asked. She seemed as interested as Oliver.

“Yes and no,” said Mr. Brownlow. “I again tried to Contact my friend’s first wife. She had died. The only person left to ask her son. But he had moved to the West Indies. I shut up my house in London and sailed there. Grimwig came with me. He wanted to find Oliver as much as I did.”

Grimwig’s ears grew pink. “I wanted evidence, that’s all.”

“Did you find it, Mr. Grimwig?” asked Oliver.

Mr. Brownlow shook his head. “No, he didn’t. My friend’s son was gone. His business had failed. He had come back here. We came back too and found him. But he would not talk about his father. He said he wanted to cut all ties with the past. He had even changed his name. Now he calls himself Monks.”

“Monks!” Nancy said.
“Do you know him?” Mr. Brownlow demanded. “I know you do not want
to betray the people you live among.”

“We agreed on that when you answered my poster. My poster asking about
Oliver and offering a reward. But things have changed.”

“They have,” Nancy agreed. “That is why I went to Miss Maylie. That is why
I brought her and Oliver to you.”

Nancy’s eyes turned nervously to the clock. “Miss Maylie can tell you the
rest,” she said “I have stayed away too long already. I will be missed.”

“Before you go...” Mr. Brownlow said. He pulled out his wallet.

Just once before I die.”

11. Oliver Learns The Truth

Nancy left. Grimwig went to the window. “I’ll see where she is heading,”
he said.

“Do not spy on her,” Mr. Brownlow said. “We cannot use her to go after her
friends. We promised not to.” He turned to Rose. “Please, tell me what you have
learned.”

Rose told him Nancy’s story. Mr. Brownlow nodded.

“I know most of it already,” he said. “You see, I hired a detective to follow
Monks. Monks led him to Fagin’s door. Then to the orphans’ home. So I went and
questioned that same Mr. Bumble. I paid him to give me answers. He told about
selling Monks the locket. The locket belonged to a lovely young woman who had
died. She had come to the workhouse. It was next door to the orphans’ home. The
young woman gave birth to a baby before she died.”
“A baby?” said Oliver.

“A baby boy,” said Mr. Brownlow.

“Did Mr. Bumble tell you that name?” asked Oliver.

“He did. When I gave him still some more money,” Mr. Brownlow said. He put his hand, on Oliver’s shoulder, “I think you can guess that name. The name Bumble gave that boy.”

“My name,” gasped Oliver. “The lovely young woman was my mother. The woman with the locket.”

“Did Bumble tell you more about the locket he sold to Monks?” Rose asked. Her voice was excited.

“He did, for more money. I have never seen a man so greedy,” said Mr. Brownlow. He smiled. “Bumble will need every penny I gave him. I reported what he did, Mr. Bumble no longer has a job.”

“But what did he say about the locket?” Rose asked again.

“Only that it was gold. And had a single name on it, Mr. Brownlow said.

“What was that name?” asked Rose.

“Agnes,” Mr. Brownlow answered.

Rose's face became pale. Her voice shook. “And Monks's real name?”

“Edward Leeford,” Mr. Brownlow answered. “Why do you ask?”

“My only sister was named Agnes.” Rose said. “She had such a locket. And she married a man named Leeford.”

“The man who was my friend,” said Mr. Brownlow. “Monks’s father.”

“He took Agnes to live in another town,” said Rose. “She wrote me that she was going to have a child. Then I heard no more. I went to see her. She was gone. No one knew where. But now I know.”
“Does that mean—” Oliver began to ask. He could not finish his question. His heart was beating too hard.

“It means my sister was your mother,” Rose said. She gave Oliver a giant hug. “I am your aunt. And I will be like a mother to you.”

“Amazing,” said Mr. Brownlow. He shook his head in wonder.

“Sir, you once told me it is a small world,” Oliver said. “You had said that we are all related.”

“I did not know how true that was,” said Mr. Brownlow. He wiped tears from his eyes. Tears of joy.

“True indeed. Very true,” Mr. Grimwig said. He wiped his eyes too. “Must have gotten a speck in them,” he said. He used his handkerchief to polish his glasses. Then Mr. Grimwig cleared his throat. “This evidence is true enough to stand up in court. Monks will have to pay Oliver what he owes him. Half his father’s fortune.” He smiled at Oliver. “What will you do with your money? Buy toys? Sweets?”

“I’ll give most of it to Nancy,” Oliver said. “She needs it more than I do, I have all of you. But she has only mean Bill Sikes and evil Fagin.”

“She has another friend, too.” Mr. Grimwig said. “I saw him when I looked out the window. His eyes lit up when he saw Nancy.”

“What did he look like?” asked Oliver fear was in his voice.

Mr. Grimwig smiled. “Don’t worry Oliver. He was little more than a child. He looked as if he was going to a costume party. All dressed up in grown-up clothes.”

“The Artful Dodger,” said Oliver.

“The Artful Dodger?” said Brownlow.

“He is one of Fagin’s boys,” said Oliver. “The one who stole your handkerchief.
Fagin must have had him follow Nancy. Now he’ll tell Fagin that Nancy came here. Fagin won’t like it. Bill will like it even less. We must save her.” Oliver was already at the door.

“Surely, we do not need to rush so,” Mr. Grimwig said. “We’ll go to the police. Let them take over.”

“You don’t know how fast the Artful Dodger moves,” Oliver said. “Or how quick-tempered Bill is. Hurry!”

12. The Murder of Nancy

They rushed out of the hotel.

Brownlow hailed a cab. “Hurry,” Mr. Brownlow told the driver.

He gave him an extra gold piece.

The cab moved through the traffic. But it stopped when it reached the slums.

The driver said, “This is as far as I go. The streets are too narrow here. Too dangerous.”

Oliver, Mr. Brownlow, Grimwig, and Rose went on by foot.

“I’ll go first,” said Oliver. He led them through the twisting streets to the building where Nancy and Bill Sikes lived.

A crowd was in front of the building, and police, too.

“What happened, Officer?” Mr. Brownlow asked of the policemen.

“A murder,” he said.

Oliver’s heart sank. His voice shook. “Whose murder, sir?”

“A girl. Nancy something,” the policeman said, “The killer was waiting for her. Beat her to death on the spot. Who knows why. These people are animals.”

“Not animals. All too human,” said Mr. Brownlow. “That poor girl. Have you caught the killer?”
“He got clean away,” said the policeman. “It’ll be a job to hunt him down. This place is a jungle. “

“A reward for finding the killer!” Mr. Brownlow shouted to the crowd.

“And I’ll add something to it!” Grimwig shouted.

“We’d do it for nothing,” a man in the crowd said. “Nancy was a good sort. But it was Bill Sikes who done it. Bill is clever as a fox. Lord only knows where he’s hiding out.”

Just then a dog came running out of the building. A big white dog.

A policeman came running after it. “It got out of the girl’s room,” he said. “Must have belonged to her.”

“Not to her. To Bill Sikes,” said Oliver.

“Quick! Follow it!”

The dog ran yelping through the streets. It knew where it was going. The crowd ran after it. The number of people kept growing. Everyone wanted to catch Nancy’s killer. The dog stopped at a building. It howled and clawed at the front door.

“Fagin’s place,” Oliver said.

“Break the door down!” shouted a man in the crowd.

“Get a battering ram!” shouted a woman.

Someone found a large beam of wood.

Five strong men bashed it against the door.

The door caved in.

The crowd started to pour through it.

Then Oliver shouted, “Look! Up there! At Fagin’s window!”

The people stopped in their tracks. They looked up at the high-window. Bill Sikes stood on the ledge.

“Give yourself up!” a policeman called to him.
“You’ll never catch me!” Bill shouted back.

He leaped to the roof of the next building. An amazing jump for someone so big. Bill ran over the rooftops, leaping from one to another. On the streets below, the crowd followed him.

He reached the last building before the river. But that did not stop him. He was carrying a coil of rope. He tied one end around a chimney. He made the other end into a loop. He put the loop over his head.

Oliver heard a man in the crowd ask,

“What the devil is he doing?”

“Can’t you see?” another answered. “He’ll put the loop around his waist. He’ll lower himself down to the river. And he’ll swim for it. That fox. He’ll cheat the hangman yet.”

But suddenly Bill froze. His eyes grew big. He screamed, “Nancy! What are you doing here. Take your eyes off me! Your eyes!”

Nobody could see what Bill was staring at.

But everyone saw him take a step backward. Right off the roof.

He fell through empty air. Until his fall was stopped by the rope around his neck.

The crowd was quiet for a moment. They watched the dead man swinging on the rope.

Then someone said, “It was like he saw a ghost.”

Another added, “I said he’d cheat the hangman. He did the job himself.”

The crowd broke up. But the police were still on the job. And Oliver and his friends still had work to do.

They all headed for Fagin’s place.
13. Oliver Finds Happiness at Last

The police pounded on Fagin’s door. It was made of steel. Too hard to break open.

“Open in the name of the law!” a policeman shouted.

“You’re wanted for hiding a killer!” shouted another. “You won’t get away from us. Not this time.”

They heard Fagin’s voice from inside. “I’ll never give myself up! Unless we make a deal.”

“What kind of a deal?” one policeman replied.

“I’ll hand over a gang of thieves to you,” said Fagin. “I’ll give evidence against them. It’s a good trade. You get five evil boys. You just have to let one poor, harmless old man go free.”

“Forget it,” the policeman called back. “You’re coming with us.”

“Nev...” Fagin started to shout. Then his voice was cut off. A moment later the door swung open.

Charley Bates stood there. Behind him the Artful Dodger was sitting on Fagin’s chest. The other boys held down Fagin’s arms and legs.

“After all that I’ve done for you,” Fagin screamed.

“And what you wanted to do to us,” the Artful Dodger replied. He looked at the police. “Give us a break for helping nab Fagin. How about it?”

“Tell it to the judge,” one policeman said. He pulled Fagin to his feet and put handcuffs on him.

“Oliver!” Fagin cried. “Tell them. I meant no harm, my dear. I Was like a father to you. To all the boys.”

Oliver looked right into Fagin’s eyes. He said not a word.

“Why, you little—” screamed Fagin. He tried to leap at Oliver. But the policemen were holding him tightly.
“Time to get what’s coming to you,” the head policeman said. “Take them away, fellows.”

Police surrounded Fagin and the boys. They left for jail.

Only Oliver and his friends remained. Plus one other person. A well-dressed young man. A young man in the corner. A young man who shrank from Mr. Brownlow’s eyes.

“So this is where I find you, Edward Leeford,” Mr. Brownlow said. “Or should I call you Monks?”

“I can explain everything,” Monks said.

“We already know everything,” Mr. Brownlow said.

“Except one thing,” said Mr. Grimwig. “Where is the will?”

“What will?” asked Monks.

“Your father’s will,” said Mr. Grimwig. “The will that left half his fortune to your half-brother Oliver.”

“There is no such will,” said Monks.

“There is one,” Mr. Brownlow said. There was iron in his voice. “Your father told me of it. I will swear to that in court. If you make us take you ther.”

“I was afraid someone knew about it,” Monks said in a broken voice. But it said that if Oliver ever broke the law, he’d get nothing. Then I’d be safe.”

“Talk, talk,” Grimwig said impatiently. “Answer my question. Where is the will?”

“My mother destroyed it,” Monks said.

“Then she wrote to Oliver’s mother, Agnes. She said that my father was already married. And wanted nothing more to do with Agnes.”

“How hurt poor Agnes must have been,” said Rose. “How ashamed. No wonder she ran away.”

“Well, it seems you are a wealthy young man,” Mr. Brownlow told Oliver. “You have half of Leeford’s fortune.”

“But that is all that is left,” Monks protested. “I have had bad luck in business. And even worse luck gambling. I will be left without a penny.”
“Then learn from Oliver,” said Grimwig, “He did not have a penny. And he has come far in the world.”

“A fortune,” said Oliver. “What will I do with it?”

“I will watch over it until you are grown up,” said Mr. Brownlow. “Then you can do what you want with it.”

“And I will take care of you while you grow up,” said Rose. She held him close. “I will be your second mother.”

“It all seems too good to be true,” said Oliver.

But it was true.

Then and in the years to come.

For Oliver and all who loved him.

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**Introduction**

Charles Dickens (1812 – 1870) was an English writer and social critic. He created some of the world’s most memorable fictional characters and is generally regarded as the greatest novelist of the Victorian period. During his lifetime, his works enjoyed unprecedented fame, and by the twentieth century his literary genius was broadly acknowledged by critics and scholars. His novels and short stories continue to be widely popular.

*The Pickwick Papers, Oliver Twist, A Christmas Carol, David Copperfield, Great Expectations* and *A Tale of Two Cities* are some of his notable works.

*Oliver Twist*, also known as *The Parish Boy’s Progress*, is the second novel by Dickens, published by Richard Bentley in 1837. The book is notable for Dicken’s unromantic portrayal of criminals and their sordid lives. An early example of the social novel, the book calls the public’s attention to various contemporary evils, including the Poor Law, child labour, recruitment of children as criminals and the plight of orphans. Dickens mocks the hypocrisies of his time by surrounding the novel’s serious themes with sarcasm and dark humour.
### Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>appetite</td>
<td>a natural desire to satisfy a bodily need, especially for food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>undertaker</td>
<td>a person whose business is preparing dead bodies for burial or cremation and making arrangements for funerals</td>
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<tr>
<td>brutal</td>
<td>savagely violent; cruel</td>
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<tr>
<td>coarse</td>
<td>rough or harsh in texture (usually cloth)</td>
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<tr>
<td>huddled</td>
<td>curl one’s body into a small space; crowd together; nestle closely</td>
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<tr>
<td>the beak</td>
<td>(commonly used in Dicken’s time) a policeman or magistrate</td>
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<tr>
<td>the mill</td>
<td>jail or prison</td>
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<tr>
<td>learn the ropes</td>
<td>explain to somebody/learn how to do a particular job, task, etc. correctly</td>
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<tr>
<td>look sharp</td>
<td>be quick</td>
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<tr>
<td>avenue</td>
<td>a broad road in a town or city, typically having trees at regular intervals along its sides</td>
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<tr>
<td>run-down</td>
<td>gradually deteriorate (or cause to deteriorate) in quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>matted</td>
<td>(especially of hair, wool, or fur) tangled into a thick mass, usually unclean</td>
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<tr>
<td>earn my keep</td>
<td>work in return for food and accommodation</td>
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<tr>
<td>gab</td>
<td>talk; chatter</td>
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<tr>
<td>nick of time</td>
<td>just in time; at the last moment</td>
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<tr>
<td>stomp</td>
<td>tread heavily and noisily, typically in order to show anger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brutal</td>
<td>make low, feeble sounds expressive of fear, pain, or unhappiness</td>
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<tr>
<td>coarse</td>
<td>give a loud shout or cry</td>
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<tr>
<td>drowsy</td>
<td>sleepy and lethargic</td>
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<tr>
<td>make short</td>
<td>to finish or deal with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work of</td>
<td>something quickly</td>
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<tr>
<td>gallows</td>
<td>a structure, typically of two uprights and a crosspiece, for the hanging of criminals</td>
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<tr>
<td>trot</td>
<td>proceed at a pace faster than a walk</td>
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<tr>
<td>speck</td>
<td>a tiny spot; a small particle of a substance</td>
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<tr>
<td>battering</td>
<td>a heavy beam; a heavy object swung or rammed against a door to break it down</td>
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<tr>
<td>ram</td>
<td>strike or hit heavily and repeatedly</td>
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<tr>
<td>pounded</td>
<td>catch (someone) doing something wrong or criminal; grab or steal</td>
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<td>nab</td>
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Comprehension

**i) Answer the following questions in a paragraph.**
1. What is the central theme of ‘Oliver Twist’?
2. Attempt a character sketch of Oliver.
3. Write a note on the conditions of the Workhouse and orphanages.
4. Give an account of Oliver’s experience working for the undertaker.
5. What is poetic justice? Is there poetic justice in ‘Oliver Twist’?

**ii) Answer the following questions in an essay.**
1. Write on Oliver’s family, contrasting the beginning and the end of the story.
2. Compare the characters and behaviour of Mr. Brownlow, Fagin and Mr. Bumble.