

UGBA/BSc Sem. – V
2019- 20

General English
Text – *India: A Journey through Stories*

1. *Profit and Loss*
Rabindranath Tagore

I. Answer the following questions in brief:

1. Why was Nirupama's name unusual?

Ans: Names in Nirupama's family were usually named after gods and goddesses. Thus Nirupama's name was unusual as it was not after some god or goddesses' name.

2. How was the impasse at the wedding resolved?

Ans: Nirupama's would be in-laws had demanded a dowry of ₹ 10000 and had pressurised her parents to give it before marriage. Nirupama's father somehow failed to collect the amount before marriage. The groom's family declared that the groom would not be brought for wedding till the full amount is given to them. But, this impasse was resolved as the groom rebelled and told his parents that he would anyhow marry the girl and he had nothing to do with money.

3. How was Nirupama treated at her in-law's house?

Ans: Nirupama was treated spitefully at her in-law's house. Insults were heaped on her and her family. Her mother-in-law's assaults were especially vicious. Even her food and clothing were neglected. Everyone treated her as if she had no rights in the household and had entered it by deceit. She spent her days crying.

4. What did Ramsundar do to raise the money for the dowry?

Ans: Ramsundar had used every possible way by pawning or selling things to raise the amount for dowry even before his daughter's marriage, but had failed. Even after marriage when his sons objected to sell their house, he started raising money by taking small loans from various quarters at high interest.

5. Why did Nirupama ask her father not to give any more money to her in-laws?

Ans: Nirupama got to know that her father had sold his house to raise money for her and this had upset her brothers. She was moved by the pitiable situation of her father. Thus she told her father not to give any more money to her in-laws. She even told him that she was not a money-bag and thus money would not increase her value.

6. What was the cause of Nirupama's death?

Ans: Nirupama's household was a bed of nails for her. Her husband was posted in some other city. As her father had not paid the said dowry she was not allowed to meet her parents. She was treated like a servant. She herself had also started neglecting her health. She was made to starve for food by her in-laws. Thus gradually she died of hunger.

7. What is the irony in Nirupama's lavish cremation by her in-laws?

Ans: Nirupama's in-laws starved her to death. They made her life a hell for a dowry of ₹ 10000, which remained unpaid by her father. But, when she died, the funeral rites were performed with appropriate pomp suitable to the Raybahadurs. They prepared a huge sandalwood pyre for her cremation which was never seen before and became famous for it. They did not even care to inform Nirupama's husband about her death and arranged for his second marriage with a dowry of ₹ 20000.

II. Write short notes:

1. Nirupama

Nirupama's story, although written in 1890s, still has its relevance. We still find several Nirupamas in society harassed or even brutally killed for dowry almost every day.

Nirupama's would be in-laws had demanded a dowry of ₹ 10000 and had pressurised her parents to give it before marriage. Her father somehow failed to collect the amount before marriage. The groom's family declared that the groom would not be brought for wedding till the full amount is given to them. But, this impasse was resolved as the groom rebelled and told his parents that he would anyhow marry the girl and he had nothing to do with money.

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2. Significance of the title - *Profit and Loss*

The theme of profit and loss resonates throughout the narrative. Each and every incident in the story results into someone's profit and others' loss. Nirupama's father tries to barter his daughter's happiness, by selling off his house, thus making his sons homeless. However, this supposedly profitable trade backfires, and he loses his sons and daughter. His sons feel that they were deprived of their right and the daughter feels sad for her father.

On the other hand, Raibahadur's only aim in life seems to be making a profit out of his son's marriage by means of a hefty dowry. However, as the groom refuses to bow down to his pressure tactics, he loses social standing and honor, being humiliated by his son's stubborn morality. Later, he spends a lot on Nirupama's funeral rites, even incurring a loan for the same. However, it is really doubtful whether he would be able to convince his son to remarry and sacrifice another lamb on the altar.

Even Nirupama, who was her father's darling, dreams of gaining an ideal husband, but ends up losing her father and brothers as well, before dying a painful death.

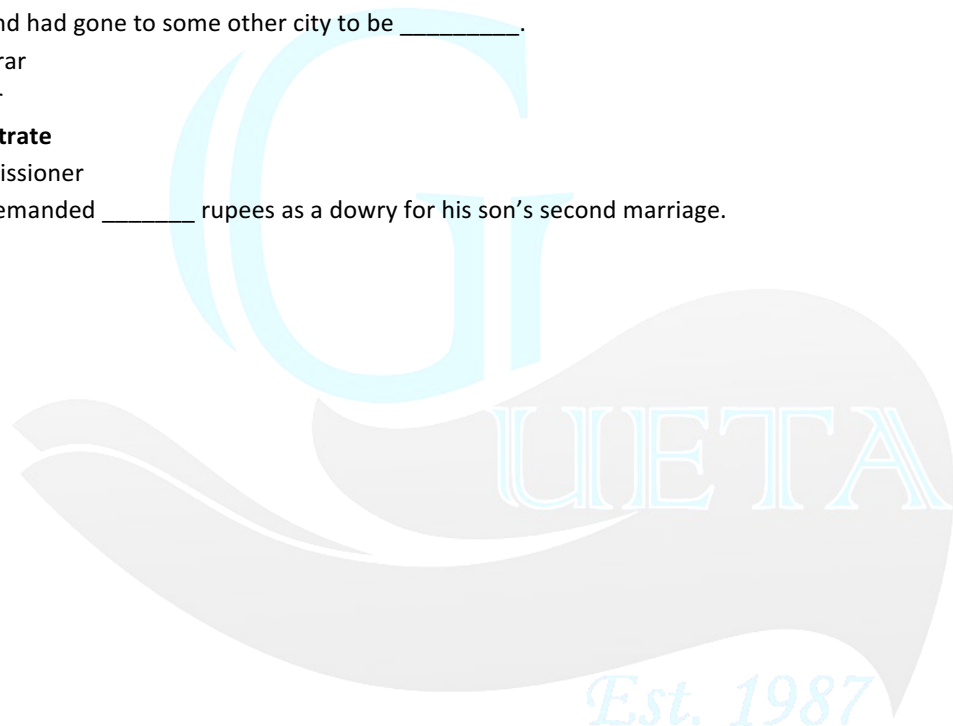
In short, every instance resonates the conversion of profit into loss, by the heedless actions of the characters, thus proving the aptness of title again and again.

And, quite fittingly the story continues through centuries, as our society continues to strive for inanimate wealth, while blindly sacrificing the honor and happiness of a bride.

III. Complete the statements by choosing the correct option from those given under them:

1. Nirupama was the _____ child of her parents.
 - a) seventh
 - b) first
 - c) fifth
 - d) **sixth**
2. On the wedding day, the groom _____.
 - a) ran away
 - b) asked for the dowry
 - c) **rebelled against his parents**
 - d) died
3. Ramsundar _____.
 - a) was welcome at his son-in-laws' house
 - b) was driven away from his son-in-law's house
 - c) lived at his son-in-laws house
 - d) **had no honour at his son-in-laws' house**

4. To save his daughter from contempt and shame, Ramsundar decided to _____.
- a) **sell his house**
 - b) bring her back
 - c) sell the jewellery
 - d) forget her
5. Nirupama _____.
- a) was happy at her in-laws' house
 - b) **wished to return from her in-laws' house**
 - c) blamed her father for her fate
 - d) was all set to teach her in-laws a lesson
6. Nirupama's father came to fetch her from her in-laws' house for the second time on the occasion of _____.
- a) **puja celebrations**
 - b) her birthday celebrations
 - c) her wedding anniversary
 - d) her mother's death
7. Nirupama's husband _____.
- a) asked for more dowry than his father
 - b) lowered the amount of dowry
 - c) did not utter a single word with regard to the dowry
 - d) **did not wish to take any dowry**
8. Nirupama's husband had gone to some other city to be _____.
- a) Deputy Registrar
 - b) Deputy Officer
 - c) **Deputy Magistrate**
 - d) Deputy Commissioner
9. The Raybahadur demanded _____ rupees as a dowry for his son's second marriage.
- a) 15000
 - b) **20000**
 - c) 25000
 - d) 30000



2. *The Miracle of Purun Bhagat*
Rudyard Kipling

I. Answer the following questions in brief

1. What did Purun Dass-the Prime Minister, do for the betterment of his state?

Ans: Purun Dass- the Prime Minister established schools for little girls, made roads and started State dispensaries and shows of agricultural implements, and published a yearly blue-book on the "Moral and Material Progress of the State". In his spare time he would endow scholarships for the study of the medicine and manufactures. Thus he tried to do his best for the betterment of his state.

2. What did Sir Purun Dass, K.C.I. E do just after a month of receiving his knighthood? What was he searching for that made him renounce his life as a Prime Minister?

Ans: Just after a month of receiving knighthood, Sir Purun Dass, K.C.I.E did what no Englishman would have dreamt of doing. He renounced the worldly affairs and resigned position, palace and power, took up the begging-bowl and ochre-coloured dress of a *sannyasi*. He had used his wealth and power for the betterment of the society. He had seen men and cities far and near. Now he felt like let things go and he was in search of peace of mind and a meaning of life.

3. After becoming a *sannyasi*, what were the things that Purun Bhagat carried with him?

Ans: Purun Dass carried nothing but an antelope skin and brass-handled crutch under his arm and a begging bowl of polished brown *coco-de-mer* in his hand. He went barefoot, alone, with eyes cast on the ground.

4. What did Purun Bhagat do after reaching the deserted shrine?

Ans: Purun Bhagat in his search for peace and an urge to get knowledge had headed towards Himalayas. After he crossed the Mutteeanee Pass, on his way he reached a deserted shrine of Kali- the goddess. He swept the stone floor clean, smiled at the grinning statue and made himself a little mud fireplace at the back of the shrine. He spread his antelope skin on a bed of fresh pine-needles, tucked his *bairagi*-his brass-handled crutch-under his armpit and sat down to rest.

5. How did the villagers treat Purun Bhagat? What did the villagers call him?

Ans: Purun Bhagat was warmly welcomed by the villagers. After meeting Purun Bhagat the village priest informed the villagers that a holy man had arrived near their village. The housewives of the village did their best to cook the most savoury meal for the Bhagat. The village priest took a full bowl of meal for Bhagat. He even asked Bhagat, if he needs a *chela* to beg for him. The villagers even showed their concern by asking him that if he needed a blanket or whether the food served was good.

6. What did Purun Bhagat do after realizing that the hill on which the villagers resided was going to be washed away?

Ans: The friends of Purun Bhagat at the deserted shrine- *langurs*, *barasinghas*, a musk deer and a bear warned him of the washing away of the mountain, on which the villagers resided, due to heavy rains. He immediately rushed towards the village guided and helped by his friends in the forest. He banged the doors and windows with his crutch and warned the villagers of the falling of the hill. He asked them to vacate the village immediately and come down the hill.

7. What did the villagers do after the death of Purun Bhagat?

Ans: Purun Bhagat was looked upon as a God by the villagers who resided on the hill where Bhagat stayed on a deserted shrine. He had saved the lives of the villagers by warning them and taking them away from the place before the hill got washed away by heavy rains. In this process he lost his life. After his death the villagers built a temple of this holy man. A little stone and an earth shrine; and they called it Bhagat's Hill. They worshipped there with lights and flowers and offerings.

II. Write short notes on

1. A pen-portrait of Purun Bhagat.
2. The title 'The Miracle of Purun Bhagat'

The title *The Miracle of Purun Bhagat* is apt and suggestive of the story as the story is a miraculous journey of Sir Purun Dass to Purun Bhagat. A compassionate narration of the passage of Purun Dass from a powerful Prime

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Minister (Diwan) of the native state of Mohiniwala to a holy man who spends the last many years of his life in the folds of the Himalayas.

A high caste Brahmin, Purun Dass was educated at the Bombay University. His post offered him luxuries but he lived a simple life. An enlightened administrator, he had a genuine concern for the moral and material development of his people. He understood the benefits of the English system of administration. He did every possible thing for the benefit of society and people around him. When he returned home, the Viceroy made him a Knight Commander of the Order of the Indian Empire and his official name became - Sir Purun Dass, K. C. I. E.

But only a month after the day he received such high honours, Sir Purun Dass did something which no Englishman would dream of doing. He returned the honours, resigned his position and renounced all material possessions. He became a *sannyasi* and left barefoot with a begging bowl on a long journey to search for the meaning of life. Sir Purun Dass, in his new avatar, became Purun Bhagat. This sudden decision was a miracle for those who knew him.

Purun Bhagat found a deserted shrine amidst a forest of deodars and settled there. The closest human habitation to his shrine was 1500 feet below in a small village in the valley. The villagers felt honoured and served the Bhagat by offering him good food. The animals around like *langurs*, *barasinghas*, *musk-deer* and a bear were his companions. The love of animals for him

Years passed. The children who used to bring food for the holy man now sent their own children with food. One summer night came such heavy rains as the hills had not known for many seasons. In the dark of the night, a *langur* pulled the Bhagat's hand hard and the *barasingha* entered his shrine. But it took the holy man some time to understand what these animals were trying to convey. He now realized that a part of the shrine was being washed away in the landslide caused by the downpour.

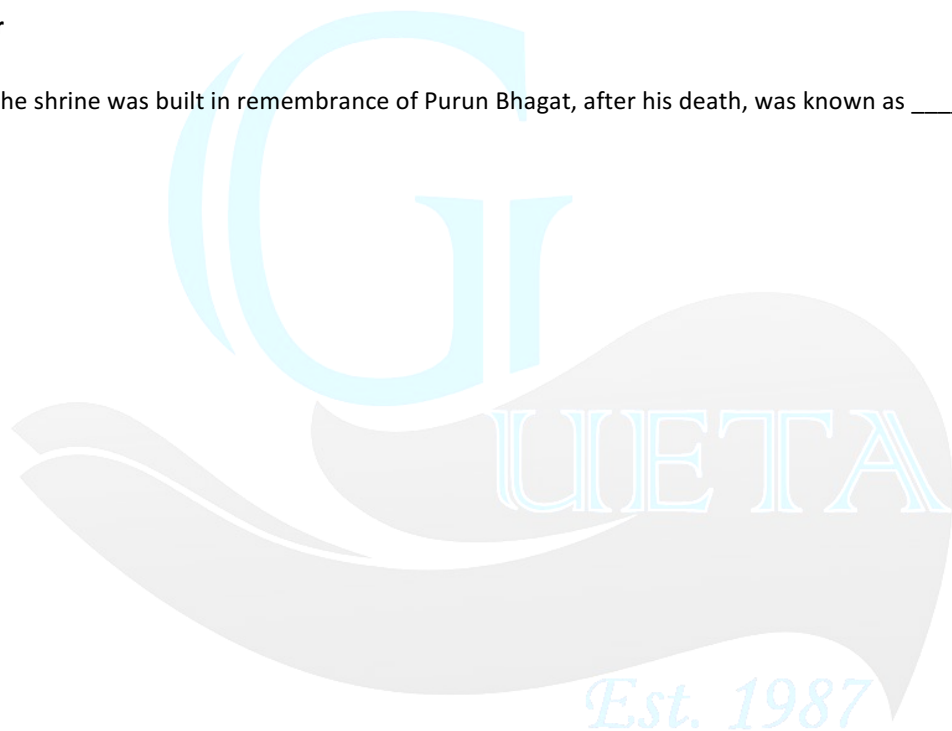
The old administrator came to the fore in place of the holy man. Holding a torch in his left hand and clutching the withers of the *barasingha* with his right, the Bhagat hurried down the slope and warned the villagers and saved their lives. The Bhagat ordered a head count of the villagers after they had reached there. For the next five minutes only the roar of the landslide could be heard. The hillside on which they had taken shelter was rocked to the blow of falling masses of rock.

The Bhagat, who had grown very old by now, died of the strain and the chill of the rain. The villagers built a temple in the holy man's memory and named the hill after him - the Bhagat's Hill. They worshipped in the temple with flowers and offerings. However, they never knew that the Bhagat had once been Sir Purun Dass – the Prime Minister of the Mohiniwala State.

III. **Complete the statements by choosing the correct option from those given under them:**

- Purun Dass's father was _____.
 - an important official in the English Government
 - an important official in Railways
 - an important official in a Hindu Court**
 - an important official in the Income Tax Department
- During his visit to London, Purun Dass talked about _____ to the English ladies.
 - Hindu social reforms**
 - women empowerment
 - the education system in India
 - the independence struggle
- Purun Dass gave up worldly affairs in search of _____.
 - wisdom
 - knowledge
 - the eternal power
 - peace, quiet and a law of his own**
- After reaching the deserted shrine of goddess Kali, Purun Bhagat _____.
 - cleaned the place and walked away
 - cleaned the place and sat down to rest**
 - worshipped the goddess and walked away
 - saw towards it and did not even care to stop

5. The village _____ came to welcome the stranger on the deserted shrine.
- sarpanch
 - school master
 - doctor
 - priest**
6. The women who served meal to Purun Bhagat murmured in his ear, ' _____ '.
- Speak for my husband before the gods, Bhagat...
 - Speak for my children before the gods Bhagat...
 - Speak for all the villagers before the gods Bhagat...
 - Speak for me before the gods Bhagat...**
7. The _____ were the first to come to meet the intruder, Purun Bhagat, in their wilderness.
- langurs**
 - royal
 -
 - stags
 - rabbits
 - Himalayan black bear
8. Purun Bhagat's reputation was that of a _____ amongst the villagers.
- cheater
 - fool
 - miracle-maker**
 - wild man
9. The hill, on which the shrine was built in remembrance of Purun Bhagat, after his death, was known as _____.
- Purun's Hill
 - Bhagat's Hill**
 - Miracle Hill
 - Holy Hill



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I. **Answer the following questions in brief**

1) **What did Kannan hear while returning home from the coconut garden?**

Ans: While returning from the coconut garden, as Kannan came to the end of the narrow track through the fields, he heard low moans in Thaiy's cottage.

2) **What was Thaiy's problem?**

Ans: Hearing the moaning sound from the cottage of Thaiy, Kannan pushed the door open and peeped inside. When he asked Thaiy that what was the matter, after a prelude of moans she said that she had a severe stomach ache.

3) **Why did Thaiy refuse to go to a physician?**

Ans: Thaiy was suggested by Kannan to visit a physician for her stomach ache. But, Thaiy bluntly refused saying that all doctors were swindlers. She believed that they gave coloured water to everyone and took away all their money. Kannan suggested that she should visit Government doctors, who have read English. But Thaiy refused saying that she would not go to those doctors having needles, knives and bitter pills even if they paid her.

4) **Describe the swindler who arrived to free Thaiy from the devil.**

Ans: Kannan took the benefit of Thaiy's reluctance to go a doctor for her stomach ache. He had a wicked thought in his mind. He told her that devil has entered her stomach and he knew a man who could exorcise the worst devil. A few days later he sent a swindler to her house. His face was ash-smeared and eyes flaming. He had three rows of a rosary around his neck.

5) **Who came to meet Kannan in the coconut garden? What was Kannan doing?**

Ans: A fortnight after stealing Thaiy's jewels, with the help of the swindler in disguise of a holy man, Kannan was going around the coconut garden marking the trees which were affected by pests. Just as he was thinking of unwinding his turban sleep for a while under the tree, he saw Bheema, the village constable, coming towards him.

6) **What does Kannan confess in front of the inspector?**

Ans: Kannan, after being thrashed by the inspector for around twenty minutes, confessed his crime. He told that he had conned Thaiy of her jewels with the help of his brother-in-law and had sold them to a pawnbroker. Although they were worth thirty-six rupees, the shopkeeper had given them just eighteen.

7) **What did Thaiy do after getting back her jewels?**

Ans: Thaiy got back her jewels with the help of the Inspector. That evening Thaiy went to the temple of Hanuman, She broke a coconut, lighted a piece of camphor before the God, and thanked God by whispered fervently that it was good that He gave her the stomach ache again so that she could realise that she was conned.

II. **Write short notes on**

1) **Thaiy**

Thaiy was an old woman. She lived alone in the village. Her son was away in the town. One day Thaiy had an unbearable pain in the stomach. Kannan, the coconut farmer, told her to see the doctor. But she was sceptical of doctors and afraid of pills and needles. Then Kannan told Thaiy that she was possessed by the devil. He warned her that the devil would move upward from the stomach and break her skull before getting out of the body. Kannan then told Thaiy that he knew a holy man who could cure her of the devil.

A few days later the holy man appeared. Thaiy had got every necessary item for the exorcism rites. Amid strange incantations, the holy man struck Thaiy on the back with a cane three times. Thus, he made Thaiy feel that the devil inside her has agreed to leave her body. He inquired about Thaiy's jewels. She took them out from a grain pot. She had hidden the jewels for a future daughter-in-law.

The holy man put all the jewels in a mud-pot. The cane struck Thaiyi for the final time. The holy man sealed the pot with a piece of cloth. He told Thaiyi that the devil was now confined inside the pot and that he (the devil) would die there. The holy man warned Thaiyi not to open the pot for three months. The devil would kill her, he said, if she did. Thaiyi believed him; but as soon as the stomach ache revisited her, she realised that she has been made a fool. She opened the pot and found that her jewels were stolen by the swindler in disguise of the holy man. She complained to the police. Kannan and his brother-in-law were caught with the jewels and thus Thaiyi got her jewels back.

2) Kannan

Kannan was a man who lived in the same village as that of Thaiyi. Once, while returning home from the coconut garden, he heard low moans in Thaiyi's cottage. When he peeped inside he found Thaiyi lying on the floor writhing in pain. He told her to see the doctor. But she was sceptical of doctors and afraid of pills and needles. Just then a wicked idea of cheating Thaiyi entered his mind. He told Thaiyi that she was possessed by the devil. He warned her that the devil would move upward from the stomach and break her skull before getting out of the body. Kannan then told Thaiyi that he knew a holy man who could cure her of the devil.

Kannan assured Thaiyi of sending that holy man to her soon. He made a plan along with his brother-in-law and disguised his brother-in-law as the said holy man. The con man disguised as the holy man went to Thaiyi's house, created a drama of driving away the devil, stole her jewels. Later Kannan and his brother-in-law sold those jewels and shared the money.

But, unfortunately Thaiyi rose to the fact soon that she was cheated. She went to the police for help. Kannan was thus caught unaware. The police recovered jewels from him and his brother-in-law and handed them back to Thaiyi.

III. Complete the statements by choosing the correct option from those given under them:

- 1) Kannan suggested Thaiyi to go to a _____.
 - a) gynaecologist
 - b) oncologist
 - c) physician**
 - d) paediatrician
- 2) Thaiyi considered the doctors to be _____.
 - a) burglars
 - b) gossip-mongers
 - c) liars
 - d) swindlers**
- 3) Kannan narrated the frightening story of his _____ to Thaiyi.
 - a) uncle
 - b) niece**
 - c) wife
 - d) child
- 4) The holy man who arrived at Thaiyi's house had _____.
 - a) an ash-smearred face and flaming eyes**
 - b) a pale yellow face and dull eyes
 - c) a rude face and bright eyes
 - d) a simple face and flaming eyes
- 5) The holy man commanded, Thaiyi to put her _____ in the pot
 - a) head
 - b) clothes
 - c) jewels**
 - d) bangles

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- 6) The holy man advised Thaiyi to keep the pot closed for_____.
- a) five months
 - b) two months
 - c) four months
 - d) three months**
- 7) A fortnight after Thaiyi's treatment by the holy man, Kannan went to the coconut garden to mark the trees _____.
- a) with fruits
 - b) affected by pests**
 - c) with no leaves
 - d) with no fruits
- 8) The constable told Kannan that the Inspector had called him to _____.
- a) drive out a devil from his wife's body
 - b) help him solve a case
 - c) plant the coconut seedlings**
 - d) answer a few queries



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I. **Answer the following questions in brief**

- 1) **What was the mission on which Jamadar Tukaram Shindey and a havaldar were sent by the newly appointed Bachcha Lieutenant?**

Ans: The Japanese army invaded Burma during Second World War. Indian soldiers serving in the British Indian Army took part in these campaigns. One evening, Lt. Wilson- the Bachcha Lieutenant, sent Jamadar Shindey and Havaldar Ranga on a patrol duty. Their mission was to find out the nearest Japanese Post.

- 2) **Why did Tukaram order the *havaldar* to go back to the camp? Why did he decide to continue to stay on the mission?**

Ans: Jamadar Tukaram and Havaldar Ranga were on a patrol duty to find out the nearest Japanese post. A mile from the camp Shindey decided to go alone and he asked Ranga to wait for him at that spot. Half a mile up Tukaram found the Japanese post, but he could not make out the enemy soldiers in the squad or their weapons. So he decided to stay on the mission till morning and get perfect details about the number of soldiers and weapons with the enemies. He asked Havaldar Ranga to go back to the camp and report Lt. Wilson that Tukaram would come next day with the detailed information.

- 3) **Why were the Japanese digging trenches in the middle of the cart track?**

Ans: The Japanese soldiers were digging trenches right in the middle of the cart track to put down AP mines and lay booby trap wires for the enemies all along the track.

- 4) **Describe the ruthless killing of the dog by a Japanese soldier.**

Ans: The Japanese soldiers had laid a trap for their enemies. They were dug in about thirty yards up the slope of the hill to the north of the track and they were armed with rifles, two LMGs and a Japanese type mortar. There was also a dog with them lying quietly in the sun tied up to a stake buried in the middle of the track.

But suddenly the dog began to yelp. This was dangerous for the Japanese as it would give a hint to their enemies of their presence. Thus a Japanese soldier cruelly attacked the dog with a heavy spade, He missed twice, but the third hit was on the dog's skull. The dog fell limply on the ground and lay silently twitching for some seconds and then died.

- 5) **What did Lt. Wilson do when Jamadar Tukaram and the *havaldar* who accompanied him, did not return?**

Ans: Although Havaldar Ranga was sent back to the camp by Shindey, he could not reach and was killed by a Japanese sniper. Thus when both Jamadar Tukaram Shindey and Havaldar Ranga did not return, Lt. Wilson decided to go on patrol himself to find the nearest Japanese post. He was totally ignorant of Shindey's findings about the enemy trap.

- 6) **What did Tukaram do to save the Bachcha Lieutenant from getting trapped in the Japanese trap?**

Ans: Tukaram shouted at the top of his voice to warn Bachcha Lieutenant about the Japanese trap; thereby alerting the Japanese soldiers about his presence. He then charged at the trenches of the enemy, firing his stengun and yelling hoarsely at the same time. Tukaram single-handedly attacked the enemies. He again and again asked Lt. Wilson to go back and save his life.

- 7) **Describe the brave act of the Bachcha Lieutenant after seeing Jamadar Tukaram being hit by the bullets.**

Ans: Bachcha Lieutenant and his tow guides saw Jamadar Tukaram's brave act of single-handedly attacking the Japanese soldiers. They saw him facing the enemy bullets and still asking the Bachcha Lieutenant to go back and save his life. But the Lieutenant did not agree to leave Jamadar Tukaram there alone. He uttered an unaccustomed oath and ran madly into the dust rising from the bullets which kicked the road near the anthill. He picked up the Jamadar and slung him across his shoulder and ran and stumbled and fell again, but continued to run. The Japanese soldiers

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targeted bullets even at him. Thus both Jamadar Tukaram and Bachcha Lieutenant were shot dead by the Japanese soldiers. This was Bachcha Lieutenant's first and also his last action in war.

II. Write short notes on

1) Jamadar Tukaram Shindey

The Japanese army invaded Burma (now Myanmar) in 1942 during World War II to drive out the British government which had been set up there. In 1943, the Allied powers tried to reassert their control over the coastal Arakan province (now Rakhine state) in western Burma. Indian soldiers serving in the British Indian Army took part in these campaigns. The action, in ***Bachcha Lieutenant*** takes place in the Arakan jungles about this time.

Jamadar Tukaram Shindey had been brought up in the North Kanara (in west Karnataka) jungles and so, he moved in the Burmese jungles with a great ease. Lt. Wilson, an Intelligence Officer, never allowed a single soldier to go on patrol duty. And that was exactly what Shindey preferred in the jungle.

One evening, Lt. Wilson sent Jamadar Shindey and Havaladar Ranga on patrol duty. Their mission was to find out the nearest Japanese post. Shindey found it, but he could not make out the number of the enemy or their weapons. He decided to stay on for the night. He asked Ranga to go back to the camp and inform Bachcha Lieutenant that Shindey would report back next evening with detailed intelligence.

Before dawn, Shindey crawled and positioned himself behind a large uprooted tree hardly fifty yards from the Japanese post. Now he could easily observe the enemy movement. In the morning, Shindey saw about twenty Japanese soldiers digging shallow trenches in the middle of the road (cart track). They were laying mines and booby traps. This was a vital piece of intelligence. Shindey congratulated himself for the success of his mission.

Totally unaware of Shindey's plan, it was imperative for Lt. Wilson to find the nearest Japanese post. At midday, he took two jawans and went out on patrol. From his hide out, Shindey saw three men in olive green walking in the direction of the Japanese post. Lt. Wilson was ahead of the other two. Shindey had to act quickly. If Bachcha Lieutenant was not warned in time, he would be killed by in an ambush. Shindey shouted to Lt. Wilson about the danger lying ahead. In doing that he had disclosed his own presence. He hurled grenades at the Japanese soldiers but they fired heavily at him. Thus, he lost his life in an effort to save Lt. Wilson.

2) Bachcha Lieutenant

The Japanese army invaded Burma (now Myanmar) in 1942 during World War II to drive out the British government which had been set up there. In 1943, the Allied powers tried to reassert their control over the coastal Arakan province (now Rakhine state) in western Burma. Indian soldiers serving in the British Indian Army took part in these campaigns. The action, in ***Bachcha Lieutenant*** takes place in the Arakan jungles about this time.

Lt. Wilson, aged 19, joined his duties only two months ago. He had not seen action in war. "Bachcha" in Hindi means "child" or "young person." For his youth and inexperience, Lt. Wilson was called "Bachcha Lieutenant" by the Indian soldiers under his command.

One evening, Lt. Wilson sent Jamadar Shindey and Havaladar Ranga on patrol duty. Their mission was to find out the nearest Japanese post. Shindey and Ranga were ordered to return to the camp by the end of the day. But Tukaram Shindey sent Ranga back and he preferred to stay there till morning and get the detailed information about the enemy soldiers and the weapons they had. Havaladar Ranga was shot dead by the enemies and could not reach the camp. Lt. Wilson disliked Shindey's disobeying the orders.

Lt. Wilson along with two jawans started on patrol to find the nearest Japanese post. From his hideout, Shindey saw three men in olive green walking in the direction of the Japanese post. Lt. Wilson was ahead of the other two. Shindey had to act quickly. If Bachcha Lieutenant was not warned in time, he would be killed by in an ambush. Shindey shouted to Lt. Wilson about the danger lying ahead. In doing that he had disclosed his own presence. He hurled grenades at the Japanese soldiers but they fired heavily at him. Facing the enemy bullets, Lt. Wilson moved ahead to rescue Shindey. Lt. Wilson ignored Shindey's exhortations to save his own life by hiding in the jungle. He picked up Shindey on his shoulders and began to run. Both of them fell to the bullets of the Japanese soldiers. This was Bachcha Lieutenant's first and also his last action in war.

III. Complete the statements by choosing the correct option from those given under them:

- 1) Jamadar Tukaram was on his second campaign in _____.
 a) China
 b) Thailand
c) Japan
 d) Burma
- 2) While on his mission, Tukaram had dry chappatis and _____ for his dinner.
 a) rice
b) two large onions
 c) pickle
 d) salt
- 3) Jamadar Tukaram along with another scout was sent out to find out _____.
 a) the number of soldiers in the enemy camp
 b) the number of ammunitions with the enemy
c) the nearest enemy position
 d) whether the enemy had escaped or not
- 4) After being ordered by Jamadar Tukaram to go back to the camp, Havaladar Ranga _____.
 a) remained where he was
 b) did not follow the orders
 c) returned back to the base
d) lost his way and got killed
- 5) The Japanese soldiers were _____ right in the middle of the Taungdaw track.
 a) sitting with their rifles
b) digging shallow trenches
 c) making tents
 d) patrolling
- 6) A Japanese soldier ruthlessly killed a _____.
 a) donkey
 b) horse
c) dog
 d) camel
- 7) Jamadar Tukaram grinned and smacked his lips because he _____.
 a) killed an enemy soldier
 b) escaped the attack from the enemy
c) knew exactly where the enemy had dug their position
 d) knew exactly the amount of ammunitions the enemy had
- 8) Lieutenant Wilson _____.
a) waited for Tukaram to come back the next day
 b) sent another soldier in search of Tukaram the next day
 c) along with two other jawans decided to retreat
 d) along with two jawans reached near the Japanese position where Tukaram was hiding
- 9) After Jamadar Tukaram was shot by the enemy, the Bachcha Lieutenant _____.
a) picked up the Jamadar, slung him across his shoulder and ran
 b) left the Jamadar dying and ran
 c) went towards the enemy soldiers to kill them
 d) was frightened and could not react to it

I. Answer the following questions in brief

1) What happened when Surekha removed her *mangalsutra*? What did she recall then?

Ans: When Surekha removed the *mangalsutra*, her heart was beating so hard that she felt it would stop with her next breath. She remembered having read somewhere that a Tibetan Lama had once said that the heart of a star beats about 270 crore times and then it dies.

2) Why was Surekha's father against her marriage to Raj?

Ans: Surekha was a young Konkani girl. She fell in love with Raj, who was a Maharashtrian boy. Surekha's father did not approve of this marriage as the boy was of other caste. To add to the misery Raj was not earning money and so Surekha's father was against their marriage.

3) What were the situations that forced Surekha to pawn her *mangalsutra*?

Ans: Surekha married Raj against her father's will. She even put her mother's *mangalsutra* around her neck and felt as if she had been blessed by God with a long life for Raj. Raj, on the other hand, drowned himself in alcohol after being a failure in getting employment. In those days, Surekha was forced to pawn her *mangalsutra* to keep the fire burning at her home. She even had to take up a job to run the house.

4) What was the cause of Raj's death?

Ans: Raj made all possible efforts to get a job after his marriage with Surekha; but he failed. To forget the sorrow of his failures he kept himself intoxicated. Thus, over consumption of alcohol became the cause of his death.

5) Why did Surekha agree to remarry?

Ans: Surekha was left with two kids to take care of, after Raj's death. She never cared to bring her *mangalsutra* back from the pawnbroker's shop, as there were no hands to put it around her neck. In her loneliness she was approached by a widower- a father of two children, for marriage. Surekha gave her life another chance by marrying that man. She allowed him put a thrice repaired *mangalsutra* around her neck.

6) How was Surekha deceived in her second marriage?

Ans: Surekha married a widower who was already a father of two children. She hoped that her children would thereby get father's love and she would be a mother to his children. But, she was deceived. The man was a hypocrite. He neither became her husband, nor her children's father. He pocketed all her earnings and ran away.

7) What did Surekha do at the end of the story and why?

Ans: One day, Surekha was sleeping between her children and she felt as if their gentle breath were trying to find a spark in the ashes. She remembered that after 270 crore heartbeats the star that turns into ashes produces the spark for a new star. She removed all the past sad years of her life. She realised that she was searching happiness outside in someone else; instead of searching within. She bought a new *mangalsutra* from the market and put it around her neck all by herself. Thus she emerged as a new independent woman.

II. Write short notes on

1) Surekha's experiences in both her marriages

2) The symbolic meaning of *mangalsutra* in this story

270 Crore Heartbeats depicts, in flashback, Surekha's journey from emotional dependence to individual autonomy. Customarily, the husband gives the *mangalsutra* (Sanskrit word literally means "auspicious thread") to his wife at the time of or after the marriage. The *mangalsutra* is supposed, on the one hand, to be a symbol of marital bliss for the wife and, on the other, an assurance of her sustenance from the husband. But throughout the story, the *mangalsutra*

is presented as a motif of domestic misery and deception. Finally, by wearing her own *mangalsutra*, Surekha denotes her freedom from the emotional bondage implicit in marriage.

A simple Konkani girl, Surekha married Raj, a Maharashtrian, against her father's wishes. Raj was penniless. Surekha bought a *mangalsutra* for herself. Though she could afford only a cheap one, she thus expressed her deep faith in the *mangalsutra* for all it traditionally symbolized. When her father softened towards her, Surekha requested only one thing from him - her dead mother's *mangalsutra*. However, financial troubles forced her to pawn it. She provided for her husband and their two children. Raj took to drinking and died. By then Surekha saved enough money but she did not redeem the *mangalsutra*. After her husband's death, who would put it around her neck?

Many years passed. A widower came to Surekha with his own two children and his late wife's heavy, golden *mangalsutra* that had been repaired at three places. Though initially hesitant, she wore this *mangalsutra*. But the man turned out to be a fraud and Surekha returned the *mangalsutra*. While removing it from her neck, she remembered the words of a Tibetan Lama: a star beats about 270 crore times and then it dies. Surekha felt that she had had her 270 crore heartbeats and that her heart would stop with the next breath. As time passed, self-realization dawned on her one day while she was sleeping. Surekha regained confidence from the idea that the spark for a new star rises from the ashes of the dead one. Like a new star she became free from all the past sad years of life. Next morning, she bought a new *mangalsutra* and wore it with her own hands. She cannot be divorced or widowed now, she told herself. From her painful experiences, Surekha emerged as an independent woman.

III. Complete the statements by choosing the correct option from those given under them:

- 1) Surekha heard the story, of a star beating about 270 crore times and then dying, from a _____.
 - a) Hindu priest
 - b) Tibetan Lama**
 - c) Buddhist priest
 - d) clergyman
- 2) Surekha fell in love with a _____ boy.
 - a) Gujarati
 - b) Christian
 - c) Maharashtrian**
 - d) Rajasthani
- 3) Surekha asked for her _____ *mangalsutra* from her father.
 - a) mother's**
 - b) sister's
 - c) aunt's
 - d) sister-in-law's
- 4) After possessing the *mangalsutra* given by her father, Surekha felt as if she had _____.
 - a) achieved what she desired
 - b) become a wealthier person
 - c) was blessed by her father
 - d) been blessed by God with a long life for Raj**
- 5) Surekha's husband died due to _____.
 - a) a severe illness
 - b) a heart attack
 - c) excessive drinking**
 - d) an accident
- 6) Surekha did not bring back her *mangalsutra* from the pawnbroker because _____.
 - a) the hands that could put it around her neck were no more**
 - b) she did not have enough money to do so
 - c) she hated her husband and did not wish to put on the *mangalsutra*
 - d) the pawnbroker had sold it to someone else

- 7) Once while sleeping with her children, Surekha remembered that after 270 crore heartbeats a star that turns into ashes _____.
- a) **produces the spark for a new star**
 - b) never rises again
 - c) becomes a painful remembrance forever
 - d) burns the soul if touched once again
- 8) Like a new-born star, Surekha removed _____.
- a) the old clothes from her closet
 - b) **all the past sad years of her life**
 - c) the old *mangalsutra* from her neck
 - d) the possessions of the children of her second husband
- 9) Surekha bought a new *mangalsutra* and wore it all by herself saying that it would not _____.
- a) break again
 - b) divorce her
 - c) make her a widow
 - d) **divorce her or make her a widow**



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