



Unit

1

Prose

Two Gentlemen of Verona

A J Cronin



Warm Up

Life is full of ups and downs. It has pleasant surprises as well as rude shocks. Nevertheless, every incident offers a lesson for us to learn and evolve into better individuals.

Mention some unexpected challenges or adversities one could face in life.

What qualities do you think one should possess to handle hardships and overcome them?

Here is a story about love, devotion, sacrifice, sincerity and maturity displayed by two little boys in their actions to save the life of their sister who suffers from tuberculosis of the spine. Read the story to find out how their actions give a new hope for humanity.

As we drove through the foothills of the Alps two small boys stopped us on the outskirts of Verona. They were selling wild strawberries. “Don’t buy,” warned Luigi, our cautious driver. “You will get much better fruit in Verona. Besides, these boys.....”

He **shrugged** his shoulders to convey his disapproval of their shabby appearance.

One boy had on a worn jersey and cut-off khaki pants; the other a shortened army **tunic** gathered in loose folds about his skinny frame. Yet, gazing at the two little figures, with their brown skins, tangled hair and dark earnest eyes, we felt ourselves strangely attracted. My companion spoke to the boys, discovered that they were brothers. Nicola, the elder, was 13; Jacopo, who barely came up to the door handle of the car, was nearly 12. We bought their biggest basket, and then set off toward town.



Next morning, coming out of our hotel, we saw our friends bent over shoe shine boxes beside the fountain in the public square, doing brisk business.



We watched for a few moments; then as trade **slackened** we went over. They greeted us with friendly faces.

"I thought you picked fruit for a living," I said." We do many things, sir," Nicola answered seriously. He glanced at us hopefully. "Often we show visitors through the town ... to Juliet's tomb ... and other places of interest."

"All right," I smiled. "You take us along."

As we made the rounds, my interest was again provoked by their remarkable **demeanour**. They were childish enough, and in many ways quite **artless**. Jacopo was lively as a squirrel. Nicola's smile was steady and engaging. Yet in both these boyish faces there was a seriousness which was far beyond their years. In the week which followed we saw them frequently, for they proved extremely useful to us. If we wanted a pack of American cigarettes, or seats for the opera or the name of good restaurant, Nicola and Jacopo could be

relied upon to satisfy our needs. What struck one most was their willingness to work. During these summer days, under the hot sun, they shined shoes, sold fruit, **hawked** newspapers, conducted tourists round the town, and ran errands.

One night, we came upon them in the windy and **deserted** square, resting on the stone pavement beneath the lights. Nicola sat upright, tired. A bundle of unsold newspapers lay at his feet. Jacopo, his head resting upon his brother's shoulder was asleep. It was nearly midnight.

"Why are you out so late, Nicola?"

"Waiting for the last bus from Padua. We shall sell all our papers when it comes in."

"Must you work so hard? You both look rather tired."

"We are not complaining, sir."

But next morning, when I went over to the fountain to have my shoes shined, I said, "Nicola, the way you and Jacopo work, you must earn quite a bit. You spend nothing on clothes. You eat little enough --- when I see you have a meal it's usually black bread and figs. Tell me, what do you do with your money?"

He coloured deeply under his sunburn, and then grew pale. He looked to the ground.

"You must be saving up to **emigrate** to America," I suggested. He looked at me sideways, spoke with an effort.

"We should greatly like to go to the States. But here, at present, we have other plans."



“What plans?”

He smiled uncomfortably. “Just plans, sir,” he answered in a low voice.

“Well,” I said, “we’re leaving on Monday. Is there anything I can do for you before we go?” Nicola shook his head, but suddenly Jacopo said, “Sir,” he burst out, “every Sunday we make a visit to the country, to Poleta, 30 kilometres from here. Usually we hire bicycles. But tomorrow, since you are so kind, you might send us in your car.”

I had already told Luigi he might have the Sunday off. However, I answered, “I’ll drive you out myself.”

There was a pause. Nicola was glaring at his young brother in **vexation**. “We could not think of troubling you, sir.”

“It won’t be any trouble.”

He bit his lip, then, in a rather put out tone, he said, “Very well.”

The following afternoon we drove to the tiny village set high upon the hillside. I imagined that our destinations would be some humble dwellings. But, directed by Jacopo, we drew up at a large red-roofed villa, surrounded by a high stone wall. I could scarcely believe my eyes and before I could recover breath my two passengers had leaped from the car.

“We shall not be long, sir. Perhaps only an hour. May be you’d like to go to the cafe in the village for a drink?” They disappeared beyond the corner of the wall.

After a few minutes I followed. I found a grilled side-entrance and, determinedly, rang the bell.

A pleasant-looking woman with steel-rimmed spectacles appeared. I blinked as I saw that she was dressed in the white uniform of a trained nurse.

“I just brought two small boys here.”

“Ah, yes.” Her face lit up; she opened the door to admit me. “Nicola and Jacopo. I will take you up.”

She led me through a cool, tiled **vestibule** into the hospital – for hospital the villa had become. At the door of a little cubicle the nurse paused, put her finger to her lips, and with a smile bade me look through the glass partition. The two boys were seated at the bedside of a girl of about twenty who, propped up on pillows, wearing a pretty lace jacket, was listening to their **chatter**, her eyes soft and tender. One could see at a glance her resemblance to her brothers. A vase of wild flowers stood on her table, beside a dish of fruit and several books.

“Won’t you go in?” the nurse murmured. “Lucia will be pleased to see you.”

I shook my head and turned away. I felt I could not bear to **intrude** upon this happy family party. But at the foot of the staircase I drew up and begged her to tell me all she knew about these boys.

She was eager to do so. They were, she explained, quite alone in the world, except for this sister, Lucia. Their father, a widower, a well-known singer, had been killed in the early part of the war. Shortly afterward a bomb had destroyed their home and thrown the three children into the streets. They had always known a comfortable and cultured life – Lucia had

herself been training as a singer– and they had suffered horribly from near starvation and exposure to the cold winter.

For months they had barely kept themselves alive in a sort of shelter they built with their own hands amidst the **rubble**. Then for three years the Germans ruled the city. The boys grew to hate the Germans. When the resistance movement began secretly to form they were among the first to join. When the war was over, and we had peace at last, they came back to their beloved sister. And they found her –suffering from tuberculosis of the spine.”



She paused, took a quick breath. “Did they give up? I do not have to answer that question. They brought her here, persuaded us to take her into the hospital. In the twelve months she has been our patient she has made good progress. There is every hope that one day she will walk– and sing–again.”

“Of course, everything is so difficult now, food so scarce and dear, we could not keep going unless we charged a fee. But every week, Lucia’s brothers have made their payment.” She added simply, “I don’t know what they do, I do not ask. Work is scarce in Verona. But whatever it is, I know they do it well.”

“Yes,” I agreed. “They couldn’t do it better.”

I waited outside until the boys rejoined me, and then drove them back to the city. They sat beside me, not speaking. For my part, I did not say a word–I knew they would prefer to feel that they had safely kept their secret. Yet their devotion had touched me deeply.

War had not broken their spirit. Their selfless action brought a new nobility to human life, gave promise of a greater hope for human society.

About The Author

Archibald Joseph Cronin (1896–1981) was a Scottish novelist, dramatist and physician. A doctor by training, Cronin was one of the most renowned storytellers of the twentieth century. Many of his stories have emerged from his medical career and are noted for their narrative skill, deep social conscience and finely drawn characters. Cronin’s books were not only bestsellers but some of them (such as **The Citadel and The Keys of the Kingdom**) were made into successful films and were adapted for radio and television. His novella *Country Doctor* was adapted for a long running BBC radio and TV series.





Glossary

shrug	- raise one's shoulders slightly and momentarily
tunic	- a loose outer garment without sleeves
slackened	- reduced
demeanour	- appearance and behaviour
artless	- innocent, guileless
hawk	- sell things crying out loudly, going from place to place
deserted	- uninhabited, unoccupied
emigrate	- take up citizenship of another country
vexation	- annoyance
vestibule	- lobby
chatter	- a series of short, quick high-pitched sounds
intrude	- enter without permission
rubble	- debris, broken bricks

1. Answer the following questions in one or two sentences each based on your understanding of the story.

- Who did the narrator meet at the outskirts of Verona?
- Why did the driver not approve of the narrator buying fruits from the boys?
- The boys did not spend much on clothes and food. Why?
- Were the boys saving money to go the States? How do you know?
- Why did the author avoid going to Lucia's room?
- What was Lucia suffering from?
- What made the boys join the resistance movement against the Germans?

h) What made the boys work so hard?

i) Why didn't the boys disclose their problem to the author?

2. Answer the following questions in three or four sentences each.

- Describe the appearance of Nicola and Jacopo.
- What were the various jobs undertaken by the little boys?
- How did the narrator help the boys on Sunday?
- Who took the author to the cubicle?
- Describe the girl with whom the boys were talking to in the cubicle.
- Recount the untold sufferings undergone by the siblings after they were rendered homeless.
- The narrator did not utter a word and preferred to keep the secret to himself. Why? Substantiate the statement with reference to the story.

3. Answer the following in a paragraph of 100–150 words each.

- What was the driving force that made the boys do various jobs?
- How was the family affected by the war?
- Write a character sketch of Nicola and Jacopo.
- What message is conveyed through the story 'Two Gentlemen of Verona'?
- Justify the title of the story 'Two Gentlemen of Verona'.
- Adversity brings out the best as well as the worst in people. Elucidate this statement with reference to the story.
- Which character do you like the most in the story and why?

Vocabulary

a) Read the following words taken from the story. Give two synonyms and one antonym for each of these words. Use a dictionary, if required.

Word	Synonyms	Antonym
cautious		
disapprove		
brisk		
engaging		
humble		
eager		
resistance		
persuade		
scarce		
nobility		

b) Homophones and Confusables

You have already learnt that homophones are words that sound alike but are different in spelling and meaning. E.g. feet – feat / face – phase / sort – sought / hair – heir/

What are **confusables**?

Confusables /confusibles are words that are commonly confused with one another in meaning or usage because of slight similarities in spelling, pronunciation or meaning. e.g. moment – movement / except – expect / human – humane / discover–invent

(i) Given below is a list of common confusables. Distinguish the meaning of each pair of words by framing your own sentences.

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| a) emigrate | - immigrate |
| b) beside | - besides |
| c) judicial | - judicious |
| d) eligible | - illegible |
| e) conscience | - conscious |
| f) industrial | - industrious |
| g) eminent | - imminent |
| h) illicit | - elicit |
| i) prescribed | - proscribed |
| j) affect | - effect |
| k) aural | - oral |
| l) born | - borne |

(ii) Fill in the blanks with suitable homophones or confusables.

wallet		hoard	
fairy		desert	
medal		night	
wait		sweet	
yoke		plain	
grown		might	
earn		quite	

c) Give the meanings of the following phrasal verbs and frame sentences using them.

cut off come upon put out
draw up pass out take off
turn away stand by bank on

d) Read the list of words formed by adding suffixes.

frequently satisfaction willingness
comfortable resemblance nobility

Form two derivatives from each of the following words by adding prefixes and suffixes.

Word	Prefix	Suffix
patient	<i>impatient</i>	<i>patiently</i>
honour		
respect		
manage		
fertile		
different		
friend		
obey		



Listening

Floods are an inevitable natural disaster which can occur in any part of the world. Floods can prove all the more disastrous in localities, where population density is high. Preparation for Disaster Management has become imperative for any city, town or village during monsoons.

The Government Department entrusted with Disaster Management makes periodic announcements about the precautions to be taken whenever floods are anticipated.

Now, you are going to listen to the cautionary instructions that are given to the general public living in flood-prone areas. Listen carefully and complete the following sentences.

- The announcement was made by the Department of_____.
- Widespread heavy rains are expected from the early hours of _____.
- The public is asked to find out the locations of_____.
- An emergency kit should contain water bottles, biscuit packets and a _____.
- A list of _____ should be displayed on the wall.
- Important documents can be secured by keeping them in a _____ case.
- Damage to refrigerators can be avoided by _____.
- Mobile phones should be charged to enable the marooned to contact their friends, relatives and _____.
- _____ should be placed in the toilet bowls to prevent sewage inflow.
- Listen to the_____ and follow the instructions implicitly.



Speaking

DRAFTING A SPEECH

You learnt the art of drafting a speech in Class XI. It requires a few basic steps such as greeting the audience, introducing the topic, elaborating the main points, summarizing the views and thanking the audience.

Given below is a template for drafting a speech.

Introduction

a) Greet the audience

Formal greeting – Good Morning / Good Afternoon / Good Evening

b) Introduce yourself and the topic to the audience

I, (name) of class _____ would like to deliver a short speech on (topic).

Body of the speech

a) Elaborate the main and supporting points

Suggested value points (E.g. Global Warming)

- ❖ Definition of the title (What is global warming?)
- ❖ Importance and relevance of the topic. (Why is global warming important? What is the relevance of global warming in the present scenario?)
- ❖ Causes and consequences
- ❖ Preventive measures (planting trees / conserving fuel by using alternative energy sources)
- ❖ Solutions (change in life style and attitude / global effort of people and the government)

Conclusion

- ❖ Summarise the main points
- ❖ Appropriate winding up and thanking the audience (formal – thank you for the patient hearing / thank you for the wonderful opportunity)

Useful linkers and sequence markers

Describing similarities

- ♦ Like wise, correspondingly, equally, not only... but also, in the same way, similarly

Showing cause and effect

- ♦ Consequently, as a result, thus, therefore, for this reason

Comparing and contrasting

- ♦ Alternatively, however, conversely, on the other hand, instead, yet

Concluding

- ♦ To summarise, it can be concluded that, ultimately, as described, finally

Task 1

On the occasion of World Environment Day, you have been asked to deliver a speech during morning assembly on the importance of tree planting. **Write the speech in about 100 – 150 words.**

❖ Introduction

❖ Suggested value points

Pollution control – Medicine –
Necessary for wildlife – Cause rainfall

❖ Conclusion

Task 2

Prepare a speech on “The importance of a reading habit” in about 100–150 words using the hints given below together with your own ideas.

❖ Introduction

❖ Suggested value points

Knowledge enrichment – Skill development – Meaningful usage of time – Overall development

❖ Conclusion



Reading

You have learnt note-making in class XI. The following tasks are for strengthening this skill.

Steps for note-making:

1. Give a title to the passage (main idea).
2. Pick out the key points which extend the title idea (supporting ideas).
3. Pick out points, if any, which substantiate the supporting ideas (supporting details).
4. Condense the points using relevant phrases, abbreviations, acronyms, etc.
5. Pick out the concluding idea in the passage.
6. Organise the points and number them in the following format:

Title

1.
 - a)
 - b)

2.

- a)
- b)

3.

- a)
- b)

Read the passage given below and make notes.

To match the best cities across the world, the Government of India initiated ‘smart cities’ to drive economic growth and improve the quality of life of people. The agenda under smart city promises to resolve urban sustainability problems. Urban forests provide a range of important ecosystem services that are critical for the sustainability of cities. Urban forestry, which is defined more as ‘Management of Trees’ contributes to the physiological, sociological and economic well-being of the society. Mangroves, lakes, grasslands, and forests in and around our cities, act as sponges that absorb the air and noise pollution and they present themselves as our cultural and recreational hotspots. However, these spots are rapidly being reclaimed and replaced in the name of development. Presence of urban green has shown to increase the economic value of the place.

Urban forests contribute to reduce the cost of building storm water drain systems for municipalities and neutralizing urban heat island effect. Plants not only provide shade but also help in regulating the micro-climate. They help regulate energy

budgets, improve air quality, and curtail noise pollution. Trees, herbs, shrubs and grasses arrest sedimentation and prevent other pollutants from entering our water systems. This will give a chance for our urban lakes and rivers to recover and help improve aquatic ecosystems. Biodiversity also gets a boost through the urban forests

and helps create corridors connecting the forest areas. High biodiversity areas can also help to build resilient ecosystems. Availability of forests within our urban areas gives an opportunity for children to connect to the natural environment and learn about native species.



TENSES

You have learnt the use of Tenses in detail in class XI.

Tenses



Tense	Form	Example Sentence
Present Simple	S+V1+O	I play basketball every week.
Present Cont.	S+am/is/are+V+ing +O	I am playing basketball now.
Present Perfect	S+have/has+V3+O	I have just played basketball
Present Perfect Cont.	S+have/has been+V+ing+O	I have been playing basketball for 3 hours.
Past Simple	S+V2+O	I played basketball yesterday.
Past Cont.	S+was/were+V+ing+O	I was playing basketball the whole evening.
Past Perfect	S+had+V3+O	I had played basketball before he came.
Past Perfect Cont.	S+had been+V+ing+O	I had been playing basketball when he came.
Future Simple	S+will+V+O	I will play basketball tomorrow.
Future Cont.	S+will be+V+ing+O	I will be playing basketball tomorrow to this time.

The following tasks are for strengthening your understanding.

Task 1

Tick the correct options and complete the dialogue.

A: Hello. What *do you watch / are you watching?*

B: A programme about the Jallian Wala Bagh massacre, which I recorded last night. *I study / I'm studying* about it this term.

A: All that *I know / I've known* about it is that hundreds of people *died / had died* in it.

B: Yes, it was much, much worse than anyone *has expected / had expected*. It *went on / has gone on* for hours. *Do you want / Have you wanted* to watch the programme with me?

A: No, thanks. I've got to do some veena practice. *I've just remembered / I just remembered* that we've got a concert tomorrow, and I *don't have / haven't had* time to practise my new piece this week.

B: OK. *I've already done / I already did* my practice, so I've got time to watch TV. See you later.

Task 2

Complete the sentences with the correct tense form of the verbs in brackets.

a) (**tell**) me exactly what (**happen**) last night!

b) Mrs. Mageswari is my Maths teacher. She (**teach**) me for four years.

c) I (**never / think**) of a career in medicine before I spoke to my Biology teacher but now I (**seriously/ consider**) it.

d) Oh no! I (**forget**) to bring my assignment! What am I going to do? This is the second time I (**do**) this!

e) I can't remember what my teacher (**say**) yesterday about our homework. I (**not listen**) properly because Hussain (**talk**) to me at the same time.

f) Last year we (**go**) on a school trip to Kanyakumari. We (**have**) a very interesting time.

g) At the moment I (**think**) about what course to pursue next year but I (**not make**) a final decision yet.

h) I (**get**) up at 7 every morning but this morning I (**sleep**) for a long time and I (**not get**) up until 8.

Task 3

Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verbs given in the brackets.

a) Everyone _____ when the earthquake hit the small town. (**sleep**)

b) Evangelene _____ her job a couple of years ago. (**quit**)

c) Where _____ your last holidays? (**you spend**)

d) I think Suresh _____ for Tiruvallur next morning. (**leave**)

e) I was angry that I _____ such a mistake (**make**).

f) My mother was tired yesterday because she _____ well the night before (**not sleep**).

- g) Her parents _____ in Coimbatore for two weeks from today **(be)**.
- h) Nothing much _____ when I got to the meeting **(happen)**.
- i) Scientists predict that by 2050, man _____ on Mars. **(land)**
- j) Sh! Someone _____ to our conversation! **(listen)**
- k) The plane _____ off in a few minutes. **(take)**
- l) They _____ about me when I interrupted their conversation. **(talk)**
- m) Justin and his parents _____ in an apartment right now because they can't find a cheap house. **(live)**
- n) Rajini Prem's family _____ in Chengalpet now. **(be)**.
- o) Yusuf _____ to the movies once in a while **(go)**
- p) This _____ an easy quiz so far **(be)**.
- q) Our team _____ any games last year. **(not win)**
- r) We _____ a wonderful film at the cinema last night. **(see)**
- s) Hurry up! The movie _____ **(already begin)**

Modal Auxiliaries

Read the following sentences carefully.

- (i) He can drive a car. ('can' shows ability)
- (ii) The rich should help the poor. ('should' shows moral obligation)
- (iii) It may rain today. ('may' shows possibility)

In the above sentences, 'drive', 'help' and 'rain' are Main Verbs whereas 'Can', 'Should' and 'May' are Helping Verbs that denote particular moods, expressions or conceptions of the mind. Here 'can' 'should' and 'may' express 'ability', 'moral obligation' and 'possibility' respectively. Since these auxiliaries denote moods or expressions, they are called Modal Auxiliaries.

Modal Auxiliary is a special auxiliary which is used to denote a particular mood or expression of the subject.

There are 13 Modal Auxiliaries (four of which are quasi-modals/ marginals).

will	would
shall	should
can	could
may	must
might	used to
ought to	dare
need	



The following table will help you understand better.

Modal Auxiliaries	
can	ability: I can speak English. permission: Can I go to the library? request: Can you wait a moment, please? offer: I can lend you my pen.
could	ability :(past) I could speak English. polite request: Could you wait a moment, please?
may	possibility: It may rain today. permission: May I go to the cinema?
might	possibility (less possible than may): It might rain today.
must	force, necessity: I must go to the supermarket today. recommendation: You must read the new novel by Bhagat.
shall	suggestion: Shall I carry your bag?
should	advice: You should drive carefully on the highway. obligation: You should switch off the lights when you leave the classroom.
will	wish, request, demand, order: Will you please shut the door? prediction, assumption: I think it will rain on Friday. spontaneous decision: Can somebody take me to the hospital? I will .
would	wish, request: Would you shut the door, please? habits in the past: Sometimes he would bring me some flowers.
Ought to	duty: You ought to submit your assignment on time. moral obligation: We ought to help the needy. necessity: We ought to hire some furniture for the party.
Used to	habits in the past: My grandfather used to walk for long hours when he was young.
Need to	necessity: I need to buy a packet of milk. moral obligation: We need to keep our environment clean.
Dare to	boldness: I dare not go out in the dark. challenge: How dare you enter my room?

Task 1

Fill in the blanks with modal auxiliaries.

- a) The candidates _____ answer five out of ten questions.
- b) How _____ you open my bag?
- c) Tajudeen _____ finish this work by Monday.
- d) _____ I go to school today?
- e) I wish you _____ tell me the truth
- f) Poonam _____ not catch the bus yesterday.
- g) People who live in glass houses _____ not throw stones.
- h) You _____ not go to the market as I have brought vegetables.
- i) _____ you have taken all this trouble?
- j) You _____ be joking.
- k) I tried to climb up the tree, but _____ not.
- l) Hima Das ran so fast that she _____ win the medal.
- m) You _____ lead a horse to water, but you _____ make it drink.
- n) I _____ like to have a cup of coffee.
- o) My grandfather _____ visit this temple when he was young.

Task 2

Complete the following sentences with modals using the clues given.

- a) You _____ help the needy. (moral obligation)
- b) If I were you, I _____ not behave like that. (conditional sentence)
- c) I _____ never tell a lie. (determination)
- d) My uncle _____ have reached by now. (possibility)
- e) The patient is critical. He _____ be taken to the hospital. (compulsion)
- f) I _____ to play hockey when I was a student. (past habit)
- g) You _____ not attend my class. (order)
- h) He _____ come today. (remote possibility)
- i) You _____ follow the traffic rules. (regulation)
- j) He _____ play the match. (willingness)
- k) You _____ not waste time on it. (necessity)
- l) Had the doctor come in time, he _____ have saved the patient. (probability)

Reported Speech


Reported Speech is the way we represent / report the speech of other people or what we ourselves say.

Direct speech is a representation of the actual words someone said.	Indirect speech does not give the exact words uttered but focusses on the content of what someone said.
Repeating the words as exactly as spoken by the speaker.	Reporting the words spoken by the speaker.
e.g. The teacher said to the students, "I shall take you to the museum tomorrow."	e.g. The teacher informed the students that he would take them to the museum the next day.

Refer Class XI for the rules governing transformation of sentences from direct to reported speech.

Task 1

Read what these people say and rewrite as sentences.

1.  I am very busy.

Raja said that he was very busy.

2.  I have completed my work.

Satya

3.  I don't like to go out.

Johnson

4.  I have just come back from Chennai.

Akshita

5.  I am learning English.

Jayan

6.  I bought a pen yesterday.

Madhu

7.  We will go shopping tomorrow.

Joseph and Mary

8.  We can't attend the party.

Afsar and Ayesha

9.  How are you?

Satish

10.  I am fine. Thank you.

Victor

Task 2

Read the following dialogue and complete the report in the space provided.

a)

Priya : Where are you going?

Vijay : I am going to the railway station.

Priya : Why are you going there?

Vijay : I want to receive my uncle who is coming from Bangalore.

Priya asked Vijay (a) _____

Vijay replied (b) _____

Priya further inquired (c) _____

Vijay stated that (d) _____

b)

Teacher : Why are you late?

Divya : I missed the bus.

Teacher : You should have reached the bus stop on time.

Divya : My grandmother is ill. So, I had to take her to the doctor.

Teacher : I am sorry. What ails her?

Divya : She has high fever.

The teacher asked Divya why she was late. Divya replied that (a) _____. The teacher told her that (b) _____. Divya said that her grandmother was ill so she had to take her to the doctor. The teacher felt sorry and further asked her (c) _____. Divya explained that she (d) _____ high fever.

Task 3

Rewrite the following passage in indirect speech.

Pradeep got out of bed with much excitement. "It is going to be a lovely sunny day," he remarked to his sister Varshini.

"Just let me sleep a bit longer, Pradeep," Varshini begged, "and since you are feeling so enthusiastic," she suggested, "Why don't you go and help mother in cooking?"

"Sure, I will", said Pradeep. "Can I help you, mum?", he said to his mother.

"Yes, of course. There are idlis and vadas on the dining table. Have your breakfast."

"Thank you, mum; I'll surely help you by eating them."



Writing

Letter Writing

Letter writing is an art that is almost forgotten. Except when formal situations demand one, we rely more on the electronic media – telephone and chatting.

For academic purposes all letters fall under two broad classifications i.e. Formal Letters and Informal Letters.

Formal Letters

Types:

- ❖ Letter of inquiry
- ❖ Letter of placing order
- ❖ Letter of cancelling order

- ❖ Complaint or reminder letter on delayed delivery
- ❖ Letter of complaint – product
- ❖ Letter of complaint – civic amenities
- ❖ Letter of request – some facility / public health department for some service
- ❖ Job Application

Informal–personal letters, (to family members, friends, birthday greetings etc.) social letters (inviting, congratulating, letter of condolence etc.)

When you realize that you are a part of the society in which you live, as a civic-conscious citizen, you have to look beyond these two classifications. You may have to arouse the conscience of the people on certain issues which might affect the social, moral, political fabric of the society. Such letters can be classified as neutral letters. Example : Letters to the Editor.

Useful Tips

Before writing a letter:

- ❖ Think before you write – consider the main purpose of the letter
- ❖ Plan your letter – make a list of facts to be presented

Writing the letter (for formal letters):

- ❖ Make the first draft
- ❖ Edit the draft
- ❖ Finalize the draft

The format of letters:

- ❖ The heading consisting of the writer's address and date



- ❖ The greeting or salutation (Dear, My dear, Sir, Madam)
- ❖ The communication or content of the letter (to be in paragraphs – simple language to be used– legibility to be kept in mind)
- ❖ The subscription must always agree in style: Yours faithfully, yours sincerely, yours obediently, yours truly ,etc... in formal letters and yours lovingly, yours affectionately, etc. in personal letters.
- ❖ The signature
- ❖ The superscription on the envelope (Depending on whether it is formal or informal, apt salutation and subscription may be used.)

a) Read the following letter carefully, discuss with your partner and answer the questions.

Sir,

I request you to publish the following letter in your daily to address an important issue which needs immediate redressal.

During week ends motorcyclists are seen racing on the East Coast road and the Old Mahabalipuram road of Chennai. The amateur racers are risking their own lives and of the public as well. They are fearless and irresponsible, not knowing the price of human lives. Risking others and their lives for their pleasure is highly condemnable.

Even school students indulge in such activities and cause fatal accidents. The racers have started occupying the lanes and streets of busy localities. As such, the violation of traffic rules often

results in loss of young lives. Such reckless riders who violate traffic rules should be punished severely.

As a responsible citizen of the society, I request the authorities concerned to take appropriate measures to put an end to this menace.

Yours truly,
Srivatsav

Questions:

- a) Who is the sender of the letter?
- b) Who is the receiver?
- c) What is the issue?
- d) What is the request of the sender?
- e) Who will take steps after reading it?

b) You have chosen Computer Science in the Higher Secondary Course. Write a letter to your friend giving reasons for your choice. Read the clues given in brackets to complete the letter.

.....(Greeting),

Hope (enquire about his well being). I would like to.....

Firstly.....(reason for your choice of group). I wish... (state your ambition).We come to hear..... (discuss recent unhealthy happenings in social media and the society). These have made me..... (demand or need of this profession). I have plans to pursue..... (higher studies or specialization).

All the best for your CA preparation.
Convey my

Yours lovingly,
(your name)



Task

- a) You had been to your Grandma's house during the summer holidays. You enjoyed your stay in her company. Write a letter to your Grandma stating how much you miss her after returning to your home.
- b) You are the head of the English department in a renowned institution. You are invited to preside over the inauguration of the English Literary club in your alma mater. Respond to the letter you have received either accepting the invitation or expressing your inability to attend the function.
- c) Write a letter to the Headmaster of your school requesting him to help you obtain a duplicate mark sheet of class XII, which you lost while travelling.
- d) Write a letter to AZ Company requesting them to replace the defective juicer that you bought recently. Include the following details: the problem, date of purchase, receipt number, model and warranty.
- e) You wish to become a pilot. Write a letter to a college enquiring about the details of the pilot training course offered by the college. Include the following details in your enquiry: duration of the course, fee structure, scholarships, hostel facilities and placement details.
- f) Write a letter to the manager of Waves Furniture Company ordering furniture for a coaching centre. Include the following details: description of the furniture, number of pieces, mode of payment, time and delivery options.
- g) Write an application for the post of Personal Secretary to the Managing Director of a company. Include the following details: Educational qualification, experience, various other qualifications required for the post.
- h) Write a letter the Editor of a newspaper about the nuisance created by the roadside vendors blocking the pavements and occupying the parking zone.
- i) Write a letter to your relative or friend who is admitted in hospital for treatment of jaundice. Advise him/her not to worry about the illness and be positive. Assure him/her of your psychological and financial help during the crisis.



Unit

1

Poem

The Castle

Edwin Muir



8FD549

Warm Up

a) What thoughts come to your mind when you think about a castle? Add your ideas to the list.

moat, huge buildings, soldiers, weapons

b) Have you ever visited a fort or a castle?

c) Fill in the following empty boxes.

Name	Location
Fort St. George	Chennai
Gingee Fort	
Golconda Fort	
Red Fort	

All through that summer at ease we lay,
And daily from the **turret** wall
We watched the **mowers** in the hay
And the enemy half a mile away
They seemed no threat to us at all.

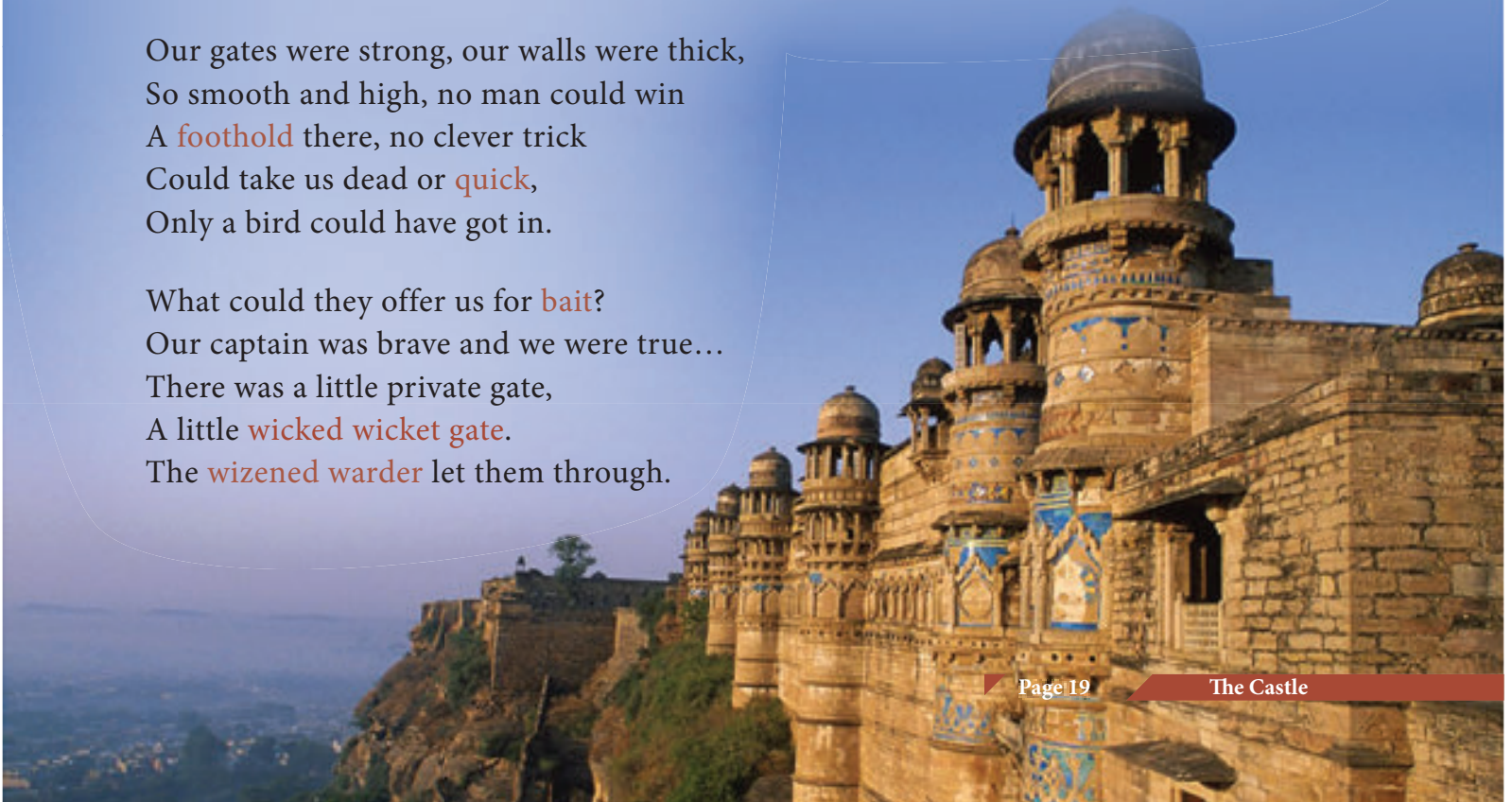
For what, we thought, had we to fear
With our arms and **provender**, load on load,
Our **towering battlements**, **tier** on tier,
And **friendly allies** drawing near
On every leafy summer road.

Our gates were strong, our walls were thick,
So smooth and high, no man could win
A **foothold** there, no clever trick
Could take us dead or **quick**,
Only a bird could have got in.

What could they offer us for **bait**?
Our captain was brave and we were true...
There was a little private gate,
A little **wicked wicket gate**.
The **wizened warder** let them through.

Oh then our **maze** of tunneled stone
Grew thin and **treacherous** as air.
The cause was lost without a **groan**,
The famous **citadel overthrown**,
And all its secret galleries bare.

How can this shameful tale be told?
I will **maintain** until my death
We could do nothing, being sold:
Our only enemy was gold,
And we had no arms to fight it with.





About The Author

Edwin Muir (1887-1959) was a renowned Scottish poet, novelist, translator and critic. He was remembered for his vivid poetry. He began writing poetry at a relatively old age, and over the course of several years worked out an individual, philosophical style for which he gained recognition later in his life. **First Poems** and **Chorus of the Newly Dead** contain Muir's initial attempts. Muir's later collections include **Variations on a Time Theme**, **The Narrow Place**, **The Voyage and Other Poems**, **The Labyrinth**, and **One Foot in Eden**.



Glossary

turret wall	- a small tower on top of a castle
mowers	- people who trim grass and level the lawns
provender	- food
towering battlements	- tall towers with openings to shoot the enemies
tier	- one above the other
friendly allies	- helpful or supporting nations or armed forces
foothold	- advantageous position
quick	- alive

bait	- something intended to entice someone to do something
wicked	- evil or morally wrong
wicket gate	- a small gate
wizened warder	- an aged or old guard
maze	- a winding, intricate confusing path
treacherous	- disloyal
groan	- lament, cry
citadel	- a safe and strong fort
overthrown	- conquered, defeated
maintain	- believe

1. Based on your understanding of the poem, answer the following questions in one or two sentences each.

- Who is the narrator in the poem?
- How long had the soldiers been in the castle?
- Why were the soldiers in the castle fearless?
- Where were the enemies?
- Why does the narrator say that the enemy was no threat at all?
- Did the soldiers fight with the enemies face to face?
- Who had let the enemies in?
- How did the enemies enter the castle?
- Why were the secret galleries bare?

- j) What was the 'shameful act'?
- k) Why didn't the narrator want to tell the tale to anybody?
- l) Why did the narrator feel helpless?
- m) Who was the real enemy?

2. Read the poem again and complete the summary using the words given in box.

Stanzas 1-3

'The Castle' by Edwin Muir is a moving poem on the (1)..... of a well-guarded (2)..... The soldiers of the castle were totally stress-free and relaxed. They were (3)..... of their castle's physical strength. Through the turrets they were able to watch the mowers and no enemy was found up to the distance of (4)..... and so they seemed no threat to the castle. They had (5)..... of weapons to protect them and a large quantity of (6)..... in stock to take care of the well-being of the soldiers inside the castle. The soldiers stood one above the other on the towering (7)..... to shoot the enemy at sight. They believed that the castle was absolutely safe because their captain was (8)..... and the soldiers were loyal.

half-a-kilometre	watching
castle	brave
ration	capture
plenty	confident

Stanzas 4-6

Even by a trick no one but the birds could enter. The enemy could not use a (9).... for their entry inside the castle. But there was a wicket gate guarded by a (10)..... He (11)..... in the enemies

inside the famous citadel that had been known for its secret gallery and intricate path. The strong castle became(12)..... and thin because of the greedy disloyal warder. The (13)..... was captured by the enemies for (14).....The narrator (15)..... over the (16)..... of the useless warder and also decided not to disclose this (17).....story to anyone. He was (18)..... and wondered how he would keep this truth to himself. He regretted not finding any (19)..... to fight with the (20)..... called 'gold'.

lamented	shameful
wicked guard	bait
let	gold
weapon	citadel
weak	disloyalty
helpless	enemy

3. Read the poem and answer the following in a short paragraph of 8-10 sentences each.

- How safe was the castle? How was it conquered?
- Bring out the contrasting picture of the castle as depicted in stanzas 3 and 5.
- Human greed led to the mighty fall of the citadel. Explain.

4. Read the given lines and answer the questions that follow in a line or two.

a) *All through the summer at ease we lay,
And daily from the turret wall
We watched the mowers in the hay*

- Who does 'we' refer to?
- How did the soldiers spend the summer days?
- What could they watch from the turret wall?

b) *Our gates were strong, our walls were thick,
So smooth and high, no man could win.*

i. How safe was the castle?

ii. What was the firm belief of the soldiers?

c) *A foothold there, no clever trick
Could take us dead or quick,
Only a bird could have got in.*

i. What was challenging?

ii. Which aspect of the castle's strength is conveyed by the above line?

d) *Oh then our maze of tunneled stone
Grew thin and treacherous as air.
The castle was lost without a groan,
The famous citadel overthrown,*

i. Bring out the contrast in the first two lines.

ii. What happened to the castle?

e) *We could do nothing, being sold.*

i. Why couldn't they do anything?

ii. Why did they feel helpless?

5. Explain the following with reference to the context in about 50-60 words each.

a) *They seemed no threat to us at all.*

b) *How can this shameful tale be told?*

c) *I will maintain until my death*

d) *Our only enemy was gold*

6. Read the poem and complete the table with suitable rhyming words.

lay	hay

7. Underline the alliterated words in the following lines.

a) *With our arms and provender, load on load.*

b) *A little wicked wicket gate.*

c) *The wizened warder let them through.*

8. Identify the figure of speech used in the following lines.

a) *A little wicked wicket gate.*

b) *Oh then our maze of tunneled stone*

c) *Grew thin and treacherous as air.*

d) *How can this shameful tale be told?*

e) *Our only enemy was gold,*

Allegory: An allegory is a complete narrative that involves characters and events that stand for an abstract idea or event. In other words, a story, poem, or picture that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, typically a moral or political one.

9. Can you call 'The Castle' an allegorical poem? Discuss.



Listening

Some phrases have been left out in the poem below. Fill in the missing phrases on listening to the reading or the audio played by the teacher. You may listen again, if required.

The Soldier

If I should die,

That there's some corner.....



That is There shall be
In that rich earth a richer
A dust whom England bore, shaped,
 made aware,
Gave,roam;
A body air,
Washed suns of home.
And think, away,
A pulse in the , no less
Gives somewhere back
 given;
Her.....; dreams happy as her
 day;
And laughter,.....; and
 gentleness,
In hearts English heaven.

Rupert Brooke

Parallel Reading

It Takes Courage

It takes strength to be firm, it takes
 courage to be gentle.
It takes strength to conquer, it takes
 courage to surrender.
It takes strength to be certain, it takes
 courage to have doubt.
It takes strength to fit in, it takes courage
 to stand out.
It takes strength to feel a friend's pain, it
 takes courage to feel your own pain.
It takes strength to endure abuse, it takes
 courage to stop it.
It takes strength to stand alone, it takes
 courage to lean on another.
It takes strength to love, it takes courage
 to be loved.
It takes strength to survive, it takes
 courage to live.

Anonymous



Unit

1

Supplementary

God Sees the Truth, But Waits

Leo Tolstoy



Warm Up

If you are punished for a prank your classmate played, how would you react to the situation?

While many would seek vengeance or feel sorry for themselves, some may put their trust in God, forgive others for the wrongs done to them and move on in life. What is your take on this? Discuss.

Here is a story about faith, forgiveness, freedom and acceptance of a young merchant named Aksionov, who was sent to prison for a crime he didn't commit.

In the town of Vladimir lived a young merchant named Ivan Dmitrich Aksionov. He had two shops and a house of his own.

Aksionov was a handsome, fair-haired, curly-headed fellow, full of fun, and very fond of singing. When quite a young man he had been given to drink, and was riotous when he had had too much; but after he married he gave up drinking, except now and then.

One summer Aksionov was going to the Nizhny Fair, and as he bade good-bye to his family, his wife said to him, "Ivan Dmitrich, do not start to-day; I have had a bad dream about you."

Aksionov laughed, and said, "You are afraid that when I get to the fair I shall go on a spree."

His wife replied: "I do not know what I am afraid of; all I know is that I had a bad dream. I dreamt you returned from the town, and when you took off your cap I saw that your hair was quite grey."

Aksionov laughed. "That's a lucky sign," said he. "See if I don't sell out all my goods, and bring you some presents from the fair."

So he said good-bye to his family, and drove away.

When he had travelled half-way, he met a merchant whom he knew, and they put up at the same inn for the night. They had some tea together, and then went to bed in adjoining rooms.

It was not Aksionov's habit to sleep late, and, wishing to travel while it was still cool, he aroused his driver before dawn, and told him to put in the horses.



Then he made his way across to the landlord of the inn (who lived in a cottage at the back), paid his bill, and continued his journey.

When he had gone about twenty-five miles, he stopped for the horses to be fed. Aksionov rested awhile in the passage of the inn, then he stepped out into the porch, and, ordering a samovar to be heated, got out his guitar and began to play.

Suddenly a troika drove up with tinkling bells and an official alighted, followed by two soldiers. He came to Aksionov and began to question him, asking him who he was and whence he came. Aksionov answered him fully, and said, "Won't you have some tea with me?" But the official went on cross-questioning him and asking him. "Where did you spend last night? Were you alone, or with a fellow-merchant? Did you see the other merchant this morning? Why did you leave the inn before dawn?"

Aksionov wondered why he was asked all these questions, but he described all that had happened, and then added, "Why do you cross-question me as if I were a thief or a robber? I am travelling on business of my own, and there is no need to question me."

Then the official, calling the soldiers, said, "I am the police-officer of this district, and I question you because the merchant with whom you spent last night has been found with his throat cut. We must search your things."

They entered the house. The soldiers and the police-officer unstrapped

Aksionov's luggage and searched it. Suddenly the officer drew a knife out of a bag, crying, "Whose knife is this?"

Aksionov looked, and seeing a blood-stained knife taken from his bag, he was frightened.

"How is it there is blood on this knife?"

Aksionov tried to answer, but could hardly utter a word, and only stammered: "I--don't know--not mine." Then the police-officer said: "This morning the merchant was found in bed with his throat cut. You are the only person who could have done it. The house was locked from inside, and no one else was there. Here is this blood-stained knife in your bag and your face and manner betray you! Tell me how you killed him, and how much money you stole?"

Aksionov swore he had not done it; that he had not seen the merchant after they had had tea together; that he had no money except eight thousand rubles of his own, and that the knife was not his. But his voice was broken, his face pale, and he trembled with fear as though he went guilty.



The police-officer ordered the soldiers to bind Aksionov and to put him in the cart. As they tied his feet together



and flung him into the cart, Aksionov crossed himself and wept. His money and goods were taken from him, and he was sent to the nearest town and imprisoned there. Enquiries as to his character were made in Vladimir. The merchants and other inhabitants of that town said that in former days he used to drink and waste his time, but that he was a good man. Then the trial came on: he was charged with murdering a merchant from Ryazan, and robbing him of twenty thousand rubles.

His wife was in **despair**, and did not know what to believe. Her children were all quite small; one was a baby at her breast. Taking them all with her, she went to the town where her husband was in jail. At first she was not allowed to see him; but after much begging, she obtained permission from the officials, and was taken to him. When she saw her husband in prison-dress and in chains, shut up with thieves and criminals, she fell down, and did not come to her senses for a long time. Then she drew her children to her, and sat down near him. She told him of things at home, and asked about what had happened to him. He told her all, and she asked, "What can we do now?"

"We must petition the Czar not to let an innocent man perish."

His wife told him that she had sent a petition to the Czar, but it had not been accepted.

Aksionov did not reply, but only looked **downcast**.

Then his wife said, "It was not for nothing I dreamt your hair had turned grey. You remember? You should not have

started that day." And passing her fingers through his hair, she said: "Vanya dearest, tell your wife the truth; was it not you who did it?"

"So you, too, suspect me!" said Aksionov, and, hiding his face in his hands, he began to weep. Then a soldier came to say that the wife and children must go away; and Aksionov said good-bye to his family for the last time.

When they were gone, Aksionov recalled what had been said, and when he remembered that his wife also had suspected him, he said to himself, "It seems that only God can know the truth; it is to Him alone we must appeal, and from Him alone expect mercy."

And Aksionov wrote no more petitions; gave up all hope, and only prayed to God.

Aksionov was condemned to be **flogged** and sent to the mines. So he was flogged with a knot, and when the wounds made by the knot were healed, he was driven to Siberia with other convicts.

For twenty-six years Aksionov lived as a convict in Siberia. His hair turned white as snow, and his beard grew long, thin, and grey. All his **mirth** went; he stooped; he walked slowly, spoke little, and never laughed, but he often prayed.

In prison Aksionov learnt to make boots, and earned a little money, with which he bought The Lives of the Saints. He read this book when there was light enough in the prison; and on Sundays in the prison-church he read the lessons and

sang in the choir; for his voice was still good.



The prison authorities liked Aksionov for his meekness, and his fellow-prisoners respected him: they called him “Grandfather,” and “The Saint.” When they wanted to petition the prison authorities about anything, they always made Aksionov their spokesman, and when there were quarrels among the prisoners they came to him to put things right, and to judge the matter.

No news reached Aksionov from his home, and he did not even know if his wife and children were still alive.

One day a fresh gang of convicts came to the prison. In the evening the old prisoners collected round the new ones and asked them what towns or villages they came from, and what they were sentenced for. Among the rest Aksionov sat down near the newcomers, and listened with downcast air to what was said.

One of the new convicts, a tall, strong man of sixty, with a closely-cropped grey beard, was telling the others what he had been arrested for.

“Well, friends,” he said, “I only took a horse that was tied to a sledge, and I was arrested and accused of stealing. I said I had only taken it to get home quicker, and had then let it go; besides, the driver was a personal friend of mine. So I said, ‘It’s all right.’ ‘No,’ said they, ‘you stole it.’ But how or where I stole it they could not say. I once really did something wrong, and ought by rights to have come here long ago, but that time I was not found out. Now I have been sent here for nothing at all... Eh, but it’s lies I’m telling you; I’ve been to Siberia before, but I did not stay long.”

“Where are you from?” asked some one.

“From Vladimir. My family are of that town. My name is Makar, and they also call me Semyonich.”

Aksionov raised his head and said: “Tell me, Semyonich, do you know anything of the merchants Aksionov of Vladimir? Are they still alive?”

“Know them? Of course I do. The Aksionovs are rich, though their father is in Siberia: a sinner like ourselves, it seems! As for you, Grandad, how did you come here?”

Aksionov did not like to speak of his misfortune. He only sighed, and said, “For my sins I have been in prison these twenty-six years.”

“What sins?” asked Makar Semyonich.

But Aksionov only said, “Well, well—I must have deserved it!” He would have said no more, but his companions told



the newcomers how Aksionov came to be in Siberia; how someone had killed a merchant, and had put the knife among Aksionov's things, and Aksionov had been unjustly condemned.

When Makar Semyonich heard this, he looked at Aksionov, slapped his own knee, and exclaimed, "Well, this is wonderful! Really wonderful! But how old you've grown, Grandad!"

The others asked him why he was so surprised, and where he had seen Aksionov before; but Makar Semyonich did not reply. He only said: "It's wonderful that we should meet here, lads!"

These words made Aksionov wonder whether this man knew who had killed the merchant; so he said, "Perhaps, Semyonich, you have heard of that affair, or maybe you've seen me before?"

"How could I help hearing? The world's full of rumours. But it's a long time ago, and I've forgotten what I heard."

"Perhaps you heard who killed the merchant?" asked Aksionov.

Makar Semyonich laughed, and replied: "It must have been him in whose bag the knife was found! If some one else hid the knife there, 'He's not a thief till he's caught,' as the saying is. How could any one put a knife into your bag while it was under your head? It would surely have woke you up."

When Aksionov heard these words, he felt sure this was the man who had killed the merchant. He rose and went away. All that night Aksionov lay awake.

He felt terribly unhappy, and all sorts of images rose in his mind. There was the image of his wife as she was when he parted from her to go to the fair. He saw her as if she were present; her face and her eyes rose before him; he heard her speak and laugh. Then he saw his children, quite little, as they were at that time: one with a little cloak on, another at his mother's breast. And then he remembered himself as he used to be—young and merry. He remembered how he sat playing the guitar in the porch of the inn where he was arrested, and how free from care he had been. He saw, in his mind, the place where he was flogged, the executioner, and the people standing around; the chains, the convicts, all the twenty-six years of his prison life, and his premature old age. The thought of it all made him so **wretched** that he was ready to kill himself.

"And it's all that villain's doing!" thought Aksionov. And his anger was so great against Makar Semyonich that he longed for **vengeance**, even if he himself should perish for it. He kept repeating prayers all night, but could get no peace. During the day he did not go near Makar Semyonich, nor even look at him.

A fortnight passed in this way. Aksionov could not sleep at night, and was so miserable that he did not know what to do.

One night as he was walking about the prison he noticed some earth that came rolling out from under one of the shelves on which the prisoners slept. He stopped to see what it was. Suddenly Makar Semyonich crept out from under the shelf, and looked up at Aksionov with



a frightened face. Aksionov tried to pass without looking at him, but Makar seized his hand and told him that he had dug a hole under the wall, getting rid of the earth by putting it into his high-boots, and emptying it out every day on the road when the prisoners were driven to their work.

“Just you keep quiet, old man, and you shall get out too. If you blab, they’ll flog the life out of me, but I will kill you first.”

Aksionov trembled with anger as he looked at his enemy. He drew his hand away, saying, “I have no wish to escape, and you have no need to kill me; you killed me long ago! As to telling of you--I may do so or not, as God shall direct.”

Next day, when the convicts were led out to work, the convoy soldiers noticed that one or other of the prisoners emptied some earth out of his boots. The prison was searched and the tunnel found. The Governor came and questioned all the prisoners to find out who had dug the hole. They all denied any knowledge of it. Those who knew would not betray Makar Semyonich, knowing he would be flogged almost to death. At last the Governor turned to Aksionov whom he knew to be a just man, and said:



“You are a truthful old man; tell me, before God, who dug the hole?”

Makar Semyonich stood as if he were quite unconcerned, looking at the Governor and not so much as glancing at Aksionov. Aksionov’s lips and hands trembled, and for a long time he could not utter a word. He thought, “Why should I screen him who ruined my life? Let him pay for what I have suffered. But if I tell, they will probably flog the life out of him, and maybe I suspect him wrongly. And, after all, what good would it be to me?”

“Well, old man,” repeated the Governor, “tell me the truth: who has been digging under the wall?”

Aksionov glanced at Makar Semyonich, and said, “I cannot say, your honour. It is not God’s will that I should tell! Do what you like with me; I am your hands.”

However much the Governor tried, Aksionov would say no more, and so the matter had to be left.

That night, when Aksionov was lying on his bed and just beginning to doze, someone came quietly and sat down on his bed. He peered through the darkness and recognised Makar.

“What more do you want of me?” asked Aksionov. “Why have you come here?”

Makar Semyonich was silent. So Aksionov sat up and said, “What do you want? Go away, or I will call the guard!”

Makar Semyonich bent close over Aksionov, and whispered, "Ivan Dmitrich, forgive me!"

"What for?" asked Aksionov.

"It was I who killed the merchant and hid the knife among your things. I meant to kill you too, but I heard a noise outside, so I hid the knife in your bag and escaped out of the window."

Aksionov was silent, and did not know what to say. Makar Semyonich slid off the bed-shelf and knelt upon the ground. "Ivan Dmitrich," said he, "forgive me! For the love of God, forgive me! I will confess that it was I who killed the merchant, and you will be released and can go to your home."

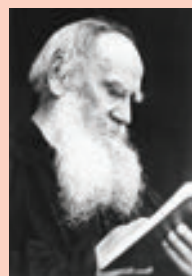
"It is easy for you to talk," said Aksionov, "but I have suffered for you these twenty-six years. Where could I go to now?... My wife is dead, and my children have forgotten me. I have nowhere to go..."

Makar Semyonich did not rise, but beat his head on the floor. "Ivan Dmitrich, forgive me!" he cried. "When they flogged me with the knot it was not so hard to bear as it is to see you now ... yet you had pity on me, and did not tell. For Christ's sake forgive me, wretch that I am!" And he began to sob.

When Aksionov heard him sobbing he, too, began to weep. "God will forgive you!" said he. "Maybe I am a hundred times worse than you." And at these words his heart grew light, and the longing for home left him. He no longer had any desire to leave the prison, but only hoped for his last hour to come.

In spite of what Aksionov had said, Makar Semyonich confessed his guilt. But when the order for his release came, Aksionov was already dead.

About The Author



Leo Tolstoy was born on September 9, 1828, in Tula Province, Russia. He is best known for the novels *War and Peace* (1869) and *Anna Karenina* (1877), often cited as pinnacles of realist fiction. He first achieved literary acclaim in his twenties with his semi-autobiographical trilogy, *Childhood, Boyhood, and Youth* and *Sevastopol Sketches*, based upon his experiences in the Crimean War. Tolstoy's fiction includes dozens of short stories and several novellas such as *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* (1886), *Family Happiness*, and *Hadji Murad*. He also wrote plays and numerous philosophical essays. Tolstoy died on November 20, 1910 in Astapovo, Russia.



Glossary

	indulging in something actively in an unrestrained way
go on a spree	-
porch	- portico
samovar	- a Russian metal urn for making tea
troika(in olden Russia)	- a cart pulled by a team of three horses



stammer	- to speak haltingly, fumble for words
betray	- fail, let one down
despair	- hopelessness
downcast	- depressed
flog	- to beat with a whip or stick
mirth	- cheerfulness
sledge	- a vehicle pulled by horses for transportation on snow
wretched	- dejected
vengeance	- revenge

1. Answer the following questions in a sentence or two each, based on your understanding of the story.

- Why did Aksionov's wife stop him from going to the fair?
- What is the importance of Aksionov's wife's dream?
- What made Aksionov leave the inn before dawn?
- What were the circumstances that led to Aksionov's imprisonment?
- Why did Aksionov give up sending petitions?
- Why didn't Makar disclose that he had killed the merchant?
- Did Makar feel guilty when he heard Aksionov's story?
- What made Aksionov think that Makar was the real murderer?
- What was Aksionov's realization by the end of the story?

- Why did Aksionov's wife suspect him of involvement in the murder?

2. Answer the following questions in three or four sentences each.

- Did the police officer have sufficient evidence to convict Aksionov?
- What impact did the book "The Lives of Saints" have on Aksionov?
- Pick out the clues that convey that Makar Semeyonich recognized Aksionov.

3. Answer the following questions in a paragraph of about 150 words each.

- Compare and contrast the main characters, Aksionov and Makar Semeyonich, in the story.
- How did Aksionov react when his wife suspected him?
- Describe the life of Aksionov in prison.
- Why did Aksionov decide not to reveal the truth about Makar Semeyonich?
- Discuss the meaning and importance of the saying "God sees the truth but waits".
- Forgiveness is the best form of revenge. Substantiate the statement with reference to the story.

4. Using the mind map given below, write a brief summary of the story in your own words.

