

MAHESH PUBLIC SCHOOL

TEXT BOOK: FLAMINGO

SUBJECT: ENGLISH CORE

CHAPTER: 2 LOST SPRING

CLASS : XII



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anees Jung (b. Dominion of Hyderabad 1944) is an Indian woman author, journalist and columnist for major newspapers in India and abroad, whose most noted work, *Unveiling India* (1987) was a detailed chronicle of the lives of women in India, noted especially for the depiction of Muslim women behind the purdah.

Early life and education

Born in Rourkela, Anees hails from an aristocratic family in Hyderabad – her father, Nawab Hosh Yar Jung, was a renowned scholar and poet, and served as the *musahib* (adviser) to the last Nizam (prince) of Hyderabad State. Her mother and brother are also noted Urdu poets. After schooling and college at Osmania University in Hyderabad, she went to the United States for higher studies at University of Michigan Ann Arbor, where she did her Masters in Sociology and American Studies.

Career

She started her career in writing with the *Youth Times*, a Times of India publication, where she worked as a journalist and editor (1976 to 1979). She has subsequently worked for the Christian Science Monitor and International Herald Tribune. Anees Jung lives in Delhi.

Books

Jung came into the limelight with the publication of *Unveiling India* in 1987, which is a travel diary focusing on interviews with women. She has written several subsequent books on the same, talking to women about their everyday lives, including *Night of the New Moon: Encounters with Muslim women in India*. (1993), *Seven Sisters* (1994). *Breaking the Silence* (1997) is based on conversations on women's lives from around the world. *Beyond the Courtyard* (2003) is based on interviews with the daughters of the women she had talked to first in *Unveiling India*, and many of the horrifying tales continue.

Anees Jung's *Lost Spring: Stories of stolen childhood* (2005) focuses on children from deprived backgrounds, and includes the story of Idrees, a child who is kidnapped and forced to work in the carpet industry in Mirzapur. Others are maltreated by alcoholic fathers or married off early or sexually abused, though some find refuge in schools set up by well-meaning NGOs. A section of this book is part of the English curriculum in many Indian schools Jung is noted for her lively and vivid descriptions.

Characters

- Saheb-e-Alam: A rag picker
- Mukesh: Son of a bangle maker

Introduction

The story, "Lost Spring" describes the pitiable condition of poor children who have been forced to miss the joy of childhood due to the socio-economic condition that prevails in this man-made world. These children are denied the opportunity of schooling and forced into labour early in life. Anees Jung gives voice to eliminate child labour by educating the children and to enforce the laws against child labour by the governments strictly. The call is to end child exploitation and let the children enjoy the days of the spring that bring joy under their feet.

Summary

I – Sometimes I find a rupee in the garbage. The first part tells the writer's impressions about the life of the poor rag pickers. The rag pickers have migrated from Dhaka and found a settlement in Seemapuri. Their fields and homes had been swept away by storms. They had come to the big city to find a living. They are poor. The writer watches Saheb every morning scrounging for "gold" in her neighbourhood. Garbage is a means of survival for the elders and for the children it is something wrapped in wonder. The children come across a coin or two from it. These people have desires and ambitions, but they do not know the way to achieve them. There are quite a few things that are unreachable to them, namely shoes, tennis and the like. Later Saheb joins a tea stall where he could earn 800 Rupees and all the meals. The job has taken away his freedom.

II – I want to drive a car.

The second part deals with the life of Mukesh, who belongs to the family of Bangle-makers. Firozabad is best known for its glass-blowing industry. Nearly 20,000 children are engaged in this business and the law that forbids child labour is not known here. The living condition and the working environment is a woeful tale. Life in dingy cells and working close to hot furnaces make these children blind when they step into the adulthood. Weighed down by the debt, they can neither think nor find a way to come out of this trap. The politicians, middlemen, policemen and bureaucrats will all obstruct their way of progress. The women in the household consider it as their fate and just follow the tradition. Mukesh is different from the rest of the folk there. He dreams to become a motor mechanic. The garage is far away from his house but he shall walk. comes across Mukesh in Firozabad.

Gist of the lesson:

Sometimes I find a rupee in garbage

- The author examines and analyses the impoverished conditions and traditions that condemn children to a life of exploitation these children are denied an education and forced into hardships early in their lives.
- The writer encounters Saheb – a rag picker whose parents have left behind the life of poverty in Dhaka to earn a living in Delhi.
- His family like many other families of rag pickers lives in Seemapuri. They do not have other identification other than a ration card.
- The children do not go to school and they are excited at the prospect of finding a coin or even a ten rupee note for rummaging in the garbage.
- It is the only way of earning.
- The writer is pained to see Saheb, a rag picker whose name means the ruler of earth, Lose the spark of childhood and roams barefooted with his friends.
- From morning to noon the author encounters him in a tea stall and is paid Rs. 800 He sadly realizes that he is no longer his own master and this loss of identity weighs heavily on his tender shoulders.

I want to drive a car

- The author then tells about another victim, Mukesh who wants to be a motor mechanic.
- He has always worked in the glass making industry.
- They are exposed to various health hazards like losing their eyesight as they work in abysmal conditions, in dark and dingy cells.
- Mukesh's father is blind as were his father and grandfather before him.
- So burdened are the bangle makers of Firozabad that they have lost their ability to dream unlike Mukesh who dreams of driving a car.