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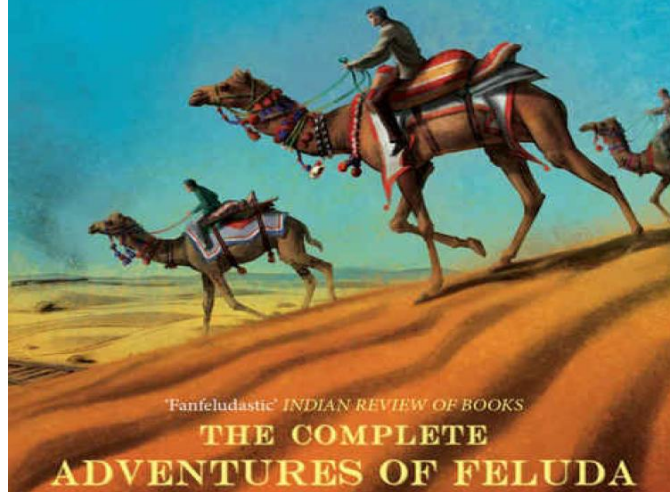
H Series

H43

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'Fanfeludastic' *INDIAN REVIEW OF BOOKS*

**THE COMPLETE
ADVENTURES OF FELUDA**

The Mystery of the Elephant God

Five

On our way back from Mr Ghoshal's house, we decided to take a short cut through an alley, away from the traffic on the main road.

Here too, a few sheep and lambs were roaming about. Lalmohan Babu prodded a lamb gently with his umbrella to get it out of the way, and said, 'Shall I tell you something, Felu Babu, about myself? You see, when I visit a new place, I like to get into the spirit of things—you know, live like the locals, and act like the natives. In fact, when we were in Rajasthan, I kept thinking of myself as a Rajput. A couple of times I even put up my hand to feel my *pugri*, and was most surprised to find my bald dome instead!'

'And here? Have you been startled to discover the absence of long, matted hair like a sadhu?'

'No, but I must confess the thought that the whole world is but an illusion did cross my mind yesterday when we were at the ghat. Today, walking through this alley, I would have been quite happy to have a dagger hanging from my waist. It's the atmosphere, isn't it . . .?'

He continued to expound on his theory, but I did not pay much attention. I had caught sight of the same figure that had followed us the day before. Among the various people who were either returning from the ghat or going to it, or crowding around shops, was this man, wearing tight pyjamas that peeped out from under a purple blanket which covered the rest of his body, including his face. He was following us doggedly at a distance of about ten yards. Since Feluda had appeared quite unconcerned the previous day, I didn't raise the matter again, but began to feel uncomfortable.

Lalmohan Babu hadn't stopped talking. 'This business of the Ganesh is going to be complicated, as far as I can see,' he was saying.

'It is difficult to say whether a case is going to be complex or simple before it reaches a certain stage. Are you telling me that we have come to such a stage already?'

'Haven't we?'

'No, not in the least.'

‘But the real villain could not have taken it, could he?’ ‘Who are you referring to, may I ask?’

‘Why, it’s that man called Meghlal . . . or is it Meghram? . . . You know, the man we saw where Machchli Baba’s staying? My God, I’ve never seen a man with such broad shoulders. Give him a pair of horns, and he could easily join those massive bulls Banaras is famous for!’

‘You mean you think Maganlal Meghraj would have turned up personally to jump over the wall, steal into Ambika Babu’s room and remove the Ganesh?’

‘Oh, I see. He would have used an agent, right?’

‘Isn’t that far more natural? Besides, he might have threatened to get the Ganesh somehow, but that does not necessarily make him the real culprit.’

We had reached the hotel. Niranjan Babu’s room was next to the reception. We found a well-built young man sitting opposite him, explaining something rather animatedly.

Niranjan Babu looked up as we arrived. ‘Here they are. This visitor has been waiting for you for nearly twenty minutes. Allow me to introduce you. This is Inspector Tiwari, and these are . . .’ He rattled off our names quickly.

Mr Tiwari was looking straight at Feluda. His eyes twinkled. Feluda frowned for a moment, then his face broke into a grin.

‘You were in Allahabad, weren’t you?’ he asked.

‘Yes, but I wasn’t sure that you’d remember me,’ Mr Tiwari replied, shaking his hand.

‘It would’ve been difficult, I must admit. You have lost a lot of weight. If I may say so, it’s done you some good!’

Mr Tiwari laughed. His height was about the same as Feluda’s, and he looked just as trim. A couple of years ago, Feluda had had to go to Allahabad in connection with a case. He had obviously met Mr Tiwari then.

‘I’d gone to meet Mr Ghoshal last night,’ said Mr Tiwari, ‘after you had left. He told me of your arrival and where you were staying.’

Niranjan Babu rang for tea. We all sat down.

'I must say this is a relief,' Feluda said to the inspector. 'I was beginning to worry about how the police might react to my presence. I know I won't have any problems with you. Two heads are better than one, aren't they? And it does appear to be a difficult case.'

Mr Tiwari's face fell. He forced a smile, and said slowly, 'Yes, Mr Mitter, it is so very difficult that I came to tell you to stay out of it.'

'Why?'

'Because Maganlal is involved in this. In fact, I'm concerned that you've already been to Mr Ghoshal's house. You must be very careful. Maganlal has a team of hired hooligans working for him.'

A bearer came in with the tea. Feluda picked up a cup, looking slightly worried, and asked, 'But how can you be sure that Maganlal is truly involved?'

'The line of investigation we're following points towards Maganlal. I have never seen anyone with such cunning.'

'But what is this line of investigation?'

'I'll tell you. Have you met everyone in the Ghoshal household?' 'Yes, all except the servants.'

'Did you see Shashi Babu?' 'Yes, we met him this morning.' 'And his son?'

'Yes, he was working with his father.'

'Did you know Shashi Babu has another son?'

'Does he? No, we didn't know that.'

'This other son is called Nitai. A bad type, very bad. He's only eighteen, but there's very little he hasn't tried his hand at. Supposing he has joined Maganlal's gang . . .'

Feluda raised a hand. 'I get it. Maganlal would get Nitai to work through either his father or brother to get the Ganesh.'

'Exactly. Nitai could easily be persuaded to use force, even on his own family. So I suggest you take it easy, at least for the time being. There is a lot to see in Banaras during the time of Durga Puja and Dussehra. So do enjoy yourselves, but don't go anywhere near the Ghoshal family.'

Feluda smiled and changed the subject. 'Aren't you thinking of investigating the case of Machchli Baba?' he asked.

Mr Tiwari put his cup down on the table and burst out laughing. 'You've already been to see him, have you? What did you think of it all?'

'Since I raised the question of an investigation, you must assume he didn't arouse any religious ardour in me.'

'Yes, Mr Mitter, but you're talking only of yourself. What about his devotees? Do you think they'd stand by and watch quietly if we openly tried to carry out an enquiry? They'd skin us alive!'

Mr Tiwari spoke the last sentence with a sidelong glance at Niranjana Babu, who threw up his hands in protest. 'Don't look at me, Tiwariji!' he exclaimed. 'What do I know of devotion? All I can say is that in our otherwise boring and eventless life, Machchli Baba is an event, an excitement—but that's all.'

'There is something you can do,' said Feluda. 'Try and find out if anyone called Machchli Baba had appeared recently in Haridwar or Allahabad.'

'Very well. That shouldn't be a problem. I'll get you this information in a couple of days.'

Mr Tiwari looked at his watch and rose. Just before stepping out of the room, he stopped for a minute and slapped Feluda on the back. 'Why don't you come to my office one day and see how we deal with crime in Varanasi? But do remember—and I mean this seriously—you must stay away from the case of the missing Ganesh.'

After lunch that afternoon, we went out for a walk again. I didn't know whether Feluda had anywhere specific in mind, but Lal Mohan Babu and I followed him into an alley opposite the hotel.

'I think your cousin is looking for a sweet shop for a plate of rabri,' whispered Lal Mohan Babu into my ear. I had to laugh, but I knew he was wrong.

The alley was both narrow and winding. Houses with two or three storeys stood on both sides. The sun hardly came in at all. Feluda told us most of these houses, like many others in Varanasi, were more than a hundred years old. Some had paintings of animals and birds on their front walls. A few had handwritten posters and advertisements in Hindi.

As we made our way carefully through this dim, dingy alley, several new noises began to reach my ears. The loudest among them was that of pealing bells. We were getting closer to the temple of Vishwanath.

Sheep and lambs had been replaced here by large cows and bulls. Each time we saw a particularly strong bull, Lalmohan Babu exclaimed, 'Look, there goes Meghraj!' In the end, Feluda was obliged to say, 'Look Lalmohan Babu, I do think those poor bulls are a lot less harmful than Meghraj, so please stop making a comparison. Anyway, I am trying to picture him as a man with thin, cruel lips and a malicious glint in his eyes. You are spoiling it for me by constantly harping on the bulls!'

It soon became impossible to walk freely. The crowd pushed us along in one direction. Pandas were scattered everywhere, each one pouncing on us eagerly. '*Darshan?* Would you like a *darshan* of Baba Vishwanath, babu?' they kept asking. We walked straight ahead, ignoring them as best we could. My attention was taken up totally in trying to protect my pocket and my wallet in it, and stop myself from stepping into the many puddles that dotted the way. When I finally looked up, I found Lalmohan Babu gazing at the golden dome of the temple, wonder and amazement in his eyes. I saw him ask Feluda something, but couldn't quite catch what he said. Only the word 'carat' reached my ears. All thoughts of God and religion had clearly been abandoned, at least for the moment.

Then I saw the kite. It was a red and white kite, identical to the one Ruku had been flying earlier.

There it was, disappearing behind the temple.

Feluda, too, was staring at it. 'Most interesting,' he said briefly. 'It's not just interesting, my friend,' said Lalmohan Babu. 'I find it positively disturbing. No, I am not talking of that kite. But do you realize this place might be infested with Meghraj's spies? In fact, one of them can't take his eyes off you. I've been watching him for nearly three minutes.'

'Is it someone dressed as a sadhu, with a long flowing beard and a brand new robe?' Feluda asked, still staring at the sky.

'Full marks,' Jatayu replied.

Now I noticed the man. He was standing near a shop laden with flowers, incense and vermilion. As we passed him, Feluda stopped for a second and

said, 'Jai Baba Vishwanath!' in a very loud voice. This nearly made me burst out laughing, but I controlled myself.

By now we had come out of the alley, having left the temple behind us. Close to where we were standing was the mosque built by Aurangzeb, and a huge open terrace. I looked up again as we reached the terrace, but couldn't see the kite any more. Steps ran down from the terrace to the road below. Feluda turned towards these. I did have a vague suspicion about where he wanted to go, but as it turned out, the same idea had occurred to Lalmohan Babu too.

'Are you, by any chance, heading for Meghraj's house?' he asked. 'Who else would I wish to call on? If there were no criminals, Lalmohan Babu, your friend here would starve. So don't you think we should pay a visit to the temple of the biggest criminal in Kashi?'

My heart began thudding faster. Since the crowd had thinned somewhat, Lalmohan Babu had to lower his voice to ask the next question, 'I hope you haven't come without your weapon?'

'If by a weapon you mean my revolver, no, I didn't bring it with me. But I've got all the other three, thank you.'

Lalmohan Babu looked up, startled, and nearly stumbled against a step. But he said nothing more. I knew that when Feluda mentioned three other weapons, he was simply referring to his powerful brain, steady nerves and strong muscles.

A tailor's shop stood where the steps ended. An old man was sitting just outside its entrance, working on a sewing machine. He told us where Maganlal lived. 'Go straight, past the Hanuman Mandir, and take the first right turn. You'll find Maganlal's house easily enough; it's the one with two large paintings of guards with swords,' he said.

'And aren't there real guards outside the main door?' Feluda asked. 'Oh yes, you'll find those as well.'

In less than two minutes, we were standing outside Maganlal's house. Two armed guards were painted on the wall, but there was no one in sight. The street, unlike the ones we had passed through, was remarkably quiet. Not even a goat or a lamb could be seen.

The front door was wide open. How very strange! Where had the guards gone? Were they perhaps having their lunch? Feluda sniffed a couple of times and

said, 'I can smell tobacco.' Then he looked around and added, 'Come on, let's go in. If we're stopped, we can always say we're new and slipped in by mistake, thinking it was a temple.'

Lalmohan Babu and I followed him in. Goodness, was this where the great Maganlal lived, I thought in wonder, staring at the cows that stood in the dark, damp courtyard. Our appearance did not bother them at all. Each continued to chew the cud, gazing at us calmly.

'This is quite common here,' Feluda whispered. 'Very few people have any open space to keep their cows in. So they keep them in their courtyard inside the house, for they can't do without large quantities of milk and ghee.'

On our right and left were corridors, leading to nothing but darkness, as far as I could see. Presumably, there was a staircase somewhere, for I had noted outside that the house had three floors.

As we stood debating what to do next, my eyes suddenly fell on a figure that had emerged silently from the dark depths and was standing on our right.

It was a middle-aged man, of medium height, clad in a green kurta-pyjama, an embroidered white cotton cap on his head. A thick moustache drooped down, brushing against his chin. When he spoke, his voice sounded like an old, worn out gramophone record.

'Sethji would like to meet you,' he said. 'Which Sethji?' 'Seth Maganlalji.'

'All right. Let's go.'

Six

'Jai Baba Vishwanath!'

I couldn't see the look on Lalmohan Babu's face, but I could tell from his voice how he felt.

'Do you really have a lot of faith in Vishwanath?' asked Feluda. I couldn't imagine how he could speak so lightly.

'Jai Baba Felunath!' whispered Lalmohan Babu. 'That's better!'

We were groping our way upstairs, climbing a series of stairs that were amazingly high. Everything was in total darkness. The man who had come to fetch us hadn't bothered to bring a light. Lalmohan Babu was still muttering under his breath. I caught the word 'black hole' a couple of times.

At last, we reached the top floor. Our emissary passed through a door. We followed him. He then took us through a room, a narrow passage, another chamber, and finally stopped before a small door, motioning us to go in.

We stepped into the room. At first I could see nothing except some coloured glass. Then I realized I was looking at a window. The light from outside was shining through its colourful panes.

'Namaskar, Mr Mitter,' said a deep, gruff voice.

A few things became visible. A thick mattress, covered with a white sheet, was spread on the floor. On it were four bolsters, also covered in white. The figure that sat leaning on one of these was that of the man we had seen from the rear at Abhay Chakravarty's house.

With a faint click, a light on the ceiling came on. We were finally face to face with Maganlal Meghraj. The eyes that regarded us solemnly were sunk in, set under thick, bushy eyebrows. A blunt nose, thick lips and a pointed chin completed the picture. He too was wearing a kurta-pyjama. The buttons on his kurta might well have been diamonds. Besides these, on eight of his ten fingers flashed other stones of every possible colour.

'Why are you standing? Do sit down,' he invited. 'Take a chair, if you like.'

There were low, Gujarati chairs placed by the side of the mattress. We took three of these.

'I wanted to meet you, Mr Mitter. I would have invited you properly, but luckily you came here yourself.' After a moment's pause he added, 'You may not know me, Mr Mitter, but I know all about you.'

'I have heard your name,' Feluda replied politely. 'You're pretty well known yourself.'

'Well known?' Maganlal laughed loudly, displaying paan-stained teeth. 'Not well known, Mr Mitter.'

What you mean is infamous. Notorious. Come on, admit it!

Feluda remained silent. Maganlal's eyes turned towards me. 'Is this your brother?'

'My cousin.'

'And who is this? Your uncle?' Maganlal was smiling.

'This is my friend, Lalmohan Ganguli.'

'Very good! Lalmohan, Mohanlal, Maganlal . . . it's all just the same, isn't it? What d'you say, eh?'

Lalmohan Babu had been shaking his legs with an 'I-don't-feel-nervous-at-all' air. Maganlal's words made his knees knock against each other. At this point, Maganlal suddenly brought his hand down on a bell, making it ring sharply. This startled Lalmohan Babu so much that he choked and began to splutter.

'Does your throat feel a bit . . . dry?' queried Maganlal.

The man who had brought us upstairs reappeared silently. 'Bring some sherbet,' ordered Maganlal. It was now possible to see everything quite clearly. There were two steel almirahs in one corner. Behind Maganlal, the wall was covered with pictures of Hindu gods and goddesses. On the mattress, on his right, were a few papers and files, a small metal cash-box and a red telephone. On his left was a silver box stuffed with paan, and a silver spittoon.

'Well, Mr Mitter,' he asked gravely, 'have you come to Banaras on holiday?'

'That was my original plan,' Feluda replied, looking straight at him.

'Then . . . why . . . are . . . you . . . wasting . . . your . . . time?' Maganlal spoke through clenched teeth, uttering each word distinctly.

'Have you been to Sarnath?' he went on. 'Ramnagar? Durga Bari, Man Mandir, Hindu University? No, I know you haven't seen any of these famous places. You walked past the Vishwanath temple today, but did not go in. Yet, you keep going back to Umanath Ghoshal's house. Why? Forget what he told you. I can make your stay in Kashi so much more enjoyable. I have my own barge, did you know that? Come any day to the river. I'll take you on a cruise from one side to the other. You'd love it!'

'You seem to be forgetting,' said Feluda, still speaking calmly, 'that I am a professional investigator. Mr Ghoshal has given me a specific task. I cannot think about having a holiday or going on a cruise on your boat until that task has been completed.'

‘What is your fee?’

Feluda was quiet for a few seconds. Then he said, ‘That depends—’

‘Here, take this!’

I gave an involuntary gasp. Maganlal had opened the cash-box and taken out a large fistful of hundred rupee notes. He was now offering these to Feluda. Feluda’s lips became set. ‘I do not,’ he said clearly, ‘accept a fee without having done anything to earn it.’

‘I see, I see!’ Maganlal bared his paan-stained teeth again. ‘But how will you earn it, Mr Mitter? How can you catch a thief when there has been no theft?’

‘What do you mean?’ This time even Feluda sounded surprised. ‘If no one stole anything, where has it gone?’

‘It,’ said Maganlal, ‘was sold to me. I paid Umanath thirty thousand for it.’

‘What rubbish is this?’

How could Feluda talk like this? My hands began to feel clammy. Lalmohan Babu, too, was looking decidedly pale.

Maganlal had started to laugh, but Feluda’s words instantly wiped the laughter from his face. A deep frown creased his brow, his eyes glinted under the light. ‘Rubbish? Maganlal doesn’t talk rubbish, Mr Mitter. Obviously, you don’t know enough about Umanath and his affairs. Did you know his business isn’t doing well? Are you aware how much he owes people? Did anyone tell you Umanath himself called me over to his house and took the Ganesh out of the chest? How do you propose to catch the culprit when it is none other than your client himself?’

‘I still don’t understand, Maganlalji,’ Feluda answered. ‘Why should Mr Ghoshal have to steal the Ganesh? Why couldn’t he simply take it out openly if he had decided to sell it to you?’

‘That Ganesh did not belong only to Umanath. It was the property of his family. His brother—who lives in England—and his father had an equal claim on it. It was his father who had had it all along, and he has certainly been lucky. Just look at how much money he’s earned, and what comfort he lives in. Umanath would never have dared tell his father he was selling their most precious heirloom!’

Feluda appeared to be thinking. Was he beginning to believe Maganlal?

‘I’ll tell you.’ Maganlal sat up. ‘He called me over to his house on the tenth of October, and offered to sell the Ganesh. I agreed. I have recently had a run of bad luck, as you may have heard. So I thought the Ganesh would help change my luck. Umanath knows nothing of the value of that green diamond. It’s actually worth far more than what I paid. Anyway, we had a chat on the tenth. He said he needed a little time to get things organized. So I said fine, take your time. On the fifteenth, he rang me again and said he had actually got the Ganesh. I told him to come to Machchli Baba’s meeting. We both arrived with a little bag in our pockets. His had the Ganesh. Mine had thirty thousand in hundred rupee notes. It didn’t take us long to exchange the bags. And that’s all. End of story.’

If what Maganlal was saying was true, then one had to admit Mr Ghoshal had deceived not just us but also the police. Perhaps he had hired Feluda only as a cover-up. But why was Maganlal telling us all this? What did he stand to gain?

To my surprise, Feluda asked him the same question. Maganlal’s small eyes narrowed further. ‘I know you are an intelligent man, Mr Mitter,’ he proclaimed. ‘In fact, your intelligence is reputed to be extraordinary. If you began an investigation, would you not have discovered the truth? And if you did, how do you suppose Umanath and I would have looked? The police would have driven us mad! After all, our dealing wasn’t exactly legal and above board, was it? Surely you can see that?’

Feluda did not say anything immediately. While Maganlal was talking, a man had brought in three glasses of sherbet, which were placed before us on a low table. Feluda picked up a glass and said, ‘That means you have got the Ganesh. May I see it? I am naturally curious to have a look at this object that’s created such a furore.’

Maganlal shook his head regretfully. ‘Very sorry, Mr Mitter, I do not have it here. You know this house was raided once. So I couldn’t keep it here. I’ve had to send it to a safer place.’

‘All right,’ Feluda spoke casually. ‘You did what you thought best, and I shan’t argue with that. But don’t you see that I have to carry on with my investigation simply to find out if you’re telling the truth? If you are, we have nothing to worry about. But what if you’re not?’

Maganlal's eyes virtually disappeared. His lips curled ominously. 'You mean you don't believe me?'

Feluda raised the glass to his lips and took a sip. Then he said, 'You told me yourself I didn't know you. So how can you expect me to believe all that you've just said? Would you believe everything a man told you the first time you met him? Especially if he clearly appeared to be tampering with the truth?'

Maganlal went on staring at him. In the silence, all I could hear was a clock ticking somewhere, but couldn't see it. Then Maganlal raised his right arm and extended it towards Feluda. He was still clutching the money. 'I have three thousand here,' he said. 'Take it, Mr Mitter, and enjoy yourself. Have a good holiday with your cousin and your uncle.'

'No, Maganlalji, I do not take money like this.'

'Does that mean you'll continue working on this case?' 'Yes. I have to.'

'Very well.'

Maganlal struck the bell again. The same man came back. Maganlal said, without even looking at him, 'Call Arjun. And get that box—number thirteen. And the wooden board.'

The man disappeared. God knew what he would come back with. Maganlal now turned towards Lalmohan Babu, a smile hovering on his lips. Lalmohan Babu's right hand was curled around a glass, but it looked as though he couldn't bring himself to drink from it.

'What is it, Mohanbhog Babu, don't you like my sherbet?'

'No, no, I mean . . .' Lalmohan Babu quickly brought the glass to his lips and swallowed some of its contents.

'Don't worry, Mohan Babu, that sherbet hasn't been poisoned.'

'No, no—' 'I don't like poison.'

'Yes, of course. P-poison is,' Lalmohan Babu gulped, 'very bad.' 'There are other things far more effective.'

'Other things?'

'I'll show you what I mean.'

Lalmohan Babu choked again. There were footsteps outside. A strange creature entered the room. It was a man, I had to admit, but I had never seen a man like him. About five feet in height, he was remarkably thin. Every vein in his body stood out. His eyes suggested he might have been a Nepali, but his nose was long and sharp. His hair was cut very short, and his ears stuck out. There was not a single hair on his body. I could see his arms and legs and chest, for he was wearing a dirty, torn sleeveless vest and an old pair of shorts. It was impossible to guess his age.

The man gave Maganlal a salute, then stood waiting for instructions.

Two men now came in carrying a long wooden box. This was probably the box number thirteen Maganlal had mentioned. The noise it made when set down on the floor suggested that its contents were made of either iron or brass.

A large wooden board was then brought in and placed against the closed door behind us. Maganlal opened his mouth once more.

‘Do you know what knife-throwing is, Mr Mitter? Have you ever seen it in a circus?’

‘Yes, I have.’

I hadn’t, but I knew what it was. A man stood with his back to a board. Another threw knives at him which, instead of hitting him, hit the board, just a few inches away from his body. Even a slight mistake made by the thrower could result in serious—even fatal—injury. Was this creature called Arjun going to throw knives? At whom?

One of the men opened the box. It was filled with knives, each with an ivory handle, an identical pattern at one end.

‘The king of Harbanspur had a private circus. Arjun used to perform in it. Now he performs for me, in my own circus . . . ha ha ha!’

Twelve knives had been selected from the box and spread out on a marble table like a Japanese fan. ‘Come on, Uncle!’ said Maganlal.

Lalmohan Babu gave a violent start, spilling most of the remaining liquid in his glass on the floor.

Feluda spoke this time. ‘Why are you calling him?’ he asked, ice in his voice.

Maganlal’s fat body rocked with laughter. ‘Who else can stand before the board, tell me? If I asked you to stand there, you couldn’t see the game, could you? No, don’t say another word. You have insulted me today by calling me a liar. Let me warn you that I have other weapons, too. I don’t use just knives. Look at those small windows. Two guns are, at this moment, pointed at you. If you behave and don’t start an argument, you’ll come to no harm. Nor will your friend. Arjun is a master in this game, believe me.’

I didn’t dare look at the windows. A moment later, Lalmohan Babu rose shakily to his feet, saying, ‘If I live, no worries about a plot . . .’ A couple of men grabbed him and took him to stand before the board. He closed his eyes. I couldn’t bear to look any more.

Lalmohan Babu was standing behind me. Before me stood Arjun, picking up the knives one by one, slowly but steadily. Each one flew over the top of my head and hit the board with a faint swish. Feluda must have been facing Lalmohan Babu and actually watching the show, or no doubt one of the guns would have been fired.

At last, the last knife was thrown. Arjun stood mutely before the empty table, breathing heavily.

Maganlal said, ‘Well done!’ The invisible clock ticked away.

No one else spoke. Nobody moved. Then, a few seconds later, just as my own breathing was beginning to get normal, Lalmohan Babu staggered forward, and grabbed Arjun’s hand.

‘Thank you, sir,’ he said.

Then he swayed from side to side, and fell down on the mattress, unconscious.

Comprehension

Question 1: Why did Lalmohan Babu prod a lamb with his umbrella?

Question 2: What did Lalmohan Babu imagine himself as when he was in Rajasthan?

Question 3: Who was following Feluda and his group in the alley?

Question 4: What did Inspector Tiwari warn Feluda about regarding Maganlal?

Question 5: What did Maganlal claim about the Ganesh statue?

Question 6: Why did Feluda refuse Maganlal's offer of money?

Question 7: What unusual activity did Maganlal ask Arjun to perform?

Question 8: How did Lalmohan Babu react when he was asked to stand before the wooden board?

Question 9: What did Feluda mean by his "three other weapons"?

Question 10: What was the condition of Maganlal's house when Feluda and his group entered?

Answers

Answer 1: Lalmohan Babu prodded a lamb with his umbrella to gently move it out of the way.

Answer 2: In Rajasthan, Lalmohan Babu imagined himself as a Rajput.

Answer 3: A man wearing tight pyjamas and a purple blanket covering his body and face was following Feluda and his group.

Answer 4: Inspector Tiwari warned Feluda to stay away from the case of the missing Ganesh because Maganlal was involved and had a team of hired hooligans.

Answer 5: Maganlal claimed that Umanath Ghoshal sold the Ganesh statue to him for thirty thousand rupees.

Answer 6: Feluda refused Maganlal's money because he does not accept a fee without earning it through his work as an investigator.

Answer 7: Maganlal asked Arjun to perform knife-throwing, targeting a wooden board with Lalmohan Babu standing in front of it.

Answer 8: Lalmohan Babu rose shakily, closed his eyes, and was so frightened that he eventually fainted after the knife-throwing.

Answer 9: Feluda's "three other weapons" referred to his powerful brain, steady nerves, and strong muscles.

Answer 10: Maganlal's house had an open front door, no visible guards, and cows in a dark, damp courtyard.