

## 1.HIS FIRST FLIGHT – SUMMARY



This imaginary story conveys the message that one learns by taking courage and not by sitting idle. A young seagull is fed lovingly by his parents. But when the time comes for him to fly, he feels himself afraid. At last, his mother hits upon a plan by persuading him with food in her beak. And the seagull finally learns how to fly. The young seagull was alone on his ledge. His two brothers and his sister had already flown away. When he wanted to fly, he could not do so. He was afraid of flying. When his brothers and

sister flew, he failed to gather the courage to fly. He was really very sad. His father and mother came to him. They asked him to fly. They even rebuked him. They threatened if he did not fly, he would die of hunger there. But he could not move.

That was twenty-four hours ago. Since then, no one has come near him. He had watched his parents and brothers and sisters flying. His parents had been perfecting his brothers and sister how to dive for fish. They called him to fly. But he could not. The sun was rising. It was getting very hot. He felt the heat. He had not eaten for long. He had found a dried piece of a fish tail. But it was not enough. There was not even a single piece of food anywhere for him. He had gone forward and backward on the ledge. But he



couldn't fly. He wanted to reach his parents. There was a deep sea below. The ridge was high.

The seagull closed his eyes standing on one leg. He had the other leg hidden under his wing. He pretended to sleep. He thought that his parents didn't take notice of him. However, mother was looking at him. He saw her tearing at a piece of fish at her feet. He was mad to see the food. He gave out a sound to get it. His mother replied in a sound and looked at him. She picked a piece of the fish. She flew across to him with it. He leaned out tapping the



rock with his feet. His mother flew across trying to get nearer to him. The seagull had the food within the reach of his beak. But he could not get at it.

The seagull waited a moment in surprise. He wondered why his mother did not come nearer. He was so mad with hunger that he dived at the fish. He fell outwards with a scream and downwards into space. His mother had swooped upwards. As he passed beneath her, he heard the swish of her wings. Then a great fear caught him. His heart stood still. He could hear nothing. But it only lasted for a moment. The next moment, he felt his wings spread outwards. He felt the wind rushing against his breast feathers. It rushed under his stomach, and against his wings. He was not falling headlong now. He was soaring slowly downwards and upwards. He was no longer afraid.

The seagull gave out a joyous scream. He soared higher calling 'ga, ga, ga'. His mother gave out 'gaw col-ah'. Then his father flew over him screaming. Then he saw his brothers and sister flying around him. They were roaring and diving. Then he completely forgot that he had not always been able to fly. He commended himself to dive and soar. He was near the sea now, flying straight over it. He saw a vast green sea beneath him. His parents and his brothers and sister had landed on the green surface of water ahead of him. They were calling him to do the same thing. He dropped his leg to stand on the green sea. But his legs sank into it. He cried with fear. He tried to rise again flapping his wings. But he was tired and weak with hunger. He could not rise. His feet sank into the green sea. His belly touched it but he sank no further. He was floating on it. Around him was his family, crying

and praising him. It was offering him scraps of dog-fish. He had made his first flight.

### His First Flight-Short Summary

‘His First Flight’ written by Liam O’ Flaherty is a story of a young seagull who is afraid of flying. A family of seagulls lived on a ledge. A young seagull is left alone as he is afraid to fly and is one among the slow learners. All that this young seagull needed was motivation. By way of punishment, his family left him alone on the ledge and flew away. They upbraided him, taunted him for cowardice and even threatened to let him starve. He remained hungry for twenty-four hours and was unable to shed off his fright of flight. He cried begging his mother to bring him some food.

She picked up a piece of fish in her beak and flew across him and stood just in front of him. The piece of fish in her beak was almost within the reach of his beak. The young seagull was mad with hunger. He dived at the fish. The next moment he found himself falling outwards and downwards into space. Instinctively, he spread his wings and flapped them. He soared upwards and all his

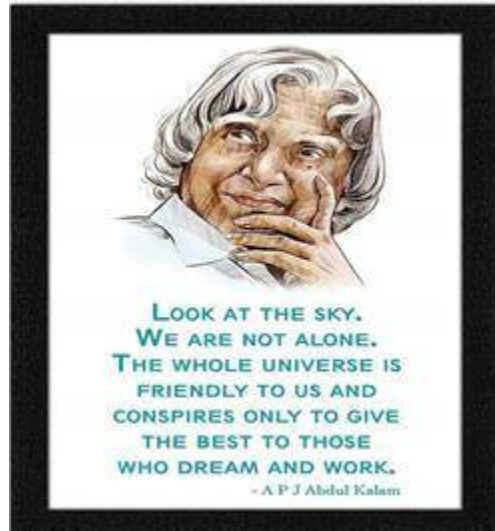


fear is gone. It was a joyous moment for his family. He forgot that he was ever afraid of flying.

## 2. I WILL FLY BY DR. APJ ABDUL KALAM

### SHORT NOTE

“I Will Fly” is an adapted version of Dr. A.P.J Abdul Kalam’s speech. Dr. Kalam believes that the ignited mind of the youth is the most powerful resource on the earth, under the earth and above the earth. He inaugurated a programme called “Sasthrayaan” at Paravur in Kerala which means the propagation of science. The mission of Sasthrayaan was to ensure the preparation of about two thousand students from different schools to make them eligible for engineers, scientists, doctors and civil servants. Kalam’s inaugural address was on the topic “Science Empowers the Nation”. After the address, many raised their hands to ask questions. Abdul Kalam shares in this unit the relevance of a question asked by a teenager. The boy expressed his fear to talk to his teachers and friends. He admitted that he had not yet asked any question in his class. The boy really wanted to become a marine engineer. Dr. Kalam was completely surprised. He appreciated the boy for asking that question and recited a beautiful poem named “I Will Fly”. He instilled courage and confidence in the boy by reciting that poem. He asked him to fly using his wings of goodness, trust, potentialities, greatness and confidence. He also encouraged all of them to be unique by fighting the hardest battle in life. He gave confidence by stressing that these things would help us to attain our goal.



### I WILL FLY –DETAILED SUMMARY

Here APJ Abdul Kalam gives a stimulating speech by citing a very simple example of a bird. Here he highlights the fact that everyone is born with potential to do something great .We all possess inborn ideas to fulfill our dreams within us. Kalam gave this speech as the inaugural lecture of Sasthrayaan mission .The mission of Sasthrayaan was the preparation of about 2000 students from different schools to be engineers, doctors, scientists, qualified managers and civil servants, which in turn would empower 2000 families .He exhorted the youth to be unique .He stated that the world around us wants us to be like others. At home the parents would tell children to be like the children of the neighbors. At school, the teacher would ask all the students to follow the path of the toppers of the class.





Kalam tells that we should not be a copycat. We should have our own identity and we should be unique.

Dr Kalam begins the speech by stating that the ignited mind of the youth is the most powerful resource on the earth, under the earth and above the earth. After the talk, the students were asked to raise their doubts. Some students were selected from the many that raised their hand. One boy asked a doubt

which gathered the attention of all the listeners and all were eager to hear the answer. The boy raised his concern about his lack of confidence. The boy said that he is diffident to talk to his teachers and friends. The boy was from a remote village and he himself admitted that he was nervous .He added that he couldn't gather confidence because he did not get it through his education all those years.

The boy wanted to be a marine engineer. He wanted to travel in a ship. He wanted to be the captain of the ship. He wanted to build the engine of the ship. He wanted to know if he would be able to do all these

.He also wanted to know how he would be able to attain his goals. The audience looked at Dr Kalam when the boy completed the question because it was a very tough question to answer. The audience was curious to know what reply Kalam was going to give to this young boy. Kalam valued the boy's question because it was the most difficult question and the boy was echoing the fear of many.

He appreciated the boy for asking that question and recited a beautiful poem named "I Will Fly". The poem was about a bird. The bird said that it is rich with goodness, trust, potentialities, greatness and confidence. It stated very confidently that it was never ready to crawl as it had wings to fly. The poem instilled courage and confidence in the boy and the boy turned confident. Kalam concluded the talk by enunciating the students to fight the hardest battle to attain a unique place in life.



### 3. IF BY RUDYARD KIPLING-SUMMARY

‘If’ is a didactic poem on the specific traits of a good leader. Through a series of paradoxes, Kipling tells his son how the middle path – a golden mean in everything will serve as the secret key to this world and everything in it.



The poem exhorts the reader to be patient, honest, and straight, especially when faced with opposition and temptation to act in a less virtuous manner. He may have to face criticism, opposition, lies, and hatred. When others blame him, he must neither lose heart nor retaliate the same way. He must remain confident and believe in himself; yet he must do his best to see the grounds for others doubting him. In all things he must hold on to his strength of character, morals, and to his values, yet he must not look too good or wise.

He also says that we have to face success and failure alike. An ideal man cannot be deceived into thinking either triumph or disaster final. Sometimes he may even have to risk the fruits of a lifetime’s toil, lose everything and start anew when nothing but sheer will power remains. Still he must hold on.

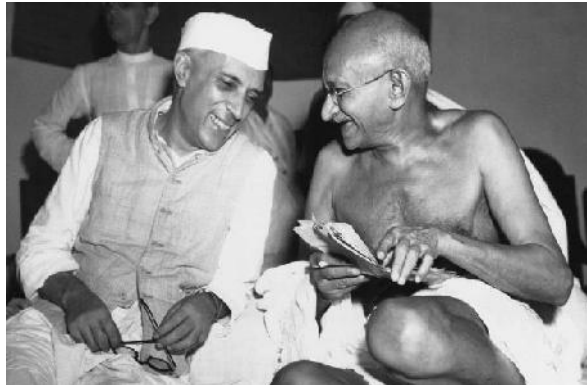
When it comes to people, he must be able to walk with kings and talk with crowds and not to lose the common touch. All men should be given their due; yet none too much. He should remain upright so that he won’t be swayed or hurt by friends or foes.

Praise of a strong work ethic is echoed throughout the poem, as is a warning against idleness. The poem also places higher value on the ability to act than on the ability to dream and philosophize.

Throughout the poem, Kipling stresses on action without desire, equanimity, humility, and uprightness and stresses that we have the right to perform your actions, but are not entitled to the fruits of the actions.

## 4. AND THEN GANDHI CAME -- JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

“And Then Gandhi Came” is an excerpt taken from Discovery of India by Jawaharlal Nehru. Jawaharlal Nehru begins the extract by stating that even though World War I was ended, there was no peace in India. Instead of peace, there were “repressive legislation” and “martial law in the Punjab”. Eventually



India was isolated by rest of the countries. We were still under the clutches of British. Since Indians did not know technical and physical works, India began to face poverty. No one gave solace and hope to Indians.

But Jawaharlal Nehru says that even though we were facing poverty, Indians did not step back. They worked very hard. They toiled day and night. As India was amidst injustice, Indians were in need of a powerful leader.

Indians were scared by British. Owing to the fear, they did whatever British asked them to do. Since Indians have fear, they believe in wrong things. But with the arrival of Gandhiji, the condition begins to change. Indians begin to uphold truth which in turn helped them to evolve themselves into fearless people. With the arrival of Gandhi, there occurred tremendous changes in India. With his ideologies and knowledge, he could change the mind of the Indians. He removed veils of ignorance from the eyes of Indians. He pointed out that Indians were exploited by British in all fields. So he declared them to strike back rather than becoming the slaves of British.

According to Jawaharlal Nehru, “The essence of his teaching was fearlessness and truth” which helped India to achieve prosperity. Gandhi was a symbol of “uncompromising” truth. Nehru firmly believed that the way Gandhi upheld truth better than anyone else.

Gandhiji influenced people in many ways. Some people were partially influenced by Gandhiji's ideologies. Others just accepted his ideologies and made changes in their lives. It was only a few who did not accept his ideologies.

Gandhiji upheld two actions. He fought against British rule and against social evils such as sati, untouchability, child marriage, etc. Nehru then mentions about the prime objective of Congress which was the freedom of India. Another one was the national unity which could be achieved by solving the problems of minorities, depressed classes and untouchability.

British propagated fear among Indians. They also ensured support from higher classes by catering their vested interests. Gandhiji attacked both these. He asked title-holders to give up their title. Since he started to lead a simple life, many rich people start to imitate him.

In order to spread the ideologies of Gandhiji, his followers went to village. For the first time, the villagers began to know about their rights, and they began to revolt against the British.

Then Nehru talks about the India which Gandhiji had dreamed. Gandhi envisaged an India in which people would live in harmony. There would be no untouchability, use of drugs and alcohol and ensured gender equality. He stressed on following Indian culture.

Nehru closes the excerpt by telling that Gandhi could influence the masses in such an effective manner as he read the mind of Indians and worked for psychological reformation in befitting ways and manners.

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## 5. THE PRICE OF FLOWERS - PRABHAT KUMAR MUKHOPADHYAY



The Price of Flowers is a story by Prabhat Kumar Mukhopadhyay which tells the story of an Indian man named Gupta who meets a poor girl in England. He meets her from a restaurant. The girl enquires the cashier of the restaurant whether Mr. Gupta is an Indian. Mr. Gupta turns curious to know why the girl made such an enquiry. He enquires in detail about the girl. He understands that the girl does not earn much and can afford lunch only on Saturdays, the day in which she gets her weekly payment. He searches for her in the shops of that lane and cannot find her out. He wanted to meet her at any cost and the next Saturday Mr Gupta visits the restaurant and finds her there. He asks the girl why she enquired about him. He talks to her and understands that the girl's brother is a soldier in India. Her name is Alice and people call her Maggie. Her mother wants to know more about India as she is worried about her son's safety. Gupta visits the girl's mother at her home and tells her that India is a safe country. The girl's brother Frank sent the family a ring from India. Frank believed that the ring could show them future. Maggie tells him that the ring can show them people who are very far away from them. The family wants Gupta to look at the crystal and see whether he can see Frank in it. They believe that Gupta will be able to see as he is a Hindu from India. They compel Gupta to look into the crystal and Gupta does accordingly .However, Gupta cannot see anything when he looks at the crystal.

A few months later, Gupta learns that Frank is fighting in a war in Punjab. The mother becomes ill worrying about her son. They do not know whether he is alive or not. The mother wants Gupta to look at the crystal again and see whether he can see Frank. Maggie requests Gupta to tell that Frank is fine even if he cannot see him. Gupta tells Mrs Clifford (Maggie's mother) that he scan see Frank in the crystal and he is well.

Later Gupta is shocked to learn that Frank has died in the war. He has died even before the false information was given to the mother. Gupta feels very sad about it. He is leaving for India to take up a new job. Maggie visits him before his departure. She gives him a shilling to buy flowers and place them on her brother's grave in Punjab. Even if Gupta knows that that money was hard –earned, Gupta accepts the same as she will not be able to offer or spend anything for her brother anymore. Gupta prepares to leave the place and the story winds up there.



## 6.DEATH THE LEVELLER BY JAMES SHIRLEY

‘Death the Leveller’ by James Shirley is a philosophical poem which talks on equality ,the ultimate truth. It details about death that tramples down human pride and pomp. It presents death as the ultimate conqueror that is showing to equality to all alike.



The poet says that the glories of our blood and state are shadows, not stable. He also adds that there is no shield against fate. Death lays its icy hands on all alike

.For death there is no partiality. Death is the ultimate leveler comes and lays his icy hands on kings and clowns alike. The scepter and the crown of the king fall down and lie equal in the dust with the poor peasant’s scythe and spade.

Worldly victory and success too are futile before death. Some kings kill a lot of people in the battlefield and win laurels to adorn their heads. They also should surrender in front of death. But ignorant people kill each other like thoughtless beasts. Early or late they also shall stoop to fate .They also shall give up their murmuring breath and creep to death.

Strength and courage too shall pass. We all die helpless and weak. The garlands on our heads wither and lose their charm and the victories they once proclaimed are forgotten. We too lose our charm and like pale captives we creep to death with a feeble murmur. In Death’s altar victor and victim are equal. The winners also will be sent to their cold tombs.

When we die we return to dust and only our good deeds will speak for us. Only this fragrance will last forever. Here James Shirley states that death levels everyone. He treats all alike. All, kings and clowns, scholars and the illiterate, the rich and the poor, end up in dust. Death shows no distinction and he carries off everybody alike – high and low, rich and poor, strong and weak – reducing them all to dust. It is only the memories of the good deeds during our lifetime that will last forever.



## 7.THE SACRED TURTLE OF KADAVU



The sacred Turtles of Kadavu is an anecdote of a Fijian island. , which talks about a ritual on the island of Fiji .The ritual is very strange and interesting. There was a beautiful village named Namuana on the island of Kadavu. The chief of Namuana had a beautiful wife named Tinaicoboga and charming daughter named Raudalice.

The two women usually went to fish close to shore, and they enjoyed it a lot. One day for fishing they went farther than usual. The mother and daughter hardly noticed how far they had gone .They got so engrossed in fishing that they did not notice the stealthy approach of a war canoe filled with fishermen from neighboring village of Nabukelevu . Seeing Tinaicoboga and Raudalice, these fishermen jumped from the canoe and bound their hands and feet with vines .Tinaicoboga and Raudalice begged them to make them free, but they did not notice at all.

But the gods were not pleased with cruelty of the men. Suddenly the sky turned black, the wind began to howl, and the once-calm sea began to churn. The fishermen fought with all their strength to keep their canoe from turning over. The waves poured over the bow and the wind tossed the canoe this way and that. Meanwhile the sea gods had turned the women into two giant sea turtles. The fishermen threw the turtles into the sea. The turtles slipped easily and comfortably into the water. Thus Tinaicoboga and Raudalice escaped from the fishermen .The moment they were safely beneath the surface, the sea grew calm, the wind grew still .The fishermen of Nabukelevu went home.



The two women, who were transformed into turtles, lived in the sea for the rest of their life. It is believed that the descendants of these turtles used to come to the shore, when the virgins of Namuana chant the strange song. The women of the village, dressed in mourning clothes and carrying sacred clubs, walk to the shore. There they stand and chant to their beloved turtles."Rise to the surface so we may see you, Raudalice and Tinaicoboga" As the women chant, the giant turtles rise to the surface of Kadavu. But sometimes they do not rise, and the people say that whenever someone from Nabukelevu is present, the turtles stay beneath the water, for they recognize their enemies, and sea turtles never forget those who have done them wrong.



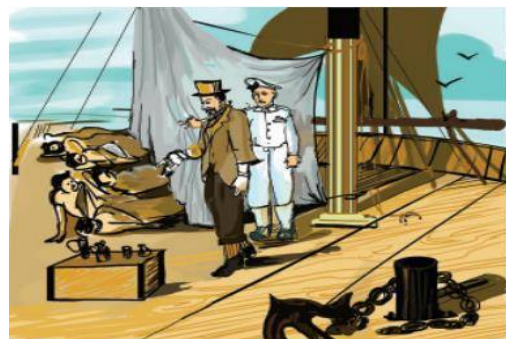
## 8. THE SERANG OF RANAGANJI

The story “The Serang of Ranaganji” by Dr.A.J Cronin is about a sea voyage from Liverpool to Calcutta. It takes place during the British rule in India. Here Cronin narrates how the author and the hero of the story manage a potential calamity silently and bravely. The story begins with a fashionable lady’s remark about a native seaman as a comic creature. He was an ugly man with short legs and a large head. He was the boatswain of the ship, Ranaganji. A.J Cronin, the physician of the ship overheard this remark. The ship was crowded with tourists and most of them were accompanied by their wives and families. When the ship landed at Port , the tourists went out for shopping.



On the following morning, Serang appeared with two lascars. They were obviously sick. Cronin diagnosed that they were suffering from small pox. Cronin reported the matter to the Captain. He advised the doctor to keep it a secret. He requested the doctor to arrange an isolated area for the patients. The serang rose to the occasion by making a shelter on the deck. Within an hour he built a large canvas shelter. Another man showed signs of small pox. Then serang, Hasan helped the doctor without showing any fear. The next day six or seven men showed symptoms of small pox. Again Hasan took much care to treat them. Serang sat watchful when one of the victims turned to coma state.

Serang was really from Punjab. His parents had wandered to South India. It was at that time he took a seafaring life. He had no place on shore and remained unmarried. He had no saving. Cronin expressed his wish that the serang should be paid extra for this extra service. But he was not interested. He was happy with what he had. When two of their



patients died, Hasan himself sewed their shrouds, read aloud a short passage from the Ramayana and threw their bodies overboard. In the end when most of them

showed signs of health, there appeared three sores in the arms of Hasan . The voyage came to an end.

As Hasan was trying to unload the baggage, that lady’s voice was heard again. She was surprised to see that „dirty creature“. She asked Cronin where he had kept that dirty creature during the whole voyage. She also asked him whether he had kept him in a cage. At this question Cronin quipped that it was in a cage that he had kept him, but all the animals were outside the cage.