

## ***The Guide: Notes & Annotations (Part-3)***

[BA (Hons.), Part-3, Paper-VII]

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1. **‘I will not permit anyone to do this. God alone is entitled to such a prostration’. / ‘I wish I had asked him what the age of the girl was’** (p-16): Refer to 8 & 10.
2. **‘Half-way through the story he realized that he could not remember either its course or its purport’** (p-18): Narayan’s narration exposes Raju’s attempt to play with the simple villagers’ innocence, coaxing them suavely to believe him as a sage. In a deeply ironic vein Narayan exposes Raju’s sham. The showy Raju, or the fake *Sadhu*, tried to attract the faith of the villagers by offering his own food first at the feet of the idol of Vishnu, and to elucidate why he does so, launches on the story of Davaka, the ‘beggar’ who ‘would not use any of his collections without first putting them at the feet of the god.’ But Raju tells the Devaka story wrong. Devaka was originally the father of Devaki, mother of Krishna. The wrong story suggests Raju’s incompleteness as a man and a *Sadhu*. It also links the story of his life to that of Krishna himself, the mischievous god who performed tricks on others and later became a miracle-performing god on whom people began to depend as the Saviour.
3. **‘We learnt that they were building a railway track’** (p-23)/ **‘Presently I began to collect sawn-off metal bits, nuts and bolts, and I treasured them in my mother’s**

\*\*\*Narayan, R.K. *The Guide*: Chennai: Indian Thought Publication, 2005 rpt.

**big trunk, ...amidst her ancient saris...'**(p-23-24): / **'You son of...'** and a variety of other expressions recently picked up' (p-24) / **'He was passing a harsh sentence on me. To be removed from a place I loved to a place I loathed'** (p-24): Narayan's presentation of the introduction of railway into Malgudi and the consequent development in Raju's character is the major thread of the novel. The introduction of railways brings in the picture of a developing India, and the effect is similar to the rapid urbanisation and industrialisation in the post-Industrial Revolution English countryside. The railway was surely a legacy of colonialism. The business and bustles in front of the shop of Raju's father is the representative of the independent India's gradual way to progress with building up communication links as one of the major initiatives undertaken by the government. The development attracts Raju's father too, who begins running a bigger shop at the railway station, expands his business from selling of tamarind to the selling of cigarettes and soon opens a bank account. As Raju recounts, 'our world was neatly divided into this side of railway line and that side', the underdeveloped past and the developing present. Raju's preserving the nuts and bolts amidst his mother's saris and Raju's father's opening a bank account and Raju's mother ignorance in this regard – this co-existence of the past and the present is the picture of the post-colonial India. But more importantly, the railways bring a significant movement in Raju's character. Raju senses the growth of an 'ownership' of the railway within himself. His picking up of the abominable words of abuse from the workers shows how the railway passes into his character. In fact, when Raju views the distant Mempi Hills from the mound of red earth heaped by the workers, it prophesises the movement from a shopkeeper's son to a guide to the

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Mempi Hills. The abuses gradually turn into shrewdness and trickery that help Raju in gulling unsuspecting tourists.

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