

**UTTARAKHAND SANSKRIT UNIVERSITY, HARIDWAR**

**SHASTRI SEMESTER IV**

**SEC-02**

**NOTES**

**NIGHT OF THE SCORPION**

**1. What happened on the night when the scorpion stung the poet's mother?**

It was a dark and rainy night when a scorpion came into the poet's house, hiding from the rain. It quietly crawled under a sack of rice. Suddenly, it stung the poet's mother and quickly ran away into the rain again. The poet still remembers this night very clearly, even though it happened long ago.

**2. How did the villagers react after hearing about the scorpion sting?**

When the villagers heard that the poet's mother had been stung, they came to the house with candles and lanterns. They searched every corner of the house to find the scorpion. Their shadows on the walls looked like giant scorpions. They believed that as the scorpion moved, the poison inside the mother's body also moved.

**3. What did the villagers say about the reason for the mother's suffering?**

The villagers believed that the scorpion's sting was a punishment for sins the mother had done in her past life. They thought her pain would clean her soul and reduce her bad karma. They said suffering would make her pure and help her become a better person.

**4. What hopes and beliefs did the villagers express about the sting?**

The villagers hoped the mother's pain would burn away her past and present sins. They also said her pain might protect her children from harm in the future. They believed that suffering had a deeper meaning and that it could bring peace in the next life or keep the family safe.

**5. What did the villagers do to try and help the mother?**

The villagers continued to chant prayers and burn incense around the mother. More people kept coming to offer help. The room became full of noise, prayers, and strong smells. Everyone was trying to help her feel better in their own way, mostly through spiritual or traditional means.

**6. How did the poet's father try to cure his wife?**

The poet's father did not believe in superstitions. He believed in science and tried many methods to help his wife. He poured some medicine on the wound, tried a powder, and even used a flame

to burn the spot where she was stung. He was worried and did everything he could to ease her pain.

### **7. What did the mother say after the pain was over?**

After about twenty hours of pain, the mother finally felt better. She did not complain or talk about her suffering. Instead, she simply said that she was thankful the scorpion had stung her and not her children. This shows how loving and selfless she was as a mother.

## **CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF THE NIGHT OF THE SCORPION**

"Night of the Scorpion" is a touching and thoughtful poem by Nissim Ezekiel, one of India's most famous modern poets. The poem is about a painful but unforgettable night when the poet's mother was stung by a scorpion. It shows how people in Indian villages react to such events—with worry, prayers, superstitions, and love. Through this incident, the poet explores the deep emotions of fear, care, faith, science, and, most importantly, a mother's selfless love.

The poem begins with a very quiet but dangerous moment. It is raining heavily outside, and a scorpion enters the house to find shelter. It hides under a sack of rice and suddenly stings the poet's mother. This small moment creates fear and chaos in the whole household. The poet, who was a child at the time, remembers every detail of that night. This shows that the event had a strong emotional effect on him. The poet sets the scene clearly and simply, helping the reader feel the tension right from the start.

As soon as the news spreads, the villagers come to help. They bring lanterns and candles, and their shadows dance on the walls. They try to find the scorpion but fail. They believe that wherever the scorpion moves, the poison also moves in the mother's body. This belief is not scientific, but it shows how people in villages often depend on old thoughts and customs during times of fear. The poet does not make fun of them—he simply describes what they do. This gives the poem a calm and respectful tone.

The villagers start saying that the sting may be a punishment for the mother's sins from a past life. They believe that suffering helps clean the soul and prepare it for peace. Some even say that her pain may protect her children in the future. These beliefs may seem strange or superstitious, but they show how people try to give meaning to pain. In times of helplessness, such beliefs can give comfort. The poem captures this side of human nature in a gentle way.

The poet's house becomes crowded, full of people praying, chanting, and burning incense. There is noise and movement, but the scorpion is long gone. Nothing really helps to reduce the mother's pain, but the people continue trying. This shows both the caring nature of the community and the limits of their understanding. They may not be able to cure the pain, but they try to offer emotional support in the only way they know.

The poet's father is shown in a different light. He does not believe in old customs or superstitions. Instead, he tries scientific methods to help his wife. He gives her medicine, uses powders, and even tries to burn the poison out with fire. He is clearly worried and does all he can. This creates a contrast in the poem—on one side, the villagers depend on prayers and rituals; on the other, the father uses reason and science. The poet presents both sides honestly, without saying which one is better. This balanced view makes the poem more realistic and meaningful.

After all the efforts, the pain slowly goes away after twenty hours. The poem ends with the most powerful line, spoken by the mother. She says, "Thank God the scorpion picked on me and spared my children." This short sentence shows the deep and selfless love of a mother. Even after suffering so much, she is not angry or sad. She is only thankful that her children were safe. This line touches the reader's heart and becomes the soul of the poem. It shows that a mother's love is stronger than any pain.

The language of the poem is simple and clear. Nissim Ezekiel does not use difficult words or confusing images. He writes in a way that feels natural and easy to understand. The poem is written in free verse, which means it does not follow a fixed rhyme scheme. This gives the poem a smooth and natural flow, like someone telling a story. The poet's tone is calm, thoughtful, and sometimes emotional, especially at the end.

The poem also paints a picture of Indian village life. It shows how people come together in times of trouble, how they follow old beliefs, and how both religion and science are part of daily life. It also shows the strong role of women, especially mothers, in Indian families. Through a small event, the poet brings out many deep themes—fear, love, faith, community, science, and motherhood.

In conclusion, "Night of the Scorpion" is a beautiful and emotional poem that tells a simple story in a deep way. It shows how people react to pain, how different beliefs come together, and how strong a mother's love can be. Nissim Ezekiel does not judge anyone—he just observes and shares. The poem teaches us to look at everyday events with understanding and heart. That is what makes this poem so special, even though it uses simple words and a small story. It leaves a big message in the reader's mind and heart.

**NOTES**  
**SEMESTER II, SEC-02**  
**PREMCHAND'S ON A WINTER'S NIGHT**

**1. What is the significance of the title "On a Winter's Night"?**

The title "*On a Winter's Night*" is significant as it sets the atmosphere for the story and hints at the hardships the characters suffers. Winter symbolizes harshness, struggle, and suffering, which are central to the story's theme. Premchand uses the cold winter night as a metaphor for the difficulties faced by the poor, emphasizing their helplessness and the indifference of society toward their condition.

**2. What are the major themes of the story?**

The major themes of "*On a Winter's Night*" include:

- **Poverty and Suffering:** The story highlights the extreme hardships of the poor, especially in harsh weather conditions.
- **Class Divide:** It contrasts the suffering of the lower classes with the comfort of the rich.
- **Empathy and Social Injustice:** Premchand emphasizes the lack of empathy in society and the indifference of the privileged towards the struggles of the poor.
- **Human Endurance:** The story showcases the resilience and struggles of people who continue to survive despite harsh conditions.

**3. What narrative techniques does Premchand use in the story?**

Premchand employs several narrative techniques, including:

- **Realism:** He provides a detailed and vivid depiction of poverty and suffering, making the story highly realistic.
- **Symbolism:** The cold winter night symbolizes the harsh realities of life, and the warmth sought by the protagonist represents the basic needs denied to the poor.
- **Third-Person Narration:** The omniscient narrator gives a deep insight into the characters' emotions and struggles.
- **Imagery:** The chilling descriptions of the night, shivering characters, and the contrast between warmth and cold effectively evoke emotions in the reader.
- **Satire and Social Commentary:** The story critiques societal indifference toward the underprivileged.

#### **4. How does Premchand depict the contrast between the rich and the poor in the story?**

Premchand masterfully contrasts the experiences of the rich and poor through detailed descriptions. While the poor suffer in the freezing cold, struggling for basic warmth and shelter, the rich remain in their comfortable, heated homes, oblivious to the suffering outside. Halku is unable to buy a simple blanket. This stark contrast highlights the deep socio-economic divide and the indifference of the wealthy toward the struggles of the underprivileged.

#### **5. How does Premchand evoke empathy for the protagonist (Halku)?**

Premchand evokes empathy by:

- Describing Halku's physical suffering in the extreme cold. His several failed attempts to keep him warm.
- Depicting his helplessness and desperation for warmth.
- Using a detailed, emotive narrative that makes the reader feel the harshness of winter and Halku's misery.
- Contrasting the suffering of the poor with the comfortable lives of the wealthy, reinforcing the social injustice.

#### **6. What is the role of setting in the story?**

The setting plays an important role in establishing the story's mood and reinforcing its themes. The cold, harsh winter night serves as a metaphor for the struggles of the poor, emphasizing their suffering and helplessness. The detailed description of the freezing atmosphere makes the reader feel the protagonist's pain and highlights the contrast between privilege and poverty.

#### **7. What are the major problems faced by farmers like Halku in the story?**

In "*On a Winter's Night*" (*Raat Mein*) by Premchand, Halku, the poor farmer, faces several problems that highlight the struggles of Indian peasants. The major problems include:

##### **➤ Burden of Debt**

Halku is heavily burdened by debt. Instead of using his hard-earned money for personal needs, he is forced to pay off his landlord. This cycle of debt prevents him from improving his life and keeps him trapped in poverty.

### ➤ **Harsh Living Conditions**

Halku and his wife suffer from extreme poverty, which is evident when he cannot afford warm clothing or blankets in winter. He endures the bitter cold without proper protection, highlighting the hardships of poor farmers.

### ➤ **Exploitation by Landlords and Moneylenders**

Like many small farmers, Halku is exploited by landlords and moneylenders who demand payments regardless of his struggles. This system leaves farmers with little to survive on, forcing them into a cycle of continuous suffering.

### ➤ **Crop Damage and Agricultural Hardships**

Halku's crops are his only source of income, but he struggles to protect them. In the story, wild animals destroy his field, adding to his misery. This represents the larger issue of farmers losing their harvest to natural disasters or animal attacks, leading to financial ruin.

### ➤ **Lack of Government or Social Support**

Halku, like many poor farmers, has no access to social security or government aid. His hardships are ignored, and he is left to struggle alone against debt, poverty, and nature.

### ➤ **Harsh Weather Conditions**

The extreme cold makes Halku's life even more difficult. Since he cannot afford warm clothes, he suffers through the freezing night, which symbolizes the neglect of the poor in society.

### ➤ **Psychological and Emotional Struggles**

Halku's suffering is not just physical but also emotional. He is torn between his responsibilities and his basic needs. He dreams of comfort but is always reminded of his harsh reality, leading to frustration and helplessness.

## **Conclusion**

Halku's problems represent the struggles of countless farmers who face poverty, debt, exploitation, and harsh natural conditions. Premchand uses his story to critique social and economic inequalities that keep farmers trapped in misery.

## 8. Why is Munni angry at the start of the story?

At the beginning of *"On a Winter's Night" (Raat Mein)*, Munni, Halku's wife, is angry because Halku is about to use their hard-earned money to pay off a debt to the landlord instead of buying a blanket for himself.

### Reasons for Munni's Anger:

- **Poverty and Hardships:** Munni is frustrated by their endless struggle with poverty. She knows that they barely have enough for basic survival, yet they are still forced to pay rent to the landlord.
- **Halku's Passive Nature:** Munni believes that Halku is too submissive and easily accepts his fate. She wants him to stand up for their rights instead of sacrificing their comfort for debt repayment.
- **The Bitter Cold:** She is particularly upset because Halku has no warm clothing for the freezing winter night, and instead of purchasing a blanket, he is prioritizing the landlord's payment. She fears that Halku will suffer in the extreme cold.
- **Cycle of Debt:** Munni is angry at the fact that no matter how hard they work, they remain trapped in the cycle of debt and poverty. She resents that they are always forced to choose between basic necessities and paying off dues.

### Conclusion:

Munni's anger represents the frustration of poor farmers' families who struggle with financial oppression and exploitation. Her practical thinking contrasts with Halku's resigned attitude, highlighting the emotional and psychological burden of poverty.

## 9. Highlight the role of Halku in the story?

### Role of Halku in the Story

Halku is the central character in *"On a Winter's Night"* by Premchand. He represents the struggles of poor farmers in India, highlighting their hardships, endurance, and helplessness in the face of social and economic oppression.

- **Symbol of a Poor Farmer's Struggles**  
Halku embodies the suffering of Indian farmers who work tirelessly but remain trapped in poverty. Despite his hard work, he is unable to escape debt, forced to prioritize rent payments over his own basic needs, such as buying a blanket for the cold winter night.
- **A Victim of Economic Exploitation**  
Halku is exploited by landlords and the rural economic system. He works the land but does not earn enough to live comfortably. His inability to challenge the system reflects the helplessness of small farmers who are forced to surrender their earnings to landlords and moneylenders.

➤ **His Relationship with Munni**

Halku's wife, Munni, is practical and outspoken, while Halku is resigned to his fate. This contrast highlights Halku's passive nature—he avoids conflict and accepts his suffering, even when Munni urges him to fight for his rights.

➤ **His Struggle Against Nature**

As a night watchman for his crops, Halku must endure the freezing winter night without proper protection. His suffering from the cold emphasizes the brutal realities faced by farmers who lack even the most basic necessities.

➤ **Resignation and Emotional Breakdown**

When wild animals invade his field, Halku initially tries to scare them away. However, overwhelmed by exhaustion and the cold, he gives up and chooses to sleep instead. This moment symbolizes his complete surrender—not just to nature, but to his entire fate as a struggling farmer.

➤ **A Critique of Social Injustice**

Through Halku's story, Premchand critiques the unfair social and economic conditions that keep farmers in perpetual poverty. Halku is not lazy or irresponsible, but the system ensures that no matter how hard he works, he remains poor and helpless.

## **Conclusion**

Halku's role in the story is that of a tragic figure—a hardworking yet powerless farmer crushed by poverty, debt, and natural hardships. His passive acceptance of suffering makes him a symbol of rural helplessness, reinforcing Premchand's message about the struggles of the poor in an unjust society.

## **Highlight the role of Jabra in the Story?**

Jabra, Halku's loyal dog, plays a significant role in *"On a Winter's Night" (Raat Mein)* by Premchand. Though an animal, Jabra symbolizes loyalty, suffering, and companionship in the face of hardship. His role extends beyond being just a pet—he reflects Halku's own struggles and emotional state.

➤ **Symbol of Loyalty and Companionship**

Jabra is Halku's only companion during the bitterly cold night. He stays by his master's side despite the harsh weather, showing unconditional love and loyalty. His presence provides Halku with warmth and emotional comfort, even when Munni is not there.

➤ **Shared Suffering with Halku**

Like Halku, Jabra suffers from the cold. He too shivers in the freezing night and struggles to keep warm. This parallel between man and dog highlights the theme of suffering and endurance. While Halku cannot afford a blanket for himself, Jabra also lacks any protection, making him a silent witness to the struggles of the poor.

➤ **A Reflection of Halku's Helplessness**

When wild animals invade the field, Jabra initially barks to warn Halku, trying to fulfill his role as a guard dog. However, just like Halku, he eventually gives up—overcome by exhaustion and the cold. This moment symbolizes Halku's own resignation to fate; if even his faithful dog can no longer fight, what hope does he have?

➤ **Contrast Between Devotion and Indifference**

Jabra's unwavering loyalty contrasts sharply with the indifferent world around Halku. While landlords and society exploit and neglect Halku, Jabra remains by his side, offering silent support. This contrast emphasizes the cruelty of human society and the purity of an animal's devotion.

➤ **Representation of the Farmer's Struggles**

Jabra's suffering mirrors the helplessness of poor farmers like Halku. Just as Jabra lacks food, warmth, and comfort, Halku also lives in deprivation. The dog's condition reflects the dehumanization of farmers, showing how both man and animal suffer under the harsh realities of poverty.

➤ **Emotional and Symbolic Climax**

In the end, both Halku and Jabra give up their duty of guarding the crops. Instead of fighting the cold and the animals, Halku chooses to sleep, and Jabra follows his lead. This moment is deeply symbolic—it shows the complete surrender of both man and beast to their cruel fate.

## **Conclusion**

Jabra is not just a pet; he represents loyalty, suffering, and the emotional connection between humans and animals in times of hardship. His shared struggles with Halku emphasize the story's central themes of poverty, helplessness, and endurance. Through Jabra, Premchand deepens the reader's empathy for Halku, making the story even more impactful.

## **Premchand: A Master Storyteller**

*With Special Reference to "On a Winter's Night" (Poos Ki Raat)*

## **Introduction**

Munshi Premchand (1880–1936) is regarded as one of the greatest storytellers in Indian literature. His works revolutionized Hindi and Urdu fiction by portraying the realities of Indian society with unmatched depth and realism. Through his simple yet powerful narrative style, he depicted the lives of common people, especially the poor and the oppressed. His stories, including *"Poos Ki Raat" (On a Winter's Night)*, reflect themes of poverty, social injustice, and human resilience.

## Premchand's Art of Storytelling

### 1. Realism: A True Portrayal of Society

Premchand was one of the first writers to break away from romanticized literature and focus on **social realism**. He depicted life as it was, especially the struggles of the poor, farmers, and lower-class people. In *"On a Winter's Night,"* Premchand vividly describes the harsh realities faced by farmers like Halku. The story does not romanticize rural life but instead presents it **honestly and painfully**. Halku's suffering in the bitter cold, his inability to afford even a blanket, and his helplessness in protecting his crops all highlight the grim truth about **economic exploitation and poverty**.

### 2. Strong Social Themes

Premchand used his stories to highlight social issues, making literature a tool for **social awareness and reform**. Some of his recurring themes include:

- **Poverty and Economic Exploitation** – Farmers and laborers in his stories, including Halku in *"On a Winter's Night,"* struggle to make ends meet. They are victims of a system where landlords and moneylenders exploit them.
- **Class Struggles** – Premchand contrasts the suffering of the poor with the indifference of the rich. While Halku shivers in the cold, the landlords and upper classes sleep comfortably, unaffected by the misery of those who work for them.
- **Human Helplessness Against Nature** – In *"On a Winter's Night,"* Halku's crops are destroyed by animals while he is unable to fight back due to extreme cold. This reflects how **poor farmers are at the mercy of nature, with no protection or support**.

Through such themes, Premchand exposes the **harsh realities of Indian rural life** in the early 20th century, many of which remain relevant even today.

### 3. Simple Yet Powerful Language

One of Premchand's greatest strengths was his **ability to convey deep emotions through simple language**. Unlike complex or ornamental writing styles, his storytelling is **natural, clear, and easy to understand**, making it accessible to all readers. In *"On a Winter's Night,"* the dialogues between Halku and Munni (his wife) are **direct and emotional**, reflecting their financial struggles. The descriptions of the winter night—the chilling wind, the dry leaves rustling—create a **vivid, immersive experience** for the reader.

## 4. Deep Characterization: Realistic and Relatable

Premchand's characters are **not heroes or villains but real, ordinary people** with strengths, weaknesses, and struggles.

- **Halku:** A poor farmer who is hardworking yet helpless. He represents **millions of Indian peasants** who work hard but remain trapped in poverty. His **resignation to fate** and ultimate **surrender to sleep instead of guarding his crops** symbolize the **powerlessness of the poor**.
- **Munni:** Halku's wife, a strong and practical woman. She voices the frustrations of farmers' families who must make **impossible choices between survival and dignity**.
- **Jabra (the dog):** A symbol of **loyalty and shared suffering**. Jabra's silent suffering mirrors Halku's struggles, reinforcing the theme of **helplessness against fate**.

Premchand's deep understanding of human psychology makes these characters **believable and emotionally engaging**.

## 5. Symbolism and Metaphors

Premchand often used **symbolism** to add depth to his narratives.

- The **cold winter night** represents the **harsh realities of life** for poor farmers.
- **Jabra, the dog**, symbolizes **loyalty but also helplessness**, as he too suffers but can do nothing about it.
- The **fire that Halku longs for** represents **hope, comfort, and relief**, which always seem out of reach for the poor.

These symbols enhance the story's emotional impact, making readers reflect on its deeper meanings.

## 6. Psychological Depth and Emotional Appeal

Premchand's stories often explore the **emotions and internal conflicts** of his characters. In "*On a Winter's Night*," Halku's decision to give up on protecting his crops is not just a physical act but a **psychological surrender**. He knows he will be blamed for his loss, but he is too exhausted to fight anymore. This moment is **heartbreaking yet deeply human**, making the reader sympathize with him. Premchand's ability to **evoke empathy and provoke thought** is what makes his storytelling so powerful.

## Conclusion

Munshi Premchand was more than just a writer—he was a **social reformer, a realist, and a literary genius**. His ability to tell **simple yet deeply moving stories** that reflect **real-life**

**struggles** makes him a **timeless storyteller**. *"On a Winter's Night"* is a **perfect example of his mastery**, showcasing **realistic characters, social critique, and emotional depth**. Through Halku's story, Premchand captures **not just the struggles of one farmer but the plight of an entire class of oppressed people**. Even decades after his death, Premchand's stories continue to **educate, inspire, and provoke thought**, proving that he truly was a **master storyteller**.

UTTARAKHAND SANSKRIT UNIVERSITY, HARIDWAR

SHASTRI SEMESTER IV

SEC-02

NOTES

A.K. RAMANUJAN'S A RIVER

**What is the main theme of A. K. Ramanujan's poem *A River*?**

The main theme of *A River* is the **indifference of poets and society to human suffering**. Ramanujan shows how both old and new poets write about the river in Madurai, but they only focus on how it flows beautifully in the rainy season. They never write about the pain and loss caused by floods. The poem points out the way people often ignore the real problems faced by ordinary people, especially the poor, and instead focus only on romantic or pretty images.

**2. How does A. K. Ramanujan use satire in the poem *A River*?**

Ramanujan uses **gentle satire** to criticize poets who write only about beautiful things and not about real-life problems. He mocks both the old and new poets who describe the river in the same way every year—talking about the rising water and floating objects—but they never write about the sufferings of the common men whose life get compromised during floods. This shows how poets are insensitive to the sufferings of people, especially those who live near the river. His satire makes us think about the responsibility of poets and artists in society.

**3. What poetic techniques are used in the poem *A River*?**

Ramanujan uses **free verse**, which means the poem does not follow a fixed rhyme or meter. This makes the poem sound more natural, like someone is speaking. He also uses **contrast** between old and new poets to show how nothing really changes. Another technique is **repetition**, as seen in the descriptions of the river, which shows how the poets keep repeating the same ideas. He also uses **irony** to highlight how poets ignore the real pain of people affected by the river's flood.

**4. How is imagery used in *A River*?**

Ramanujan uses **strong and simple imagery** to bring the river and its effects to life. He describes things like "cattle and human skeletons," "straw and women's hair," and "three village houses" floating in the flood. These images are **realistic and powerful**, not beautiful or romantic. They help the reader understand the real damage caused by the river. Instead of using grand or poetic words, Ramanujan uses clear images to show the truth about the floods and how they harm people.

## 5. Why is the river important in the poem?

The river in the poem is not just a natural object—it becomes a **symbol of neglect and repeated tragedy**. Every year, it floods and causes destruction, but people, especially poets, treat it as something beautiful or heroic. The river shows how **disasters are repeated**, yet no one learns from them. It represents the **failure of society** to care about the poor and the way poetry sometimes avoids talking about real problems.

### A. K. Ramanujan as a Poet – With Special Reference to *A River*

A. K. Ramanujan is one of the most important Indian poets who wrote in English. He was also a scholar, translator, and teacher. He knew many languages, including Tamil, Kannada, and English, and he used this knowledge to write poems that were thoughtful and meaningful. His poems often talk about **Indian culture, traditions, family, memory, and human feelings**. Ramanujan's poems are special because they are both **simple and deep**. He connects the past with the present and the personal with the social.

One of his most famous poems is *A River*. In this poem, Ramanujan talks about a river in the city of Madurai, which is known as a city of poets and temples. Many poets have written about this river, but Ramanujan does something different. He does not praise the beauty of the river like other poets. Instead, he talks about how the river causes floods every year, and how people suffer because of it. He asks an important question: **Why do poets only write about beauty and not about pain and suffering?**

#### Theme of the Poem

The main theme of *A River* is the **failure of poets and society to care about real human suffering**. Ramanujan shows that both the **old poets and the new poets** write about the river in the same way. They talk about the river rising during the rainy season and describe how it looks. But none of them write about the people who die in the floods or lose their homes. This shows that poetry is often disconnected from real life. Ramanujan wants poets to write about **truth and real problems**, not just about nature or beauty.

## Use of Satire and Irony

Ramanujan uses **satire and irony** in a clever and quiet way. He does not shout or complain. Instead, he gently points out how poets ignore real pain. For example, he mentions that a pregnant woman and her unborn twins drowned in the flood. But even such a tragic event is not written about with care. The poets just mention it as if it is not important. This makes the reader feel how **cold and careless** such writing is.

Ramanujan uses this poem to **criticize society's attitude**. He shows that people are so used to suffering around them that they stop caring. Even poets, who are supposed to feel deeply, do not write about the real struggles of ordinary people. This is the poet's way of saying: "Look around you. See what is really happening. Don't just write pretty words."

## Simple but Powerful Imagery

The poem uses very **simple words** and **clear images**. Ramanujan does not try to be fancy. Instead, he describes things in a way that helps the reader **see and feel** them. He talks about floating objects like **cows, women's hair, and dead bodies** during the flood. These are not romantic images. They are **real and painful**. These images make us understand that the river is not always beautiful. Sometimes, it brings disaster.

He also uses **repetition** and **contrast** to make his point. He repeats that both old and new poets wrote in the same way. This shows that even though times have changed, people's attitudes have not.

## Style and Technique

Ramanujan writes in **free verse**, which means there is no fixed rhyme or rhythm. This style gives a natural flow to the poem, like someone speaking directly to the reader. His tone is calm, but the meaning is strong. He does not preach or give big speeches. Instead, he uses simple lines that make the reader **think deeply**.

His technique is to **observe carefully** and then share what he sees in plain language. He notices things others ignore—like the fact that even tragedies become just another line in a poem. This shows Ramanujan's **sensitivity and honesty** as a poet.

## Ramanujan's Message as a Modern Indian Poet

As a modern Indian poet, Ramanujan shows that **poetry should reflect real life**. It should speak about the truth, even if it is painful. He does not want poetry to be only about tradition, religion, or nature. He wants it to talk about the **lives of common people**, their joys and their sorrows. In

*A River*, he questions the idea of beauty and challenges the habit of ignoring the poor and their problems.

Ramanujan also mixes Indian culture with modern ideas. He respects tradition, but he also wants to **question and improve** it. This balance between the old and the new is a key feature of his poetry.

## Conclusion

To sum up, A. K. Ramanujan is a thoughtful and honest poet. He uses simple language to say important things. In his poem *A River*, he shows how poets and society ignore real suffering. He uses satire, clear images, and free verse to make us think about the value of truth in poetry. Ramanujan teaches us that poetry is not just about beauty—it is also about **feeling, caring, and understanding** the world around us. That is what makes him a truly great modern Indian poet.

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## SEC-02

### Notes on An Astrologer's Day

#### **How does the description of the astrologer's workplace help the story?**

The astrologer works in a crowded, noisy street full of lights and shops. This makes the story feel real because it shows an everyday place, not a holy or quiet one. It's interesting that such a big moment in the story happens in such a normal place. The tools and the bright cloth he uses are just for show, not for real astrology. This makes the story ironic—he looks like a wise man, but he is just pretending. The place shows that people often believe in appearance more than truth.

#### **What do the astrologer's simple tools tell us about him?**

The astrologer uses some cowrie shells, a chart, a notebook, and a colorful cloth. These are not real tools for reading the stars—they just help him look like an expert. This shows that he is smart and knows how to make people trust him. He uses these things like an actor uses props. His tools show that he doesn't really use astrology; he just knows how to make people believe him.

#### **What do we learn about the astrologer from his meeting with the stranger (Guru Nayak)?**

When the astrologer meets Guru Nayak, he shows how good he is at understanding people. At first, he feels nervous, but he quickly talks in a way that makes the man listen. Even before he knows who the man is, he guesses things about him just by watching his face and mood. When he finally recognizes him, he acts fast and tells him lies to protect himself. This shows that the astrologer is clever and knows how to use his words to stay safe.

#### **How does the story use darkness and light to show its ideas?**

The story starts in the evening, and the astrologer works in a dark street with some lights. The light helps him do his work, but it's not very bright—just like his knowledge, which is not real. The darkness hides the truth about who he really is. When he meets Guru Nayak, he finally remembers the truth about his past. It's like a light turning on in his mind. This shows that truth can be hidden in the dark, and people don't always want to see it clearly.

**How does the meeting with Guru Nayak show irony in the story?**

It is very ironic that the astrologer meets the man he once tried to kill—Guru Nayak. The astrologer tells him things that sound like magic, but he only knows them because he was part of the past. Guru Nayak doesn't know who he is talking to, but the astrologer knows. He lies and says the man who attacked Guru Nayak is dead—meaning himself—just to stay safe. This is ironic because people think the astrologer has special powers, but he's just lucky and smart. It shows that sometimes, truth sounds like magic when it comes from someone with secrets.

**What does the astrologer's behavior tell us about truth and lies?**

The astrologer lies every day to earn money. He guesses things and makes people believe him. But when he meets Guru Nayak, his words are true because he knows him from before. He doesn't tell the full truth—he uses it to protect himself. This shows that truth and lies can mix. People want to hear things that make them feel better, even if it's not the full truth. The astrologer is not wise because of the stars; he is clever because he understands people.

**How does the market setting add to the story?**

The astrologer works in a loud, crowded market with lights and shops. It's not a special or holy place, just a normal busy street. This makes the story feel real. It also shows how the astrologer hides in plain sight—he looks like a holy man, but he is just trying to make a living. The fake lights and noise match the fake image he shows people. The market helps us understand that the story is about tricks, not real magic.

## CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF “AN ASTROLOGER’S DAY” BY R.K. NARAYAN

R.K. Narayan’s short story “*An Astrologer’s Day*” is a brilliant example of storytelling with a twist. It mixes suspense, irony, human psychology, and humor in a simple but powerful way. The story appears to be about an ordinary day in the life of a street astrologer, but by the end, we realize it’s about a man hiding a dark secret and trying to escape his past.

At the center of the story is the astrologer. He dresses in bright clothes, sits under a tree on a busy street, and uses shells, charts, and a notebook to look like a wise man. In truth, he has no real knowledge of astrology. He only guesses and observes his customers carefully. He is very clever and understands human nature well. He uses common words and guesses that can apply to many people, which makes people believe he knows their past and future.

The setting plays a big role in the story. The astrologer works in a crowded marketplace full of shops, lights, and noise. This lively environment helps him get customers, but it also hides his real identity. The light from the street lamps creates a sense of half-truth—things look clear but are not fully honest, just like the astrologer’s words. The story starts at dusk, a time when light and darkness meet. This also reflects the main theme of the story: the thin line between truth and lies.

One of the strongest parts of the story is the twist in the end. When the astrologer meets a stranger, he gets nervous. Soon, he realizes the man is Guru Nayak—the person he had tried to kill years ago. The astrologer had run away from his village thinking he had committed murder. This shocking moment turns the story in a completely new direction. The astrologer uses his memory to pretend he is reading the stars and tells Guru Nayak that his enemy is dead. In reality, the astrologer himself is the “enemy.” He uses this lie to protect himself and to make sure Guru Nayak does not come back. This twist is clever and unexpected, and it shows Narayan’s talent as a writer.

The story also makes us think about how people deal with guilt and fear. The astrologer has lived for years with the fear of being caught. He has changed his life and even changed who he is. He lives by fooling others, but in the end, he fools someone who could have destroyed him. His clever words save him, and for the first time, he feels relief from his guilt. This brings out another theme—how people try to escape their past but can never fully forget it.

The language of the story is simple and direct. Narayan doesn't use big or difficult words. Instead, he uses common, everyday language that makes the story easy to follow. His use of humor and irony adds charm to the story. The characters feel real, and the conversations are natural.

In conclusion, "*An Astrologer's Day*" is more than just a story about a fake astrologer. It is about human nature, survival, guilt, and the power of quick thinking. R.K. Narayan shows us how ordinary people carry deep secrets and how life can surprise us in unexpected ways. With its rich themes, realistic setting, and clever ending, the story is a fine example of how a short story can be both simple and deep at the same time.

**UTTARAKHAND SANSKRIT UNIVERSITY, HARIDWAR**

**SHASTRI SEMESTER IV**

**SEC-02**

**NOTES**

**RUSKIN BOND'S "ROMI AND THE WILDFIRE"**

**1. Who is Romi, and how does he react when he learns about the wildfire?**

Romi is a brave and alert young boy who lives in a hill village. When he notices signs of an approaching wildfire—such as smoke rising and the smell of burning—he doesn't panic. Instead, he acts quickly and responsibly. He alerts the villagers and does everything in his power to help prevent harm. His courage and presence of mind highlight his maturity and sense of responsibility, especially during a dangerous situation. Through Romi's actions, the story emphasizes the importance of staying calm and helping others in times of crisis.

**2. How does Ruskin Bond describe the wildfire in the story?**

Ruskin Bond paints a vivid and intense picture of the wildfire. He describes the crackling of dry leaves, the growing heat, and the thick smoke that fills the air. The fire is shown as both beautiful and terrifying, with flames dancing wildly through the forest. Bond's descriptive style makes readers feel the urgency and danger of the situation, and also shows his deep connection to nature. He doesn't just focus on the destruction, but also on the emotions it stirs in both humans and animals.

**3. What themes are explored in "Romi and the Wildfire"?**

The story explores several important themes such as courage in the face of danger, responsibility, human connection with nature, and community effort. Romi's actions show that even young people can make a big difference when they take initiative. The wildfire represents a natural disaster, but it also brings people together to protect their homes and environment. Bond subtly teaches that we should respect nature, prepare for its unpredictability, and always look out for one another.

**4. What did Romi notice that made him realize a fire was spreading in the forest?**

Romi first noticed a strong smell of burning in the air, followed by a column of smoke rising in the distance. Soon after, he saw birds and animals behaving unusually—flying or running away from the hills, clearly afraid. These clues made him realize that a wildfire was spreading rapidly through the forest. His sharp observation and understanding of nature helped him act quickly, showing his connection to his surroundings and his alertness in times of danger.

**5. How did the animals react to the wildfire, and how did Romi respond to their distress?**

As the wildfire spread, the animals began fleeing the forest in panic—deer, monkeys, birds, and even smaller creatures rushed downhill in a desperate attempt to escape the flames. Romi, instead of ignoring their fear, felt a deep sympathy for them. He tried to help in small ways, such

as guiding some towards safer paths and warning villagers to open gates and let the animals pass. This moment shows Romi's empathy and the story's strong message of respecting and protecting all life during a crisis.

**6. Describe the villagers' reaction to Romi's warning. How did the community come together?**

When Romi rushed to warn the villagers about the approaching fire, they quickly believed him and sprang into action. They gathered water, dug trenches, and used branches to try and control the flames. The story highlights the strong sense of community in the village—everyone, including elders and children, contributed to the effort. This scene emphasizes teamwork and the importance of acting collectively to face natural disasters, rather than waiting for outside help.

**7. What challenges did Romi face while trying to help, and how did he overcome them?**

Romi faced multiple challenges: thick smoke that made breathing difficult, intense heat from the flames, and the overwhelming fear that the fire would reach his village. Despite being scared, he kept going. His determination and concern for others helped him push through physical and emotional obstacles. Romi's courage under pressure makes him an inspiring character, showing that real bravery is about doing what's right even when you're afraid.

## **THOSE THREE BEARS**

**1. How does Ruskin Bond portray the relationship between humans and animals in "Those Three Bears"?**

In "Those Three Bears," Ruskin Bond explores the relationship between humans and animals as one of mutual respect, curiosity, and occasional conflict. The bears are wild but not threatening, and the narrator, while wary, treats them with cautious admiration. Bond doesn't portray the animals as villains or pests; instead, he highlights their natural behavior and right to roam. Through humorous and vivid descriptions, such as the bears raiding fruit or exploring the house, Bond shows how humans and animals coexist in shared spaces, even if imperfectly. This relationship, though sometimes inconvenient, is depicted as an essential part of life in the hills, emphasizing coexistence over domination.

**2. What role does humor play in the story, and how does it affect the tone?**

Humor is a key element in "Those Three Bears," softening the tension that might otherwise arise from human-animal encounters. Bond's playful tone, especially when describing the bears' antics—like raiding the orchard or playing with household items—adds charm and approachability to the narrative. This light-heartedness helps portray the bears not as dangerous invaders but as mischievous yet endearing creatures. The humor also reflects the narrator's own fondness for the animals and his acceptance of the unpredictable life in the hills. As a result, the

story feels warm and whimsical rather than cautionary or fearful, reinforcing Bond's typical celebration of nature's quirks.

### **3. How does Ruskin Bond use setting to enhance the story's themes?**

The Himalayan setting plays a crucial role in "Those Three Bears," grounding the story in a natural landscape where encounters with wildlife are both expected and normalized. Bond's descriptions of the hillside home, the orchard, and the surrounding wilderness emphasize the proximity between human habitation and the animal world. This closeness supports the theme of coexistence and illustrates the tension between domestic life and the untamed environment. The setting also adds atmosphere—peaceful, remote, and alive with natural activity—mirroring the story's calm acceptance of nature's presence. Bond uses the setting not just as a backdrop but as a character in itself, shaping events and reflecting his respect for the wild.

### **4. What does the incident of the bears entering the house reveal about their nature and the narrator's response?**

The moment when the bears enter the house is both comical and revealing—it shows the bears' curiosity and intelligence, but also the thin line between the wild and domestic. The narrator doesn't respond with violence or panic, but rather with surprise and an effort to manage the situation calmly. This incident demonstrates how the bears are not aggressive; they're more like mischievous children exploring a new space. The narrator's composed reaction shows his understanding of their behavior and his respect for wildlife. This moment underscores a central theme: humans and animals share the land, and sometimes, boundaries blur—but fear need not be the first response.

### **5. How does the narrator's interaction with the bears change throughout the story?**

Throughout the story, the narrator's interaction with the bears evolves from passive observation to cautious engagement. Initially, he watches their behavior—eating fruit, wandering nearby—with amusement and a bit of annoyance. However, as they grow bolder, especially with incidents like entering the house, he is forced to take a more active role. Despite the disruption, he doesn't treat the bears as threats, but as neighbors who must be gently discouraged. This change shows his increasing familiarity with their habits and his growing adaptability. The shift reflects Bond's broader message: living close to nature requires patience, understanding, and respect rather than control or fear.

### **6. What does the scene where the bears play in the orchard symbolize about nature's claim on the land?**

The bears playing freely in the orchard symbolize nature's undying claim on spaces often considered human territory. The orchard, while cultivated by people, still belongs to the broader ecosystem. When the bears eat fruit and roam the grounds, it becomes clear that boundaries are

artificial—nature doesn't recognize property lines. This scene reminds readers that animals are not intruding; they are simply participating in the life of the land. Bond uses this imagery to blur the line between wild and domestic, showing that harmony with nature involves accepting its presence rather than trying to exclude it.

### **7. What is the significance of the narrator's decision not to harm the bears, even when they become a nuisance?**

The narrator's choice not to harm the bears, despite their increasingly bold behavior, reveals his deep respect for wildlife and his philosophy of coexistence. Rather than reacting with fear or aggression, he chooses tolerance and mild deterrence. This decision highlights a core theme of the story: living in nature means accepting its unpredictability and sometimes making compromises. It also reflects Bond's larger environmental ethic—humans must learn to share space with animals rather than dominate it. The narrator's restraint serves as a moral example, showing that peaceful solutions are not only possible but preferable.

### **Discuss Ruskin Bond as a writer of short stories with reference to 'Romi and the Wildfire' and 'Those Three Bears'**

**Ruskin** Bond is one of India's most well-known short story writers, famous for writing stories that are simple, heartfelt, and full of life. His stories are usually set in the hills and small towns of India, where nature plays an important role. Bond's writing is not focused on big adventures or heroes, but on ordinary people, small incidents, and the deep connection between humans and nature. Two short stories that clearly show his style and themes are "*Romi and the Wildfire*" and "*Those Three Bears*."

In "*Romi and the Wildfire*," Bond tells the story of a young boy named Romi who witnesses a dangerous forest fire. The story is exciting because of the danger and action involved, but it is also emotional and meaningful. Romi doesn't just run away—he takes a brave decision to help his friend Teju and warn others in the village. This shows his courage and sense of responsibility. Bond uses this event to show how even a young boy can act with great bravery and kindness. At the same time, the story reminds us how powerful and unpredictable nature can be. The wildfire is not shown as a villain, but as part of the natural world that must be respected. Through Romi, Bond teaches that bravery, friendship, and quick thinking can help people survive even in dangerous times.

In contrast, "*Those Three Bears*" is more light-hearted and humorous, but it also has deep meaning. In this story, a man living in the hills has to deal with three wild bears who often visit his home and garden. The bears are not dangerous—they are curious and playful, even though they sometimes create trouble. Bond describes their actions in a funny and friendly way, making them seem almost human. The narrator never harms the bears or tries to drive them away harshly. Instead, he learns to live with them, showing patience and understanding. This story

shows Bond's belief in living peacefully with animals and accepting nature as a part of daily life. It also reflects the quiet, unpredictable charm of life in the mountains.

Both stories—though very different in mood—highlight some common qualities of Ruskin Bond's writing. First, his stories often have young characters like Romi, who show strength, innocence, and maturity. Bond respects children and gives them important roles in his stories. Second, he writes about nature not just as a background, but as a character itself. Whether it is the fire in the forest or the bears in the garden, nature is always present, powerful, and deserving of respect. Third, Bond's language is simple and clear, but full of feeling. He doesn't use big words or complex ideas, yet he creates strong emotions through small moments and observations.

Another special quality of Bond's writing is his ability to find meaning in ordinary life. He doesn't write about kings or superheroes—he writes about villagers, children, animals, and natural events. Yet, his stories leave a strong impact. In "*Romi and the Wildfire*," we feel the fear and bravery of a child. In "*Those Three Bears*," we laugh at the mischief of animals but also learn to appreciate their place in the world. Bond's stories teach lessons about humanity, nature, and compassion without sounding like lectures.

In conclusion, Ruskin Bond is a master of short stories because he brings together simplicity, nature, and human values in a beautiful way. "*Romi and the Wildfire*" and "*Those Three Bears*" show two sides of his writing—one exciting and heroic, the other peaceful and humorous—but both reflect his deep understanding of life in the hills and the relationships between people, animals, and the environment. Through his stories, Bond reminds us to be brave, kind, and respectful toward all living things.



## WHERE MIND IS WITHOUT FEAR

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- Rabindranath Tagore
- Nobel Laureate in 1913
- 35<sup>th</sup> poem of *Gitanjali*
- Originally published in 1910
- English Translation was published in 1912

**Question: 1. Choose the correct option:**

1. What is meant by “mind is without fear and head is held high”?

- a) To be fearless and self-respecting
- b) To be proud of one's high position.
- c) To stand straight and be carefree.

2. The ‘domestic walls’ are usually associated with safety, comfort and love. What is the meaning of ‘narrow domestic walls’?

- a) Small houses which make us feel cramped
- b) Ideas which are petty and narrow-minded.
- c) A house divided into rooms by walls.

3. Who wrote the poem “Where the mind is without fear”?

- a) Rabindranath Tagore
- b) R.K.Narayan
- c) O Henry
- d) Sarojini Naidu

4. Rabindranath Tagore wants his countrymen to be without \_\_\_\_\_

- a) Courage
- (b) Respect
- (c) Fear
- (d) Shame

5. The Poet wants the words to come from \_\_\_\_\_

- (a) The depth of spirit
- (b) The depth of mind
- (c) The depth of truth
- (d) The depth of heart

6. "Where the Mind is Without Fear" is the ..... poem in Gitanjali: Song Offerings.
- a) Fifth
  - b) Fifteenth
  - c) Twenty-fifth
  - d) Thirty-fifth
7. Identify the theme of the poem "Where the Mind is Without Fear".
- a) Complaint
  - b) A Historical event
  - c) Personal loss
  - d) Prayer
8. To whom is "Where the Mind is Without Fear" addressed?
- a) The poet's mother
  - b) God
  - c) To the poet's child
  - d) To the poet's friend
9. In the line "Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake", to which country does the poet refer?
- a) America
  - b) Britain
  - c) India
  - d) Russia
10. What does the poet mean by the expression "Where knowledge is free"?
- a) Unscientific
  - b) Accessible to all without barriers of class, caste, gender, etc.
  - c) Irrational
  - d) Both b and c

**Question: 2. Answer the following questions:**

**1. Who wrote the poem Where the Mind is without Fear?**

**Ans.:** Poet, Rabindranath Tagore wrote the poem, "Where Mind is Without Fear". He prays to "the father", the almighty God, to bless all with a free nation.

**2. What does the poet mean by “where knowledge is free”?**

**Ans.:** In the poem, “Where Mind is Without Fear”, the poet, Rabindranath Tagore shares his idea of free India. He really prays to “the father”, the almighty God, to bless all with a free nation where each and every person has the right to gain knowledge, irrespective of cast, religion or any economical barrier. The concept is of free education for all.

**3. What according to the poet do people tirelessly strive towards?**

**Ans.:** The poet, Rabindranath Tagore, wants people to follow the path of truth and strive for perfection. He wants each and every person to work tirelessly and stretch their capabilities so that they can give the best.

**4. How does the poet describe the old habit?**

**Ans.:** The poet has very smartly compared the old customs/ habit to the dreary desert sand. He wants everyone to understand that the desert sand never allows new growth, the greenery, the same way, old / dead habits / customs hinders the clear thinking process. So, if one wants to get ahead in life, one has to leave these old customs / habit behind.

**5. How does the poet describe ‘heaven of freedom’?**

**Ans.:** The poet prays to almighty God to awake their fellow citizens in a heaven of freedom where the mind of people is guided by conscience; the inner self that represents the God within us. Alongside, the thoughts and actions of these people should be ever widening, all inclusive so that they think and work for all not only for the “self”.

**6. Who does the poet address as ‘thee’ and my father?**

**Ans.:** The poem, “Where Mind is Without Fear” is a prayer by Rabindranath Tagore, offered to almighty God. Here, he describes his idea of free nation. Towards the end of the poem, he refers to God twice with the words like “thee” and “my father”.

**7. What kind of freedom does the poet desire for his country?**

**Ans.:** Towards the end of the poem, the poet, Rabindranath Tagore talks about heaven of freedom. Where the mind of people is guided by conscience; the inner self that represents the God within us. Alongside, the thoughts and actions of these people should be ever widening, all inclusive so that they think and work for all not only for the “self”.

**8. What is the poet's opinion about work, idleness, reason, and old customs?**

**Ans.:** In his prayer to God for an ideal country/society, the poet states that instead of idleness and customs and practices bordering on superstition(s), people should adhere to logic and rationality. Moreover, constant hard work would be the mantra with the aim of achieving perfection in every endeavour.

**Question: 3. Write a short notes:**

**1. The central idea of the poem:**

**Ans.:** "Where the Mind is Without Fear" is the thirty-fifth (35) poem in Gitanjali: Song Offerings. The poet prays to "Father" (that is, God), and thereby offers a detailed vision of the kind of country and future he desires for India and its citizens. The central idea of Tagore's poem is the creation an ideal country/society where there is individual freedom to follow one's preferred way of living with respect to language, religion, eating habits, etc. and freedom to express one's opinions and beliefs provided that they do not hurt or offend others; where every individual is able to lead his/her life with dignity; where there is unrestricted access to knowledge without financial, class, caste, or religious barriers; where everyone is united by the common thread of humanity irrespective of their class, caste or religious background; where life is defined by truth and constant hard work; and where logic and reason, instead of superstition(s), reign supreme.

**2. The poet's "heaven of freedom."**

**Ans.:** In his poem "Where the Mind is Without Fear", the poet Rabindranath Tagore prays to God for a country/society which each and every citizen, including himself, can consider a "heaven of freedom". This is because, the new country/society would be without prejudices and discriminations of class, caste, language, religion, etc.; would have individual freedom to follow one's preferred religion, food habits, etc. and the freedom to express one's opinions provided they do not hurt the sentiments of others; would ensure education and knowledge for everyone without prejudices of class, caste, gender, religion, etc.; would be hard-working, truthful, and passionate about achieving perfection; and would be purely rational and scientific instead of superstitious.

**SAROJINI NAIDU**  
**INDIAN WEAVERS**

**Q1: What are the weavers doing in the morning, and what does it mean?**

In the first stanza, the weavers are weaving cloth early in the morning. The poet asks them why they are weaving such bright and cheerful blue cloth. The weavers reply that they are making clothes for a newborn baby. The color blue is fresh and bright, just like a new life. This stanza represents the beginning of life—birth. The tone is happy and full of energy. The poet uses simple words and asks a question to show curiosity. This part of the poem celebrates the joy of a baby's arrival into the world.

**Q2: What are the weavers doing in the afternoon, and what does it show about life?**

In the second stanza, the weavers are working in the warm afternoon. The poet asks them what they are making now, and they say they are weaving a rich, purple and green cloth for a queen's wedding robe. This symbolizes youth and marriage, the middle part of life when a person is full of strength, beauty, and love. The colors purple and green are bright and royal, showing richness and happiness. The tone of this stanza is grand and joyful. This part of the poem represents the peak of life and celebrates love and union.

**Q3: What are the weavers doing at night, and what does it mean?**

In the third stanza, the weavers are weaving cloth at night. The poet again asks what they are making, and the weavers reply they are making a white cloth, as white as a feather or a cloud, to wrap a dead man. This stanza is about death, the final part of life. The white color represents peace, stillness, and the end. The tone here is calm and quiet, with a little sadness. The poet shows that just like morning and night, life also has a beginning and an end. This stanza reminds us that death is a natural part of life.

**Q4: What is the main theme of the poem "*Indian Weavers*"?**

The main theme of "*Indian Weavers*" is the journey of life—from birth to marriage to death. Each stanza shows a different time of day and a different stage of life. Morning is for birth, afternoon is for marriage, and night is for death. The poem uses simple but meaningful language to show how weavers, through their work, reflect the cycle of human life. The poet celebrates Indian traditions while also teaching us that life moves in stages, and each stage is important.

### **Q5: What poetic techniques does Sarojini Naidu use in the poem?**

Sarojini Naidu uses several techniques in this poem. She uses questions and answers in each stanza to make the reader feel involved. She also uses color imagery—blue, purple and green, and white—to match the different stages of life. The colors help us imagine the mood of each part of life: joy, love, and peace. The poem also has rhythm and rhyme to make it sound musical. She uses **symbols** like cloth, time of day, and color to show the meaning of birth, youth, and death in a simple but powerful way.

### **CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF THE POEM “INDIAN WEAVERS”**

Sarojini Naidu was a great Indian poet and freedom fighter. She is often called the "Nightingale of India" because of the musical quality of her poems. She wrote about Indian life, nature, love, and the beauty of traditions. Her poems often have rich imagery and deep meaning but are written in simple, sweet language. As a woman and a leader in India's independence movement, she wanted to celebrate Indian culture, people, and values. Her poetry shows her love for the country and its people. One of her most famous short poems is "*Indian Weavers*." In this poem, she uses the work of Indian weavers to show the journey of human life from birth to youth and finally to death.

"*Indian Weavers*" is a very short poem with only three stanzas, but it gives a strong and deep message. The poem describes the weavers working at three different times of the day—morning, afternoon, and night. At each time, they are weaving different types of cloth for different life events. The poet asks them what they are making and why. Their answers show us the three stages of life: birth, youth, and death. Sarojini Naidu connects their daily work to the larger story of human life in a very creative and symbolic way.

In the first stanza, the weavers are working in the early morning. They are weaving a cloth that is blue in color, as blue as the wing of a wild bird. This blue cloth is meant for a newborn baby's clothes. The morning time and the color blue are both symbols of the beginning of life. Morning is fresh and full of new hope, just like the birth of a baby. The tone of this stanza is joyful and cheerful, showing the happiness that comes with new life. This part of the poem tells us that life begins with beauty and excitement.

In the second stanza, the weavers are weaving during the afternoon. They are making cloth that is purple and green, which are bright and rich colors. They say the cloth is for a queen's wedding robe. This part of the poem stands for the youth stage of life, a time when people fall in love, get married, and live actively. The afternoon time here shows the middle part of life, which is full of energy and strength. The tone is celebratory, and the colors show the richness of love and the beauty of marriage. This stanza reminds us that the middle part of life is full of purpose and joy.

In the third stanza, the time is night, and the weavers are now making a cloth that is white, soft like a feather or cloud. They are weaving this cloth to wrap a dead man's body. This clearly represents the end of life—death. The white color stands for peace, rest, and purity. Night also symbolizes the time when everything comes to an end, just like life. The tone here is calm and quiet, not sad or fearful. It shows that death is natural and should be accepted peacefully. The poet treats death as something gentle, just like the cloth being made.

The main theme of the poem is the life cycle of a human being. Sarojini Naidu shows that life moves through different stages: birth, youth, and death. Each part has its own beauty and meaning. Another theme is the importance of Indian workers and traditions. By choosing weavers as the speakers in the poem, she shows respect for their role in Indian life. The weavers do not just make clothes—they create things that are part of people's most important life events. This brings honor to their work.

Sarojini Naidu uses many poetic devices to make this poem beautiful. She uses symbolism—colors, time of day, and cloth types—all stand for parts of life. She uses questions and answers in each stanza, which makes the poem feel like a conversation. This helps the reader feel more involved. She also uses rhyme and rhythm. Each stanza follows the same rhyme scheme (AABB), which makes the poem sound musical, like a song. The imagery is very strong, and we can clearly picture the blue morning sky, the rich wedding dress, and the soft white cloth at night. The poem is written in very simple language, but it gives a deep and serious message.

The tone of the poem changes with each stanza. The first stanza is happy and fresh, the second is rich and proud, and the third is peaceful and serious. This change in tone matches the changes in life. The mood of the poem moves gently, from joy to peace, just like life moves from beginning to end.

In conclusion, "*Indian Weavers*" is a simple yet powerful poem that teaches us about the meaning of life. Sarojini Naidu uses the work of humble weavers to show the beauty of birth, the joy of youth, and the peace of death. Her use of color, time, and tradition brings out the Indian way of looking at life in a gentle and respectful way. This poem is a perfect example of how poetry can be simple in words but deep in message. It is one of Sarojini Naidu's most loved poems and continues to inspire readers of all ages.