PANORAMA

BA - III
Comp. English
Text & Grammar

Board of Editors

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Section A: PROSE

1. Mabel

W Somerset Maugham

About the Author

William Somerset Maugham (1874–1965) was a renowned British writer who authored several novels, short stories and plays. He took up medicine as a career, before giving it up for a career in writing after the unprecedented success of his first novel, *Liza of Lambeth* (1897). He served with the Red Cross and the ambulance corps during the First World War and then moved on to work with the British Secret Intelligence Service. He travelled to different parts of the world in this stint, and his world experiences are strongly reflected in his writing. His parents passed away before he was 10, which had a profound effect on him, something that's also reflected in his work.

About the Story

The story is about a man named George, whom the narrator meets in Burma. He was engaged to a woman named Mabel for seven long years. They could not get married owing to George being stationed in Burma. When Mabel was finally to join George, he gets cold feet and tries to run away however the determination of Mabel never falters and follows him till he couldn't get away anymore and they get married.

Mabel

Mabel's drive and determination is admirable and crucial to the story. She has her heart and mind set on marrying George and based on this, she follows him throughout Asia. She simply won't give up which is admirable considering that George is determined not to be found when he tries to escape from Mabel. There is also a sense that there is no escape for George when he is eventually tracked down by Mabel.

I was at Pagan, in Burma, and from there I took the steamer to Mandalay, but a couple of days before I got there, when the boat tied up for the night at a riverside village, I made up my mind to go ashore. The skipper told me that there was there a pleasant little club in which I had only to make myself at home; they were quite used to having strangers drop off like that from the steamer, and the secretary was a very decent chap; I might even get a game of bridge I had nothing in the world to do, so I got into one of the bullock-cans that were waiting at the landing-stage and was driven to the club. There was a man sitting

on the veranda and as I walked up he nodded to me and asked whether I would have a whisky and soda or a gin and bitters. The possibility that I would have nothing at all did not even occur to him. I chose the longer drink and sat down. He was a tall, thin, bronzed man, with a big moustache, and he wore khaki shorts and a khaki shirt. I never knew his name, but when we had been chatting a little while another man came in who told me he was the secretary, and he addressed my friend as George.

'Have you heard from your wife yet?' he asked him.

The other's eyes brightened.

'Yes, I had letters by this mail. She's having no end of a time.'

'Did she tell you not to fret?'

George gave a little chuckle, but was I mistaken in thinking that there was in it the shadow of a sob?

'In point of fact she did. But that's easier said than done. Of course I know she wants a holiday, and I'm glad she should have it, but it's devilish hard on a chap.' He turned to me. 'You see, this is the first time I've ever been separated from my missus, and I'm like a lost dog without her.'

'How long have you been married?'

'Five minutes.'

The secretary of the club laughed.

'Don't be a fool, George. You've been married eight years.'

After we had talked for a little, George, looking at his watch, said he must go and change his clothes for dinner and left us. The secretary watched him disappear into the night with a smile of not unkindly irony.

'We all ask him as much as we can now that he's alone,' he told me. 'He mopes so terribly since his wife went home.'

'It must be very pleasant for her to know that her husband is as devoted to her as all that.'

'Mabel is a remarkable woman.'

He called the boy and ordered more drinks. In this hospitable place they did not ask you if you would have anything; they took it for granted. Then he settled himself) in his long chair and lit a cheroot. He told me the story of George and Mabel.

They became engaged when he was home on leave, and when he returned to Burma it was arranged that she should join him in six months. But one difficulty cropped up after another; Mabel's father died, the war came, George was sent to a district unsuitable for a white woman; so that in the end it was seven years before she was able to start.

He made all arrangements for the marriage, which was to take place on the day of her arrival, and went down to Rangoon to meet her. On the morning on which the ship was due he borrowed a motor-car and drove along to the dock. He paced the quay.

Then, suddenly, without warning, his nerve failed him. He had not seen Mabel for seven years. He had forgotten what she was like. She was a total stranger. He felt a terrible sinking in the pit of his stomach and his knees began to wobble. He couldn't go through with it. He must tell Mabel that he was very sorry, but he couldn't, he really couldn't marry her. But how could a man tell a girl a thing like that when she had been engaged to him for seven years and had come six thousand miles to marry him? He hadn't the nerve for that either. George was seized with the courage of despair. There was a boat at the quay on the very point of starting for Singapore: he wrote a hurried letter to Mabel, and without a stick of luggage, just in the clothes he stood up in, leaped on board.

The letter Mabel received ran somewhat as follows:

Dearest Mabel.

I have been suddenly called away on business and do not know when I shall be back. I think it would be much wiser if you returned to England. My plans are very uncertain. Your loving George.

But when he arrived at Singapore he found a cable waiting for him.

Quite understand. Don't worry. Love. Mabel. Terror made him quick-witted.

'By Jove, I believe she's following me.' he said.

He telegraphed to the shipping-office at Rangoon and sure enough her name was on the passenger list of the ship that was now on its way to Singapore. There was not a moment to lose. He jumped on the train to Bangkok. But he was uneasy: she would have no difficulty in finding out that he had gone to Bangkok and it was just as simple for her to take the train as it had been for him. Fortunately, there was a French tramp sailing next day for Saigon. He took it. At Saigon he would be safe; it would never occur to her that he had gone there: and if it did, surely by now she would have taken the hint. It is five day's journey from Bangkok to Saigon and the boat is dirty, cramped, and uncomfortable. He was glad to arrive and took a rickshaw to the hotel. He signed his name in the visitors' book and a telegram was immediately handed to him. It contained but two words: *Love. Mabel.* They were enough to make him break into a cold sweat

'When is the next boat for Hong Kong?' he asked.

Now his flight grew serious. He sailed to Hong Kong, but dared not stay there; he went to Manila; Manila was ominous; he went on to Shanghai: Shanghai was nerve-racking; every time he went out of the hotel he expected to run straight into Mabel's arms; no,

Shanghai would never do. The only thing was to go to Yokohama. At the Grand Hotel at Yokohama a cable awaited him:

So sorry to have missed you at Manila. Love. Mabel.

He scanned the shipping intelligence with a fevered brow. Where was she now? He doubled back to Shanghai. This time he went straight to the club and asked for a telegram. It was handed to him:

Arriving shortly. Love. Mabel

No, no, he was not so easy to catch as all that. He had already made his plans. The Yangtse is a long river and the Yangtse was falling. He could just about catch the last steamer that could get up to Chungking and then no one could travel till the following spring except by junk. Such a journey was out of the question for a woman alone. He went to Hankow and from Hankow to Ichang, he changed boats here and from Ichang through the rapids went to Chungking. But he was desperate now, he was not going to take any risks: there was a place called Cheng-tu, the capital of Szechuan, and it was four hundred miles away. It could only be reached by road, and the road was infested with brigands. A man would be safe there.

George collected chair-bearers and coolies and set out. It was with a sigh of relief that he saw at last the crenellated walls of the lonely Chinese city. From those walls at sunset you could see the snowy mountains of Tibet.

He could rest at last: Mabel would never find him there. The consul happened to be a friend of his and he stayed with him. He enjoyed the comfort of a luxurious house, he enjoyed his idleness after that strenuous escape across Asia, and above all he enjoyed his divine security. The weeks passed lazily one after the other. One morning George and the consul were in the courtyard looking at some curios that a Chinese had brought for their inspection when there was a loud knocking at the great door of the Consulate. The doorman flung it open. A chair borne by four coolies entered, advanced, and was set down. Mabel stepped out. She was neat and cool and fresh. There was nothing in her appearance to suggest that she had just come in after a fortnight on the road. George was petrified. He was as pale as death. She went up to him.

'Hullo. George. I was so afraid I'd missed you again.' 'Hullo, Mabel,' he faltered.

He did not know what to say. He looked this way and that: she stood between him and the doorway. She looked at him with a smile in her blue eyes.

'You haven't altered at all.' she said. 'Men can go off so dreadfully in seven years and I was afraid you'd got fat and bald. I've been so nervous. It would have been terrible if after all these years I simply hadn't been able to bring myself to marry you after all.'

She turned to George's host.

'Are you the consul?' she asked.

'I am.'

'That's all right. I'm ready to marry him as soon as I've had a bath.'

And she did.

GLOSSARY

steamer: type of boat that is driven by steam

skipper: captain of a ship

chap: fellow, guy

bridge: (here) game played with cards

fret: be constantly or visibly anxious

chuckle: to laugh inwardly or quietly

irony: the use of words to express something other than and especially the opposite of the literal meaning

mope: feel dejected and apathetic

hospitable: friendly and welcoming to visitors or guests

cheroot: a small type of cigar

pace: walk at a steady speed, especially without a particular destination and as an expression of anxiety or annoyance

quay: a stone or metal platform lying alongside or projecting into water for loading and unloading ships

despair: the complete loss or absence of hope

tramp: normally a ship carrying cargo

ominous: giving the worrying impression that something bad is going to happen; threateningly inauspicious

brigands: a member of a gang that ambushes and robs people in forests and mountains

crenellated: provide (a wall of a building) with battlements

strenuous: requiring or using great effort or exertion

petrified: so frightened that one is unable to move; terrified

faltered: speak hesitantly

2. The Gold Frame

R K Laxman

About the Author

Rasipuram Krishnaswami Iyer Laxman (1921–2015) was an Indian cartoonist who created the daily comic strip – "You Said It" in *The Times of India*, which started in 1951. He also illustrated part time in college including his brother R K Narayan's stories. He published various short stories, essays and articles, which can be found in the collection published as *The Distorted Mirror* (2003). He also wrote the novels *The Hotel Riviera* (1988) and *The Messenger* (1993) and an autobiography, *The Tunnel of Time* (1998). In addition, numerous collections of Laxman's cartoons were published. He was awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 2005, India's second-highest civilian honour.

About the Story

The story is about a man named Datta who runs the shop called Modern Frame Works, working alone with providing frames for photographs, posters, paintings and the like. He encounters a customer one day who wanted a photograph framed. The customer explained the importance of the man in the photograph and insisted on the best quality frame. While working on the photograph, Datta makes a terrible error that worries him immensely. What follows is Datta's attempt to salvage his reputation and livelihood.

The Modern Frame Works was actually an extra-large wooden packing case mounted on wobbly legs tucked in a gap between a drug store and a radio repair shop. Its owner, Datta, with his concave figure, silver-rimmed glasses and a complexion of seasoned timber, fitted into his shop with the harmony of a fixture.

The Gold Frame

He was a silent, hard-working man. He gave only laconic answers to the questions his customers asked and strongly discouraged casual friends who tried to intrude on his zone of silence with their idle gossip. He was always seen sitting hunched up, surrounded by a confusion of cardboard pieces, bits of wood, glass sheets, boxes of nails, glue bottles, paint tins and other odds and ends that went into putting a picture in a frame. In this medley a glass-cutter or a pencil stub was often lost and that was when he would uncoil from his posture and grope impatiently for it. Many times he had to stand up and shake his dhoti

vigorously to dislodge the lost object. This operation rocked the whole shop, setting the pictures on the walls gently swinging.

There was not an inch of space that was not covered by a picture; gods, saints, hockey players, children, cheap prints of the Mona Lisa, national leaders, wedding couples, Urdu calligraphy, the snow-clad Fujiyama and many others co-existed with a cheerful incongruity like some fabulous world awaiting order and arrangement.

A customer standing outside the shop on the pavement obstructing the stream of jostling pedestrians, announced, `I want this picture framed.' Datta, with his habitual indifference, ignored him and continued to be engaged in driving screws into the sides of a frame. `I want a really good job done, no matter how much it costs.' The customer volunteered the information, unwrapping a faded newspaper and exposing a sepia-brown photograph of an old man. It was sharp and highly glazed in spite of its antiquity.

'What sort of a frame would you like?' Datta asked, still bent over his work.

`The best, of course. Do you expect I would stint where this great soul is concerned?'

Datta gave a side glance and caught a glimpse of the photograph; just another elderly person of those days, he told himself; a standard portrait of a grandfather, a philanthropist, a social worker, with the inevitable whiskers and top-heavy cascading turban it could be any one of these. At least half a dozen people came to him every month bearing similar portraits, wanting to demonstrate their homage to the person in the picture in the shape of a glittering frame.

The customer was describing the greatness of the old man; extravagant qualities of nobility, compassion and charity were being generously attributed to him in a voice that came close to the chanting of a holy scripture. `...If this world had just a few more like him, believe me, it would certainly have been a different place. Of course, there are demons who may not agree with me. They are out to disgrace his name and destroy his memory. But he is God in my home!'

`What sort of a frame do you want?' Datta interrupted. `Plain, wooden, lacquer, gold plastic or just enamel painted?'

He waved a casual hand towards the pictures on the wall. The customer silently surveyed the various frames. After some time Datta heard him mumble, 'I want the best..

'I don't have any second-rate stuff in my shop,' Datta said. He was shown a number of samples; plain, decorative, floral, geometrical, thin, hefty and so forth. The customer was baffled by the variety. He examined the selection before him for a long time as if he was unsure of his judgement and was afraid of enshrining his saviour for ever in some ugly cheap frame.

Datta came to his rescue and recommended one with a profusion of gold leaves and winding creepers and, in order to clear any lingering doubt he might still harbour in regard to its quality, added: 'It is German! Imported!'

The customer at once seemed impressed and satisfied. Datta next asked, 'You want a plain mount or a cut mount?' and watched the puzzled look return. Again he helped the man out by showing his various mounts and suggested that a cut mount looked more elegant.

All right, let me have a cut mount then. Is that a cut mount?' he asked, pointing to a framed picture on the wall of a soulful looking lady in an oval cut mount. 'I like that shape. Will it cost much?"No. Frame, mount, glass all will cost seventeen rupees.'

The customer had expected it would be more. He pretended to be shocked all the same and tried to bargain. Datta withdrew to his corner without replying and began to cut a piece of plywood.

The customer hung about uncertainly for some time and finally asked, 'When will you have it ready?' and barely heard the reply over the vibrating noise of the saw on the plywood, 'Two weeks from today.'

Datta had learnt by long experience that his customers never came punctually. They came days in advance and went away disappointed or came months later, and some never turned up at all and their pictures lay unclaimed in a box, gathering dust and feeding cockroaches and silver fish. Therefore he made frames for those who came to him and visited him at least twice before he actually executed their orders.

Ten days later the tall, rustic-looking man appeared and enquired, 'Has the picture been framed? I was passing by and thought I could collect it if it was ready.'

Datta cast a side look at him and continued with his work.

'I know I have come four days early,' the customer grinned nervously. 'Will it be ready by Tuesday?'

Datta merely nodded without shifting attention from a tiny nail which he, with precise rhythmic strokes, was driving into a frame, but sensed the man's obsessive attachment to the photograph. He told himself there would be trouble if he did not deliver the order on the promised date.

Next morning he made that his first job, keeping aside all the others. The photograph was lying on a shelf among many others. He took it and carefully kept it on a wooden plank on the floor. Then he looked for the pencil stub for marking the measurements. As usual it was missing. He swept his hand all round him impatiently, scattering fragments of glass and wood. False shapes that he mistook for the pencil harassed him no end and stoked his anger. Frustrated in all his attempts to find , he finally stood up to shake the folds of his dhoti an ultimate move which generally yielded results. But he shook the folds so violently that he upset a tin containing white enamel paint and it fell right on the sacred photograph of the old man, emptying its thick, slimy contents on it.

Datta stood transfixed and stared at the disaster at his feet as if he had suddenly lost all faculty of movement. He could not bring himself even to avert his eyes from the horror which he seemed to be cruelly forced to view. Then his spectacles clouded with perspiration and helpfully screened his vision.

When at last he fully recovered his senses he set about rescuing the picture in such desperate hurry that he made a worse mess of it. He rubbed the picture so hard with a cloth that he peeled off thin strips of filmy coating from its surface. Before he realised what he had done half the old man's face and nearly all of his turban were gone. Datta helplessly looked at the venerable elder transformed into thick black specks sticking to the enamel smeared on the rag in his hand.

He sat with both hands clutching his head; every nerve in his head throbbed as if it would tear itself apart if he did not hold it down. What answer was he going to offer to the customer who had a fanatic devotion to the photograph he had just mutilated beyond recovery? His imagination ran wild, suggesting nightmarish consequences to his own dear self and to the fragile inflammable shop.

He racked his brain for a long while till sheer exhaustion calmed his agitated nerves and made him accept the situation with a hopeless resignation. Meanwhile the plethora of gods, saints and sages gazed down at him from the walls with a transcendental smile and seemed to offer themselves to him to pray to. With a fervent appeal in his heart he stared at them.

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In his state of mind it did not register for quite a while that a particular photograph of a person on the wall had held his attention rather more than it was qualified to do. It was an ordinary portrait of a middle-aged man in a dark suit and striped tie, resting his right arm jauntily on a studio prop made to look like a fluted Roman pillar. Datta was amazed to see that he had a faint likeness to the late lamented old man. The more he gazed at the face the more convincing it appeared to him. But he dismissed the odd resemblance he saw as one of those tricks of a thoroughly fagged-out mind. All the same, at the back of his mind an idea began to take shape; he saw the possibility of finding an acceptable substitute!

He brought down the old wooden box in which he had kept all the photographs unclaimed over the years. As he rummaged in it, panicky cockroaches and spiders scurried helter-skelter all over the floor. Unmindful of them, Datta anxiously searched for the brownish photographs of the old man's vintage. Soon there was a pile before him; he was surprised he could pick up so many which qualified to take the old man's place. But he had to reject a lot of them. In most of the portraits the subjects sported a very conspicuous flower vase next to them, or over-dressed grandchildren sat on their laps and therefore had to be rejected.

Luckily, there was one with which Datta felt he could take a fair risk; the print had yellowed a bit noticeably but he calculated that the total effect when put in a dazzling gold frame would render it safe.

After a couple of hours' concentrated work he sat back and proudly surveyed the old man's double, looking resplendent in his gold frame. He was so pleased with his achievement that he forgot he was taking perhaps one of the greatest risks any framemaker ever took! He even became bold enough to challenge the customer if his faking was discovered. `Look, my dear man', he would say, 'I don't know who has been fooling you! That's the picture you brought here for framing. Take it or throw it away!'

The days that followed were filled with suspense and anxiety. Datta feared that the customer would surprise him at an unguarded moment, making him bungle the entire, carefully-thought-out plot. But the man turned up promptly a couple of days later. At that moment Datta was bent over a piece of work and slightly stiffened as he heard the voice, shrill with expectation, ask, `Is it ready?'

Datta's heart began to race and to compose himself he let a whole minute pass without answering. Then he put aside the scissors in his hand with slow deliberation and reached out to take the neatly wrapped package in a corner.

Ah, it is ready!' the customer exclaimed with childish delight, at the same time mumbling flattering tributes to Datta for his promptness and so on. He spread his arms widely with dramatic exuberance to receive the photograph as if it was actually a long lost person he was greeting.

But Datta took his time removing the wrapper from the frame. The customer waited impatiently, filling in the time showering more praises on his worshipful master who was to adorn the wall of his home.

Datta finally revealed the glittering frame and held it towards him. The customer seemed visibly struck by its grandeur and fell silent like one who had entered the inner sanctum of a temple.

Datta held his breath and watched the man's expression. With every second that passed he was losing his nerve and thought that in another moment he would betray the big hoax he had played.

Suddenly he saw the customer straighten, the reverential look and benevolent expression vanished from his face. `What have you done?' he demanded, indignantly. For Datta the moment seemed familiar for he had already gone through it a thousand times night and day since he splashed the white paint on the original photograph. Several times he had rehearsed his piece precisely for this occasion. But before he could open his mouth the customer shouted with tremendous authority in his bearing, Now, don't deny it! I clearly remember asking for a cut mount with an oval shape. This is square. Look!'

GLOSSARY

wobbly: to move unsteadily from side to side

concave: having an outline or surface that curves inwards like the interior of a circle or sphere

laconic: (of a person, speech, or style of writing) using very few words

medley: a varied mixture of people or things

grope: search blindly or uncertainly by feeling with the hands

jostling: push, elbow, or bump against (someone) roughly, typically in a crowd

sepia: a reddish-brown colour associated particularly with monochrome photographs of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries

antiquity: an object, building, or work of art from the ancient past

philanthropist: a person who seeks to promote the welfare of others, especially by the generous donation of money to good causes

cascading: fall or hang in copious quantities

homage: special honour or respect shown publicly

extravagant: spending much more than is necessary or wise; wasteful

lacquer: a protective coating consisting of a resin, cellulose ester, or both, dissolved in a volatile solvent, sometimes with pigment added

baffled: to be confused, bewildered

profusion: an abundance or large quantity of something

transfixed: to become motionless with horror, wonder or astonishment

avert: turn away (one's eyes or thoughts)

venerable: accorded a great deal of respect, especially because of age, wisdom or character

mutilated: inflict a violent and disfiguring injury on

plethora: a large or excessive amount of something

resplendent: shining brilliantly; gleaming; splendid

exuberance: the quality of being full of energy, excitement and cheerfulness

benevolent: willing to help and generous towards people

COMPREHENSION

A. Answer the following questions in 30–40 words.

1 Describe Datta's shop.

2. Describe the man in the customer's photograph.
3. Which mount did the customer want and why?
4. Why did Datta not take the new customer seriously in the beginning?
5. How did Datta spoil the photograph?

B. Write short notes on the following in about 40–50 words.

1. Datta.
2. Datta's mode of work process.
3. Datta's attempt to fix the spoiled photograph.
4. The customer's response to Datta's work.

C. Answer in detail in 120–140 words.

1. Discuss the story as a criticism on the sense of prestige and class in Indian society.
2. Comment the use of satire in the story.

3. Three Hermits

Leo Tolstoy

About the Author

Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy (1828–1910) was born in Russia. He was born in an aristocratic Russian family. Considered a literary giant, he is best-known for the novels *War and Peace* (1869) and *Anna Karenina* (1877). These novels are often cited as the pinnacles of realist fiction. Tolstoy first achieved literary acclaim in his twenties with his semiautobiographical trilogy, *Childhood*, *Boyhood*, and *Youth* (1852–1856), and *Sevastopol Sketches* (1855), based upon his experiences in the Crimean War. Tolstoy's fiction includes several short stories and novellas, such as "The Death of Ivan Ilyich", "Family Happiness" and *Hadji Murad*. He also wrote plays and numerous philosophical essays.

About the Story

The story is about a ship sailing across the sea to a monastery. A bishop on the ship overhears the other sailors talking about three hermits on an island. The bishop becomes curious about the hermits and wishes to meet them. When he does manage to meet them on their island, he is pleased at the opportunity to teach them how to pray. After hours of teaching them the words, the bishop goes back on his journey and finds himself being taught a lesson himself.

Three Hermits

A Bishop was sailing from Archangel to the Solovetsky Monastery; and on the same vessel were a number of pilgrims on their way to visit the shrines at that place. The voyage was a smooth one. The wind favourable, and the weather fair. The pilgrims lay on deck, eating, or sat in groups talking to one another. The Bishop, too, came on deck, and as he was pacing up and down, he noticed a group of men standing near the prow and listening to a fisherman, who was pointing to the sea and telling them something. The Bishop stopped, and looked in the direction in which the man was pointing. He could see nothing, however, but the sea glistening in the sunshine. He drew nearer to listen, but when the man saw him, he took off his cap and was silent. The rest of the people also took off their caps, and bowed.

'Do not let me disturb you, friends,' said the Bishop. 'I came to hear what this good man was saying.'

'The fisherman was telling us about the hermits,' replied one, a tradesman, rather bolder than the rest.

'What hermits?' asked the Bishop, going to the side of the vessel and seating himself on a box. 'Tell me about them. I should like to hear. What were you pointing at?' 'Why, that little island you can just see over there,' answered the man, pointing to a spot ahead and a little to the right. 'That is the island where the hermits live for the salvation of their souls.'

'Where is the island?' asked the Bishop. 'I see nothing.' 'There, in the distance, if you will please look along my hand. Do you see that little cloud? Below it, and a bit to the left, there is just a faint streak. That is the island.'

The Bishop looked carefully, but his unaccustomed eyes could make out nothing but the water shimmering in the sun.

'I cannot see it,' he said. 'But who are the hermits that live there?'

'They are holy men,' answered the fisherman. 'I had long heard tell of them, but never chanced to see them myself till the year before last.'

And the fisherman related how once, when he was out fishing, he had been stranded at night upon that island, not knowing where he was. In the morning, as he wandered about the island, he came across an earth hut, and met an old man standing near it. Presently two others came out, and after having fed him, and dried his things, they helped him mend his boat.

'And what are they like?' asked the Bishop.

'One is a small man and his back is bent. He wears a priest's cassock and is very old; he must be more than a hundred, I should say. He is so old that the white of his beard is taking a greenish tinge, but he is always smiling, and his face is as bright as an angel's from heaven. The second is taller, but he also is very old. He wears tattered, peasant coat. His beard is broad, and of a yellowish grey colour. He is a strong man. Before I had time to help him, he turned my boat over as if it were only a pail. He too is kindly and cheerful. The third is tall, and has a beard as white as snow and reaching to his knees. He is stern, with over-hanging eyebrows; and he wears nothing but a mat tied round his waist.'

'And did they speak to you?' asked the Bishop.

For the most part they did everything in silence, and spoke but little even to one another. One of them would just give a glance, and the others would understand him. I asked the tallest whether they had lived there long. He frowned, and muttered something as if he were angry; but the oldest one took his hand and smiled, and then the tall one was quiet. The oldest one only said: "Have mercy upon us," and smiled.'

While the fisherman was talking, the ship had drawn nearer to the island.

'There, now you can see it plainly, if your Grace will please to look,' said the tradesman, pointing with his hand.

The Bishop looked, and now he really saw a dark streak—which was the island. Having looked at it a while, he left the prow of the vessel, and going to the stern, asked the helmsman:

'What island is that?'

'That one,' replied the man, 'has no name. There are many such in this sea.'

'Is it true that there are hermits who live there for the salvation of their souls?'

'So it is said, your Grace, but I don't know if it's true. Fishermen say they have seen them; but of course they may only be spinning yarns.'

'I should like to land on the island and see these men,' said the Bishop. 'How could I manage it?'

'The ship cannot get close to the island,' replied the helmsman, 'but you might be rowed there in a boat. You had better speak to the captain.' The captain was sent for and came.

'I should like to see these hermits,' said the Bishop. 'Could I not be rowed ashore?'

The captain tried to dissuade him.

'Of course it could be done,' said he, 'but we should lose much time. And if I might venture to say so to your Grace, the old men are not worth your pains. I have heard say that they are foolish old fellows, who understand nothing, and never speak a word, any more than the fish in the sea.'

'I wish to see them,' said the Bishop, 'and I will pay you for your trouble and loss of time. Please let me have a boat.'

There was no help for it; so the order was given. The sailors trimmed the sails, the steersman put up the helm, and the ship's course was set for the island. A chair was placed at the prow for the Bishop, and he sat there, looking ahead. The passengers all collected at the prow, and gazed at the island. Those who had the sharpest eyes could presently make out the rocks on it, and then a mud but was seen. At last one man saw the hermits themselves.

The captain brought a telescope and, after looking through it, handed it to the Bishop.

'It's right enough. There are three men standing on the shore. There, a little to the right of that big rock.'

The Bishop took the telescope, got it into position, and he saw the three men: a tall one, a shorter one, and one very small and bent, standing on the shore and holding each other by the hand.

The captain turned to the Bishop.

'The vessel can get no nearer in than this, your Grace. If you wish to go ashore, we must ask you to go in the boat, while we anchor here.'

The cable was quickly let out, the anchor cast, and the sails furled. There was a jerk, and the vessel shook. Then a boat having been lowered, the oarsmen jumped in, and the Bishop descended the ladder and took his seat. The men pulled at their oars, and the boat moved rapidly towards the island. When they came within a stone's throw, they saw three old men: a tall one with only a mat tied round his waist: a shorter one in a tattered peasant coat, and a very old one bent with age and wearing an old cassock—all three standing hand in hand.

The oarsmen pulled in to the shore, and held on with the boathook while the Bishop got out.

The old men bowed to him, and he gave them his benediction, at which they bowed still lower. Then the Bishop began to speak to them.

'I have heard,' he said, 'that you, godly men, live here saving your own souls, and praying to our Lord Christ for your fellow men. I, an unworthy servant of Christ, am called, by God's mercy, to keep and teach His flock. I wished to see you, servants of God, and to do what I can to teach you, also.'

The old men looked at each other smiling but remained silent.

'Tell me,' said the Bishop, 'what you are doing to save your souls, and how you serve God on this island.'

The second hermit sighed, and looked at the oldest, the very ancient one. The latter smiled, and said:

'We do not know how to serve God. We only serve and support ourselves, servant of God.'

'But how do you pray to God?' asked the Bishop.

'We pray in this way,' replied the hermit. 'Three are ye, three are we, have mercy upon us.

'And when the old man said this, all three raised their eyes to heaven, and repeated:

'Three are ye, three are we, have mercy upon us!'

The Bishop smiled.

'You have evidently heard something about the Holy Trinity,' said he. 'But you do not pray aright. You have won my affection, godly men. I see you wish to please the Lord, but you do not know how to serve Him. That is not the way to pray; but listen to me, and I will

teach you. I will teach you, not a way of my own, but the way in which God in the Holy Scriptures has commanded all men to pray to Him.'

And the Bishop began explaining to the hermits how God had revealed Himself to men; telling them of God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

'God the Son came down on earth,' said he, 'to save men, and this is how He taught us all to pray. Listen, and repeat after me: "Our Father."'

And the first old man repeated after him, 'Our Father,' and the second said, 'Our Father,' and the third said, 'Our Father.'

'Which art in heaven,' continued the Bishop.

The first hermit repeated, 'Which art in heaven,' but the second blundered over the words, and the tall hermit could not say them properly. His hair had grown over his mouth so that he could not speak plainly. The very old hermit, having no teeth, also mumbled indistinctly.

The Bishop repeated the words again, and the old men repeated them after him. The Bishop sat down on a stone, and the old men stood before him, watching his mouth, and repeating the words as he uttered them. And all day long the Bishop laboured, saying a word twenty, thirty, a hundred times over, and the old men repeated it after him. They blundered, and he corrected them, and made them begin again.

The Bishop did not leave off till he had taught them the whole of the Lord's prayer so that they could not only repeat it after him, but could say it by themselves. The middle one was the first to know it, and to repeat the whole of it alone. The Bishop made him say it again and again, and at last the others could say it too.

It was getting dark, and the moon was appearing over the water, before the Bishop rose to return to the vessel. When he took leave of the old men, they all bowed down to the ground before him. He raised them, and kissed each of them, telling them to pray as he had taught them. Then he got into the boat and returned to the ship.

And as he sat in the boat and was rowed to the ship he could hear the three voices of the hermits loudly repeating the Lord's prayer. As the boat drew near the vessel their voices could no longer be heard, but they could still be seen in the moonlight, standing as he had left them on the shore, the shortest in the middle, the tallest on the right, the middle one on the left. As soon as the Bishop had reached the vessel and got on board, the anchor was weighed and the sails unfurled. The wind filled them, and the ship sailed away, and the Bishop took a seat in the stern and the ship sailed away, and the Bishop took a seat in the stern and watched the island they had left. For a time he could still see the hermits, but

presently they disappeared from sight, though the island was still visible. At last it too vanished, and only the sea was to be seen, rippling in the moonlight.

The pilgrims lay down to sleep, and all was quiet on deck. The Bishop did not wish to sleep, but sat alone at the stern, gazing at the sea where the island was no longer visible, and thinking of the good old men. He thought how pleased they had been to learn the Lord's prayer; and he thanked God for having sent him to teach and help such godly men.

So the Bishop sat, thinking, and gazing at the sea where the island had disappeared. And the moonlight flickered before his eyes, sparkling, now here, now there, upon the waves. Suddenly he saw something white and shining, on the bright path which the moon cast across the sea. Was it a seagull, or the little gleaming sail of some small boat? The Bishop fixed his eyes on it, wondering.

`It must be a boat sailing after us,' thought he, 'but it is overtaking us very rapidly. It was far, far away a minute ago, but now it is much nearer. It cannot be a boat, for I can see no sail; but whatever it may be, it is following us, and catching us up.'

And he could not make out what it was. Not a boat, nor a bird, nor a fish! It was too large for a man, and besides a man could not be out there in the midst of the sea. The Bishop rose, and said to the helmsman:

'Look there, what is that, my friend? What is it?' the Bishop repeated, though he could now see plainly what it was—the three hermits running upon the water, all gleaming white, their grey beards shining, and approaching the ship as quickly as though it were not moving.

The steersman looked and let go the helm in terror.

'Oh Lord! The hermits are running after us on the water as though it were dry land!'

The passengers hearing him, jumped up, and crowded to the stern. They saw the hermits coming along hand in hand, and the two outer ones beckoning the ship to stop. All three were gliding along upon the water without moving their feet. Before the ship could be stopped, the hermits had reached it, and raising their heads, all three as with one voice, began to say:

'We have forgotten your teaching, servant of God. As long as we kept repeating it we remembered, but when we stopped saying it for a time, a word dropped out, and now it has all gone to pieces. We can remember nothing of it. Teach us again.'

The Bishop crossed himself, and leaning over the ship's side, said:

`Your own prayer will reach the Lord, men of God. It is not for me to teach you. Pray for us sinners.'

And the Bishop bowed low before the old men; and they turned and went back across the sea. And a light shone until daybreak on the spot where they were lost to sight.

GLOSSARY

prow: the pointed front part of a ship; the bow

salvation: preservation or deliverance from harm, ruin, or loss

cassock: a long, close-fitting garment worn by members of the clergy or others participating in church services

tinge: a trace of a colour

tattered: old and torn; in poor condition

pail: a bucket

stern: serious and unrelenting, especially in the assertion of authority and exercise of discipline

stern: the rearmost part of a ship or boat

helmsman: a person who steers a ship or boat

dissuade: persuade (someone) not to take a particular course of action

venture: a risky or daring journey or undertaking

benediction: an utterance of good wishes

COMPREHENSION

A. Answer the following questions in 30–40 words.

1. Where is the Bishop travelling to?
2. What were the sailors talking about?
3. Where did the three hermits live?
4. How did the hermits help the sailor stranded on their island?
5. Why does the Bishop wish to meet the hermits?

B. Write short notes on the following in about 40–50 words.

1. The Bishop.
2. Physical appearance of the three hermits.
3. The prayer the three hermits utter.
4. The Bishop's aim in teaching his prayer.

C. Answer in detail in 120–140 words.

1. Discuss the humility of the three hermits.
2. Describe the use of supernatural element in the story.

4. Misery

Anton Chekhov

About the Author

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov (1860–1904) was a renowned Russian playwright and short story writer. He is considered to be among the greatest writers of short fiction in history. His career as a playwright produced four classics and his best short stories are held in high esteem by writers and critics. Chekhov is often referred to as one of the significant seminal figures in the birth of early modernism in the theatre. His most famous short stories are "Ward No. Six" (1989), "Gooseberries" (1898) and "The Lady with the Little Dog" (1899). Among the notable classics of world drama, Chekhov's contribution include *The Cherry Orchard* (1904), *Ward Number Six*, *Uncle Vanya* (1900) and *Three Sisters* (1901).

About the Story

The story is about Iona Potapov, a horse sleigh driver, who has recently lost his son to a high fever and is heartbroken with grief. Throughout the night, Iona wishes to have a conversation with someone about his loss but he is unable to find anyone who would listen to him. The tone of the story circulates around the deep sadness and lack of compassion given to Iona as he searches for an outlet for his sorrow. He finally finds an unexpected but excellent listener.

Misery

"To whom shall I tell my grief?"

The twilight of evening. Big flakes of wet snow are whirling lazily about the street lamps, which have just been lighted, and lying in a thin soft layer on roofs, horses' backs, shoulders, caps. Iona Potapov, the sledge-driver, is all white like a ghost. He sits on the box without stirring, bent as double as the living body can be bent. If a regular snowdrift fell on him it seems as though even then he would not think it necessary to shake it off.... His little mare is white and motionless too. Her stillness, the angularity of her lines, and the stick-like straightness of her legs make her look like a halfpenny gingerbread horse. She is probably lost in thought. Anyone who has been torn away from the plough, from the familiar gray landscapes, and cast into this slough, full of monstrous lights, of unceasing uproar and hurrying people, is bound to think.

It is a long time since Iona and his nag have budged. They came out of the yard before dinnertime and not a single fare yet. But now the shades of evening are falling on the town. The pale light of the street lamps changes to a vivid color, and the bustle of the street grows noisier.

'Sledge to Vyborgskaya!' Iona hears. 'Sledge!'

Iona starts, and through his snow-plastered eyelashes sees an officer in a military overcoat with a hood over his head.

'To Vyborgskaya,' repeats the officer. 'Are you asleep? To Vyborgskaya!'

In token of assent Iona gives a tug at the reins which sends cakes of snow flying from the horse's back and shoulders. The officer gets into the sledge. The sledge-driver clicks to the horse, cranes his neck like a swan, rises in his seat, and more from habit than necessity brandishes his whip. The mare cranes her neck, too, crooks her stick-like legs, and hesitatingly sets of....

'Where are you shoving, you devil?' Iona immediately hears shouts from the dark mass shifting to and fro before him. 'Where the devil are you going? Keep to the r-right!'

'You don't know how to drive! Keep to the right,' says the officer angrily.

A coachman driving a carriage swears at him; a pedestrian crossing the road and brushing the horse's nose with his shoulder looks at him angrily and shakes the snow off his sleeve. Iona fidgets on the box as though he were sitting on thorns, jerks his elbows, and turns his eyes about like one possessed as though he did not know where he was or why he was there.

'What rascals they all are!' says the officer jocosely. 'They are simply doing their best to run up against you or fall under the horse's feet. They must be doing it on purpose.'

Iona looks as his fare and moves his lips.... Apparently he means to say something, but nothing comes but a sniff.

'What?' inquires the officer.

Iona gives a wry smile, and straining his throat, brings out huskily: 'My son... er... my son died this week, sir.'

'H'm! What did he die of?'

Iona turns his whole body round to his fare, and says:

'Who can tell! It must have been from fever.... He lay three days in the hospital and then he died.... God's will.'

'Turn round, you devil!' comes out of the darkness. 'Have you gone cracked, you old dog? Look where you are going!'

'Drive on! drive on!...' says the officer. 'We shan't get there till to-morrow going on like this. Hurry up!'

The sledge-driver cranes his neck again, rises in his seat, and with heavy grace swings his whip. Several times he looks round at the officer, but the latter keeps his eyes shut and is apparently disinclined to listen. Putting his fare down at Vyborgskaya, Iona stops by a restaurant, and again sits huddled up on the box.... Again the wet snow paints him and his horse white. One hour passes, and then another....

Three young men, two tall and thin, one short and hunchbacked, come up, railing at each other and loudly stamping on the pavement with their goloshes.

'Cabby, to the Police Bridge!' the hunchback cries in a cracked voice. 'The three of us,... twenty kopecks!'

Iona tugs at the reins and clicks to his horse. Twenty kopecks is not a fair price, but he has no thoughts for that. Whether it is a rouble or whether it is five kopecks does not matter to him now so long as he has a fare.... The three young men, shoving each other and using bad language, go up to the sledge, and all three try to sit down at once. The question remains to be settled: Which are to sit down and which one is to stand? After a long altercation, ill-temper, and abuse, they come to the conclusion that the hunchback must stand because he is the shortest.

'Well, drive on,' says the hunchback in his cracked voice, settling himself and breathing down Iona's neck. 'Cut along! What a cap you've got, my friend! You wouldn't find a worse one in all Petersburg....'

'He-he!... he-he!...' laughs Iona. 'It's nothing to boast of!'

'Well, then, nothing to boast of, drive on! Are you going to drive like this all the way? Eh? Shall I give you one in the neck?'

'My head aches,' says one of the tall ones. 'At the Dukmasovs' yesterday Vaska and I drank four bottles of brandy between us.'

'I can't make out why you talk such stuff,' says the other tall one angrily. 'You lie like a brute.'

'Strike me dead, it's the truth!...'

'It's about as true as that a louse coughs.'

'He-he!' grins Iona. 'Me-er-ry gentlemen!'

'Tfoo! the devil take you!' cries the hunchback indignantly. 'Will you get on, you old plague, or won't you? Is that the way to drive? Give her one with the whip. Hang it all, give it her well.'

Iona feels behind his back the jolting person and quivering voice of the hunchback. He hears abuse addressed to him, he sees people, and the feeling of loneliness begins little by little to be less heavy on his heart. The hunchback swears at him, till he chokes over some elaborately whimsical string of epithets and is overpowered by his cough. His tall companions begin talking of a certain Nadyezhda Petrovna. Iona looks round at them. Waiting till there is a brief pause, he looks round once more and says:

'This week... er... my... er... son died!'

'We shall all die...' says the hunchback with a sigh, wiping his lips after coughing. 'Come, drive on! drive on! My friends, I simply cannot stand crawling like this! When will he get us there?'

'Well, you give him a little encouragement... one in the neck!'

'Do you hear, you old plague? I'll make you smart. If one stands on ceremony with fellows like you one may as well walk. Do you hear, you old dragon? Or don't you care a hang what we say?'

And Iona hears rather than feels a slap on the back of his neck.

'He-he!... ' he laughs. 'Merry gentlemen.... God give you health!'

'Cabman, are you married'?' asks one of the tall ones.

'I? He he! Me-er-ry gentlemen. The only wife for me now is the damp earth.... He-ho-ho!....The grave that is!... Here my son's dead and I am alive.... It's a strange thing, death has come in at the wrong door.... Instead of coming for me it went for my son....'

And Iona turns round to tell them how his son died, but at that point the hunchback gives a faint sigh and announces that, thank God! they have arrived at last. After taking his twenty kopecks, Iona gazes for a long while after the revelers, who disappear into a dark entry. Again he is alone and again there is silence for him.... The misery which has been for a brief space eased comes back again and tears his heart more cruelly than ever. With a look of anxiety and suffering Iona's eyes stray restlessly among the crowds moving to and fro on both sides of the street: can he not find among those thousands someone who will listen to him? But the crowds flit by heedless of him and his misery.... His misery is immense, beyond all bounds. If Iona's heart were to burst and his misery to flow out, it would flood the whole world, it seems, but yet it is not seen. It has found a hiding-place in such an insignificant shell that one would not have found it with a candle by daylight....

Iona sees a house-porter with a parcel and makes up his mind to address him.

'What time will it be, friend?' he asks.

'Going on for ten.... Why have you stopped here? Drive on!'

Iona drives a few paces away, bends himself double, and gives himself up to his misery. He feels it is no good to appeal to people. But before five minutes have passed he draws himself up, shakes his head as though he feels a sharp pain, and tugs at the reins.... He can bear it no longer.

'Back to the yard!" he thinks. "To the yard!'

And his little mare, as though she knew his thoughts, falls to trotting. An hour and a half later Iona is sitting by a big dirty stove. On the stove, on the floor, and on the benches are people snoring. The air is full of smells and stuffiness. Iona looks at the sleeping figures, scratches himself, and regrets that he has come home so early....

'I have not earned enough to pay for the oats, even,' he thinks. 'That's why I am so miserable. A man who knows how to do his work,... who has had enough to eat, and whose horse has had enough to eat, is always at ease....'

In one of the corners a young cabman gets up, clears his throat sleepily, and makes for the water-bucket.

'Want a drink?' Iona asks him.

'Seems so.'

'May it do you good.... But my son is dead, mate.... Do you hear? This week in the hospital.... It's a queer business....'

Iona looks to see the effect produced by his words, but he sees nothing. The young man has covered his head over and is already asleep. The old man sighs and scratches himself.... Just as the young man had been thirsty for water, he thirsts for speech. His son will soon have been dead a week, and he has not really talked to anybody yet.... He wants to talk of it properly, with deliberation.... He wants to tell how his son was taken ill, how he suffered, what he said before he died, how he died.... He wants to describe the funeral, and how he went to the hospital to get his son's clothes. He still has his daughter Anisya in the country.... And he wants to talk about her too.... Yes, he has plenty to talk about now. His listener ought to sigh and exclaim and lament.... It would be even better to talk to women. Though they are silly creatures, they blubber at the first word.

'Let's go out and have a look at the mare,' Iona thinks. 'There is always time for sleep.... You'll have sleep enough, no fear....'

He puts on his coat and goes into the stables where his mare is standing. He thinks about oats, about hay, about the weather.... He cannot think about his son when he is alone.... To talk about him with someone is possible, but to think of him and picture him is insufferable anguish....

'Are you munching?' Iona asks his mare, seeing her shining eyes. 'There, munch away, munch away.... Since we have not earned enough for oats, we will eat hay.... Yes,... I have grown too old to drive.... My son ought to be driving, not I.... He was a real cabman.... He ought to have lived....'

Iona is silent for a while, and then he goes on:

'That's how it is, old girl.... Kuzma Ionitch is gone.... He said good-by to me.... He went and died for no reason.... Now, suppose you had a little colt, and you were own mother to that little colt.... And all at once that same little colt went and died.... You'd be sorry, wouldn't you?...'

The little mare munches, listens, and breathes on her master's hands. Iona is carried away and tells her all about it.

GLOSSARY

gingerbread: a spicy cake containing ginger-shaped people

unceasing: not coming to an end; relentless

assent: the expression of approval or agreement

fidget: make small movements, especially of the hands and feet, due to nervousness or impatience

jocosely: in a way that is humorous or shows that you would like to play

wry: deliberate distortion of the facial muscles, often to express irony or mockery

disinclined: unwilling because of mild dislike or disapproval

hunchbacked: having a back deformed by a sharp forward angle that forms a hump

goloshes: also known as boat shoes, dickersons or overshoes, a type of rubber boot that is slipped over shoes to keep them from getting muddy or wet

altercation: a noisy, heated, angry dispute

indignantly: in a manner indicating anger or annoyance at something perceived as unfair

jolting: push or shake (someone or something) abruptly and roughly

quivering: trembling or shaking with a slight rapid motion

whimsical: unusual and strange in a way that might be funny or annoying

epithets: (here) a disparaging or abusive word or phrase

revelers: a group of people who are enjoying themselves in a lively and noisy way

lament: a passionate expression of grief or sorrow

colt: a young uncastrated male horse, in particular one less than four years old

5. Vivekananda: The Great Journey to the West

Romain Rolland

About the Author

Romain Rolland (1866–1944) was a French novelist, dramatist and essayist. He was widely known to be an idealist involved with pacifism, the fight against fascism and the analysis of artistic genius. Rolland's masterpiece, *Jean-Christophe*, is one of the longest great novels ever written and is a prime example of the *roman-fleuve* ('novel cycle') in France for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1915. His other novels are *Colas Breugnon* (1919), *Clérambault* (1920), *Pierre et Luce* (1920) and his second *roman-fleuve*, the 7-volume *L'âme enchantée* (1922–1933).

About the Essay

The essay is told from the point of view of Romain Rolland who describes Swami Vivekananda's first journey to the west where he represented the country at the Parliament of World Religions held in Chicago. Vivekananda is depicted as not being fully prepared for the journey but somehow finds himself able to manage and pave his way to the parliament where he gives one of his most important speeches.

Vivekanada: The Great Journey to the West

This journey was indeed an astonishing adventure. The young Swami went into it at random with his eyes shut. He had heard vaguely of a Parliament of Religions to be opened some day somewhere in America; and he had decided to go to it, although neither he, nor his disciples, nor his Indian friends, students, pundits, ministers or Maharajas, had taken any trouble to find out about it. He knew nothing, neither the exact date nor the conditions of admission. He did not take a single credential with him. He went straight ahead with complete assurance, as if it was enough for him to present himself at the right time—God's time. And although the Maharaja of Khetri had taken his ticket on the boat for him, and despite his protests had provided him with a beautiful robe that was to fascinate American idlers no less than his eloquence, neither he nor anybody else had considered the climatic conditions and customs; he froze on the boat when he arrived in Canada in his costume of Indian pomp and ceremony.

He left Bombay on 31 May 1893, and went by way of Ceylon, Penang, Singapore, Hong Kong, and then visited Canton and Nagasaki. Thence he went by land to Yokohama, seeing Osaka, Kyoto and Tokyo. Everywhere, both in China and Japan, his attention was attracted by all that might confirm his hypothesis—his conviction—alike of the religious influence of ancient India Over the Empires of the Far East, and of the spiritual unity of Asia. At the same time the thought of the ills from which his country was suffering never left him; and the sight of the progress achieved by Japan reopened the wound.

He went from Yokohama to Vancouver; thence by train he found himself towards the middle of July in a state of bewilderment at Chicago. The whole way was strewn with his feathers, for he was marked prey for the fleeter: he could be seen from afar! At first like a great child he wandered, gazing, mouth agape, in the world's fair, the Universal Exposition of Chicago. Everything was new to him and both surprised and stupefied him. He had never imagined the power, the riches, the inventive genius of this Western world. Being of a stronger vitality and more sensitive to the appeal of force, than a Tagore or a Gandhi who were oppressed by the frenzy of movement and noise, by the whole European-American (especially American) mechanism, Vivekananda was at his ease in it, at least at first; he succumbed to its exciting intoxication, and his first feeling was of juvenile acceptance; his admiration knew no bounds. For twelve days he filled his eager eyes with this new world. A few days after his arrival in Chicago he bethought himself to go to the Information Bureau of the Exposition . . . What a shock! He discovered that the Parliament did not open until after the first week of September—and that it was too late for the registration of delegates—moreover, that no registration would be accepted without official references. He had none; he was unknown, without credentials from any recognised group; and his purse was nearly empty; it would not allow him to wait until the opening of the Congress . . . He was overwhelmed. He cabled to his friends in Madras for help and applied to an official religious society that it might make him a grant. But official societies do not forgive independence. The chief of the society sent this reply:

'Let the devil die of cold!'

The devil neither died nor gave up! He threw himself upon fate, and instead of hoarding in inaction the few dollars remaining to him, he spent them in visiting Boston. Fate helped him. Fate always helps those who know how to help themselves. Vivekananda never passed anywhere unnoticed, but fascinated even while he was unknown. In the Boston train his appearance and conversation struck a fellow traveller, a rich Massachusetts lady,

who questioned him and then interested herself in him, invited him to her house, and introduced him to the Hellenist, J. H. Wright, a professor at Harvard; the latter was at once struck by the genius of this young Hindu and put himself entirely at his disposal; he insisted that Vivekananda should represent Hinduism at the Parliament of Religions, and wrote to the President of the Committee. He offered the penniless pilgrim a railway ticket to Chicago, and letters of recommendation to the Committee for finding lodgings. In short, all his difficulties were removed.

Vivekananda returned to Chicago. The train arrived late; and the dazed young man, who had lost the address of the Committee, did not know where to go. Nobody would deign to inform a coloured man. He saw a big empty box in a corner of the station, and slept in it. In the morning he went to discover the way, begging from door to door as a *sannyasin*. But he was in a city that knows, Panurge-like, a thousand and one ways of making money—except one, the way of St Francis, the vagrancy of God. He was rudely dismissed from some of the houses. At others he was insulted by the servants. At still others, the door was slammed in his face. After having wandered for a long time, he sat down exhausted in the street. He was remarked from a window opposite and asked whether he were not a delegate to the Parliament of Religions. He was invited in; and once more fate found for him one who was later numbered among his most faithful American followers. When he had rested he was taken to the Parliament. There he was gladly accepted as a delegate and found himself lodged with the other Oriental delegates to the Parliament.

His adventurous journey, which had almost ended disastrously, brought him on this occasion into port, but not for rest. Action called him, for now that fate had done its worst, it had to give place to resolution! The unknown of yesterday, the beggar, the man despised for his colour by a mob, wherein the dregs of more than half a dozen of the peoples of the world meet—at the first glance was to impose his sovereign genius.

On Monday, 11 September 1893, the first session of the Parliament was opened. In the centre sat Cardinal Gibbons. Round him to left and right were grouped the Oriental delegates Protap Minder Mozoomdar, the chief of the Brahmo Samaj, an old friend of Vivekananda, representing the Indian theists together with Nagarkar of Bombay; Dharmapala, representing the Buddhists of Ceylon; Gandhi representing the Janis; Chakravarti, representing with Annie Besant the Theosophical Society.

But amongst them all it was the young man who represented nothing—and everything—the man belonging to no sect, but rather to India as a whole, who drew the glance of the

assembled thousands. His fascinating face, his noble stature, and the gorgeous apparel, which heightened the effect of this apparition from a legendary world, hid his own emotion. He made no secret of it. It was the first time that he had had to speak before such an assembly; and as the delegates, presented one by one, had to announce themselves in public in a brief harangue, Vivekananda let his turn go by hour after hour until the end of the day.

But then his speech was like a tongue of flame. Among the grey wastes of cold dissertation it fired the souls of the listening throng. Hardly had he pronounced the very simple opening words, `Sisters and brothers of America . . . ' than hundreds arose in their seats and applauded. He wondered whether it could really be he they were applauding. He was certainly the first to cast off the formalism of the Congress and to speak to the masses in the language for which they were waiting. Silence fell again. He greeted the youngest of the nations in the name of the most ancient monastic order in the world—the Vedic order of *sannyasins*. He presented Hinduism as the mother of religions, who had taught them the double precept: Accept and understand one another!'

He quoted two beautiful passages from the sacred books: `Whoever comes to Me, through whatsoever form, I reach him.' All men are struggling through paths which in the end lead to Me.' Each of the other orators had spoken of his God, of the God of his sect. He—he alone—spoke of all their Gods, and embraced them all in the Universal Being. It was the breath of Ramakrishna, breaking clown the barriers through the mouth of his great disciple. The Parliament of Religions gave the young orator an ovation.

GLOSSARY

credential: (here) a letter of introduction

assurance: promise or pledge; guaranty; surety

idler: someone who idles around, doing nothing and wasting time

eloquence: fluent or persuasive speaking or writing

bewilderment: a feeling of being perplexed and confused

fleeter: fast and nimble in movement

agape: wide open in surprise or wonder

stupefied: to be astonished and shocked

vitality: the state of being strong and active; energy

frenzy: a state or period of uncontrolled excitement or wild behaviour

Section B: GRAMMAR

1. Active and Passive Voice

Look at these two sentences:

The dog bit the man.

The man was bitten by the dog.

Both the sentences mean the same thing. But while the first says that the Subject (dog) did something, the second says that something was done to the Subject (man). The first sentence is said to be in the **Active Voice** because its Subject is active and does something. The second sentence is said to be in the **Passive Voice** because its Subject does nothing, but passively allows something to be done to him.

Changing a sentence from Active Voice to Passive Voice –

1. Read these sentences

a. He killed a tiger.

A tiger was killed by him.

b. Pratap caught a big fish.

A big fish was caught by Pratap.

Here, the Object of the Verb in the Active Voice becomes the Subject of the Verb in the Passive Voice.

2. Examine these sentences

a. Shreedhar wrote a poem.

A poem was written by Shreedhar.

b. Julius Caesar invaded Britain.

Britain was invaded by Julius Caesar.

Here, the Subject of the Verb in the Active Voice becomes an Object of the Preposition 'by' in the sentence in the Passive Voice.

3. Study the following

a. Gopal broke the mirror.

The mirror was broken by Gopal.

b. The postman brought a telegram.

A telegram was brought by the postman.

Here, the Verb in the Active Voice in the first sentence is changed into the Passive form in the second. In the first sentence, the Verb 'broke' is changed into 'was broken.' In the second sentence, the Verb 'brought' is changed into 'was brought.'

4. Examine these sentences

Active	Passive
a. Gopal gave me a present.	a. I was given a present by Gopal. b. A present was given to me by Gopal.
b. Gandhiji taught us the doctrine of non-violence.	a. We were taught the doctrine of non-violence by Gandhiji. b. The doctrine of non-violence was taught to us by Gandhiji.

Here, you must have noticed that in both these sentences the Verbs have two objects each—one 'Direct' and the other 'Indirect'. Therefore, each sentence can be changed into the Passive in two ways. Either of the Objects can be made the Subject of the Passive Verb and the other can be retained as the Object.

However, it should be noted that it is more natural in English to make the personal Object (Indirect) the Subject of the Passive. Therefore, in the two examples given above, form (a) of the Passive is to be preferred to form (b). It should also be noted that when the Subject who is the doer of the action is to be made prominent, the Active Voice should be preferred. It is when the Subject is vague or when we do not care to mention the Subject, or when the action is to be made prominent that the Passive Voice is used. In such cases the use of the expression 'by so and so' is to be avoided. A Passive sentence, which needs the expression 'by so and so' is better written in the Active form. The Passive voice has an impersonal effect and is hence commonly used in scientific writing and objective reporting.

Some examples of the Active and Passive Forms:

Active	Passive
Someone has picked my pocket.	My pocket has been picked.
People say that there will be another war in West Asia.	It is said that there will be another war in West Asia.
We hope that now they will call off the strike.	It is hoped that the strike will now be called off.
You must understand that such a thing will not be permitted again.	It must be understood that such a thing will not be permitted again.
They say that there are living beings on Mars.	It is said that there are living beings on Mars.
You cannot deny that he tried his best to do so.	It cannot be denied that he tried his best to do so.
Prepare yourself for the worst.	Be prepared for the worst.
Advertise the post.	Let the post be advertised.

Circumstances obliged him to resign from his post.	He was obliged to resign from his post.
No one told me about it.	I was not told about it.
Who sent this letter? Warner Brothers produced this film.	By whom was this letter sent? This film was produced by Warner Brothers.
The police gave him a reward of ₹ 100/-.	He was given a reward of ₹ 100/- by the police.
Rash driving causes many accidents.	Many accidents are caused by rash driving.

The Passive form should never appear awkward. Only such sentences should be written in the Passive as will look more natural in that form than in the Active. 'It is hoped', 'It is said', 'It must be borne in mind', 'It has been decided', 'It is generally agreed', etc., are some common Passive sentence openings.

EXERCISES

A. Change the verbs in the following sentences into the Passive form.

1. Shastriji gave the slogan 'Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan.'
2. Who drew that picture on the wall?
3. Covet not wealth or honour.
4. You cannot expect little children to understand that.
5. People hoped that the government would take some action.
6. You must never say that he was unsympathetic.
7. They have decided to start a new sugar factory here.
8. Parikh had told him about the incident.
9. Gopal said that he would visit his native village this summer.
10. By 2014, I shall have completed four years in office.
11. God made the country and man made the town.
12. We shall give the workers a handsome bonus.
13. Lead us from the unreal to the real, from darkness to light, from death to immortality.
14. Love your enemies and bless them that curse you.
15. Who gave you this pen?
16. We must remove corruption from all walks of life.
17. Fruits and vegetables provide all the vitamins we require.
18. He is constructing a house at Gandhinagar.

3. Use of Adjectives and Adverbs

Adjectives

An adjective is a word which tells something more about a noun or a pronoun. When we want to give more information than can be provided by using a noun alone, we can add an adjective to identify a person or thing, or describe them in more detail, for example,

a. her **new** dress

b. a **kind** person

c. a **beautiful** smile

Types of Adjectives

1. **Adjective of Quality** – It describes the characteristic of a noun or a pronoun, such as tall, sunny, nice, big, beautiful, kind, etc.
   a. This book is written on a **true** story.
   b. My sister is very **pretty**.
2. **Adjective of Quantity** – It describes the approximate amount of a noun, such as much, a little, some, any, no, most, half, all, whole, sufficient, enough, few, great, etc. They are also called quantitative adjectives.
   a. How **much** money do you need?
   b. I have **enough** time to complete my homework.
3. **Adjective of Possession:** It describes ownership or possession. These are pronouns initially. But as their role is to describe the nouns, they are also called possessive adjectives. For example, my, our, his, her, their, your, its, etc.
   a. **Our** father told us not to quarrel with anyone.
   b. We are concerned about **his** performance.
4. **Adjective of Number** – It tells us the exact number of a noun, such as one, two, three, first, second, etc. They are also called numeral adjectives. Numeral adjectives are also referred to as the post-determiners.
   a. **Five** students were absent today.
   b. The **first** girl in that column is a dancer.

   Numerals are further classified as cardinal numerals and ordinal numerals.

   Cardinals: one, two, three, four, five, six, ... and so on.

   Ordinals: first, second, third, fourth, … next, last.

5. **Demonstrative Adjectives** – It points out a particular noun or a pronoun in concern, such as this, that, latter, former, those, etc. Demonstratives are pronouns originally. They become adjectives when they occur before the noun and modify it.
   a. I want to eat **those** biscuits.
   b. **This** is a unique pen.
6. **Interrogative Adjectives** – They help in asking questions about a noun or a pronoun, such as what, which, when, how, why, etc.
   a. **Whose** notebook has a torn cover?
   b. **Which** is your favourite car?
7. **Distributive Adjectives** – These words used to refer to each and every person or thing. For example, each, every, either, neither, any, both, etc.
   a. **Every** nation is proud of its culture.
   b. **Neither** of them got majority.

Order of Adjectives

When more than one adjective is used to describe something, all the adjectives need to be placed in the correct order.

For example, if you want to use an adjective referring to size and an adjective referring to shape, you would put the size adjective first, like

- a **large round** table
- a **beautiful green** dress
- a **lovely soft** blanket
- a **difficult** but **rewarding** job

Descriptive adjectives used in above manner belong to seven main types. The following table summarises the types and the usual order in which they appear if more than one adjective is placed before a noun:

Order of Adjectives								
1st	**2nd**	**3rd**	**4th**	**5th**	**6th**	**7th**	**8th**	**9th**
quantity/ number	**value/ opinion/ quality**	**size**	**tempera-ture**	**age**	**shape**	**colour**	**origin**	**material**
some, more, thirty, hundred	precious, good, tasty	large, tiny, medium	hot, cold, freezing	five years, ancient, new	circle, round, square	black, white, blue	Indian, African, Mexican	glass, wood, gold

Formation of Degree of Adjectives

By adding	Positive Degree	Comparative Degree	Superlative Degree
'er' & 'est'	long	longer	longest
	high	higher	highest
	young	younger	youngest
Positive ending in 'e' 'r' & 'st'	pure	purer	purest
	large	larger	largest
	true	truer	truest
Positive ending in 'y' 'ier' & 'est'	jolly	jollier	jolliest
	silly	sillier	silliest
	dry	drier	driest
'more' & 'most'	difficult	more difficult	most difficult
	honest	more honest	most honest
	fruitful	more fruitful	most fruitful
	splendid	more splendid	most splendid
	profound	more profound	most profound

Formation of Degree of Adjectives

Adverbs are the words that modify or add more information about place, time, manner and many points to a verb, an adjective, a phrase or even another adverb. Look at the following examples –

1. I will **gladly** do this work. (The sentence shows that I will do the work. But gladly shows the manner of doing.)
2. He fought **bravely** in the war. (He did fight in the war. But what is important is the manner of fighting bravely.)
3. Ravi will go to Delhi on **Monday**. (Monday shows the time when Ravi will go.)
4. The electricity **often** fails in our village. (Often shows the frequency of failure of electricity.)
5. The meeting will be held in the auditorium. (The place of the meeting is made clear by the word auditorium.)
6. Jitesh is **very much** worried by the loss in business. (Very much shows the degree of being worried.)
7. Pallavi sang **very** beautifully in the competition. (Very adds to the adverb beautifully.)

Note: Adverbs are words that generally end with the suffix 'ly.'

Types of Adverbs

Adverbs as the word class are the modifiers. They modify a verb, an adjective, an adverb or the whole sentence. They modify the verbs in relation to various aspects. Sometimes, they tell the manner, place, frequency, and so on. On the basis of their function, adverbs are classified into various categories as follows:

1. **Adverb of Manner:** An adverb which shows manner of an action (how an action is) is called adverb of manner. They are highly productive and belong to the open word class. They are generally derived from the adjectives by suffixing 'ly'. These adverbs answer the question **how** or in **what manner**. For example,
   a. She sings **beautifully**.
   b. He was **badly** wounded.
   c. **Foolishly**, he had decided to give a pitch battle.
2. **Adverb of Place:** An adverb which shows the place of an action (where an action is done) is known as the adverb of place. These adverbs answer the question **where**. The adverbs of place are here, there, above, below, up, somewhere, nowhere, everywhere, near, out, in, etc. For example,
   a. They are not going to stay **here** for a long time.
   b. Pramod lives **somewhere** near Chicago.
   c. Corruption can be seen **everywhere** these days.
3. **Adverb of Time:** The adverb used to show the time of an action (when an action is done) is known as the 'adverb of time'. These adverbs answer the question **when**. The adverbs of time are: late, before, after, today, tomorrow, now, then, soon, etc. For example,
   a. Anita was **late** for the party.
   b. He was a minister **then**.
   c. It is a cold day **today**.
4. **Adverb of Frequency:** An adverb used to show the frequency of an action (how often an action is done) is known as adverb of frequency. These adverbs answer the question **how often**. The adverbs of frequency are always, often, generally, seldom, occasionally, rarely, sometimes, never, continually, frequently, ever, once, twice, etc. For example,
   a. Seema **always** stands first in the class.
   b. A barking dog **seldom** bites.
   c. Wild animals are **rarely** seen in this part of the country.
5. **Adverb of Degree:** An adverb used to show the extent of an action (degree) done is known as adverb of degree. These adverbs **either intensify the action or tone it down**. Thus, they are also called intensifiers and down toners. The adverbs of degree are fairly, rarely, fully, very, pretty, rather, quite, almost, extremely, etc.