

# Engine Trouble

## Getting Started

- \* Have you ever been in a situation when the prize awarded to you feels more like a problem or nuisance to you?

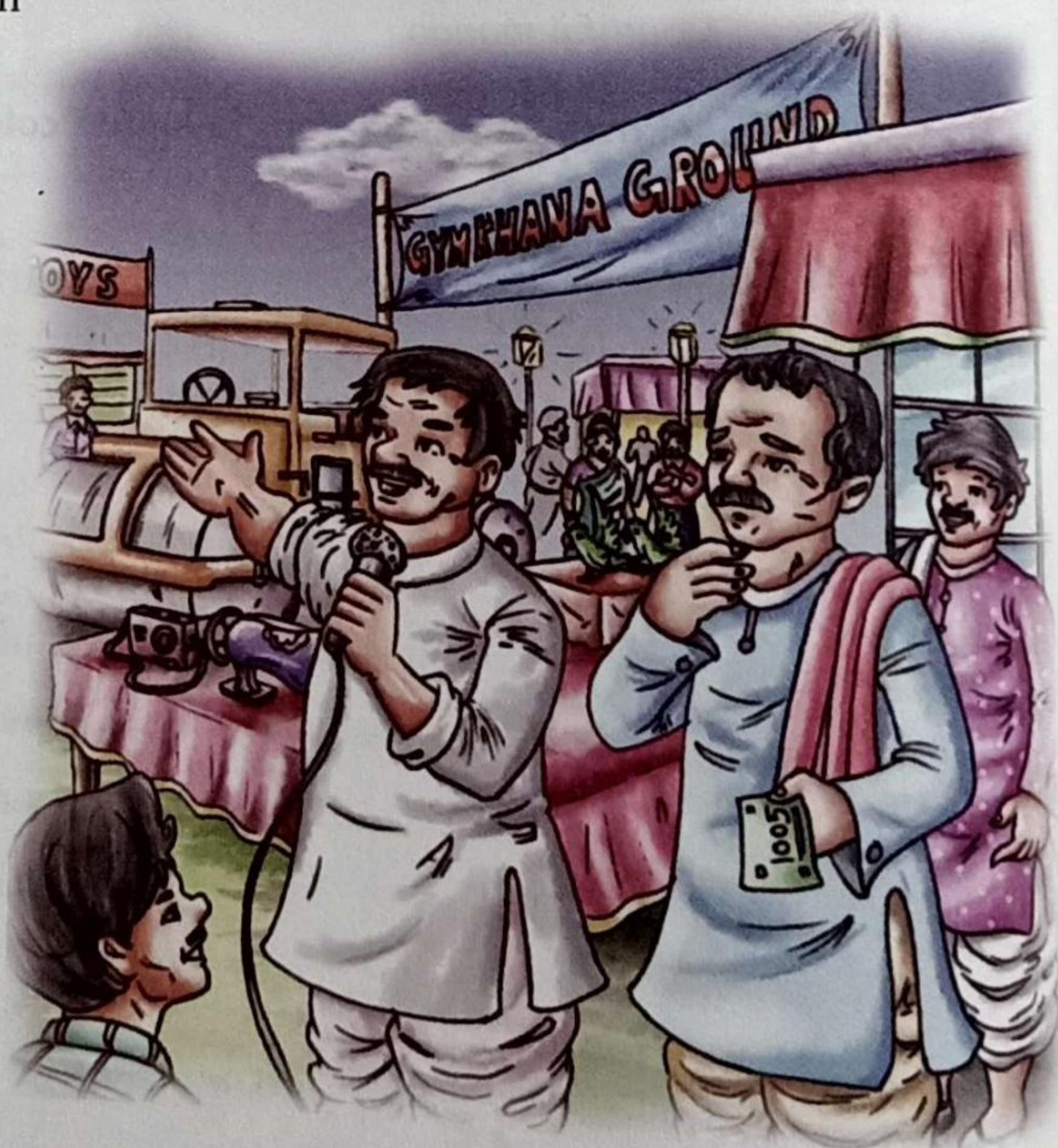
*The story 'Engine Trouble' is from R K Narayan's famous collection of short stories entitled Malgudi Days.*

There came down to our town some years ago a showman owning an institution called the Gaiety Land. Overnight our Gymkhana Ground became resplendent with banners and streamers and coloured lamps.

Gaiety Land provided us with all sorts of fun and gambling and sideshows. For a couple of annas in each booth, we could watch anything from performing parrots to motorcyclists looping the loop in the Dome of Death.

There was a particular corner of the show which was in great favour. Here for a ticket costing eight annas you stood a chance of acquiring a variety of articles—pincushions, sewing machines, cameras or even a road engine. On one evening, they drew ticket number 1005, and I happened to own the other half of the ticket. Glancing down the list of articles, they declared I became the owner of the road engine!

It was not the sort of prize one could carry home at short notice. I asked



the showman if he would help me to transport it. He merely pointed at a notice which decreed that all winners should remove the prizes immediately on drawing and by their own effort. However, they had to make an exception in my case. They agreed to keep the engine on the Gymkhana Ground till the end of their season, and then I would have to make my own arrangements to take it out.

My friends and well-wishers poured in to congratulate me on my latest **acquisition**. No one knew precisely how much a road engine would fetch; all the same they felt that there was a lot of money in it. 'Even if you sell it as scrap iron you can make a few thousands,' some of my friends declared. Every day I made a trip to the Gymkhana Ground to have a look at my engine. I was a poor man. I thought that, after all, my troubles were coming to an end. How ignorant we are!

When the showman took down his booths and packed up, I received a notice from the municipality to attend to my road engine. When I went there next day, it looked forlorn with no one about. The ground was littered with torn streamers and paper decorations. The showman had moved on, leaving the engine where it stood. It was perfectly safe anywhere.

I received a notice from the municipality ordering that the engine be removed from the grounds at once, as otherwise they would charge rent for the occupation of the Gymkhana Ground. After deep thought, I consented to pay the rent, and I paid ten rupees a month for the next three months. Dear sirs, I was a poor man. Even the house which I and my wife occupied cost me only four rupees a month. And fancy my paying ten rupees a month for the road engine.

It cut into my slender budget and I had to **pledge** a jewel or two belonging to my wife!

I was making myself a **bankrupt** maintaining this engine in the Gymkhana Ground. Meanwhile, the municipality was pressing me to clear out. I thought it over. I saw the priest of the local temple and managed to gain his sympathy. He offered me the services of his temple elephant. I also engaged fifty coolies to push the engine from behind. You may be sure this drained all my resources.

The coolies wanted eight annas per head, and the temple elephant cost me seven rupees a day and I had to give it one feed. My plan was to take the engine out of the Gymkhana and then down the road to a field half a furlong off. The field was owned by a friend. He would not mind if I kept the engine there for a couple of months, when I could go to Madras and find a customer for it.

I also took into service one Joseph, a dismissed bus-driver who said that although he knew nothing of road rollers he could nevertheless steer one if it was somehow kept in motion.

It was a fine sight: the temple elephant **yoked** to the engine by means of stout ropes, with fifty determined men pushing it from behind, and my friend Joseph sitting in the driving seat. A huge crowd stood around and watched in great glee. The engine began

# KRISHNAGAR ACADEMY.

CLASS - VI. SUBJECT - ENGLISH - II.  
CHAPTER - ENGINE TROUBLE.

DATE: 29.05.2020.

-R.K. NARAYAN.

## WORD MEANINGS:

1. Gymkhana: An Anglo-Indian term used to refer to a gymnasium.
2. Resplendent: bright and colourful in an impressive way.
3. Annas: A currency formerly used in India.
4. Acquisition: Something that has recently been acquired or taken.
5. Pledge: Something valuable given as a guarantee that a debt will be paid.
6. Bankrupt: Ruined financially.

## Exercise Question Answer.

Q1. What was the reason behind the Gymkhana Grounds being decorated?

Ans: The reason behind the Gymkhana Grounds being decorated with banners and streamers and coloured lamps because few years ago there came down a showman in the town of the narrator who was owing an institution called the Gaiety Land.

Q2. Which particular corner of the show was in great favour and why?

Ans: There was a particular corner of the show which was in great favour. For a ticket costing eight annas one could get a chance of acquiring a variety of articles - pin cushions, sewing machines, cameras or even a road engine.

Answer of the question given as Homework on 20.05.20 ~~on~~ from the first chapter.

Q.e. Why did the group gathered around the person start moving towards the narrator who had placed himself behind the pillar?

Ans: After the discussion was over the cook sat down to have a cup of coffee. Everybody was relaxed. At that moment one of the cousin of the narrator saw his caricature and began to giggle. His laughing spread like a wildfire. So the group gathered around the person start moving towards the narrator who was placed himself behind the pillar.

Homework for Today.

Q3. Why did the narrator feel that the engine was safe anywhere even after the showman vacated the Gymkhana Grounds?

In the next class we shall be doing the rest of this chapter on 01.06.2020 (MONDAY)