

Personas and Things, I see at Night”-

As told by a Street Lamp

Ours is a large family. We are seven in all. We have to live in a single room. Naturally, when I wish to read a book, I do not find our living room a very suitable place for study. So, I often sit under a street lamp that stands in front of my house. One summer night I pulled my cot quite close to the street lamp and kept on reading a very interesting book till 2 O'clock. As I closed the book and lay under my pillow, I was startled to hear a low laugh. I looked around. Everyone was fast asleep. My fat neighbor was snoring as usual. “Ha, ha, ha! Don't be frightened, dear boy I too have read your book” said someone. I looked up because the sound came from above. The bright bulb was shining more brightly than ever. And again I heard, “Yes, it is then I... the lamp post speaking to you. I liked the last joke in your book. I couldn't help laughing. Do I frighten you? I see! You are not.

“Dear boy, then know that I am a silent spectator of life's I have been standing here these three and twenty years. I have seen thefts and murders. In fact, I have seen all sorts of crimes being committed right under my nose. I keep awake at night and I sleep during the day. Someone working in some distant control room of DESU. Touches something and I come to life. Then begins my vigil. I watch the people going up and down this lane. I peep into the neighboring houses and see what is going on there. For example, I can see from this vantage point that your youngest brother a tinny toddler of two is smiling in his sleep. I like children and they like me they always gather here and I enjoy their play. You know they play in my light till their little limbs get tired. I feel very lonely when they all go away. But I can always steal a glance over them through the windows.

Dogs are my most faithful friends. I looked up because the sound came from above. The bright bulb was shining more brightly than ever. And again I heard, “Yes, it is then I... the lamp post speaking to you. I liked the last joke in your book. I couldn't help laughing. Do I frighten you? I see! You are not. That is why I call them my faithful friends.

Studious boys like you come and sit by me and read books. Sometimes a few gamblers come here and gamble away their hard earned money. I see people, dressed in their best clothes, going eagerly to see some film. I watch them when they come back tired, exhausted and sorry that they wasted their on such a senseless thing. Sometime is lucky enough to see a marriage party. What happy people they are and how they dance! But at times I have to eye the dark and dismal

scene of death. Sometimes I see a drunkard walking with unsteady steps and falling into the gutter, Life is like that, sometimes happy sometimes sorrowful.”

At this point I suddenly fell asleep. When I wake up next morning, I looked at the lap post. It was there, silent, lifeless and dark. Did it really speak to me last night or was it only a dream? I do not know.