

INTRODUCTION

About The Author

R.K Narayan , one of the distinguished contemporary Indian writers in English, was born in 1906 in Madras (now Chennai) and educated at the Collegiate High School in Mysore where his father was the Head master, then at Maharaja's College, Mysore. (His full name is Rasipuram Krishnaswami Ayyar Narayanswami. However, he shortened it to R.K Narayan on Graham Greene's, suggestion). He worked, very briefly, as a teacher, then as a journalist, before publishing his first novel, **Swami and Friends** (1934) in which he created the imaginary small town of Malgudi, which he was to map out and populate in several of his forthcoming novels. Some of his other novels are **The Bachelor of Arts** (1937), **The English Teacher** (1945), **Mr. Sampath** (1949), **The Financial Expert** (1952), **The Guide** (1958), **The Vendor of Sweets** (1967), **The Painter of Signs** (1977) and **The World of Nagraj** (1990).

His fictional world is peopled with characters -- journalists, painters, professors, financial experts, lawyers, dreamers - portrayed with a gentle irony as they struggle to accommodate tradition with Western attitudes inherited from the Britishers. Graham Greene, who recommended his first novel for publication, compared the tragedy-comedy, pathos and frequently disappointed aspirations of his characters to those of Anton Chekhov's and commented that Narayan's particular comic gift flourished in 'the strong framework of social convention'.

Narayan's other publications include collection of short stories -- **An Astrologer's Day and Other Stories** (1947), **Lawley Road** (1956), **A Horse and Two Goats** (1970), **Malgudi Days** (1982), a Memoir -- 'My Days' (1975) and translations of Indian epics and myths. He was awarded the prestigious 'Sahitya Academy' Award for his novel **The Guide** in 1960. In 1964, he was honoured with