

CLASS XII

R.K NARAYAN'S
**A TIGER
FOR
MALGUDI
(ABRIDGED EDITION)**



BOARD OF SECONDARY EDUCATION RAJASTHAN,
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COMMITTEE**

R.K NARAYAN'S

**A TIGER FOR MALGUDI
(ABRIDGED EDITION)**

CLASS XII

(ENGLISH LITERATURE BOOK II)

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PREFACE

*What we call today Indian Writing in English dates back to earlier part of the nineteenth century but excellence in writing of prose could be achieved much later than in the writing of verse. But despite its late start, the novel has gone far ahead in quantity and quality. It was only with Gandhian struggle for freedom that Indian English novel came on its own. With the publication of Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* (1935) and *Coolie* (1936) and Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* (1938) the Indian novel in English started gaining prominence. Today the writers of this genre are in great number. Besides Mulk Raj, Raja Rao and R. K Narayan, the big three as they are called, K. Nagrajan, Bhabhani Bhattacharya, Manohar Malgaonkar, Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Jhumpa Lahiri, Arvind Adiga, to name a few, have immensely enriched this body of Indian English Fiction. Some of them also have earned international acclaim.*

*R.K. Narayan's *Tiger For Malgudi* was published in 1986. Unlike his other protagonists, this novel has a tiger as the main character, from whose point of view the whole story, the different incidents and their impact on the mind and psyche of the latter are narrated in great detail and depth. The evolution of the tiger, aided and inspired by his master (the monk/hermit) has roots in the Indian philosophical tradition.*

The novel in its abridged form has been divided into three sections for the purpose of better and comprehensive understanding of the text. Short -type questions in addition to glossary and detailed questions have been added at the end of each section to help students prepare for examination.

About the Author

R. K Narayan is now regarded as one of the greatest writers of Indian

Writing in English. He is the most aesthetic of Indian writers and his sole aim being to give aesthetic satisfaction, and not to use his art as a medium of propaganda or to serve some social purpose. Soon after early education he had decided to devote all his time to writing, though the idea was unthinkable at that time but Narayan went ahead with great confidence and soon achieved eminent success as a novelist and short story writer.

Narayan has a vast body of creative output to his credit. Prominent among them are English Teacher, The Guide, Malgudi Days, and Waiting for the Mahatma. His works have been published both in England and the U.S.A, where he enjoys great popularity. In America, he is regarded next to Faulkner and Graham Greene.

Narayan's Indianness is reflected in various ways in his novels. But he is a storyteller first and narrates the story in the Indian tradition. Human relationships, particularly domestic relationships occupy a central place in his fiction. His Indianness is further seen in the introduction of much that is fantastic but which is credible in the Indian context. Many popular superstitions, rituals and beliefs are frequently exploited; Sadhus, Sanyasis, and Swamis are recurring characters. The Master of Tiger For Malgudi belongs to the ascetic of the Indian tradition. But one feature is ever persuasive in his entire fictional work- he makes no attempt to preach or deliver. His readers must gather the message by reading between the lines.



INTRODUCTION

R.K. Narayan had heard about the reports of a hermit, who arrived at the KumbhaMela, with a tiger as his companion. The animal moved about freely in the midst of a huge crowd without even scaring or hurting anyone. This gave him the idea of writing a novel on the subject of a tiger. His determination was strengthened when he heard similar stories about friendship between the tigers and human beings. This theme also got further imprinted on his mind when he came across a four inch long picture of tiger. Pleading, "I would love to get into a book." To this his response was, "Surely you will get into my book, but the goodness of the book itself I cannot guarantee."

Man, according to Narayan, has been mostly the focus of fictional creations. Very rarely do we realize other creations too have such emotions as ego, values, outlook and the ability to communicate although they are not capable of audible speech. Man thinks all other forms of creation are meant for his amusement, comfort or even food.

In response to a question, from a journalist as to why only a tiger is the subject of his novel and not a mouse, his answer was, "So that the chief character may not be trampled upon or lost sight of in a hole".

The author's story begins with an aged tiger lying in its cage and recollecting its past beginning with its cub hood and wild age in the jungle and later in captivity as a circus star.

Later it acquires freedom after running away from the clutches of a film-shooting crew and wanders in the town. The fear-stricken people try to get it shot but an ascetic appears on the scene and adopts it

as a companion.

Who is he? Where is he from? are questions that trouble people when they see him. But whenever he is asked, ``Who are you?" he just says, "What I am trying to find out". When one is overpowered with the feeling to understand one's self, one needs to leave behind all normal life and all that goes with it-one becomes an ascetic, a 'Sanyasi', a 'Sadhu' or 'Yogi', who leaves everything and undergoes a complete change of personality. He totally obliterates his past, even his previous name and acquires a new one. He thus frees himself from all human ties and material things. He is a constant wanderer, who lives on alms and seeks seclusion in a cave or forest at some stage for prolonged meditation.

In the story of R.K. Narayan Tiger ForMalgudi, the author employs his powers to save the tiger and transform it inwardly working on the idea that deep within, at the core, all beings are the same, in spite of differing appearances and categories.

Note: This is the author's preface to the novel. Also the whole story is narrated from the point of view of the tiger.

Plot:

The novel revolves around the life of a tiger which covers his life span from a beast to an ascetic animal who can understand human talks and follow spirituality. The novel opens with the remembering of the past by the tiger when he is in his old age and is living in a cage of a zoo. The narrator in the novel is the tiger himself. In the beginning of his life he appears to be a vulnerable creature when his mother deserts him suddenly. The challenges and taunts of other animals change him into the strongest and brutal animal soon. He has to enter the village to

search for his captivated family. He is caught by the Captain. He brings the tiger to the Circus. One day the tiger is hired by a filmmaker named Madan to play a role in the film. The Captain forces him with cruelty to stand on hind legs but feeling extremely tortured he kills the Captain and runs away. He takes shelter in a school where a hermit saves him and takes him along to the forest. In the company of the pious hermit, the tiger too follows the spiritual path for salvation. The novel tells about the simplicity of the animal world and the complexity which arises due to human greed and wrath.

Theme:

The major theme of the novel is non-violence and sympathy for others. The world can be won by love and affection while cruelty and wrath can destroy all. No creature is safe with hatred. The regeneration takes place in everyone's life, one only has to recognize its moments or flashes of sudden illumination of wisdom. Once a person is on the path of love and affection for all the animals and human beings, his regeneration starts automatically. The text follows the Gandhian philosophy of life.

Major Characters:

Tiger:

Tiger is the central character of the text. He represents the animal world in a new perspective. He says that despite a refined language for communication and body structure animals are the same as humans at all levels. They have emotions as well as intelligence which make them either friends or enemies of humans as per the behaviour of the human beings towards them. The tiger completes a life cycle of different stages with different people. In the beginning he is a beast. Later on when he is

caught by the Captain, he becomes a slave in the circus. At last he becomes a companion of the Master which leads him to the path of regeneration. The text revolves around the tiger. Each stage of the life of the tiger throws a light on his life and how he evolves and develops a spiritual and philosophical understanding by the time the novel ends.

The Captain:

The Captain is the owner of the Circus. In the beginning he was a factotum for Dadhji. He has all the skills required for managing the circus. He has in-depth knowledge of animals' behaviour and their traits. He cares a lot for the animals of the circus. He is well aware that animals should be given sufficient food to eat and time for rest. He is the Master of the Ring of the Circus. In the end we see a drastic change in his personality and attitude towards animals. Madan, the filmmaker, ignites the greed and cruelty of the Captain which results in the death of the Captain at the hands of his most beloved animal Raja 'the tiger'.

The Master:

The Master exercises great influence on the life of the Tiger. He saves him from Alphonse, the hunter, and prevents from being shot and taken him out of the prison. The tiger feels a big change in his traits and inner self when he meets the Master for the first time. Later on he follows him as an obedient disciple. The personality of the Master is a mystery for the villagers. Some of them take him as a hermit from the Himalayas while others think of him as a magician. Before becoming an ascetic he was an affluent insurance agent leading a healthy family life. Then suddenly, as if following the example of Siddhartha, he renounces the worldly life in an attempt to discover himself.

Minor Characters:

The Collector:

The District Magistrate or The Collector runs the administration of the district in which the village Malgudi is located. The villagers approach him to protect them against the attack of the tiger. He appears indifferent and takes a very official view, ignoring their pleas and sentiments. He doesn't take any concrete action for the protection of the villagers and their cattle.

The Clerk:

The clerk is the office assistant of the Collector. He receives the complaints and reports for the Collector. He takes gifts like pumpkin, cucumber etc. from the villagers but never helps them in a proper way.

Madan:

Madan is a filmmaker who is always in search of a unique idea which can help him in getting an award for his film. He comes to see a show in the circus and finds the tiger the most appropriate character for his future-film. He offers a handsome amount to the Captain and makes an agreement with him to use the tiger for filmmaking.

Jaggu : A sturdy and robust man whom Madan hires to play the role of a fighter in his film. He raises laughter at the film set by his innocent and naïve answers to Madan.

Alphonse: A hunter with a double barrel gun who is ever eager to shoot the tiger.

Rita: She is the wife of the Captain and leads the Trapeze show.



SECTION ONE

Chapter-I

When I was left in the zoo I had no idea of its expanse, nor of the other mates. I remember how the man who came to transfer me from the forest told one of the zoo-keepers, "He is all right. Now run up and see if the cage is ready. This animal is used to human company and a lot of free movement..."

I was given a special treatment because of the Master, whom I may not see again, although I always dream of him as suddenly appearing out of a crowd, opening the door of my cage and telling me, "Come out, let us go." I keep watching people and thinking if I could even come across the face of my Master. All the people appear to have dull and monotonous faces, none as radiant as my Master. They peep through the bars and make all kinds of voices to rouse me and often say "Ah, see this tiger. What a ferocious beast" (a word detested by my Master). About these people I would often think, you are not likely to understand that I am different from the tiger next door, that I possess a soul within this forbidding exterior. I can think, analyse, judge, remember and do everything that you do, perhaps with greater subtlety and sense I like only the faculty of speech.

I know that people are carried away by my appearances-my claws and fangs. I don't blame them. I don't know why God has shaped me like that, unlike the parrots and peacocks who inspire poets and painters. Even I am afraid of my appearance.

Once when I looked into a pond and saw my own reflection, it

filled me with a sense of fear, not when I was a wild beast but long after- I had come under the influence of my Master and learnt to question, who am I".

During my early days I lived as a cave-dweller and jungle beast-a time I recollect both with pleasure and shame. Living in a cave near a rivulet at the far end of the Memphis range, I remember frolicking like a cub on the sandy bank and the cool stream protected and fed by a mother. Although I believed she would live with me forever but one day she suddenly vanished leaving me panic-stricken. Initially When I ventured out I was chased, knocked down and hurt by bigger animals and taunted by lesser ones but in time I learnt to survive by catching innocent creatures and as rabbits, fox cubs and squirrels. Not only did I survive very soon I became the Supreme Lord of the Jungle, striking terror in others. It was a time of wildness, violence and toughness and cruelty inflicted on the weaker creatures. I even wondered why the lion was crowned as the king of the forest. It was the most slothful creature I had ever seen, he saved its energy only for hunting food once this was achieved he did not move a muscle for days. Later in the circus, it got a taste of my strength when he was let out to fight and it retreated into its cage immediately when I gave evidence of my strength- an act, for which the ringmaster patted me on the back.

At my arrival every animal trembled and I started believing" Let them tremble and understand who is the Master, Lord of This World". Every creature except the monkey withdrew at my sight. We, the denizens of the jungle, have a language of our town, we don't have words but communicate like human beings. When I passed by rabbits scurried off, the jackal put his ears back, lowered his tail and rolled his

eyes in humility. Among our Jungle community we had an understanding and each one acknowledged my unquestioned superiority. My Master sometimes told me how the same was true of human beings in various degrees.

Out of all the creatures it was only the porcupine that I tried to avoid. Yet once in sheer recklessness I tried to attack it, and received such a stab of quills over my nose, jaws and paws forcing me to retreat to my cave. I nearly collapsed and stayed there starving for days. All this was being observed by a crow who sat on the branch of a fig tree. He mocked me and said, "Served you right. No one in his right mind would ever go near a porcupine, Ignorant fool. Should you run after every kind of flesh indiscriminately? You think no end of your powers!" (He then spread the news far and wide, it became the joke of the jungle.) Then it suggested to me a way out of this difficult situation, "... Now listen carefully if you can move yourself across to the stream, not far from there is a yellow shrub with bristles. Brush against it, milk from its leaves will loosen your quills and heal your sores."

Forgive me for talking about my past, when I do so I lose all control. In doing so, I often felt quiet but my Master, who reads my mind, says that there is nothing wrong in it and I should never curb it, it is a part of me indispensable, although I have come a long way from it."

The only animal that I was worried about was the monkey-it lived at a height and moved about as it pleased and considered itself to be above the rules and the laws of the jungle, a mischievous tribe. The birds were its allies, which too lived at a height and enjoyed freedom and facility. I wished I could climb or fly and then I would be able to eliminate the whole tribe that were contemptible of me, including the

owl, the wise one with his round eyes; he was a self-appointed advisor and always derived pleasure from my fall. Whenever I passed in their close proximity the owl and its mate would make a cynical crackling sound and hoot. When I looked they would talk in a mocking tone to each other:

'When the king passes what should one do?' There would be some answer to that.

"If you don't?"

"Then he will nip off your head".

"Yes-only if he could carry his mighty bulk up a tree trunk".

The crow was another treacherous creature who followed my movements and produced a din to reveal where I had the kill, making it impossible for me to eat in peace.

Another animal that annoyed me often was the leopard-how many they were in the entire jungle I could not make out but whenever I passed by he would deliberately make it a point to climb a tree to emphasize a fact that he was higher than myself. I generally ignored him because he was quite agile and could easily get beyond one's reach. But he was mean and always made it a law that he didn't care for me. When he was with his mate, he made fun of me by talking about the superiority of spots over stripes.



Chapter-II

There are many superstitions associated with stripes of the tiger. One popular one is the story which says the first tiger in creation was very much like a lion; it had a shining coat of pure gold. Imagine! But he offended some forest spirit, which branded his back with coal. I generally didn't believe it. It was a fable circulated by the leopard couple, who felt inferior because of their spots, but made a virtue of it. It hurt my pride as an all-powerful ruler of the jungle, while all creatures respected my status, bowed to it and kept out of my way. Every day I thought of ways to eliminate him altogether from the jungle. Sometimes I set out to drive him back in a deep hollow or inside a cave but he soon got the scent of it and escaped, slipping on the top of a banyan tree and eyeing me with contempt from there. I Soon realized that I had to reconcile to his existence in the jungle.

I could ignore the leopard and go my way but my greater concern was the female of my own species, whom I came across beyond the mango grove. It was a creature as large as me. I could smell her presence a long way off. Initially I hesitated whether to turn back or advance. I was out hunting in the evening and if I had not been hungry I would have hunted and gone back. But as I moved towards a meadow where a herd of deer always grazed, I found her standing in the middle blocking my way. Perhaps she was from the adjoining forest and generally we respected each other's territories and never intruded but my temper rose at the sight of her. I roared, "Get out of my way and go back where you belonged". She found it a joke and showed no response, I felt insulted and could not tolerate it. I was furious and

jumped on her back and tried to throttle her but this lady surprised me by throwing me off her back with a jerk. My claws were buried in her skin but this did not deter her from attacking me. She turned around and gashed my eyes and bit my throat. Luckily I had shut my eyes but my brow was bruised and blood trickled down my eyes. The lady returned for the attack and knocked me off my feet by ramming into me. I have never encountered anyone so strong. I could have retreated but my pride was hurt especially when I found out that drawn by the scent of blood the jackal had seen my humiliation. I thought I should fight it out even if one of us were to die in the process. We butted into each other, scratched, scrawled, clawed, wrestled grappled, gashing, biting, hurting each other, I also stood up and threw my weight on her but it was like hitting a rock-she was no normal animal and was finding it extremely difficult to take any more of it, I collapsed on the ground bleeding from every pore. I had no strength left to run. I wish I had not paid any attention to the jackal and bothered about my prestige.

My only consolation was that my opponent seemed to have fared no better. She had also collapsed in a ditch with her flesh torn and exposed and was bleeding profusely. I could see that even as I could open my eyes with dripping blood, she could not even open her eyes. It was her inability that forced her to withdraw. While both were lying panting, the jackal, standing at a safe distance, asked in a humble tone, "May I know why you have been fighting and brought upon yourself this misery. If you can show even half a reason, I shall be satisfied? He continued," if you cannot discover a reason to be enemies why don't you consider being friends? How grand you could make if you joined forces-you could be supreme in this jungle and the next and the next, no one will even try to stand up to you, except a crazy tusker, whom

you could toss about between the two... you combined could make the jungle shake."

His words made sense. I felt sympathy for my adversary and gratitude for sparing my life. Before I could thank the jackal and say, "You have advised me well," the jackal disappeared. I limped my way to the tigress and expressed my regret and the desire to make amends. She was in no condition to get up or even see me. Cleaning my body, a bit, I sat close to her, paying all my attention and performing different acts of tenderness till she opened her eyes slightly. Suddenly I felt a dread she could kill me instantly but a change had come over her too and my gestures seemed to work. She recovered her breath and her limbs began to move and she followed me quickly, although both of us were limping to the nearest pond where we washed ourselves till we were cleansed of blood and felt energized.

I have no idea of the time but by the time our scars were healed we had added four to our family, jumping, climbing over us all at ease. The little ones felt happy once fully fed after continuously sucking and preferred to jump and play around their mother while I roamed about in the jungle and rested generally at a place in the shade from which I could pounce my game easily.

As time passed the young ones came to an unsafe stage where any bison or bear passing in that direction could trample them out of existence. We had to guard them all the time. There was the constant danger of the cubs slipping and rolling down into the ravine. They were now too large to be carried by the scruff. Once they were forcefully brought back to the cave one of the parents sat at the entrance to prevent them from escaping to the outside world. But that was not

the permanent solution.

A stage came when the obstacle at the cave's entrance did not matter to them. Though we enjoyed their activities, it was becoming much of a trial. One evening it was my turn to guard the cubs. The mother had gone out in search of a hunt. I remember seeing her going down the slope across the river and climbing the other bank. I assumed the cubs were playing inside the cave but at some moment when I was not alert, they escaped. When I woke up I saw them wading through the river. I believe they must have got the scent of their mother. I thought they would safely return to the camp with their mother. After all they also should watch their mother hunt and share a fresh kill.

After sometime I felt a little uneasy hearing all kinds of disturbing noises from the jungle and no sign of my family returning home. I roared about so that the sound could penetrate the forest, the valleys and the mountains and bring back my family. Unable to wait further I moved in the same direction and went to the other side of the river but there was no sign of the cubs nor of the tigress. I went down the valley and followed the path in the plains beyond the jungle, leading to human habitation. I even saw a group of people passing, pulling a cart, singing and shouting. I cried in angst and desperation and hid myself at the sight of human beings; till now I thought the jungle was unapproachable to humans and I had hardly seen any specimen till the moment.

Now human feet had touched our ground and I felt strange forebodings. The men were too drunk to take any notice of me, preoccupied as they were in their enjoyment. As the procession passed by, I jumped on to another rock and kept looking at them. As the sun went down dazzling my eyes, I came close to the edge of the overhanging cliff and stayed there.

Chapter-III

I slept till dusk and started walking in the direction of the procession, taking full care that no other creature, especially the owl or the jackal, took notice of my movement. I kept moving along the works on the hills at a safe height. When I arrived at the village I found the inhabitants sleeping. Without making my noise I lay beside a well waiting for things to become quiet.

I could see to my utter surprise a cart in which my cubs and their mother were just imprisoned. It filled me with great fury, I just wanted to dash on, pounce on every creature and destroy, pick my cubs and carry them away. Just as I was about to jump forward a group of men arrived in a strange vehicle (later I came to know it was a jeep) and suddenly there was much shouting and arguments. After sometime the carcasses were taken to the back of the jeep and it drove off. I lay low and no one could notice and when people had moved to their houses, I went back to my hiding place near the well. But this rest was short-lived as women, carrying earthen pots and buckets approached the well. I slipped back and hid myself on the hill behind the bushes.

Another day started with my dozing off till evening. When dusk fell I watched the villagers returning from their fields with bundles of firewood on their heads driving their flocks home. I slipped through the lantana shrub and lay in their path, well hidden behind a boulder, and pounced upon the last animal in the herd, seized its throat and went off with it. It could take care of my food for the next two days. Later when the owner of the herd realized that one of these animals was missing as he followed the blood stains, I thought of changing my tactics regarding the place of catching the prey. I tried to elude the villagers again and again.

They started wondering about the shape of the predator, "Can it be a tiger, the hunter by this time must have taken away his entire family, by this time they will have sold the skin of the adult". Somebody remarked that it was a tigress, the father must be at large. The local animal expert claimed, "You must understand that a male tiger lives with his family...tigers are not family bound like monkeys and other creatures." Human beings have their own theories and it is amusing to see how ignorant they are about other creatures. As of now they must have concluded that it was not a tiger, but a cheetah or even a hyena, which steals up and attacks and would not be satisfied with just a sheep, it kills bigger animals.

Nowadays I chose a smaller animal from the herd because I could manage it without leaving a trail and eat it afresh as one meal. With bigger animals, they were required to be kept hidden till I completely finished eating them. Besides, I was required to change my location constantly. While moving along the entire mountain range I could see in the valleys and plains scattered human habitations to which cattle were driven back in the evenings. I could change my locations every day: lie in wait, seize the last animal in the herd and vanish.

Since the villages were scattered the news spread very slowly. This proved a boon to me for the time being. Also I found this strategy better than hunting in the jungle, where the animals are more alert and elusive; they can anticipate the danger far better than the village cattle.

The villagers started getting restless because they had been losing animals regularly. People thought some devil was around, so they started engaging in special pujas to propitiate the gods. Even they began bringing the cattle back much before the evening set. This greatly affected but only for a short time. I began to scout around the villages at night when there were no lamps and people had retired for the day.

Chapter-IV

Once I stealthily entered the enclosure of sheep situated in the centre of a village at night when even the mongrels were not aware of my approach. The stockade was surrounded by bamboo, brambles and thorn and could be easily broken. The moment I seized the last creature and was about to escape, I heard the cry of the lamb in my grip. This set the whole flock bleating, crying and howling in panic, waking the villagers from their deep slumber and soon they came out screaming, "Ah! Now we know. We have him. He must not escape..."

They came rushing down in great force, carrying flaming torches, hatchets, crowbars and staves. As I was about to dash out with my prize, in the midst of utter confusion, I lost sight of the door. I had never seen humans in such a frenzy. They were all armed, spoking at me and hitting me with arrows and all other kinds of weapons. More than all this I found flowing torches, red-coloured and smoking viciously most. I dropped the lamb, and my only aim was to escape with my skin intact. I had never been so close to fire but now the fire was choking, blowing and scorching. One fellow flung his torch at me which burnt my skin, another threw a spear which gashed my sight. I ran round and round madly. They were all intent on murdering me. They were throwing huge stones at me, they had lost all fear. I could have fallen on any of them and reached them but the fire was unbearable. I was bleeding at various places and I wished I were dead. The moments chased and tormented me.

But luckily in the midst of all this chaos, a mishap occurred while I was feeling desperate. A boy who was carrying a torch at the end of the

bamboo pole, while attempting to poke at me, held his flame too close to the fence, which caught fire. The people's attention was now diverted to saving the sheep. They demolished the stockade and opened a way out. Caught between bleating sheep, which received blows meant for me, I ran out and escaped into the night.

When I look back, I feel I should not have chosen villages to hunt. Stepping into human society was a thoughtless act. Instead of living in the jungle as the unquestioned lord and master, leading my life majestically as an honest-to-god tiger going in and out of the cave at will, eating and sleeping and performing every act what he wished, I had let myself in for ultimate slavery. I had thought that there could never be any creature stronger than a tiger. I was mistaken. A human being may look small, without prominent teeth or claws, but he is gifted with some strange power, which can manipulate a tiger or an elephant as if they were toys.



Chapter-V

After my attack on the village, the public became more careful. They not only began to guard their cattle better, they even thought of seeking help from government officers. They sent their representatives to the collector in the town and became more vocal by expressing their anger and concern freely in the form of exaggerated report of how a tiger was terrorizing the countryside, invading the villages and carrying away the cattle, injuring people going into the forest to gather the firewood; they even gave a list of persons who were killed. They tried to build a case against me by inventing all kinds of stories. I had always tried to avoid encounters with human beings and had I wanted even on that night I could have managed and not messed up with the humans. But I did not because I did not want to do so. If I were given an opportunity to present myself before the collector, I would have told him how the people were lying about me. Human beings lie-it was a lesson I learnt quite late in life.

The Collector, for whom these representations were a routine, just said, "I will look into your case. I can't promise anything. How do you know there is a tiger around"?

The latter conversation is much more amusing"

"We saw it."

"How many of you saw it.?"

"All of us..." said the deputation.

"How many people live in your village".

The people were taken aback and did not know what to say,
"More than a hundred, sir."

"Have all the hundred seen the tiger".

"Yes", they chorused.

The collector further questioned them:

"How big was the tiger?".

The man blinked for a minute and then indicated with his hands some size, whereupon another name pushed himself forward and said, "He is wrong. The tiger was this big...". A heated argument followed and the Collector again asked, "Silence, are you both talking of the same tiger or two different ones? Was there one tiger or two or three?"

Someone said, "Five in all. Four cubs and a tigress which were shot."

"Who shot them?", asked the Collector.

"Some shikari/ hunters from the town..."

"Which town?"

"We don't know..."

"Did he have a license to shoot? Who gave them the license?"

The petitioners now became tongue tied. But the Collector observed for a moment and said, "Have you brought your petition in writing?" They looked terrified but the Collector who was sympathetic said, "I can't take action unless there is a written petition. Go to a petition writer...get the petition enforced on a stamp paper. Leave it with my clerk. I will fix the date for inspection and take action. For all I

know that may not be a tiger, whatever. You may be imagining!". However, he said it was part of his duty to look into their grievances.

From now on, the villagers had to visit the Collector almost once a week, spending time and money without any purpose.

From within the jungle where their villages were situated they had to walk ten miles to get on the highway before they could get a lift on the bus or a lorry. Even after much waiting at the Collector's office, they could meet only his clerk, who took their written complaints and further asked them to complete more formalities. At the end of the day, they would return to their villages, fearing they could be waylaid by the tiger!!

Meanwhile I had perfected my system of snatching cattle at night. I made myself familiar with their movements, their enclosures and the weak points of the villagers in tending their cattle. The villages were all alike and villagers had similar habits of keeping their sheep. They could never anticipate where I would strike next. I covered a large perimeter. If I took a sheep from one village, my next attack would be somewhere else, and in your terms, several days later. So the people could never know where to look for me. Some parts of Mempi hills had deep ravines, quite inaccessible to human beings. I hid myself in them and planned my next move with careful calculation. For me no village was too far out and no fencing impregnable. I walked in and out of villages, hardly aware how desperate the people were getting. They started keeping a bon- fire up all night and posting vigilant guards. At a few places they even scattered poisoned meat, but I was careful not to touch any of it. Only some wild cat or mongrel mistakenly became its victims.

Chapter VI

When he announced his name as Captain, people generally asked, "Of What?" His reply was "Just Captain. Mister Captain, if you like." "Oh. We thought it was an army or football Captain". But he was used to this kind of conversation and did not mind it. Eager to be seen as a man about town doing his business, he passed for running a circus named "Grand Irish Circus". When questioned about its said origin, he would later recall how during his visit to Poona he came across an Irishman, who owned a half striped pony, a yellow monkey and a parrot which could pick numbers and alphabets from a pack of cards. Later his association with this man got him this business of "circus" for just fifty rupees, with only parrot and the monkey as its sole members. Captain used the signboard, monkey and parrot to make a living following the Irishman's tradition.

The desire to do better in life look the Captain to one Dadhaji, the owner of "Dadhaji Grand Circus." Young Captain approached Dadhaji with the monkey on his shoulder and holding the carrot in his hand. Dadhaji watched him for some time and asked,

"What do you want?" To which the Captain's reply was "I want to work here?". Dadhaji's next question was, "What do you know about the animals?" adding what he was looking for in him was only "honesty". Dadhaji's men, who were positioned all around the Captain, looked at him with contempt. Fearing that if he reported lying, these guards would surely pounce on him. He recollected that the only animal he knew was an alley cat in his boyhood in Abu Lane and a mongrel he was fond of which used to curl up in dust. He had made several

attempts to shelter it in his room but was frustrated by his father who was strictly anti-canine. Later with his father he had to leave his home and fled for himself. All the flashes of memory he didn't consider worth mentioning and gathering some courage said, "Born and bred in Abu Lane of Malgudi, town sir, no chance of encountering animals sir. The reason why I have come to you is to learn about animals and their training. All this pleased the old man. He said, "... I am not going to ask you how you got these animals. It's your business, if you like, or drive it back to its tree top, so also the parrot. They are two insignificant things for my circus. When I say 'show' I mean acts of large quadrupeds and bipeds, whose movements would be visible from any part of the auditorium. Otherwise it is no show.... Now you may go if you choose. Or stay if you are willing to work here."

The personality and mood swings of the old man fascinated the Captain and he said, "Let me stay here, sir...and learn to work" The old man said, "I have around one hundred and fifty animals in this camp. Are you prepared to start with the horses? You will have to clean their stables first and also groom them. And then I can tell you what you can do. Ultimately, if you prove your worth you will be in charge of the cages of tigers and lions. That is all for the present you will be fed and sheltered and given pocket money. Think over this after the offer and give me your answer tomorrow...."

Captain said, "Not tomorrow, I will stay here."

This is how the Captain started his career when he was not even twenty. Dadhaji taught him his complete knowledge and skills in the training of animals as well as his business methods. He explained to him the principles of his philosophy." There is no such thing as a wild

animal space, any creature on four legs can be educated if you apply the right method. For over fifty years I have lived with animals ...over a hundred at a time and I know what I am saying."

The Captain wholeheartedly devoted himself to his work and Dadhaji started depending on him more and more. When he became too old to manage things he made the Captain his business partner. At his death the entire circus with all its property and assets were bequeathed to the Captain.



Chapter VII

After Dadhaji's death, the Captain shifted his circus to Malgudi and purchased a waste land beyond the level-crossing and within three months the land was totally transformed and in big letters loomed the large signboard: GRAND MALGUDI CIRCUS. The local officials, who were a little reluctant in the beginning to grant permission for the circus, were pleased when they saw the name of 'MALGUDI' added to the enterprise. The Captain would often say it in so many words. "Just to show my roots are here although I must confess that I had thought of perpetuating my benefactor's name originally. Here after Malgudi will be the home of hundreds of animals and scores of acrobats and performers of all kinds. You will be proud of it..." Thus in a very short time Malgudi became synonymous with the circus and the Captain was called the wonder man.

All this was the result of a lot of hard work. Captain got up at five in the morning and went on a tour of inspecting all the animals. He meticulously followed every advice given to him by his mentor, "You must understand the condition of every animal and anticipate how long it lasts, get an immediate replacement if any one dies. Keep an eye on the sources, if you are not to face embarrassment in public. The show never stops because of one animal." He could judge their health and welfare by observing their stance in the morning. Animals, according to him, looked their brightest at that hour if they were in good health.

He sat at his desk and noted down his observations and suggestions or criticized the state of cleanliness of cages or

surroundings and indicated punishment for negligent assistants.

During breakfast with his wife he generally boasted about the condition of his animals. His wife's constant grudge was that he was more careful about his animals than his own family; she says left to the Captain's ways their two sons would have been turned into lion-tamers had she not forced him to send them to Lovedale boarding school for studying. The Captain, on his part, is quite critical of his wife's family members who live in Madras enjoying the money regularly sent to them out of the circus-earnings. The Captain feels that some members of her family should lend a helping hand in the affairs of the circus but the wife has her own axe to grind.

"Is it enough that I slave for you? You want the entire damned family at your beck and call? I am tired of everything my boy. As soon as you get someone to lead your trapeze team, I will retire and go back to Madras. I'm tired of jumping and swinging and the perpetual tent living". When things started getting more tense between the two, the Captain would gulp his coffee and abruptly leave. Then she would often remark: "He has lost all sense of humour, the slightest up and he out, let him. I don't care..." And the Captain would tell himself, "Women are impossible. Worse than twenty untamed jungle creatures...."



Chapter-VIII

Captain had once gone to the collector's office where he heard the word tiger being mentioned a number of times. He immediately remembered Dadhaji's injunction: "If you hear the word tiger, don't leave." His curiosity was aroused and he engrossed himself into the conversation between the collector's clerk and the villagers: "This is our twentieth visit and you always keep saying come tomorrow.... Are you playing with us? You are waiting to see and our cattle eaten by the tiger and digested before you can think of saving us." The clerk got irritated, "No one has invited you." The villagers protested. "Then why did the officer promise help?" The clerk retorted, "Ask him. Why should I answer that question.?" As the conversation progressed the clerk said:

"My boss will come and inspect your village."

The villagers started getting more impatient:

"When? After the tiger has had his fill."

The clerk, in a matter of fact manner, replied to end matter:

"There is no tiger and he will not eat you..."

...The officer will come on inspection next month."

This made the villagers more angry:

"Next month! Next month! and the tiger has been fattening our cattle."

The Captain watched them instantly as they left the place grumbling. He followed a little distance, and threw out a general question in order to attract their attention, "Are you the headmen of the

village?" At which they turned round and stopped:

"How did you know us, Sir?"

He introduced himself, "you see that circus that is mine and I often come to this office on business. Not bad fellows at this office but delay. That poor fellow, he can't help. His master has to do things...."

"Every time we come, we bring him some things-cucumber or sugar cane, pumpkin, melon or anything. Never see him bare-handed, and yet he is unhelpful."

Captain gained their favour by listening to their stories patiently, as if they needed someone to hear their case. The villagers did not know who he was but his dress-pants, bush-shirt and the sun hat impressed them, and he spoke to them in Tamil, which appealed to them. He also treated them to colourful drinks from the wayside stall while eliciting information on the tiger. He invited them to his circus. "I have work to do, next two days, and then I will come to your village. If you help me I will catch the tiger. You will have to show me where he lives."

They answered: "We don't know sir. We can't say. He is here and there and everywhere. We think he is a devil and has wings and is no ordinary creature. We saw this creature only once.... We would have burnt him with the fire and cooked him alive but he escaped. He slips in and out, and can never be caught or killed. Before we can notice, he snatches away even the big sized buffalo and vanishes."

"He is an ordinary tiger, black and yellow, with four legs and only one tail and no extraordinary creature. I will deal with him, don't worry. I will see you on Thursday next." This is how the Captain tried

to comfort them.

He took directions about the village from them and reached there on the appointed day. The village was set far into the jungle with a single street and not more than thirty houses, mostly of brick or thatched ones, a lot of cattle and sheep. It was a pastoral community. He had gone there in his car but had to leave on the highway and walk down the village, which was full of excitement. Women and children surrounded him; the children took him for a policeman because of his grey dress. The men, who were away on the fields, immediately rushed to the village and shouted from far off, "Oh it is our hunter who is going to kill the tiger."

Captain corrected them, "I am not going to kill, but take him away." People tried to give him a warm welcome by offering him coconut drink, papaya or banana. Overwhelmed by their hospitality the Captain promised, "I will see that you are not bothered by the tiger. But you must all help me. I must know where he is and how comes and goes and where he keeps himself during the day."

He further added, "If you don't tell me, I may also begin to think, like those officials, that you are fancying the tiger."

At this they protested, "Even two days ago, two fellows who had gone out to cut wood were mutilated-one fellow lost an arm. "

The Captain asked, "Will you take me to him?" To which they started giving answers in a roundabout manner. When the Captain insisted, "Will you come and show me the man and where he was attacked, so that I may find the tiger's movements," all of them seemed averse to this procedure.

Soon the Captain realised the victims of the tiger seemed as elusive as the tiger itself. They would complain but were somehow reluctant to help directly. All this did not discourage the Captain and he thought of adopting some new tactics. He contacted the forest guards and offered them a fee for information about the tiger.

Leaving all the work of the circus to his executive and other assistants he relentlessly pursued the tiger and finally arrived at the rivulet-beyond which was the cave at the far end of the Mempi range. Captain took special precautions to camouflage himself with certain types of foliage. He settled himself onto the branch of a tree and stayed there all night in the company of the forest guard, and finally had a glimpse of the tiger returning to his cave.



Glossary:

Scaring(adj)	: Terrifying
Trample(v)	: Walk heavily or roughly
Ascetic(n)	: Someone who practices self-denial as a spiritual discipline
Obliterated(adj)	: Reduced to nothingness
Radiant(adj)	: Radiating or as if radiating light
Peep(v)	: Look furtively
Subtlety(n)	: The quality of being difficult to detect or analyse
Rivulet(n)	: A small stream
Frolicking(v)	: Play boisterously
Slothful(Adj)	: Disinclined to work or exertion
Scurry (v)	: To move about or proceed hurriedly
Retreat(v)	: Pull back or move away or backward
Contemptible(adj)	: Deserving of contempt or scorn
Nip off(v)	: Sever or remove by pinching or snipping
Throttle(v)	: Kill by squeezing the throat of so as to cut off the air
Grapple(v)	: Hold or seize, as in a wrestling match
Gash(n)	: A wound made by cutting
Profusely(adv)	: In an abundant manner
Foreboding(n)	: A feeling of evil to come
Elude(v)	: Escape, either physically or mentally

- Unerring(Adj) : Not liable to error
- Tormented(adj) : Experiencing intense pain especially mental pain
- Caper(V) : Jump about playfully
- Impregnable(Adj) : Incapable of being overcome, challenged or refuted
- Vigilant(adj) : Carefully observant or attentive; on the lookout for possible danger

Questions:

Answer the following questions in not more than twenty words.

1. What was the name of the circus?
2. Mention the names of any two birds whom the tiger does not like.
3. Name the animals to which the Captain was familiar in his childhood.
4. Which day was decided for the visit to the village by the Captain?

Answer the following questions in about 60 words.

1. How does a person change into an ascetic? Answer the question on the Basis of the text 'The Tiger for Malgudi'.
2. Name the animals which make the tiger worried. Mention reason.
3. 'The lion is known as the king of the forest'. Write the views of the tiger on this statement.
4. What were the suggestions of the Jackal to the tiger?
5. Who attacked the lion with its quills? Who suggested the cure of quills to the tiger?

6. What were the instructions of the Captain regarding the show and animals of the circus?
7. Which things were given as gifts by the villagers to the clerk of the District collector on their visit to his office? How was the reaction of the administration towards the complaint?

Answer the following questions in about 300 words.

1. Comment on the opening paragraph of the text a Tiger for Malgudi.
2. Describe the scene when the tiger was surrounded by villagers in the enclosure of sheep.
3. What questions the villagers were asked by the collectors? Write your views about the conversation.
4. Discuss the first meeting of Dadhaji and the Captain?
5. Describe the characteristics of Dadhaji.



Section Two

Chapter-IX

I was careful to avoid all kinds of traps laid for me but ultimately I yielded to temptation and that proved to be the end. After trying to hide at many places I was finally back to my original home. As I came out one evening, passing through the grass, I heard a bleating and following the sound saw a well-fed goat in front of me. I hesitated for a moment and looked around, took a leap and landed on its back. At the same time, I heard a strange, unfamiliar clattering noise- and the door came down and shut me. I was trapped. I was immediately surrounded by unfamiliar figures and heard a strange voice. A flashlight was pointed at me, saying, "Just what was I looking for. A magnificent fellow." Somebody remarked:

"Mr. Captain, isn't it rather big for our purpose."

The Captain sounded optimistic: No, he is just right. Only we may have to starve him for a while."

"Will you be able to make him obedient? "

"Of course," said the Captain. "You will see.

I will make him a star."

Soon the Captain instructed his men to get rid of the forest-guards and other people not belonging to his team by paying them some extra tip. His own men, six in number, were required to wheel the cage to the town. It may take four days, if drawn by bullocks. But it would serve as great advertisement for the circus as the bullock cart drawing the cage will be watched by numerous people across many villages and towns.

Later in my life my Master mentioned the word hell, describing the conditions that would give me a feel of it. Now, recollecting the day of my trapping and the journey onward, I realize its meaning. The trap was narrow and I felt cribbed and cramped. I who lived a free life-sheathing myself as I pleased, or burying myself in the jungle grass-now had to keep standing as the trap on wheels was drawn along. A pair of bullocks was yoked to it and the driver kept-yelling and whipping them, the wheels rolled on rough ground and I was constantly moving from side to side. I felt strangely uncomfortable to be moving without the use of my legs!

First time experiencing locomotion.

They took me through many villages and towns and now and then they stopped under a wayside tree and unyoked the bullocks to give them rest. At such times the floor slopped forward and I kept sliding down, with the remains of the goat flowing over me. It was uncomfortable and I had to roar out my displeasure. The noise I made scared the spectators surrounding my cage and sent them running and making all kinds of noises and followed by much talk. I, who was used to the silence of the jungle, the noisy nature of humanity was distressing. Gradually I got used to it and when I imbibed my Master's lessons, I realized that deep within I was not different from human beings and I got into their habit myself and never had a moment 's silence or stillness of mind. I was either talking (in my own way inaudibly) or listening and thus became fully qualified to enter human society.

After a few days we came to a stop and I suddenly heard a lot of talk and shouting and much movement outside. All the things and foliage screening the cage were worn away and I saw through the bars

a world I could never have imagined in my life. I saw a vast stretch of land with no trees or rocks, long grass but bare and clean ground ending in what I learnt was a big tent surrounded by smaller tents. The whole place was swarming with bipeds. I had no idea that the earth contained so many human creatures. Naturally they stared and gaped and talked. I tried to head my way out by pushing, and hurt myself in the attempt.

Then I saw a man with a long staff in hand standing close by, saying, "Want to get out? All right come on"..., and he poked with the staff and laughed when I protested. "Ah what a beautiful voice. If you were a singer, you could enchant an audience of thousands, without a mike," and laughed at his own joke. Others laughed with him too. Later I learnt that they were obliged to laugh at his jokes, being his subordinates. As I went along I found that he was the owner of the circus. He was the one who had met me when I was trapped, and he was to be my commander for years to come.

I heard the Captain telling his yes- men that their immediate task was to transfer me to a new cage, which was going to be my new home. He prodded me with the staff and hit me to the accompaniment of stentorian commands; I was to hear this voice again and again for a very very long time.

Also he hit the bars of the cage with staff creating a rat-rat noise, that confused me completely. When I tried to understand what it meant, he withdrew the staff and jabbed my side with it. I was miserable and did not know where to keep myself. He gave me no rest, but drove me round and round with that staff in the narrow space till I saw desperation in his eyes, I dashed on and found myself in another cage, where the door immediately came down. This was the first act of obedience. Captain said, 'Ah! Good, stay there!'

Chapter X

As night fell, I could hear the roar of the lion and voices of other jungle fellows, except of course, human talk in different tones. I saw only empty ground and a glow of light somewhere, wondering why I was brought here and what they were planning to do with me. Captain and his men would come every now and then, look at me and leave. It was quite discomfoting to remain in this condition. The only activity being lying down and getting up in that cramped up space, stretching myself to the extent possible, turning round and round and whining. Being used to freedom, I could do nothing more than pace up and down in despair. But no one cared.

For three days I did not feel hungry but on the fourth day I experienced hell. How was my hunger going to be appeased? It appeared to be an endless state of torment with no promise of relief or escape. I still had no idea that food would come one's way without a chase. These were stages of learning through suffering. Bars of iron, unbending and continuously pressing against one's face, I had had no contact with any kind of metal in my life; now this combination of man and metal subdued me. I desperately tried to smash the bars again and again and it only made my head bloody. People did see me and left unaffected.

When the Captain showed himself outside the cage, a ray of hope rose in me that things were about to change and get better. That was probably the way he worked driving me to look on him ultimately as my survivor. He was considered an expert on animal training and knew their psychology well. I would generally watch the direction of his coming. He would look at me and ask, "How are you, sir? Learn to

be a good boy and I will make you happy...". I did not know how to become a good boy and make him happy. He continued to make me suffer loneliness, immobility, and above all hunger.

For days they kept me without food and water. Only the Captain with his companions would come to observe me, and then comment and leave. I had lost all strength; I couldn't even stand. At this stage my cage was moved one day and taken to a large enclosure. I jumped gratefully, for at last I was in the open air. But the Captain was at the centre and would not let me live on my own. He held a whip and a chair in his hand. He lashed my face several times, it pained beyond measure. When I tried to ward off the attack, he brought forward the chair as a shield. I could only hit the chair with my paw but he constantly poked my face with it. He kept shouting, "Run, run", and kept repeating with every lashing.

I discovered that my condition was being watched by other animals, most of whom I had never seen in the jungle, some were moving freely, others were tied to the leather, some in different cages. Among the birds, I would see a parrot. Then a grotesque creature came with great height and humps. To my surprise I saw a grass-eater, a majestic animal, the horse, many in number and also its smaller version, the donkey. Besides, I also saw someone who took away my breath was the hippopotamus, which I mistook for an ill-shaped mountain. Of course I could recognize the ape, which moved freely and integrated himself easily with the human company. I also had a glimpse of a bear, but no deer. I now understood that he had helped me up as a lesson to other creatures, of what awaited them if they did not obey. At least they were fortunate in knowing how to show their obedience. They were all excellent performers; I was soon to become

their colleague.

I was in great misery, if it had not been for the chair I would have ended my pain by pouncing on the Captain. The chair was the greatest obstacle. He was crying like a maniac, "Run, run come on". While I was suffering one of those animals tried to communicate to me in a language to be understood only by our kind, "He wants you to see round and round as if you were being stung by bees. Do it and he will stop beating. Otherwise you have no chance". I said to my well-wisher, "But I feel faint and can't stand on my feet, starving, not even a drink of water." "Never mind you will get everything, only you have to be seen running round as he commands". Came the advice. I asked him, "Why do you tolerate him? Anyone can stamp him". My well-wisher said that it would never be easy, as he was stronger than even ten of us.

It was good that mutual communication was a privilege left for us animals: human beings could not interfere with our freedom of speech because they never suspect that we have our own codes, signals and idioms.

The monkey was the most light-hearted of all-he moved freely and his general behaviour was quite similar to the human beings-he enjoyed their food, wore clothes like them, smoked cigarettes and in the ring too his part was to ride a cycle combined with the trapeze acts. He continuously chattered, grinned and grimaced-a happy soul. He also added a word of his choice, "hey tiger! run round and round as our boss demands. Let us hope and pray. We will see a day when he will do the running and we shall hold the whip. Anyway till that day arrives at least we are spared of the trouble of seeking food and preserving ourselves, he protects and feeds us. He is doing all that for us. He is a damned fool but doesn't know it; he thinks he is the lord of the

universe...". I said, "at one time I had also thought so of myself".

The Captain forced me to do the senseless running round and round; I was almost fainting but I kept running as long as he kept the whip creaking in the air without touching my back. He also kept gyrating with me and it was a lot of hard work for him. But as soon as the whip stopped, I too stopped. I was ready to faint and probably breathe my last. When I came near the cage its door opened and I leaped and lay down expecting to be killed for my outright disobedience. But when I opened my eyes I saw the Captain looking at me more kindly than ever. "Well that was a fine performance. Now I have confidence that we can use him". Soon I found the warders prodding me to move to another cage. I was happy to find three pieces of meat and a trough of water. It was my first piece of education.

I was not clear about my business. Every day at the same hour I would be taken to the enclosure where the Captain was already there with the whip and chair. The moment the door was opened and I heard the cracking of the whip, I started running round and round. Then I would be wheeled back to my home where I found the place clean and with food kept for me. That was very welcome because I was required to do nothing for the rest of the day.

I started realizing life wasn't bad after all and the Captain was not such a monster. I began to admire and even worship him for his capabilities. I had thought in the jungle that I was supreme. Now that was over. I was a defeated king and captain of the unquestioned suzerain. After all, what he expected of me was so simple that instead of understanding it, I allowed myself to be beaten and suffered through ignorance. And running round around the enclosure was any day better than remaining cooped up in the cage.

Chapter XI

Very soon I understood that that was not all. It was only a preparation. Once I became an expert in running, I was ready for the next stage of education. The more difficult part was to follow.

One day I was let out into the enclosure and captain as alert with his whip and chair. But this time at the crack of the whip my running was obstructed by a change of object which I later knew as a stool that was kept in my path. The Captain cried, "Jump, go on jump!" and the whip came lashing on me. All the good names I had heard and all the admiration I had for the Captain evaporated. I felt infuriated and felt like jumping on him, but he held that terrible chair. I stumbled on the obstacle and kicked it away and ran my usual round. This enraged the Captain and he came lashing behind me and shouting in a frenzy, "Jump! Jump!" and applied the whip liberally. I ran hither and thither and tried to run back to the cage. That made him more angry. He ordered me out. He shouted, "Take the devil away from rations for three days, not even water, and he will come around, you will see." and kept glaring at me.

At that stage I could not have understood human speech and did not know what the word jump meant and suffered untold misery. Today I would have immediately understood if the Captain wished me to cross the hurdle in a jump and proceed to go round, come back to the hurdle and jump over it again and again until he was satisfied that I had mastered the art. On the day I understood and performed he stroked my head and said, "Good keep it up you have earned your dinner".

Every day I was put through this exercise. After this other exercises were an elaboration of this. A few more obstacles were put in

my way and they had been kept with the same smartness. My only aim was to please the Captain and when I did that I got my pieces of meat and water and undisturbed sleep in the cage. The hurdles of different kinds, some labyrinth like, some so crooked that I feared I might become permanently crooked. Into some I had to crawl my belly and get out; some hurdles would lead me back to my starting point and I had to finish the whole process with great speed and exact time even by the second. Captain always held a watch in his hand and during the actual performance he would announce: "Raja is now running at a speed of sixty miles an hour, the speed he maintains while chasing the game in the jungle.

From his starting point in the ring back to the same spot in two minutes four seconds...You will see ladies and gentlemen that whatever the hurdle, he is uncanny in his timing. Anyone who wants to prove that he takes more time and I am wrong, can claim a reward of five hundred rupees..."

Captain had a vast army of workers. trapeze artists, clowns, trains of monkeys, parrots and so on. Captain's wife Rita was the head of the trapeze team. Besides there were many workers, who pulled, pushed, unrolled carpets and set-up fences, furniture etc. and changed them quickly for the next item. Now I was not isolated and had become an established member of the circus and enjoyed picking up a lot of information from the animals. Among them the chimp was always bursting with news. Our main topic was the boss.

Only in recollection now can I appreciate the Captain's energy and power and the variety of tasks he was able to perform: to be successful, and provide all that variety and quantity of food for us, also appear on stage and look after many administrative activities including the checking of accounts and making payments. It was a marathon task and he always devoted his mind to new tricks and

novelties that would make his shows more attractive to the public.

Captain called it a 'Creative Circus'. After getting an idea he would give clear instructions to his assistants for the exact execution of his idea and tell them: "Here is a sketch I have made of the position of the ring in relation to the swings and the net below, you work out the mechanical details and modalities. Bring your report tomorrow morning". The executive reported the next day that Madam was not ready for any change. Without hesitation he would ask Lyla to be put in Madam's place, since Lyla was number two with the team, this gave rise to some kind of crisis. Madam Rita said "I am not prepared to spare any of my girls or set fire to myself just to please your fancy. I am not an orthodox wife preparing for Sati".

He retorted saying, "There is no danger and the public wants something new. Public must find it rather stale to see you and your girls in your satin tights swing up and down". The heated argument continued for some time. The lady cut short Captain's speech by saying: "You think our items are cheap and easy? Have you any idea how every second our lives are at risk? You think whipping and bullying beasts is the only great act?" He softens his tone by suggesting to her, "Let people say, the lady is capable of more than jumps and twists in the air, she can pass through fire rings so easily, being slim". He also added that all this would be a part of the approaching Jubilee Show.

After the rehearsal, the Captain's determination yielded results. The accuracy and timing with which the artists performed their trapeze acts, somersault and shot through a flaming ring before landing safely on the net below was applauded repeatedly by the public. But to that I would come later.



Chapter-XII

Let me again talk about my training period. After becoming an expert in racing through all obstacles I wanted to be left alone but the Captain had other plans for me. Today in the enclosure he held a new lesson for me. It was not enough that I ran round fast overcoming the hurdles; at the bend I saw fire and I thought Captain could kill me but I would never go near the fire. It brought back memories of the villagers attacking me with lanterns. But the whip came down and bruised me more than ever. He would not let me retreat from the fire. He blocked all my movement with his person shielded only with the chair. I roared aloud, "Leave me alone you monster." But he shouted at me: "Raja, come on through that ring, in there come, come on...." I snarled, showed my teeth, wrinkled my nose, opened my mouth and shut it and growled as if the earth were trembling. But he was unaffected and warded me off with his chair and pushed me closer and closer to the fire. All my movement was restricted in such a way as to leave no room for me to move or turn except through fire. First time my belly was singed but in course of time I could pass without touching the flames. And when I performed diligently I became Captain's favourite again, with meat and water back in the cage.

The next piece of training was slightly mild. I was driven round and round and then stopped where a stool was placed. I had to sit on it, dangling my tail on the floor.

A saucer of milk was placed on the table, with Captain howling, "Drink, drink!" he went down and took out his tongue over the saucer to indicate what I was supposed to do. "Put head down, and tongue

out," and he cracked the whip. He hit me so hard while I had my head down, I had to bend further down with my tongue out. No sooner did my tongue touch the saucer than I was seized with nausea and a fit of sneezing. Why did it taste so awful!

Later that day the chimp came near my cage and asked, "How did you like it?" I said, 'What'? he replied, " the milk in the saucer." I said, "It is horrible and how can anyone like it?" The chimp also shared with me the fact that the human kids are brought up on it right from birth. Although left to himself he would eat only nuts and bananas but if the Captain insisted on their having it, they had no choice.

By the time I could get a pat of approval on back from the Captain, I had become resigned to the taste of milk. After that a new item appeared. As I looked up from the saucer at a training session, I found a goat seated opposite me across a table -an extraordinary thing to happen. I thought I was being awarded with fresh food for accepting the milk...A goat sitting up with a tiger as an equal-what a crazy situation! I gave out a shout of joy before pouncing on the table. But when I moved, I was whipped back to my seat and the goat was withdrawn. When I was back in my seat, another pan of milk appeared and the goat was back in his seat. I could not understand this jugglery. Sitting on my hunches was irksome and painful: the sight of the pan of milk was offensive and the goat was appetizing. But what was happening was beyond my understanding. This sort of dodging and reappearing was confusing and maddening. I went at it again and again and it disappeared and reappeared after I had been whipped back to my seat. Ultimately I realised it was best to ignore that goat, but if it was not meant for me, why were they offering it? The ways of the

Captain were mysterious. Whatever he had in mind, he seemed to be able to express it only through violence. There was no meeting ground between me and the Captain, yet we had a lot to do with each other. That was the irony of fate.

My ignoring of the goat didn't bring an end to my troubles. Here I was disciplined enough not to move a muscle in the presence of the goat. It is only quite late I realized that all along they were using a dummy goat. Had I known it, it would have been quite simple. But suddenly something else happened, they at one point of the exercise, replaced the supposed goat with a real one. It bleated and it roused me. I involuntarily tense but the Captain was too quick to change, "Stay back, Raja" and that was enough for me. The stupid goat forgot the perils and became greedy at the sight of the milk, it immediately put its head down and lapped the saucer dry. The act of the goat was much appreciated by the Captain and that too without the slightest movement of the whip. Just as I was feeling relieved the Captain ordered more milk.

When another supply of milk came he said, "Raja, now that milk is for you. What an impossible torture. I hesitated and noticing the slightest movement of the whip I bent down to the saucer, pretended to lick the milk and sat back. Next, it was the goat's turn, it went down and again licked the plate dry. It was surprising how much milk the goat could consume; I thought it was the Captain's intention to fill the goat to the bursting point; with me he was satisfied if I could dampen my tongue or nose and then resume my seat. This went on all afternoon. By the time I returned to my cage I was completely exhausted and could hardly eat my meat because of the lingering smell of milk.

Next day I was subjected to a new set of exercises. I had to sit still until the goat had started lapping it up and take my mouth to the saucer at the same time and pretend to enjoy the milk in his company. This was a trying moment as the proximity of the goat's head and its flavour was overpowering. We had to keep trying this act until I was supposed to cultivate a taste for milk and distaste for the goat. When the Captain was satisfied with the results, he made me rehearse the whole series- sitting on the stool, running round the obstacles and finally coming to rest at the saucer of milk. He set special value on this part and announced with fanfare for the Jubilee Show, where it was to be presented as a Four -in- One Act. He announced me to the public as "that miracle Raja Tiger, the magnificent". I must indeed have looked grand and mighty with yellow and black acquiring a special gloss through doses of milk imbibed each day. How prophetic he was when he explained that I was not an ordinary creature but a highly intelligent one, almost human in understanding!



Chapter XIII

Captain presented his shows six months in a year in Malgudi town. A team of his men wearing fancy clothes went round to the villages in the district and with the beat of drums and a megaphone advertised the circus. On festivals and holidays the patrons arrived by bus, lorry, bullock carts and bicycles for the show; coming into the lawn for the circus was an event for the villages.

When the monsoon set in, in October- November, the circus moved out of Malgudi to other centres in a caravan, parading the animals, which made the circus known all along the way.

At every show, the Captain made a speech sometimes autobiographical and sometimes to boost a special act such as mine. He delivered the message in at least three languages. Hindi, English and Tamil. And would often begin by saying, "I love Malgudi because I was born here. You will see my life history in a book form, sold at the gate for a small price, so that young people may cultivate ambition and a spirit of adventure, and bring our nation a great name. All that I wish to say is that the great circus master Dadhaji of Poona adopted me and trained me. I cannot begin the show without paying homage to him".

Captain was considerate and helped us save our energies by regulating our rest periods. On off days he sent away all the herbivores to forage in the lower reaches of Mempi range -camels, horses, elephants and zebras went out in a sort of parade through the streets of Malgudi and returned in time for the show. The rest of the animals always had rest for at least two days, rest between performances. He did a lot of paperwork, scheduling each animal's duty and off hours in

a month.

He bestowed special attention to my part of the work. It always came after the trapeze sequence, which was his wife's show. He never made a speech introducing her- a subject that made her grumble from time to time. She would often complain:

"While your wit and eloquence are always reserved only for the tiger and the rest, I suppose" and further added fuel to the fire by saying "Your horoscope and the tiger's seem to be better matched".

I don't know why she was measuring herself against me all the time. Fancy anyone being jealous of a tiger. I don't think she would have poisoned me. She enjoyed being argumentative, that's all. They were a peculiar couple, devoted to each other but not betraying their feelings in speech.

Later on the nature of their relationship was explained to me by my Master. He said, "Human ties cannot be just defined in black and white terms. There cannot be anything as unmitigated hatred or unmitigated love. Those who are deeply attached sometimes deliberately present a rough exterior to each other and that is also a way of enjoying married life."

When the Captain started the publicity for his special Jubilee Show, no one questioned him, except his wife who always taunted him. However, announcements were made through colorful lithographs. posters pasted on every wall in Malgudi from Albert Mission College compound wall to sprawling Central Jail walls. Captain always felt that such walls were going to waste and should be utilized properly. He called the town Arts Council men eccentrics who were opposed to every kind of announcement and hoarding, never

realizing that they were thus obstructing economic life and ultimate prosperity.

When his plans were opposed, he had his own technique of winning over opposition, a few complimentary tickets (not always for VIP seats, he had a few seats for semi-VIPS and non VIP, depending upon the status of those to be favoured). When mere tickets would not work, he donated cash from a fund he had earmarked as "Birthday Gifts" in his account books.

As a result of this intensive publicity, the box office presented a completely sold out case with every inch of the auditorium occupied in all the three shows-noon, evening and night.

Captain reserved the tiger's act for the night show. It came after Rita's trapeze act, somersaults and diving through a ring. When the tiger was wheeled in, Captain bowed to the public in all the directions, and introduced, "Ladies and gentleman, you are about to see Raja perform, an act which I have named 'Four-in-One', which is actually a symphony in music-a movement as you will notice when the band plays. The tiger Raja will go through the act with precision and finish. The sequence as befits a country dedicated to non-violence- with a sip of milk in the company of a goat. I appeal to you to keep your eyes open and your nerves cool-never fear a moment that Raja will ever overstep the bounds in any manner".

After his speech which created suspense and anticipation in the audience, he let me out of the cage, opening the door with his own hand. He carried nothing more than his whip, he had put away even the chair. He wished to demonstrate that he was absolutely confident of his authority over me. He kept himself deftly at a distance but

always close to an emergency gate. When the rounds were completed, the hurdles and the images and labyrinths appeared at the appropriate places, and men passed through rings of flame, followed by the item of the goat and the milk. My mouth watered at the sight of the goat, but the Captain was very careful to crack the whip and drove me back to the cage when he noticed it.

The four in one act was a great hit and the Captain's fame and box office collection increased tremendously.

Captain announced extra daily rations for the animals taking care that I was never over fed, "keep Raja light, he has difficult acts to perform. Feed him well after the act, late at night", he said, with the result that they hardly fed me until midnight. This compulsory fasting the whole day kept me always hungry, and made it extremely difficult to accept the milk in the goat's company.

Thus it went day after day, week after week till one evening I had just gone through all the rounds preceding the milk and was sitting before the pan of the milk. As a courtesy to the weaker companion, the goat must be allowed to sip the milk first. By now the Captain had great confidence in me and took me for granted, a risky thing to do! I kept looking at him with a benign face because the slightest change in my expression would alert the Captain. But he was as watchful as ever. As the goat went down and stretched its neck to reach the milk, I felt a powerful impulse to seize the white neck held out temptingly. My agony of self-control was worse than the raging hunger. The glamorous goat was lapping the milk. How lovely it would be to put one's teeth to it and go off to the bamboo bush for a leisurely meal. Memories of my jungle life revived.

As it happened, the temptation stayed too long holding myself back seemed impossible. Captain, reading my mind, was alert more than ever, cracked his whip and commanded me to share the milk while the goat was still at it. But now, suddenly he had to look away, when he heard a commotion in the auditorium as someone fell off the top rung of a gallery. I chose this moment to shoot forward and nip off the goat's head. In the midst of shouts and cries and confusion from a section for a minute, the Captain whipped me hard, picked up his chair, hit me with it, and drove me back to my age. The goat was finished, but of no use to me. Whatever, as it was snatched away out of sight at once and the place was cleaned as if nothing unusual had happened. And the next item came without delay. The chimp, wearing tuxedo and wearing spectacles came along with the clowns and charmed the audience with his jugglery, diverting their minds completely from the preceding item

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Chapter XIV

This incident made me quite unpopular with the Captain. He dropped my acts for a few days. He announced to the audience that Raja's acts had to be suspended because he "has distemper and needs rest and isolation".

"Rest and isolation" meant starving. I was given neither food nor water for three days. What right did he have to stare at me? I felt enraged at the thought of the Captain and his allies and wished the iron bars could yield, and then I could show them another way to celebrate the Jubilee. The isolation hurt me most. I had got used to the company of that wonderful chimp and all other good fellows. After a few days when the Captain was away on business, the chimp sneaked in and asked, "What had come over you?"

"I was hungry, that's all", I said.

He added, "How can you eat a friend with whom you had been on milk-drinking terms, however hungry you might be! Though I am sorry for the goat, for he was mild and inoffensive, I am glad to say it's done us some good. Captain is talking of closing the Jubilee Show and resting for a few days".

I was suffering hunger another day when the Captain came to my cage with a companion and said, "Take a look at him now. Not at his best. He is under treatment for his misconduct. I hope he has learnt the lesson".

The person accompanying the Captain surprised me with his remarks:

"Put up another goat before him and see what he can do. That was a magnificent shot I took in sixteen-millimetre. I was lucky to be there in time to take it. I don't think you could ever repeat it. One in a million situations. As I watched he was so quick no one could have noticed his action. His head shot up like a cobra's and he just pecked at the goat... but it was like-it was a snapshot, neat, precise like a surgeon's..." That man was so full of enthusiasm and praise for me that he became incoherent and could hardly complete a sentence.

Captain said, "So what?"

The latter part of the conversation unfolded his companion's future plan:

"You don't seem to appreciate it...It' d be an impossible, unbelievably perfect shot, the kind of thing that a film--director would be dreaming about. I shall treasure the shot I have taken and use it somewhere and if it gets an award in any international film show, don't be surprised..."

"Raja is my tiger and I want a royalty for a show by him..."

"Captain, ever since I saw Raja's surgical performance on the goat, I have been thinking of a story in which I could put him to proper use..."

"I have to think it over.... I can't give you an instant yes or no. I want two days. "

"Think it over...But don't starve him. Feed him. He is magnificent; don't spoil him. You have no idea how he will look in colour."

He took another look at me and said, "Raja, I am sure you will cooperate with us."

Soon an attendant came and left food and water; I gave a roar of pleasure, at last feeling happy after a long time.

Captain spoke to his wife about the film maker's proposal. She was in no mood to contradict him, her only concern was : " Can they handle Raja, and what exactly he is supposed to do?" To which the Captain remarked: "They can't. The idea seems to be that they will tell me what they want and I can get Raja do it".

She further told him that she had always found this brute undependable and would consider the film-maker's proposal only if he bought that little cat off the Captain's hands. The Captain vehemently differed with her:

"Nothing of the kind, my dear I won't part with him as long as I run a circus. I am looking for another goat to train until Raja can be used somewhere else." And said that as far as the incident that took place a few days earlier was concerned she should not take too harsh a view of Raja. He did not do it out of malevolence, but it was a sudden impulse of mischief! That's a way of life in their jungle society. As for lending Raja for film work at all, there was still time to think it over.



Chapter XV

The film director came in as promised on the third day. After initial exchange of greeting and general talk the director unfolded the details of his proposal:

"It is a simple one. Ever since I saw the tiger, I wanted to make a film with him in the main role. I have watched his performance for two weeks now, while the idea was developing in my mind. But when I saw him the other evening neatly snatching the goat I said to myself, ``Ah! here is my material, here is what I have been seeking eternally, I am at the end of the quest." To this captain's own comment was "The tip of the rainbow where the golden bowl is".

The director continued with his narration: "Ever since I saw that act of your tiger in relation to the goat, I felt inspired, particularly after I saw the shot in sixteen-millimetre, which of course is going to be blown up to thirty-five and integrated in the feature and Oh, boy. it's going to be a sensation".

To all this the Captain's response was "you found the goat scene inspiring, but my wife Rita, although accustomed to circus life, felt sickened by the spectacle and retrieved: even now when she recollects the scene, she is in tears".

The director who was persistent with his proposal brushed aside such sentimentalist's cry and suggested that they better be joined. According to him, all the film medium is where art and commerce and sex and violence are an essential part of any commercial composition and there is no use fighting against it. He even went to the extent of describing the details of his plan:

"Inspired by your circus act I sat up that night and wrote the outline of the story in which Raja would be the main feature. The human side in the story will be a hero called Jaggu. I have already booked him; he was an all in wrestler and physical feats performer and weighs one hundred kilograms, two meters in height. When he is photographed, his figure will fill a wide screen. I had booked him and was looking for a story. I was lucky to have got one of your VIP seats at the show, through a friend in the collector's office-that's how I was able to film the goat- sequence". The film-director added further, "The goat brought up as a pet, is constantly being pursued by the tiger, who is accustomed to ripping off goat's head, but the 'giant' who owns the goat fights it off with bare hands. He finally captures the tiger and trains it to live in peace with the goat. Non-violence is India's contribution to civilization. I got the idea from your own speech before the tiger act; violence can be conquered only by non-violence".

Then they proceeded to discuss the terms of agreement. The filmmaker began by saying that they were planning on a moderate budget, getting the technicians and crew from Madras, shooting mostly outdoors, and he expected the Captain to complete Raja's side of the work within the specified time. Captain's categorical reply was that he could at best spare Raja for two weeks for this kind of work and that any delay, if at all it occurred, would have to be adequately compensated in monetary terms. After all, he said, he too was a businessman and not a hermit. The meeting ended with the Captain's final assertion that by next Friday he would be ready with all the terms and conditions, all laid out in written form.

Madan, the film maker, found it very difficult to understand the Captain's mind. He came almost every morning and was driven away

by Annand, captain's chief executive, who had all kinds of excuses to make regarding the availability of his master. Madan soon got tired of waiting and one day lost his temper and started shouting. When the uproar became too much the Captain came out of his office only to say that Madan's written proposal was not suitable and that they were willing to give the tiger only for a set purpose and for a limited period. He also wanted him to put everything in black and white to avoid legal complications at a later stage. Feeling completely frustrated Madan said:

"Captain sahib, give me a draft and I will sign it blindly, only tell me when to come...My technical unit is waiting for a word from us. I can't hold them off indefinitely". The Captain's cool reply was:

"Madan, my friend, know this, I won't be coerced whatever may happen. You bring the answers to my queries and then you will have my green signal. Why should we hurry? It must go on at its own pace. I am prepared to drop the proposal altogether. First finalize your location and then come to me".

This placed a great strain on the film director. The greater the urgency he showed, the more the Captain delayed until he got into a fever of activity which did stop right one day. After much effort he selected a location situated in the southern direction. It was a wooded area where the highway passed with a couple of furlongs. Finally, the Captain approved of it and the contract was signed; Madan felt as if a picture had been produced and he had won an Oscar!

Madan worked day and night to transform the land taken on lease and in no time it was ready for location shooting.

He engaged men and women from a nearby village to remove

stones and bumps, and sweep and smooth out the ground. He pressed Jaggu into service, a welcome diversion for him from swatting flies at the Travelers Bungalow. He uprooted boulders and loosed them off at ease. He lifted heavy articles in the construction of sets (a village street with a row of two dimensional homes), stockades, and platforms for mounting lights, reflectors and cameras. When all was ready, the Captain inspected the place and remarked, "You are truly great to be able to transform Ginger Field (the land used to be referred as Ginger Field in the olden days) into a film studio". He even went to the extent of appreciating Jaggu's work. He thought he could be a substitute for power-lifts, steam hammers, cranes and other shifting of that kind. Madan said he could even "carry down the generator as if it were a box of matches. Picks up stacks of bamboo for fencing, probably alone at a time, he just picks them up and sets them in place. For all his appearance he is mild and gentle".



Chapter-XVI

Captain cast a special eye on the spot chosen for the tiger and suggested a few changes: "Get the enclosure close to this spot, so that the cage is not hit by the evening sun, which is not good for the tiger. Give me twenty-four hours' notice and I will have him ready for your call. Your Jaggu is really fun, he said looking at him, "What a mountain of a man! You are lucky I could use him in my circus too-for lifting and moving which goes on all the time with twenty hands at the job. After you are done with him, will your pleasure let me try him?"

To which the film-maker readily agreed, "After all the possible retakes when the negatives are cut, I will set him free and you may have him. Perhaps you could include all wrestling shows, he will excel in them". Madan then went on to narrate the story as to how he had found the giant, "During one of his travels from Madras to Trichy I stopped at a village for some help. At the fair I noticed this fellow standing on a little platform and challenging the people around to come up and wrestle, even four at a time, if they chose. When his challenges were accepted, and a batch of four fell on him, he just brushed them off with the back of his hand. His admirers applauded and cheered, while his challengers picked themselves up from the dust and paid down the wages. That seemed to be his main source of income. The money was collected by a woman, who, the crowd said, happened to be his wife".

Madan continued, "He lived in a hut and made money at the market fairs in the countryside. While I was brooding on the subject for a film, the sight of this man gave me an idea for a strong- man- story of a giant who cannot be contained. When I went back that way again, I visited him and offered him five hundred rupees a month for one year

with food (that was most important) to join me and do whatever role I gave him. His wife was delighted to let him go, having never seen so much money in her life... After I saw the tiger act in your circus, I wanted to combine them in my story- and there we are".

Madan and the Captain kept sitting on chairs under the banyan tree while Jaggu was made ready for his role. The make-up and costume section was in one of the huts and it could hardly hold the make-up men and his assistants as Jaggu stood in the centre. He was fitted with a leopard-skin covering, which was strapped across his shoulder, his hair was tousled so that it looked like an aura and they had also given him a mustache and whiskers. When the makeup men were done with him, Madan studied him and cried, "Here pull off those moustaches and whiskers. He's alright, plain-faced. He is like Tarzan and not like a pirate or Bhima. Also, loosen his robe a little -it should come down to his knees. Otherwise it will look as if he wore a loincloth, and would cut a sorry figure on the screen." Pulling out the moustache was ticklish, literally and Jaggu moaned and wriggled and was reprimanded by Madan's assistants supervising the operations.

Finally, at about nine O'clock the hero was ready; properly painted and costumed, his hair done up in proper style. Madan and his assistant kept looking at him, I don't know where they got the idea of moustache from-our mythology I suppose. Jaggu is not a demon. We must establish him as a normal human being." He looked with admiration when Jaggu was brought out. He said, "Go up to that hut. Let us see how you do it. Walk naturally...don't swing your arms...be natural. Camera! Rehearsal", The cameraman shouted back "O.K. boss, a little more to the left".

They made Jaggu return to the starting point, marked it with paint and marked a circle on the cottage step, and directed him to stand in

that circle with his back to the camera. The director ordered, "Don't move an inch until you hear a cry, "Tiger, Tiger". He was made to walk back and forth repeatedly and was required to turn only when the director shouted the word, "Tiger". The director allowed a pause for a few moments and suddenly screamed, "Tiger! Tiger".

When Jaggu asked involuntarily in a stentorian voice, looking around in panic: he made a move to spring forward. The director cried, "Idiot, I told you not to move out of this mark. Get back and stay there". The cameraman kept saying "More left, more left, your feet in the circle...Now come forward just one foot." Jaggu felt tired and confused.

Now the director approached Jaggu and said, "Now don't move, only listen. They will now take a shot standing as you are now. Following it you will hear them cry, 'Tiger! Tiger! When that's heard, you will only say. Ah! as loudly as you can, spin round like this, raise your arm and spring forward with a war-cry and run up to that starting point over there marked white, demolish the tiger and walk back casually..." When he had completely demonstrated all this action physically himself and Jaggu understood what was being expected of him, the director returned to his chair marked "Director" and said, "Handling this idiot is proving more difficult...but I am determined..."

Just as when the cameraman and others got ready for the shot, a cry was heard from another end of the field, "Tiger has come". On hearing Jaggu sprang round with a great cry and sprang forward with his arms raised. Even a couple of men on duty jumped out of his way to avoid his approach.

The director was informed that the tiger carriage had come and was being brought down the field. He looked exasperated, "Bloodiness. Begin all over again," he said to his assistant, "and take that fool back to his position...Touch him up all over again". At this moment, the Captain arrived in his car and Madan rose to receive him.

Chapter-XVII

From my cage I could hear their conversation and felt happy to be able to stay in this wood, reminded of my freedom of jungle days. Though well-kept and well-fed, I was still a prisoner. I wished they would open the door of my cage so that I could go out, run and return to my cage without hurting anyone. But I know people talk ill of my species all the time and it is our misfortune that neither the denizens of the jungle nor those of the town would trust us of our good behaviour except the Captain, who too had his own limitations- he had a wrong philosophy of depending upon a whip and a terrible voice.

I heard Madan explain my act to the Captain, "This is what I want. It is up to you to arrange it. Raja must make one spring at Jaggu, who will ward it off with the back of his hand, and pound his face with such a cry that Raja will turn back with his tail between his legs." Madan further told him that all this was written in the script and they were not supposed to deviate from it. To the Captain's objection that Raja could never tuck his tail between his legs, Madan's answer was: "It enhances the prestige of the hero, if he can make a tiger lower his tail in defence and crawl..." A heated argument ensued between the two and Madan reminded the Captain that the latter had been paid advance in cash for four weeks of shooting and that he should abide by the terms of the agreement.

Amidst this exchange, Jaggu said that he couldn't keep standing any longer and wanted some rest. The other members of the crew also started complaining and said that they too wanted a break. When things were becoming too much for Madan to handle, the Captain intervened and tried to pacify them, especially the camera man. He said,

"You are an experienced cameraman and you know how difficult is the film medium, it's where arts and commerce are combined and our friend suffers from disadvantages of both. So be patient...you know as a cameraman, how difficult it is to get the artists to do the right thing. Here we have no normal actors, but a tiger and one who understands less than a tiger...Difficult work but Madan has invested money and time. You must do your best for him and leave it to him to work it out."

Soon everyone felt relieved as soon as 'coffee break' was announced, with people leaving for the canteen for refreshments and other kinds of recreation.

In the meantime, Madan and the Captain resumed their discussion. The Captain asked him to be more flexible in his approach and try to find some middle path, which was good for the animal to do his part and was also good for the shooting of the film in general. He suggested:

".... I will tell you what we might have to do. You must utilize the flexibility of the film medium. On my side I will make Raja stand on his hind legs and place his fore paws on a wrestler who is not there, and you will ask your 'giant' to imagine himself wrestling with a tiger which is not there. After all he was a wrestler and it must not be difficult for him to imagine an adversary and pound him...Shoot them separately and join them through an optical printer. That way it should be easy to show them hugging."

"Marvellous idea", cried Madan. "Next four days, we will shoot the maximum footage, I will get a second unit from Madras immediately".

The Captain then told Madan, "Better you give your hero a close view of the tiger, so that he may flail and hug and tackle realistically.

Has he seen the tiger?" Madan said that he had seen the tiger; but always from a distance. Captain was of the view that till the time their extra unit arrived from Madras the giant and the tiger should get used to each other. Also, it would be good for Raja to have a glimpse of his adversary.

After Jaggu's trip from the canteen, where he had eaten to his fill and was relaxing with his 'beedi' on a bench, one of Captain's hands, who had exported the tiger, came to him and took him through a gate into a stockade built for the cameraman, with platforms for taking top shots and enough gaps between the railings for the camera to follow the action in a large enclosure. Here Jaggu saw a man with a whip in one hand and chair in the other standing and commanding, "Raja come out". The whip cracked and the tiger jumped out of its cage. "Race round", commanded the man. The tiger ran round, while Jaggu stood petrified, unable to believe his eyes. Madan was watching him with attention and said, "Fellow looks nervous but must get used to the idea even if we are taking a shot." At one point the tiger lunged forward with a roar in Jaggu's direction and dashed against the stockade, Jaggu let out a howl, "Amma! Save me!"

At this point Madan produced a gadget which when pressed shot out a thin metal rod, and its touch delivered a shock, working on a battery. Madan said that it worked at only fifteen volts but was capable of keeping the animal well-behaved; it could be used in an emergency. The Captain completely disapproved of the use of this gadget or any other unnatural means to control the animals. He shook his head, "I'd be ashamed to employ this on any animal. No trainer worth his name can be proud of it if his animal is covered and beaten down with such an instrument. It's not raining. It's stampeding an animal into obedience with electric shock..."

During the time Madan and the Captain were discussing the use of the gadget, fear-filled Jaggu disappeared from the scene and was not traceable. Madan started his car and drove down the road recklessly and was back within an hour with the giant stuffed like baggage in the narrow back seat of the car. Madan looked happy and relieved. He said, "I found him in an old Mari shrine. Some instinct told me he must be there." He addressed Jaggu, "The goddess would not protect you. You know why? Because you tried to cheat me. Goddess doesn't like persons who try to cheat."

"I don't like tigers", Jaggu said.

"We don't care what you like or dislike...you are under contract with me. I told you the story before signing the agreement. If you act like a coward now, I will hand you over to the police". Madan assured him that no harm would come to him, "Did not you see the bars between you and the tiger? We will see that it does not hurt you. You will be safe." He said, "You must cooperate with me and I will make you rich and a famous man. Your photos will be on walls and papers..." Jaggu was told that the tiger was not all-it was only a part. He tried to cheer him up by saying, "I have written a story in which you knock down the tiger, kill it and then marry a beautiful girl. I'm sure you will like it."

Jaggu was horrified "Oh no, I am married. I will go back to the village to give her money, whatever I earn..."

Later he was rehearsed endlessly and made to go through the motions of wrestling with an unseen tiger. Madan himself was tired of demonstrating the gestures, which the giant had to copy while the camera was shooting.

At another end of the plot the Captain was handling Raja. He had extended the time for shooting by several weeks since Madan had

agreed to pay heavily for the extension. Although he was generally indifferent in money matters, now a certain degree of greed was overcoming him, a gradual corruption through contact with the film world, which promised a lot of money. He wanted to reap the most while this shooting business lasted. He even shared this idea with his wife, "Possibly after this, Madan may come up with an idea for making a full circus- picture, that will be a good break for us."

She welcomed the idea and asked him to cooperate with Madan and added,

"I am tired of this circus business. Let us try something new for a change. We lose nothing. We may be free from all this dust and noise and ticket selling for some time".

Captain said how Raja was standing in their way, "We have to depend on Raja too much, and beg him to 'cooperate', but his act is rather difficult. He is required to stand on his hind legs and all bend forward. Every day I'm trying to make him understand but it's proving difficult."

"Why don't you try the electrical gadget", she asked. But the Captain got angry, "I won't hear of it. Impossible". At this point their pleasantries came to an end and she castigated him for being impractical and sentimental. She said, "After all he will limp for a few minutes, when you can manoeuvre him for the camera. I'm prepared to handle your Raja with the electric staff if you lack the guts". Their conversation abruptly came to an end and when the Captain gave his final verdict, "...Whatever you want to do, keep off my animals. They won't obey us just because you are my wife."



Chapter-XVIII

I did not like it in the least. Day after day I had to do the same thing over and over again. Captain came up at the same hour. The whip and the chair were back in use...Like here in the circus ring also there would be many men, but they all helped the show, carried out captain's orders but here was a man who was ordering each other all the time. A man at the camera was commanding everybody, shouting at the top of the voice all the time, "More left, not so much, go back, light... When they said "Light" a blinding radiance would appear. I missed all the good things and the company of other animals that I got used to at the circus. Here everyone was seized with fever.

The cameraman even ordered the Captain, "Captain, if you want the tiger alone in the shot, you should step back, manoeuvre the tiger from out of the cage". It was unbelievable that the Captain would become submissive. He would crack his whip and get me out and order, "up" every time and hit my legs till I lifted; it was a terrible trial for me and the cameraman would generally be never satisfied and wanted me to repeat and improve, my captain blindly carrying out his orders, whipping, hitting and yelling. This went on day after day. They neither gave me any rest nor showed any kindness. Captain was losing his grip over himself and his self-respect. Often Madan came to watch and gave his own directions to the camera man. Between the two they seemed to have enslaved the Captain. All the polish and gentleness Madan had shown so far had gone, and often spoke of the money he had thrown away, and of his enterprise as a blunder. Captain would

remain calm and just say, "Don't talk nonsense. This is an extremely intelligent tiger, but you demand impossible actions from him". Thus went on their talks. Soon they devised a method to stand me on my hind legs. When the Captain brought me out of the cage, I found a lamb dangling before me. As I reached out, the lamb rose in the air gradually. I was interested now, and tried to reach it; it went up so slowly that I had to stand up and try to keep my balance, and then it would go out of my reach up and up and no amount of straining on my part would help-even though I stretched myself fully and stood up like a human being, and fell forward. While they tempted me with a bait to stand up, the camera followed my action, the act repeated till I was sick of it. Monotonous and tedious. Morning till night and sometimes with blinding lights at night.

I became desperate. Once at the start of the day, I refused to take note of the lamb and looked away indifferently, but the Captain would not let me. If I had the gift of speech I would have said, "Please leave me out today. I am worn out." But I could only growl and roar and none of his whipping and yelling could get me out of my cage. Then something happened I had never experienced before. He brought out a novel object, which shot out a tongue of metal; at its touch I felt blinded with a strange kind of pain and helplessness, and ran out the cage, anything to escape the touch of that vicious tongue. I just collapsed on the ground, my legs aching with all the jumping to catch the dangling lamb the previous day.

But the Captain would not let me lie down. The Cameraman and Madan were shouting, "Get him on his hind legs, the reel is running out. Come on..." Captain lashed me in the face. When it did not move

me he assumed a loud pitch of voice that could even reach the skies. Instead of obedience today it only generated anger. I swished my tail and grunted. Captain got the message that today it would not be easy to tackle me. But he did not care for my inclinations, to him his will counted more and he thought he could impose it on me. I shuddered at the idea of going after that elusive lamb. If I could have spoken, I would have warned him, "Go away before any harm befalls you. After all you have fed me and protected me. I shall honour you for it. But please go away and leave me alone. I won't be your slave any more, I will never go back to my cage, that's all. I won't do any of the meaningless turns these foolish men around me want me to do. It was different at the circus, but the present activities appear to me senseless and degrading, I won't go through them. I like air and freedom. I'm not going to give it up now. Please listen to my advice."

But he was a stubborn fellow and brought his whip down on my nose again and even started hitting in quick succession over my eyes. I was stung immensely and wanted to scream loudly, "Oh captain, don't be foolhardy, your life is in danger, go away, leave me before calamity befalls you". But he was drunk with authority and would not rest till he had exacted total submission. I noticed him bringing out the dreadful instrument which would shoot out a metal tongue. He would only touch me, as with a feather, to make me dizzy and servile.

I caught myself thinking, "Why should I fear this creature no bigger than my tail?" First time in my life such an idea occurred. So far I had never measured him. But today he looked puny to me in spite of all his yelling and angry gestures. In reorganization of our relationship and as a final warning I growled and just raised my paw. He cried, 'Ah!

Ah! You threaten me", forgetting everything else, he dashed forward with that vicious metal shooting out of its sheath. As he stooped down to touch me with its tip, I just raised a forepaw, taking care to retract my claws, and knocked the thing out of his hand. The blow caught the Captain under his chin and cut off his head. It was surprising that such a flimsy creature should have held me in fear for so long!

Much confusion and excitement and running, I got up to move freely for the first time. The crew at first tried to save the equipment in the pandemonium but abandoned it and fled. Madan's voice could be heard, "Where is the gun? But no one had the calmness to answer any question, each one was running for safety while I calmly walked off the plot.

Glossary:

- Retorted(v) : Responded in a quick, clever or humorous way
- Fattening : Subject to or used in the process of finishing or fattening up for slaughter
- Elicit(v) : Call forth (emotions, feelings, and responses)
- Mutilated(v) : Having a part of the body crippled or disabled
- Averse(adj) : Strongly opposed
- Relentlessly (Adv) : without being ceased/Stopped
- Camouflage(n) : An outward semblance that misrepresents the true nature of something
- Foliage(n) : A cluster of plant leaves
- Stentorian(adj) : (of a voice) loud, resonant and powerful
- Jabbed(V) : Pushed suddenly or strongly with a finger or

	something pointed
Grimaced(v)	: Contorted the face to indicate a certain mental or emotional state
Warder(n)	: A person who works in a prison and is in charge of prisoners
Prodding(n)	: Anything that inspires, motivates or drives you to do something
Coop(n)	: An enclosure made of wire or metal bars in which birds or animals can be kept
Uncanny(adj)	: Suggesting the operation of supernatural influences
Rand(n)	: A strip of leather used to fit the heels of a shoe
Bruised(v)	: Injured the underlying soft tissue or bone of
Jugglery(n)	: The performance of a juggler
Irksome(Adj)	: Irritation or annoyance
Dampen(v)	: Lessen in force or effect
Lingering(n)	: The act of carrying
Homage(n)	: Respectful, deference
Considerate(adj)	: Showing concern for the rights and feelings of others
Unmitigated(adj)	: Not diminished or moderated in intensity or severity; sometimes used as an intensifier
Anticipation(n)	: An expectation
Benign(adj)	: Kindness of disposition or manner

- Commotion(n) : Confused movement
- Persistent(adj) : Continually recurring in the mind
- Assertion(n) : The act of affirming, asserting or stating some thing

Questions:

Answer the following questions in not more than twenty words.

1. Name the hill where the cave of the tiger was located.
2. What was the name of the Captain's wife?
3. In which months did the circus move out of Malgudi?
4. Name the places to which Dadhaji and the Captain belonged.
5. What was the name of the show performed by Captain's wife? Write her name also.
6. What name was given to the fund used for the purpose of donation?
7. Who performed the act Four-in One?
8. Who was the chief executive of the circus?

Answer the following questions in about 60 words.

1. How did the Captain try to comfort the villagers knowing their difficulties?
2. What help did the Captain seek from the villagers to catch the tiger?
3. How was the tiger caught? Describe.
4. What similarities did the tiger find between him and the Captain?
5. What was the irony of fate according to the tiger?

6. Describe Madan's view about the incident which forced the Captain to halt the show Four-in-one for a few days.

Answer the following questions in about 300 words.

1. Draw the character sketch of the Captain.
2. Describe the village life on the basis of the text 'The Tiger for Malgudi'.
3. Write a short note on the life of the animals in the circus.
4. Write a short note on humour in the text 'The Tiger for Malgudi'.
5. Who is Madan? Why did he hire the tiger? Explain.
6. Discuss the humour as revealed in the conversation between Jaggu and Madan.



Section Three

Chapter-XIX

It was still a busy hour when I entered the market road. People ran for their lives at the sight of me. As I passed through the streets, shutters were pulled down, and people hid themselves under culverts, on trees, behind pillars. Now I had the chance to study the behaviour of human beings. They were neither sturdy nor fearless, but now I found them fleeing like a herd of deer, although I had no intention of attacking them. Later I learnt from my Master of the chaos that betook the city when it became known that the Captain had been destroyed and that I was somewhere in the city. Sheer hopelessness seemed to have seized the people. One could understand their fears, but why should those living in brick and cement feel nervous? Why should an ordinary simple tiger have any interest in them either to destroy or to safeguard? "I am too full," I wanted to tell them, "I found a green pasture teeming with food on the way. Won't need any for several days to come, won't stir again until I feel hungry again. Tigers attack only when they feel hungry, unlike human beings who slaughter one another without purpose or hunger".

Children of all ages and sizes were running helter-skelter, screaming, jostling, joyously, no school, no school, tiger! Tiger! They were shouting and laughing and enjoyed being feared. I felt like joining them, bounded away and trotted along with them. They gleefully cried, "The tiger is coming to eat us; let us get back to the school".

I followed them through their school gate while they ran up and

shut themselves up in the school hall securely. I ascended the steps of the school, saw an open door at the far end of the veranda, and walked in. It happened to be the headmaster's room, I believed, as I noticed a dignified man jumping on the table and heaving himself up into an attic. I walked in and flung myself on the cool floor, with my head under a large desk. All I wanted was a little moment of sleep, already half asleep. I heard the doors of the room being shut and bolted and locked. I didn't care and I slept.

While I slept, a great deal of consultation was going on outside. I learnt about it later only through the Master, who was in the crowd and was watching. When a teacher said, "Now that brute is safely locked we must decide." At this moment my Master pushed him way through the crowds and admonished, 'Never use the word beast or brute. They are ugly words coined by man in his arrogance. The human being thinks all other creatures are beasts. Awful words!'

Someone said, "So this is a time to discuss vocabulary problems?" "Why not?" retorted the Master. Yet another man came forward and said, "What a reckless man you are! Who are you!"

My Master's reply baffled them: 'You are asking a preferred question. I have no idea who I am! All my life I have been trying to find the answer. Are you sure you know who you are?' The Master's answer annoyed them further and they asked him categorically to leave the school premises and leave them free for consultations among themselves. And then my Master withdrew to a far corner to watch them, to observe how they were going to tackle the tiger. One of them suggested, "We must get someone to shoot it. Who has the gun?" The mathematics teacher, who was supposed to be the most practical-minded, said, "Shall I call the police to handle the tiger?" Another

teacher had a misgiving, "I doubt if this is a police matter. No law has been broken."

During further discussion they tried to fix the responsibility on the circus man for letting loose a tiger in a public thoroughfare but since the circus man was dead, it could be film-production people who could be held accountable for this kind of situation endangering public safety. Somebody told them that the entire crew had vanished-fled even before the tiger had left the place and that he would not be surprised if the tiger had swallowed them up.

My master again intervened, "I would not think this...He is not a man-eater." He further said, "I have not seen any progress in your talks. Why don't you let all your children go home without making any noise... and all of you may also go home..."

"And leave the tiger in charge of the school?" asked the acting Headmaster? "You must go; we don't want you here in any way."

At which my Master shouted back, "If my presence is the real problem rather than the tiger, I will go, but you will see me again, I have no doubt." He was only out of their vision but was at hand, sitting on a culvert keenly watching the goings on in the school veranda. They discussed various options as to how to get the tiger shot. They thought of getting one Alphonse, a good hunter who had a licensed double barrelled gun. The walls of his house were covered with heads and stuff like that. But this suggestion did not get enough support as people said that he was a confirmed poacher and even the government had confiscated his license. Next option was to get the D.F.O. (District Forest officer). But they could not come up with any conclusive solution.

My Master, who had been hearing all their conversation, said, "If you keep chatting I will dash up and let the tiger out." Again the acting head master admonished him and he had to back out. But suddenly he saw a man arrive on a motorcycle, carrying a gun. He slowed down near my Master and asked, "I heard of a tiger being somewhere here-is it true?" My Master indicated the school but added, "You can't shoot him, if that's your idea...." Ignoring it the man turned into the gate with a haughty toss of his head.

Now my Master followed a fresh motley crowd drifting in, driven by a mixture of fear and curiosity. Meanwhile a group, having heard the shouts of children locked up in the hall, went up and forced open the door, and the children poured out of the room like flood water released from a sluice, screaming and roaring with joy. Confusion was at its maximum.

The man with the gun got in with the gun in position, shouting at the top of his voice:

"Keep away, everybody, I won't be responsible if anybody is hurt. I will count. Before I count ten, everyone must clear out the way. Otherwise I will shoot and won't be responsible for any mishap to any individual," and he held up and flourished his double-barrelled gun, asking, "Is he in there?" I can shoot-through the door."

"Oh, no, don't. The headmaster is also there." Someone cried.

Alphonse's prompt reply was, "I will aim and hit right on it only the tiger. You may keep a flower on its back or even the headmaster himself, but my bullet will leave everything else untouched and bring down the beast alone."

At this moment my Master came forward to say, "Never use that

word again..."

"Which word?" asked the gunman.

"Beast is an ugly, uncharitable expression."

"Mind your business," said Alphonse.

"This is my business," answered my Master and people, fearing that he might be shot, pulled him away.

And Alphonse came up with an idea, "Get me a ladder, then. I will go up and shoot from the roof.... enough if a couple of tiles are removed...." Someone was hustled to fetch a ladder from the neighbourhood. They all waited in silence. Somehow that sight of the gunman seemed to have subdued the crowd"

"Where is the ladder?" demanded Alphonse. The acting headmaster said that their school did not have a ladder and started elaborating on the procedure for purchase of every article out of government expense. As he continued with his narration on this uninteresting topic of ladder-purchase, the gunman started getting restless. But thanks to the efforts of two students the ladder was finally brought and placed before the crowd. Alphonse was delighted. He patted the boys' heads by turn, one by one, methodically and asked.

"Where have you got this from?", he asked, very pleased.

The boy said, "We ran to a house in Kabir Lane. I had noticed that they had kept a ladder in their backyard, to pluck drumsticks from the tree, and now they had locked themselves in because of the tiger and also shut all the windows because of the tiger, so I brought it away quietly and they did not see us. I was dragging it along, but Ramu saw me on the way and helped me and both of us carried it down-because we heard you asking for a ladder, I ran out remembering the ladder in

the next house."

The gunman said, "You are intelligent. What is your name?"

"Shekhar", he answered proudly.

"Shekhar", cried Alphonse enthusiastically, "Come and see me with your friend. I will present you with a wonderful air gun." They placed the ladder near the ventilator of the room. And then he proceeded to remove a few tiles and asked the boys to follow his example.

Soon an opening was made and a shaft of sunlight entered the room. The headmaster was on the point of collapse, crouching there in the narrow attire, amidst the bundle of files and papers. He looked up and saw the faces of the two boys. Shekhar cried, "It's me sir, my friend is also there, Rama of Four B. Uncle is there...to shoot the tiger..."

The headmaster took his finger to his lips to warn the boy not to make a noise and wake up the tiger. Then the gunman spoke, "I'm Alphonse, Headmaster, keep cool; we will get you out soon. Ah! I see him there must be eleven point four feet...a full grown brute. Wish his head were not under the table. I could dispatch him with one shot then and there. You need not doubt...I could have shot now, but if he is hit in the hind part, he may go mad and spring up." He looked around and said, "Boy you must get a hacksaw or a carpenter's saw quickly." At this moment he heard a voice, "Yes you will need more than a carpenter's saw.... I could come up the ladder as well as anyone". It was my Master.

Alphonse could not contain his imitation, "If you don't behave I will push you in through this gap. Shekhar gets a saw without delay- instead of listening to this mad fellow. He is persistent...No way of keeping him off."

How can you keep me off? Who are you?", asked my Master, and added, "I can ask the same question you asked, who are you? I know enough law to realize that I have as good a right to be on the roof as anyone else? Besides, you won't be able to work through the rafters so easily. They are old teak beams. You will have to see for days before you can make a dent..."

"In that case, I will shoot. I have enough sight now. Let the headmaster stay where he is, and take a chance and pray for his life...", said the gunman.

Just as Alphonse was about to begin his adventure my Master exclaimed, "Oh, here they are." A Jeep had arrived and a number of people jumped out of it and entered the school compound. "Come down, please and keep your finger off the trigger. We are the Save Tiger Committee. You must hear us first. We are a statutory body with police powers..."

Alphonse came down the ladder, saying, "The headmaster is about to be saved, please give me five minutes and then we can discuss".

The committee members asked, "How do you propose to save the headmaster." Alphonse said he proposed to cut through the rafts and bail out the headmaster. But my Master again intervened and said that the rafts were of ancient timber and would take at least three days to make a notch. Alphonse glared at him and said angrily, "You again! Why do you dog my steps like this? I'd knock you down with the butt, but for your age. The animal is there already striving and growling. How long do you think the headmaster will stand the tension...?"

My Master ignored Alphonse and turned to the committee: "I'm

grateful you have responded to my call. If you had not come, he'd have murdered the tiger. His plan was to make enough noise with a saw or anything to stir up the animal, and shoot, leaving it to chance for the headmaster to survive..."

The chairman of the local chapter of 'Tiger Project' said, "Save Tiger Project', as its name indicates, is to prevent the decimation of tiger population, which was at one time nearly fifteen thousand; today it is less than fifteen hundred and there is a general ordinance issued by the government that prohibits shooting of any tiger in any part of India, and we are given powers to enforce rules and initiate prosecution in case of any violation, with penalty up to two thousand rupees and one year rigorous imprisonment and confiscation of the offender's weapon and license."

"I know all of this," said Alphonse and added, "But there is a provision in the ordinance, an exemption where a man eater is concerned". To which the member replied, "Yes, yes we know all that; where a tiger has been established to be a man-eater, we can permit the shooting, provided you apply for it with proof and evidence".

Alphonse asked with grim honour, "What proof? Remains of a poor villager snatched away from the tiger's jaw. I will also have to file a photograph and write an application in triplicate, I suppose? Ha! Ha! Ha! Here's a headmaster struggling to survive and you go on talking rules. You people do not distinguish between What's important and unimportant!"

□□□

Chapter-XX

Meanwhile I awoke after a very good snatch of sleep and heard voices outside. I looked up and saw the headmaster cowering in the attic. I wished to assure him that I was not going to hunt him. If it had been the old jungle ways, I'd have gone after him; already a change was coming over me. My Master's presence in the vicinity, though he had not come near me yet, must have begun to affect me.

Meanwhile outside, my Master noticed Alphonse taking the chairman aside under a tree, where they spoke in whispers. When they came back, the chairman was a changed man. He took the other members aside in his turn, and spoke to them. Thereupon they took papers out of a briefcase and signed and gave them to Alphonse. All this concerned me. I was declared a man-eater and Alphonse was given written permission to shoot. My Master suspected that Alphonse had offered a substantial bribe as he was known to be engaged in a flourishing business exporting tiger skins.

The commotion was at its height when Alphonse, properly armed with the permit, gave a final look to his double-barrelled gun, held it this way and that and looked through the barrel gun, held it and looked through the barrel and shouted a command: "Your attention everybody! Everyone must retreat at least a hundred yards before the school gate which will give you an initial advantage if the tiger should decide to chase. No one can foresee how the situation will develop. The beast when shot may smash the door and rush out, and god help anyone in its way. I must count ten and this area must be cleared. It is an emergency; I won't be responsible for any calamity. The headmaster

whatever is left of him must be saved without delay.". He jangled the bunch of school-keys, which he had snatched from the acting headmaster and said!" I'm risking my life. I'll push open the door and shoot the same second, normally that should be enough..." After this he let out a shout like a cattle-driver and a stampede started towards the gate, as he started counting, "One, two, three..."

My Master, who had stayed back unobtrusively, came forward to ask him," Whom were you talking to?"

"You", said Alphonse."I knew you were here. I knew you'd not go. I saw you obstinate devil...So I thought, I thought, what did I think'? I don't know. I have forgotten. No. no if the beast comes out and swallows you, it will serve you right. I am not drunk. It's only watery-rum...less than ten percent proof."

My Master asked, "Are you relaxing, drinking, What about the tiger? Aren't you going to shoot?"

"No", the gunman said, "My hands must be steadied. I must have another drink.my flask is empty ... the son of a bitch didn't fill it. I'll deal with that cheat..."

My Master said, "The headmaster, what about him?"

"I don't know. Don't ask me. Am I responsible for every son-of-a bitch?"

Hearing this my Master gave him a gentle push, and he fell on the ground and passed out. My Master must have turned on him his powers of suggestion. Taking the key-bench from Alphonse, he went up to the headmaster's room and had just inserted the key into the lock when the chairman, watching through the window of the next room, shouted across at the top of his voice, "What are you trying to do? Stop!"

"I am only trying to get the tiger out so that the headmaster may come down confidently," said my Master.

The chairman said, "By the powers vested in me in my capacity as the second Honorary Magistrate in this town, I give you notice that you shall not open or enter that room. My committee members will bear witness to this order".

My Master asked, "Why will you prevent me from going near the tiger?"

They were at a loss to answer: "It is unlawful to commit suicide".

"Maybe", my Master said, "but which law section says that a man should not approach the tiger? Aren't circus people doing this all the time?"

"Yes", replied the chairman weakly. "But that's different".

"I can tame a tiger as well as any circus ringmaster. It's after all my life that I'm risking", said the Master.

"There is no such thing as my life or your life before the law: in the eyes of the law, all lives are equal...No one can allow you to murder yourself."

"Life or death is in no one's hands: you can't die by will or escape death by determination. A great power has determined the number of breaths for each individual, who can neither stop them nor prolong...That's why God says in the Gita, 'I am life and death. I'm the killer and the killed. Those enemies you see before you Arjuna are already dead, whether you aim your arrows at them or not'".

The chairman was visibly confused and bewildered, "In that case you will have to sign an affidavit absolving us from all responsibilities

of life or death..."

"Your honorary magistrate! After all, that I have said, in spite of the urgency...All right, give me a paper and tell me what to write."

My Master signed the document and returned it with the comment, "Just to respect your magistracy otherwise I know it is uncalled for and irrelevant..."

I had felt provoked at the sound of the key turning in the lock. Nobody had a right to come in and bother me. I was enjoying my freedom, and the happy feeling that the whip along with the hand that held it was banished forever. It was a pleasure to brood over this good fortune. Next time anyone displayed the whip I would know what to do. Just a pat with my paw, I realized, was sufficient to ward off any pugnacious design. What ignorance so far! Now that I know what men were made of I had the confidence that I could save myself from them. Now I have learnt much about chairs and men and the world in general. Perhaps these men were planning to trap me, cage me and force me to continue those jumping turns with the suspended lamb, shamelessly standing on my hind legs before the crowd of filmmakers. If this was going to be the case, I must show them that I could be vicious and violent too. So far I had shown great concern and self-control. Thus far and no further. The evidence of my intentions should be the headmaster who I hoped was somewhere above me, unharmed, and as I hoped, peacefully sleeping. So I have a double responsibility now: to save myself and not let any harm come to the headmaster. Even as I was lost in my thoughts, I heard some noise at the door.

I held myself ready to spring forward.

The door opened quickly and my Master entered, shutting the

door behind him. I dashed forward to kill the intruder, but I only hurt myself by hurting against the door. He was not there, though a moment ago I saw him enter. I just heard him say, "Understand that you are not a tiger, don't hurt yourself. I am your friend..." How I was beginning to understand human speech is a mystery. He was exercising some strange power over me. His presence sapped all my strength. When I made one more attempt to spring up, I could not stand. When he touched me, I tried to hit him, but my forepaw had no strength and collapsed like a rag. When I tried to snap my jaws, again I hit only air. He merely said, "Leave that style out. You won't have such violent gestures any more. It all goes into your past".

I had to become subdued, having no alternative while he went on talking, "It is a natural condition of existence. Every creature is born with a potential store of violence. A child as he grows all through life maintains a vast store of aggressiveness, which will be subdued if he is coerced, or expended in some manner that brings retaliation. But violence cannot be everlasting. Sooner or later it has to go, if not through wisdom, definitely through decrepitude that comes when one grows old. The demon, the tyrant or the tormentor in history, if he ever survives to experience senility, becomes helpless and dependent. You are now a full grown tiger of fifteen years (equivalent to seventy years in human beings) old and let's be grateful for it. You cannot continue with your ferocity forever. You have to change."

At this point someone from the other side of the door called, "Sir, Swamiji, are you all right".

"Yes, I am, don't you hear me talking?" replied my Master.

"Whom are you talking to, is the headmaster safe"? asked the worried person.

"At the moment I am discoursing to the tiger...the headmaster does not seem to be awake yet". "Oh does it understand?", wondered the man at the other end.

My Master explained, "Why not? If you could follow what I've been saying, the tiger should understand me even better since I'm closer to his ears..."

"Don't let him out sir...when you open the door, please warn us first...", came the reply. "Surely, if you are afraid, but let me tell you, you need not fear; he has only the appearance of a tiger, but he is not one... inside he is no different from you and me".

I felt restless and wanted to do something or at least get away from the whole situation, back to my familiar life of the jungle... How grand it'd be to be back in the world of bamboo shade and monkeys and jackals. Even the supercilious leopard and the monkey I would not mind; compared to their occasional taunts and gossip...I was sick of human beings!

When I rose, my Master became alert and said, "You want to go away, I suppose! I understand. But there is no going back to your old life, even if I open the door and let you out. You can't go far. You will hurt others or you will surely be hurt. A change is coming and you will have to start a new life, a different one...Now lie down in peace. Let us go out together, it will be safer. But first I must get the headmaster down from his perch. He has been there too long. Now you lie still, turn your face to the wall and do not stir in the least. If the headmaster thinks you are lifeless so much the better. The situation is delicate and you must not do anything to worsen it." Whatever its advantages, circus life had accustomed me to understand commands and I did as commanded by my Master.

My Master called out loudly but there was no response from the headmaster. My Master went to the door and announced, "I want a ladder and a person to climb to the loft, wake up the headmaster, and help him come down...Let me assure you that the tiger will do no harm to anyone who comes here inside the room to help me get the headmaster down". There was no response. My Master then finely said, "I will manage". He shut the door again, pulled the table into position, and put up a chair on it, then another chair and a stool, and went up step by step and reached the loft.

Presently I heard him waking the headmaster and persuading him to come down. I sensed what was happening and was curious to turn but I didn't want to disobey my Master. The first thing the headmaster did on coming down was to cry, "It's still there! "The headmaster groaned and whimpered and was trying to go back to the loft, at which my Master must have toppled the pile of chairs and pulled him down.

My Master kept advising him, "What if it is still there? Don't look in its direction, turn away your head, away, come with me..." He led the headmaster as he kept protesting and propelled him to the door and pushed him out saying to those outside, "Here he is, take care of him. Not a scratch, only shock..." and shut the door again as a medley of comments, questions and exclamations poured into the room.

Now he addressed me, "Now turn around, get up and do whatever you like." I stretched myself, yawned and rose to my feet. That was all I could do. I felt grateful but I could not make out his form clearly. There was a haze in which he seemed to exist, a haze that persisted all through our association.

He said, "Let us go out now. You must-realize that human beings

for all their bluster are timid creatures and will panic when they see you. But don't look at them. This is one of the rules of Yoga to steady one's mind, to look down one's nose and nothing beyond. That's one way not to be distracted and maintain one's peace of mind. I would ask you to keep your head bowed and cast your eyes down and make no sound, whatever may be the reaction of the people we pass. People of the town are likely to get excited, but you must notice nothing."

This was a necessary instruction since our emergence from the room created a sensation and stampede, in spite of the warning cry my Master had given, "Now I am coming out with the tiger, keep away. Believe me he will walk past you and you will be safe. I will give you a little time to decide." When he opened the door, he said, "keep close to me". As he stepped out of the room, I was at his heels. The veranda was empty, not a soul in sight except Alphonse who was lying on the top step. Without a word we brushed past him but the breeze of our movement seemed to have blown on his face and he immediately sat up, rubbed his eyes, blinked and muttered, "Crazy dream" and apparently went back to sleep. We had gone past him a little way when he cried "Hey, you bearded one, you again! Won't leave me alone even in a dream! What is this?"

"The same tiger", my Master said, ``you may touch it if you like".

``No, no go away,". He waved us off angrily and resumed his sleep.



Chapter-XXI

At first, when the Master emerged from the school gate with the tiger, the crowds in the street looked petrified. Cycles, automobiles, lorries and bullock-carts hurriedly withdrew to the side. But as advised by the Master I never lifted my eyes but followed his steps. The Master passed down quickly, reached the Market-gate, turned to his right, proceeded northward on the highway, and vanished at dusk towards the mountains.

Now gradually normal life started returning to the people of Malgudi: Lorries, bullock carts began to move, people could be seen moving in the streets or even sitting in the restaurants. Everywhere the hot topic of discussion was the tiger and my Master.

The following pieces of conversations could easily reflect their comments, questions and arguments:

"The hermit must have come from the Himalayas, (somebody said) I have heard that there are many extraordinary souls residing in the ice-caves, capable of travelling any distance at will, and able to control anything by their yogic powers".

"How could the yogi have known that there was a tiger in the headmaster's room, and why should he have wanted to protect it."

"Probably they were family friends". They laughed at the joke.

"The question remains who is this tiger tamer - the terrible animal trots behind him, while the Circus-Wallah for all his expert control could not save himself in the end."

Jayaraj, who framed pictures sitting in a cubicle at Market Arch, observed the goings on in the town from his position of vantage, and had spent a lifetime commenting and gossiping while his hands were busy nailing pictures. He was explaining to his friends: "At first I did not close my shop and was not frightened but when I saw the crowd flooding past, I too was caught in the frenzy, and went there just in time to see that man come out of the school with his pet. The crowd pressed me and just as I could not go farther away, I saw the tiger almost brushing against my legs. I shivered as I was between the wall and the animal. But when that man noticed my fright he said, 'Don't fear' and passed on. In that very instant I recognized the man-the shape of those eyes, the voice, and those features were familiar, and through all that shrunken frame and sunburnt, I could see who he was."

Jayaraj then started recollecting every detail about him from the past. "I used to see him cycling up the Market road every morning from his ancestral house in Ellman street. I can't remember that name now, Gopal, Govind? He was arrested during the 'Quit India' movement for climbing the collector's office roof and tearing down the Union Jack. He could not even pass his B.A. busy as he was in every kind of demonstration. But when things quieted down after independence, he came to me one day to have his passport photo taken, but never collected it, though he had paid me in advance...

"Later on I used to see him coming with his family in a motor car, he was a completely changed man, looked like a fop with a tie and suit. Once I ran to stop him and asked him to collect his photograph. He just said, 'I will come again and hurried out; perhaps he was busy with his insurance job in a foreign company with its office in the new

extension...I never thought of him again until I heard that he had vanished abandoning his wife and children. Even the police came to me seeking his photograph but I did not give it, "While replying to a question Jayaraj said, "Remember the ancient saying 'Don't probe too far into the origin of a river or saint.'" and abruptly got-up and went away.

Late in the evening Alphonse woke up on the school-steps and muttered, "Not a soul in sight. Where has everybody gone? They have bluffed me. When he entered the Market junction someone ventured to inform him, "The tiger is gone". He replied, "Oh shut up, all that nonsense about the tiger! It has been over a year since I saw one...Those bastards have April-fooled us...If ever you see a real tiger with a tail on the right end, call me; otherwise it is a waste of time." With that Alphonse was off.



Chapter-XXII

We passed through many villages, big and small towards I don't know where, as I followed my Master, everywhere people made way for us, retreated hurriedly staring in wonder and disbelief, afraid even to breathe, which made my Master remark, "What our nation needs most is a tiger to keep people disciplined..."

We passed on while I stuck close to his heels and moved along without lifting my head or looking at anyone for too long. My Master told me, "The eye is the starting point of all evil and mischief. The eye can travel far and pick out objects indefinitely, the mind follows the eye, and the rest of the body is conditioned by the mind. Thus starts a chain of activity which may lead to trouble and complication, or waste of time, if nothing else; so don't look at anything except the path." Sometimes I could not resist looking at cattle or other creatures, which I would normally view as my rightful prize. But I would immediately alert my eyes when I realized what I was doing.

We were about to descend a hillock when we saw a procession of people dancing and rejoicing carrying their God in a chariot. The moment they saw us they ran away. But my Master had to go after them and tell them, "Don't abandon your God. This tiger is Godly, continue with your enjoyment. When I saw the children, pipers, and the drummers in subdued spirit, I felt like telling everyone, "This pains me very much, how can I prove you are a friend". Slowly they resumed their activities.

At another place we went into a rioting mob-groups of people attacking each other with all kinds of knives, stones and iron rods.

When they noticed us, they dispersed swiftly. Master cried to them, "If I find you fighting again, I will be back to stop it. Take care. You should not need a tiger to keep peace."

When we reached the foot of the Mempi range, the Master looked up with joy; "That ought to be our home, but it is inaccessible, so we will stop here...I was here before, and once saw a flash of light on the very top of that peak and felt overwhelmed by its mystery since no human being has ever set his foot there...Although I realise now that might be just a touch of the moon rising behind it, I have a desire to see that flash again."

He searched and found his spot. A rock jutting over a ledge seemed to him an adequate spot. He said, "Here we stay". He broke some twigs and swept the floor. Farther off there was a spring, he told me: "You go there, have a drink of water there. But I cannot tell you where to seek your food... I know I cannot persuade you to eat grass and live on roots and greens. God has decided for you a difficult diet. I can help your mind and soul but I cannot affect your body or its functions. Now I should leave you free to go where you like, but don't go too far away from here or too long..."

I accepted his advice and lay outside the entrance of his shelter while he sat inside with eyes shut and in prayer. In the evenings he would open his eyes and talk to me on subjects of life, death and God, a name that he mentioned several times. He described God as the Creator, the Great spirit that lives everywhere and among all creatures. Once he asked me about my notion of God and I replied, "God must be an enormous tiger, spanning the earth and the sky, with claws that could hook on the clouds, and teeth that could grind the mountains." Hearing this he burst into a laugh and said, "It is said that God made

man in his own image and so you are perfectly right in thinking that God is a super tiger. But we must not forget that he must be everything that we imagine and more. Remember also he is within every form of life and we derive our strength from Him. He did not treat me as an animal and I only felt grateful that he was trying to transform me in so many ways. How? It was a secret of his own!

At dawn after bathing in the spring and feeding himself on roots, herbs and leaves, he would be engrossed in prayer and meditation. Except for those moments when he discoursed to me, he generally remained silent. Nowadays the keenness of my hunger was also gone and I rarely went away in the jungle only when I felt extremely hungry. Often I was seized with a sense of guilt when I hunted and killed. Even for drinking water, I chose another stream since I did not want to sully the spring in which my Master performed morning ablutions.

Now I suffered hunger for consecutive days before seeking food again but I felt noble for it. I felt I had attained merit through penance, making myself worthy of my Master's grace. How I wished I had learnt the art of living on sugarcane and rice like the elephant and the hippo of the circus.

This phase of life I found elevating: the change churning internally was still felt by me, but it did not bother me now. If I had shed the frightening physical encasement God has chosen for me, I could have lived on air, or dry leaves, and I'd have felt more blessed. Understanding the turmoil in me my Master said, "Do not crave for unattainable. It is enough to have realization. All in good time. We cannot understand God's intentions. All growth takes place in its own time. If you brood over your improvements rather than your shortcomings, you will be happier."

While I learnt a great deal from him one thing he would not teach me -the art of reckoning. Numbers and figures were still beyond me. To my question he said, "Why do you want to know how long ago or before or how much later or earlier? Not necessary for you. A sense of time may be required for human beings engaged in worldly activities. But why for you and me? I shun all activities and you have none. You have freed yourself from all duties which had been forced on you. In short you don't have to know the business of counting, which habit has made us miserable human beings in many ways". He continued, "We have lost the faculty of appreciating the present living moment. We are always moving forward or backward, waiting for one or sighing for the other, and lose the pleasure of awareness of the moment in which we actually exist...the thousands of human beings that you encountered since leaving the forest suffer from minds, over-burdened with knowledge, facts and information-fetters and shackles for the rising soul."

When he knew that I was to know about his past life, he began by saying "I was a man of the world, busy and active, checking my bank account, greeting and smiling at all and sundry because I wanted to be treated as a respectable man in society. One day it all seemed wrong, a senseless repetition of activities and I abruptly shed everything and fled away from my wife, children, home, possessions all of which seemed intolerable. While others slept, I left very much in the manner of Siddhartha. I trudged and tramped and wandered through jungles and mountains and valleys not caring where I went. I achieved complete anonymity and shed purpose of every kind, never having to ask what next. And so here I am, that's all you need to know."

□□□

Chapter-XXIII

Although my Master had taken the trouble to choose a remote part of the jungle to live in, people had come to know about it. A man living in the company of a tiger-this news must have travelled from village to village. One morning, watching from his ashram from a distance, we saw a group of peasants approaching, carrying baskets of flowers and fruits. They stood away at a distance and spoke alone, "Swamiji, are you there?"

"Yes, I am here, but I am no swamiji!"

"May we approach you?"

"Why not? Anyone is welcome"

"But you have the tiger with you still".

"Yes, naturally, but he is not a tiger."

"He looks like one, we are afraid".

"Then why do you want to come?"

"For your"darshan `` sir".

My Master objected to the use of the word "darshan". Again when they said they wanted to sit at his feet, he said impatiently, "Oh at my feet. Where have you picked up those phrases of mental slavery...?"

But when he noticed their preparations to prostrate before him he said, "I would not allow you to prostrate..." and added, "I am not different from you, we are equals and no need to pay homage to me. It has no meaning. You must prostrate only before God and seek only God's darshan". At this point he suddenly lifted his head and delivered

a full-throated song, his voice rebounding from rocks: "When I bring my palms together and raise my arm in prayer, I'm only half-praying to you. Is it right to pray thus?"

His visitors were overwhelmed, but suddenly remembered the tiger and asked timidly, "Where is the tiger?"

My Master said, "Don't think of him, tell me your purpose".

They placed the basket of flowers and fruits before him and appealed, "Please accept these." He took just a single flower and a small banana. All the visitors sat on the ground and began to explain, "We are from both the sides you found fighting the other day. We have come to assure you that we will not fight again. When your honour passed through our village that day, you saw us in a shameful state...We are here to beg for your forgiveness." My Master said, "Instead you ask God's forgiveness...Don't ever fight...don't mention to me the causes of rivalry. No cause is worth a clash."

When they pledged never to fight again, the Master gave them a final piece of advice, "You should not depend upon a tiger or a bearded man again to help you settle your differences. If you are ready to hate and want to destroy each other, you may find a hundred reasons-only the foolish waste their lives in fighting."



Chapter-XXIV

One morning I was lying at the feet of my Master, he was sitting in meditation. These days he encouraged me to remain close to him when he meditated as it might help me too. At such moments a profound silence prevailed, I was carried to a sublime state and I felt lighter at heart and my physical self, my sight became clearer; if I lifted my gaze to the horizon, the sun shining on the land filled me with joy. When the Master read the state of my mind, he explained, "No one would credit the tiger with so much poetic joy, it is inconceivable. Looking back, I would say that in one of your previous births you were a poet, maybe in the king's court, whose memory has remained buried in your personality and is being carried from birth to birth."

At this moment, as the Master was saying something deep related to my existence, he saw a woman coming. He told me to hide myself before she saw me because she might faint in his arms at the sight of my terrifying physical form.

Presently the visitor arrived and I could see her through the foliage. She was panting. I could not describe human beings. For me all humans looked alike and my Master confirmed my view. When he understood my curiosity about the woman he explained that she was over fifty years old, medium height, dark, round cheeks, with grey hair tied up at the back.

The lady advanced towards my Master seated on a slab of stone and prostrated. At this he protested but she said, "One has the right to show one's veneration for a sublime soul." The Master replied, "Calm

yourself, rest for a while, you don't have to say anything. Feel completely silent. You don't have to utter a single word." But the woman was persistent, so my Master finally relented:".... Let me know what has brought you here." She began, "I heard of a remarkable person who went out with a tiger...and I told myself I must see this swamiji." it's only this remarkable man who can help me in my search."

He asked her, "Don't you see what risk you face by going after a Sadhu? He might be fake...Also, you might be endangering your virtue". The woman replied: "At my age and condition, my virtue is safe. No one will molest a grey-haired fat hag. Only they robbed me of my money and all my possessions... Good they did this, at last they only robbed, which seems to me less heinous than deserting one's family and home for no reason." My Master said, "How can you say 'no reason'? An inner compulsion is enough to make one's fateful decisions."

How I wish I could join their conversation but I had to keep my cursed form concealed behind the lantana bush. If permitted I would have asked, "How did you come to know about my Master.?"

As if in answer to my question, she was saying, "On that day when the tiger was at school, I went there with a neighbour who was searching for her son...Later my friend told me how she was comforted and helped by a bare bodied Sadhu who was sitting calmly on a culvert outside the school."

When my Master asked in what way was the Sadhu able to help her. she replied, "He told her that the tiger was locked in and would not harm anyone, and also her son must be with the other children safely sheltered in the school hall. Was that Sadhu You?

My Master tried to evade the question but the woman insisted that it was him only because of a habit, peculiar to him only-he was in the habit of rubbing his finger across his brow while thinking as he was doing then also.

I knew it was true: when my Master was listening and thinking he always drew his fingers across his brow as if writing something there.

The woman continued her story, "When I went back home and kept thinking how I had not seen anyone else do it. How when he sat in the verandah reclining in his easy chair, reading a newspaper, he'd hold it in one hand so as to leave the other free to grace his forehead-whether joking or serious, he always took his fingers to his forehead. To this my Master's was a calm response: "If God had devised the hand differently, the world and human actions and attitudes would have been different."

The lady could not take it anymore and she burst out, "Oh husband, how can I forget the years we have spent together, twenty years, twenty-five years, Thirty-I have lost count."

My Master's answer was, "Don't use the word 'husband', it is a wrong word..."

"Husband, husband, husband, I know who I am talking to. Don't deceive and cheat on me. Others may take you for a hermit, but I know you intimately. I have borne your vagaries patiently for a lifetime: your inordinate demands for food... my surrender night or day when passion seized you and your display of indifference of a savage...I shudder to think of all this..." she said crying.

"You should have felt happy to lose such a husband. Why have

you gone after him? No reason, especially when he has left you and your children, every kind of security in life...he took nothing except a piece of loom cloth for all the wealth he had accumulated! However, please note that he left home not out of wrath, there was no cause for it, but out of an inner transformation."

When she suggested that he return with her to their home, he was very categorical in his reply:

"Listen carefully: My past does not exist for me, nor a future, I live for the moment and that awareness is enough for me...I have erased from my mind my name and identity...it would be unthinkable to slide back. You must live your own life and leave me to live mine and end it in my own way".

She broke down and wailed aloud:

"You are callous; you talk of sympathy just with the tip of your tongue. You have no feeling; you are selfish..."

He listened to her in stony silence. At some point he even failed to look at her; closed his eyes and went into meditation. He just said, "Since you will pass through the jungle, I will take you down to the road. Let's get there before sunset."

She retorted, "Why should you take the trouble, I can go alone as I came..." My Master said, "We come into the world alone, and are alone while leaving. Your understanding is becoming deeper".

She repeated, "I did not need your help while coming. Why should you bother about a stranger? You and your tiger... if he is there in the jungle and meets me, I shall be grateful if he ends my misery then and there, or could you not tell him?"

"You will reach home safely", he said.

She sprang to her feet, "Finally, is there no way I can persuade you?"

My Master's final words to her were, "I need no persuasion...God be with you!"

She wiped her eyes with the end of her saree, turned round, hurried down the hill and disappeared in the jungle. He sat motionless in his seat and closed his eyes in meditation.

I did not wish to disturb him; I kept away and did not even go out to hunt that night, preferring to go without food.

My Master never mentioned her visit again. He sat continuously in meditation for a few days and then our normal life was resumed. He bathed in the pool, went into the forest to gather roots and herbs and leaves for his nourishment, meditated and discoursed to me in the evenings seated on his slab of stone.



Chapter-XXV

Thus our life went on for how long I have no idea. I could only measure it by my own condition. Gradually I realised that I was becoming less inclined to get up and move, preferring to spend long hours in my own corner hidden behind the shrub, often without food for days since I had grown too weak to go through the strain of chasing the game. Many creatures eluded me with ease. Most of my old associates like the longoor, the jackal and others who used to watch me and annoy me, were missing, perhaps dead. My claws sometimes stuck and most of my teeth had fallen. It was difficult for me to tear or chew. My movements were slow and clumsy, my hearing was also impaired. I could not hear when my Master summoned me.

He understood what was happening to me. He told me, "Raja, old age has come on you. Beautiful old age, when faculties are dimmed one by one, so that we may be restful, very much like extinguishing lights in a home, one by one, before one goes to sleep."

He went on to explain further, "You may live a maximum of five years. I don't think we should risk your suffering starvation or attack from other creatures. Once they know you are old and weak, they will come for you and you are going to be alone because we are going to part.

Last night I realized that the time for my attaining Samadhi is near at hand. I must prepare for it by releasing myself from all bondage...As a first step I am releasing you.

Tomorrow a man will come to take charge of you. He is the head of the zoo in the town. You will spend the rest of your years in the company of other animals. You will be safe in a cage, food will be

brought to you and they will open the door and let you out to move freely in an open enclosure, and look after you".

Since I had never questioned my Master I accepted his decision about my fortune, though with a heavy heart. He explained to me philosophically, "No relationship, human or other, lasts forever. Separation is the law of life from the mother's womb. One has to accept it, if one has to live in God's plans".

Next there was a visitor from the town. He was carrying no whip; at first sight I could understand that this man was fearless and used to the company of animals and had sympathy, and was not another captain. So when he stroked my back, by his touch I could see that I had a friend.

My Master told him, "keep him well. Remember he is a tiger only in appearance...He is a sensitive soul who understands life and its problems exactly as we do. Take him as a Gift from God; only don't put him in rough company."

For the last time my Master commanded, "Come Raja", and I followed him. He patted my back and opened the gate of the cage and said, "You may get in now...Raja, a new life opens for you where you will meet hundreds of men, women, children and animals of all kinds, who will come and see you and you will make them happy." Then he thrust his hand through the bars and whispered in my ears, "Both of us will shed our forms soon and perhaps could meet again, who knows? So goodbye for the present."

Glossary:

Crouch(v) : Take a low static position with bent knees, esp. to hide, be underneath something or be nearer the ground

Statuary(N)	: Prescribed or authorized by or punishable under a statute
Decimation(n)	: Destroying or killing a large part of the population (literally every tenth person as chosen by lot)
Grim (adj)	: Harshly uninviting or formidable in manner or appearance
Vicinity(n)	: A particular area; the surrounding or nearby region
Commotion(n)	: The act of making a noisy disturbance
Smash(v)	: Hit hard
Bray(v)	: Laugh loudly and harshly
obtrusively (Adv)	: In an unobtrusive manner
obtrusive (adj)	: Easily ignored; undesirably or intrusively noticeable
obstinate(adj)	: Stubbornly persistent in wrongdoing
prolong(v)	: Lengthen or extend in duration or space
brood(v)	: Hangover as of something threatening, dark, or menacing
pugnacious(adj)	: Ready and able to resort to force or violence
hurl(v)	: Throw forcefully
sap(v)	: Deplete
subdued(adj)	: Lacking in light; not bright or harsh
decrepitude(n)	: A state of deterioration due to old age or long use
senility(n)	: Mental infirmity as a consequence of old age;

	sometimes shown by foolish infatuations
ferocity(n)	: The property of being wild or turbulent
Supercilious(adj)	: Having or showing arrogant superiority to and disdain of those one views as unworthy
Whimpered(v)	: Cried weakly or softly
Topple(v)	: Fall down, as if collapsing
Persist(v)	: Continue to exist
Petrify(v)	: Cause to become stone like, stiff or dazed and stunned
Retreat(v)	: Pull back or move away or backward
Churning(adj)	: Moving with, producing or produced by vigorous agitation

Questions:

Answer the following questions in not more than twenty words.

1. Name the place where the Master lived with his tiger.
2. Name the person who was eager to shoot the tiger?
3. Who was the lady who visited the Master?
4. Who was the Chief Executive of the circus?
5. What name was given to the circus by the Captain?

Answer the following questions in about 60 words.

1. Write a short note on the "Save Tiger Committee".
2. What are the views of the Master about violence?
3. How can a person keep his mind steady?
4. What did people say about the Master?
5. What was the notion of the Tiger about God? Why?

6. What did the Master reply to the visitors?
7. How did the woman come to know that the Master was her husband?
8. How did the Master save the tiger in the school?
9. Explain the proverb. "Don't probe too far into the origin of saints and rivers."
10. Whom did the Master preach about Gita? Write a comment.
11. Why did the Master not want the tiger to look anywhere except his path?
12. Write a note about Lantana bush on the basis of the text "The Tiger for Malgudi".
13. Why do human beings suffer according to the Master?
14. What was the purpose of the woman's visit to the Master?

Answer the following questions in about 300 words.

1. Write a note on the character -sketch of the Master as discussed in the text.
2. Write a character sketch of the Tiger.
3. Discuss the conversation between the woman and the Master. Write Your views about the philosophy of the Master.
4. Who was Jayraj? How did he describe the Master to others?
5. What changes do you see in the character of the tiger after meeting the Master?
6. Do you remember any well-known saint in Indian context whose life story resembles the story of the Master of the text The Tiger for Malgudi. Write in detail.