

## UNIT II

### DRAMA : WARMING UP

'Drama' is inescapable in everyday existence. Most of us tend to understand drama only as entertainment on stage or on screen. But the fact is that all of us act out our little dramas at home, work place, public places etc. Remember the times when you argued and quarreled, times when you felt deep attachment and rushed to help brothers, sisters and friends, instances where you encountered or caused comic goof-ups, the sorrow and pain that engulfed you when you had to part from dear ones. Well, that is drama for you in real life. Now you may have developed a sense of drama that does not confine itself to the text, stage or screen. Read the plays prescribed as representations of what happens in life and try to establish parallels to events in the texts in your own experience.

Drama, in fact, is a site where communication is demonstrated. In the dialogue, there is a speaker and a listener. Certain communicative situations turn out to be successful whereas certain others end in failure. This way, drama helps to find the cause for communication success or failure. As a listener and speaker you will learn what to adopt and what to avoid. Drama offers opportunities for learning turntaking, pauses, tone, active listening etc. Drama also carries instances of non-verbal communication like when a character makes a threatening or supportive move and by studying them you learn the use of body language.

Like any other form of literature drama too delights and teaches. Be entertained first and go back to the text this time treating it as a terrain of communication where you will learn to tread effectively. In other words stop being mere audience and do the drama alongwith the characters.

# THE BOY COMES HOME

A.A. Milne

## LINK

In our country, till one grows up and becomes earning adults, he/she is constantly advised/controlled by parents, uncles, aunts and why even the once indulgent grandparents. Decisions concerning you upto your marriage invariably are made by elders. You, no doubt, would have faced such situations and desperately wanted to assert yourself but did not owing to the habit of yielding. Summon such occasions to your mind and begin reading the play.

## NOTE ON THE AUTHOR

Alan Alexander Milne (1882-1956) better known as the creator of Winnie the Pooh wrote novels, plays and poems. A humorist, he also worked as a journalist and served as assistant editor of **Punch**. Considered to be an inheritor of Lamb's tradition, his plays are characterized by "laughter of things, surface gaities" and "the comedy of existence". He does not allow pathos or background of disaster to dull his plays. Some of his other works are **First Plays** and **The Red House of Mystery**.

## TEXT

### THE BOY COMES HOME

A.A.Milne

Scene: A room in UNCLE JAMES'S house in the Cromwell Road

Time: The day after the War.

*Any room in UNCLE JAMES'S house is furnished in heavy mid-Victorian style; this particular morning-room is perhaps solider and more respectable even than the others, from the heavy table in the middle of it to the heavy engravings on the walls. There are*

two doors to it. The one at the back opens into the hall, the one at the side into the dining-room.

PHILIP comes in from the hall and goes into the dining-room. Apparently he finds nothing there, for he returns to the morning-room, looks about him for a moment and then rings the bell. It is ten o'clock, and he wants his breakfast. He picks up the paper, and sits in a heavy armchair in front of the fire – a pleasant-looking well-built person of twenty-three, with an air of decisiveness about him. MARY, the parlour-maid, comes in.

MARY : Did you ring, Master Philip?

PHILIP (*absently*) : Yes; I want some breakfast, please, Mary.

MARY (*coldly*) : Breakfast has been cleared away an hour ago.

PHILIP : Exactly. That's why I rang. You can boil me a couple of eggs or something. And coffee, and not tea.

MARY : I'm sure I don't know what Mrs. Higgins will say.

PHILIP (*getting up*): Who is Mrs. Higgins?

MARY : The cook. And she's not used to being **put about** like this.

PHILIP : Do you think she'll say something?

MARY : I don't know what she'll say.

PHILIP : You needn't tell me, you know, if you don't want to. Anyway, I don't suppose it will shock me. One gets used to it in the Army.  
(*He smiles pleasantly at her.*)

MARY : Well, I'll do what I can, sir. But breakfast at eight sharp is the master's rule, just as it used to be before you went away to the war.

PHILIP : Before I went away to the war I did a lot of silly things. Don't drag them up now. (*More curtly*). Two eggs, and if there's a ham bring that along too.

(*He turns away.*)

MARY (*doubtfully, as she prepares to go*) : Well, I'm sure I don't know what Mrs Higgins will say.

(*Exit MARY.*)

(*As she goes out she makes way for AUNT EMILY to come in, a kind-hearted mid-Victorian lady who has never had any desire for the vote.*)

EMILY : There you are, Philip! Good morning, dear. Did you sleep well?

PHILIP : Rather; splendidly, thanks, Aunt Emily. How are you? *(He kisses her.)*

EMILY : And did you have a good breakfast? Naughty boy to be late for it. I always thought they had to get up so early in the Army.

PHILIP : They do. That's why they're so late when they get out of the Army.

EMILY : Dear me! I should have thought a habit of four years would have stayed with you.

PHILIP : Every morning for four years, as I've shot out of bed, I've said to myself, 'Wait! A time will come.' *(smiling)* That doesn't really give a habit a chance.

EMILY : Well, I daresay you wanted your sleep out. I was so afraid that a really cosy bed would keep you awake after all those years in the **trenches**.

PHILIP : Well, one isn't in the trenches all the time. And one gets leave – if one's an officer.

EMILY *(reproachfully)* : You didn't spend much of it with us, Philip.

PHILIP *(taking her hands)* : I know; but you did understand, didn't you, dear?

EMILY : We're not very gay, and I know you must have wanted gaiety for the little time you had . But I think your Uncle James felt it. After all, dear, you've lived with us for some years, and he is your guardian.

PHILIP : I know. You've been a darling to me always, Aunt Emily. But *(awkwardly)* Uncle James and I –

EMILY : Of course, he is a little difficult to get on with. I'm more used to him. But I'm sure he really is very fond of you, Philip.

PHILIP : H'm! I always used to be frightened of him ... I suppose he's just the same. He seemed just the same last night – and he still has breakfast at eight o' clock. Been making pots of money, I suppose?

EMILY : He never tells me exactly, but he did speak once about the **absurdity** of the excess profits tax. You see, jam is a thing the Army wants.

PHILIP : It certainly gets it.

EMILY : It was so nice for him, because it made him feel he was doing his bit, helping

the poor men in the trenches.

(Enter MARY).

( *He smiles at her and goes out into the dining-room, AUNT EMILY wanders round the room, putting a few things tidy as is her habit, when she is interrupted by the entrance of UNCLE JAMES. JAMES is not a big man, nor an impressive one in his black morning-coat; and his thin straggly beard, now going grey, does not hide a chin of any great power; but he has a severity which passes for strength with the weak.* )

JAMES : Philip down yet?

EMILY : He's just having his breakfast.

JAMES (*looking at his watch*) : Ten o'clock. (*Snapping it shut and putting it back*) Ten o'clock. I say ten o'clock, Emily.

EMILY : Yes, dear, I heard you.

JAMES : You don't say anything?

EMILY(*vaguely*) : I expect he's tired after that long war.

JAMES : That's no excuse for not being punctual. I suppose he learnt punctuality in the Army?

EMILY : I expect he learnt it, James, but I understood him to say that he'd forgotten it.

JAMES : Then the sooner he learns it again the better. I particularly stayed away from the office today in order to talk things over with him, and (*looking at his watch*) here's ten o'clock – past ten – and no sign of him. I'm practically throwing away a day.

EMILY : What are you going to talk to him about?

JAMES : His future, naturally. I have decided that the best thing he can do is to come into the business at once.

EMILY : Are you really going to talk it over with him, James, or are you just going to tell him that he must come?

JAMES (*surprised*) : What do you mean? What's the difference? Naturally we shall talk it over first, and – er – naturally he'll fall in with my wishes.

EMILY : I suppose he can hardly help himself, poor boy.

JAMES : Not until he's twenty-five, anyhow. When he's twenty-five he can have his own money and do what he likes with it.

EMILY (*timidly*) : But I think you ought to consult him a little, dear. After all, he has been fighting for us.

JAMES (*with his back to the fire*) : Now that's the sort of silly sentiment that there's been much too much of. I object to it strongly. I don't want to boast, but I think I may claim to have done my share. I gave up my nephew to my country, and I - er - suffered from the shortage of potatoes to an extent that you probably didn't realize. Indeed, if it hadn't been for your fortunate discovery about that time that you didn't really like potatoes, I don't know how we should have carried on. And, as I think I've told you before, the excess-profits tax seemed to me a singularly stupid piece of legislation - but I paid it. And I don't go **boasting** about how much I paid.

EMILY (*unconvinced*) : Well, I think that Philip's four years out there have made him more of a man; he doesn't seem somehow like a boy who can be told what to do. I'm sure they've taught him something.

JAMES : I've no doubt that they've taught him something about - er - bombs and -er - which end a revolver goes off, and how to form fours. But I don't see that that sort of thing helps him to decide upon the most suitable career for a young man in after-war conditions.

EMILY : Well, I can only say you'll find him different.

JAMES : I didn't notice any particular difference last night.

EMILY : I think you'll find him rather more - I can't quite think of the word, but Mrs Higgins could tell you what I mean.

JAMES : Of course, if he likes to earn his living any other way, he may; but I don't see how he proposes to do it so long as I hold the purse-strings. (*Looking at his watch*) Perhaps you'd better tell him that I cannot wait any longer.

(EMILY opens the door leading into the dining-room and talks through it to PHILIP).

EMILY : Philip, your uncle is waiting to see you before he goes to the office. Will you be long, dear?

PHILIP (*from the dining-room*) : Is he in a hurry?

JAMES (*shortly*) : Yes.

EMILY : He says he is rather, dear.

PHILIP : Couldn't he come and talk in here? It wouldn't interfere with my breakfast.

JAMES : No.

EMILY : He says he is rather you came to him, darling.

PHILIP (*resigned*) : Oh, well.

EMILY (to JAMES ) : He'll be here directly, dear. Just sit down in front of the fire and make yourself comfortable with the paper. He won't keep you long.  
(*She arranges him*).

JAMES (*taking the paper*) : The morning is not the time to make oneself comfortable. It's a most dangerous habit. I nearly found myself dropping off in front of the fire just now. I don't like this hanging about, wasting the day.  
(*He opens the paper*).

EMILY : You should have had a nice sleep, dear, while you could. We were up so late last night listening to Philip's stories.

JAMES : Yes, yes. (*He begins a yawn and stifles it hurriedly.*) You mustn't neglect your duties, Emily. I've no doubt you have plenty to do.

EMILY : All right, James, then I'll leave you. But don't be hard on the boy.

JAMES (*sleepily*) : I shall be just, Emily; you can rely upon that.

EMILY (*going to the door*) : I don't think that's quite what I meant. (*She goes out*).

(*JAMES, who is now quite comfortable, begins to nod. He wakes up with a start, turns over the paper, and nods again. Soon he is breathing deeply with closed eyes*).

PHILIP (*coming in*) : Sorry to have kept you waiting, but I was a bit late for breakfast. (*He takes out his pipe.*) Are we going to talk business or what?

JAMES (*taking out his watch*) : A bit late! I make it just two hours.

PHILIP (*Pleasantly*) : All right, Uncle James. Call it two hours late. Or twenty-two hours early for tomorrow's breakfast, if you like.

(*He sits down in a chair on the opposite side of the table from his uncle, and lights his pipe*).

JAMES : You smoke now?

PHILIP (*staggered*): I what?

JAMES (*nodding at his pipe*): You smoke?

PHILIP: Good heavens! What do you think we did in France?

JAMES: Before you start smoking all over the house, I should have thought you would have asked your aunt's permission.

(PHILIP *looks at him in amazement, and then goes to the door*).

PHILIP (*calling*): Aunt Emily! .....Aunt Emily! ..... Do you mind my smoking in here?

AUNT EMILY (*from upstairs*): Of course not, darling.

PHILIP (*To JAMES, as he returns to his chair*): Of course not, darling.

(*He puts back his pipe in his mouth*).

JAMES: Now, understand once and for all, Philip, while you remain in my house I expect not only punctuality, but also civility and respect. I will not have impertinence.

PHILIP (*unimpressed*): Well, that's what I want to talk to you about, Uncle James. About staying in your house, I mean.

JAMES: I don't know what you do mean.

PHILIP: Well, we don't get on too well together, and I thought perhaps I'd better take rooms somewhere. You could give me an allowance until I came into my money. Or I suppose you could give me the money now if you really liked, I don't quite know how father left it to me.

JAMES (*coldly*): You come into your money when you are twenty-five. Your father very wisely felt that to trust a large sum to a mere boy of twenty-one was simply putting temptation in his way. Whether I have the power or not to alter his dispositions, I certainly don't propose to do so.

PHILIP: If it comes to that, I am twenty-five.

JAMES: Indeed? I had an impression that that event took place in about two years'

time. When did you become twenty-five, may I ask?

PHILIP (*quietly*) : It was on the Somme. We were attacking the next day and my company was in support. We were in a so-called trench on the edge of a wood - a damned rotten place to be, and we got hell. The company commander sent back to ask if we could move. The C.O. said, 'Certainly not; hang on.' We hung on; doing nothing, you know - just hanging on and waiting for the next day.

Of course, the Boche knew all about that. He had it on us nicely....(*Sadly*) Poor old Billy! He was one of the best - our company commander, you know. They got him, poor devil! That left me in command of the company. I sent a runner back to ask if I could move. Well, I'd had a bit of a scout on my own and found a sort of trench five hundred yards to the right. Not what you'd call a trench, of course, but compared to that wood - well, it was absolutely Hyde Park. I described the position and asked if I could go there. My man never came back. I waited an hour and sent another man. He went west too. Well, I wasn't going to send a third. It was murder. So I had to decide. We'd lost about half the company by this time, you see. Well, there were three things I could do - hang on, move to this other trench, against orders, or go back myself and explain the situation .....I moved..... And then I went back to the C.O. and told him I'd moved .....And then I went back to the company again.....(*Quietly*) That was when I became twenty-five ...or thirty-five.... or forty-five.

JAMES (*recovering himself with an effort*) : Ah yes, yes. (*He coughs awkwardly.*) No doubt points like that frequently crop up in the trenches. I am glad that you did well out there, and I'm sure your Colonel would speak kindly of you; but when it comes to choosing a career for you now that you have left the Army, my advice is not altogether to be despised. Your father evidently thought so, or he would not have entrusted you to my care.

PHILIP : My father didn't foresee this war.

JAMES : Yes, yes, but you make too much of this war. All you young boys seem to think you've come back from France to teach us our business. You'll find that it is you who'll have to learn, not we.

PHILIP : I'm quite prepared to learn; in fact, I want to.

JAMES : Excellent. Then we can consider that settled.

PHILIP : Well, we haven't settled yet what business I'm going to learn.

JAMES : I don't think that's very difficult. I propose to take you into my business. You'll start at the bottom, of course, but it will be a splendid opening for you.

PHILIP (*thoughtfully*) : I see. So you've decided it for me? The jam business.

JAMES (*sharply*) : Is there anything to be ashamed of in that?

PHILIP : Oh no, nothing at all. Only it doesn't happen to appeal to me.

JAMES : If you knew which side your bread was buttered, it would appeal to you very considerably.

PHILIP : I'm afraid I can't see the butter for the jam.

JAMES : I don't want any silly jokes of that sort. You were glad enough to get it out there, I've no doubt.

PHILIP : Oh yes. Perhaps that's why I'm so sick of it now... No, it's no good. Uncle James; you must think of something else.

JAMES (*with a sneer*) : Perhaps you've thought of something else?

PHILIP : Well, I had some idea of being an architect –

JAMES : You propose to start learning to be an architect at twenty-three?

PHILIP (*smiling*) : Well, I couldn't start before, could I?

JAMES : Exactly. And now you'll find it's too late.

PHILIP : Is it? Aren't there going to be any more architects, or doctors, or solicitors, or barristers? Because we've all lost four years of our lives, are all the professions going to die out?

JAMES : And how old do you suppose you'll be before you're earning money as an architect?

PHILIP : The usual time, whatever that may be. If I'm four years behind, so is everybody else.

JAMES : Well, I think it's high time you began to earn a living at once.

PHILIP : Look here, Uncle James, do you really think that you can treat me like a boy who's just left school? Do you think four years at the front have made no difference at all?

JAMES : If there had been any difference, I should have expected it to take the form of an increased readiness to obey orders and recognize authority.

PHILIP (*regretfully*) : You are evidently determined to have a row. Perhaps I had better tell you once and for all that I refuse to go into the turnip and vegetable marrow business.

JAMES (*thumping the table angrily*) : And perhaps I'd better tell you, sir, once and for all, that I don't propose to allow rudeness from an impertinent young puppy.

PHILIP (*reminiscently*) : I remember annoying our Brigadier once. He was covered with red, had a very red face, about twenty medals, and a cold blue eye. He told me how angry he was for about five minutes while I stood to attention. I'm afraid you aren't nearly so impressive, Uncle James.

JAMES (*rather upset*) : Oh! (*Recovering himself*) Fortunately I have other means of impressing you. The power of the purse goes a long way in this world. I propose to use it.

PHILIP : I see ....Yes....that's rather awkward, isn't it?

JAMES (*pleasantly*) : I think you'll find it very awkward.

PHILIP (*thoughtfully*) : Yes.

(*With an amused laugh JAMES settles down to his paper as if the interview were over.*)

PHILIP (*to himself*) : I suppose I shall have to think of another argument.

(*He takes out a revolver from his pocket and fondles it affectionately.*)

JAMES (*looking up suddenly as he is doing this – amazed*) : What on earth are you doing?

PHILIP : Souvenir from France. Do you know, Uncle James, that this revolver has killed about twenty Germans?

JAMES (*shortly*) : Oh! Well, don't go playing about with it here, or you'll be killing Englishmen before you know where you are.

PHILIP : Well, you never know. (*He raises it leisurely and points it at his uncle.*) It's a nice little weapon.

JAMES (*angrily*) : Put it down, sir. You ought to have grown out of monkey tricks like that in the Army. You ought to know better than to point an unloaded revolver at anybody. That's the way accidents always happen.

PHILIP : Not when you've been on a revolver course and know all about it. Besides, it is loaded.

JAMES (*very angry because he is frightened suddenly*) : Put it down at once, sir.  
(*PHILIP turns it away from him and examines it carelessly.*) What's the matter with you? Have you gone mad suddenly?

PHILIP (*mildly*) : I thought you'd be interested in it. It's shot such a lot of Germans.

JAMES : Well, it won't want to shoot any more, and the sooner you get rid of it the better.

PHILIP : I wonder. Does it ever occur to you, Uncle James, that there are about a hundred thousand people in England who own revolvers, who are quite accustomed to them and – who have nobody to practise on now?

JAMES : No, sir, it certainly doesn't.

PHILIP (*thoughtfully*) : I wonder if it will make any difference. You know, one gets so used to potting at people. It's rather difficult to realize suddenly that one oughtn't to.

JAMES (*getting up*) : I don't know what the object of all this tomfoolery is, if it has one. But you understand that I expect you to come to the office with me tomorrow at nine o'clock. Kindly see that you're punctual. (*He turns to go away*).

PHILIP (*softly*) : Uncle James.

JAMES (*over his shoulder*) : I have no more –

PHILIP (*in his parade voice*) : Damn it, sir! stand to attention when you talk to an officer! (JAMES *instinctively turns round and stiffens himself*.) That's better; you can sit down if you like.

(*He motions JAMES to his chair with the revolver*).

JAMES (*going nervously to his chair*) : What does this bluff mean?

PHILIP : It isn't bluff, it's quite serious. (*Pointing the revolver at his uncle*) Do sit down.

JAMES (*sitting down*) : Threats, eh?

PHILIP : Persuasion.

JAMES : At the point of the revolver? You settle your arguments by force? Good heavens, Sir! this is just the very thing that we were fighting to put down.

PHILIP : We were fighting! We! We! Uncle, you're a humorist.

JAMES : Well, 'you,' if you prefer it. Although those of us who stayed at home –

PHILIP : Yes, never mind about the excess profits now. I can tell you quite well what we fought for. We use force to put down force. That's what I'm doing now. You

were going to use force – the force of money – to make me do what you wanted.  
now I'm using force to stop it. *(He levels the revolver again).*

JAMES : You're – you're going to shoot your old uncle?

PHILIP : Why not? I've shot lots of old uncles – Land sturmers.

JAMES : But those were Germans! It's different shooting Germans. You're in England now. You couldn't have a crime on your conscience like that.

PHILIP : Ah, but you mustn't think that after four years of war one has quite the same ideas about the sanctity of human life. How could one?

JAMES : You'll find that juries have kept pretty much the same ideas, I fancy.

PHILIP : Yes, but revolvers often go off accidentally. You said so yourself. This is going to be the purest accident. Can't you see it in the papers? 'The deceased's nephew, who was obviously upset –'

JAMES : I suppose you think it's brave to come back from the front and threaten a defenceless man with a revolver? Is that the sort of fair play they teach you in The Army?

PHILIP : Good heavens! Of course it is. You don't think that you wait until the other side has got just as many guns as you before you attack? You're really rather lucky. Strictly speaking, I ought to have thrown half a dozen bombs at you first. *(Taking one out of his pocket)* As it happens, I've only got one.

JAMES *(thoroughly alarmed)* : Put that back at once.

PHILIP *(putting down the revolver and taking it in his hands)* : You hold it in the right hand – so – taking care to keep the lever down. Then you take the pin in the finger – so, and – but perhaps this doesn't interest you?

JAMES *(edging his chair away)* : Put it down at once, sir. Good heavens! Anything might happen.

PHILIP *(putting it down and taking up the revolver again)* : Does it ever occur to you, Uncle James, that there are about three million people in England who know all about bombs, and how to throw them, and –

JAMES : It certainly does not occur to me. I should never dream of letting these things occur to me.

PHILIP *(looking at the bomb regretfully)* : It's rather against my principles as a soldier, but just to make things a bit more fair – *(generously)* you shall have it.

*(He holds it out to him suddenly).*

JAMES *(shrinking back again)* : Certainly not, sir. It might go off at any moment.

PHILIP *(putting it back in his pocket)* : Oh no; it's quite useless; there's no detonator....  
*(Sternly)* Now, then, let's talk business.

JAMES : What do you want me to do?

PHILIP : Well, I don't quite know, Uncle James. I expect we should go through this little scene again tomorrow. You haven't enjoyed it, have you? Well, there's lots more of it to come. We'll rehearse it every day. One day, if you go on being unreasonable, the thing will go off. Of course, you think that I shouldn't have the pluck to fire. But you can't be quite certain. It's a hundred to one that I shan't – only I might. Fear – it's a horrible thing. Elderly men die of it sometimes.

JAMES : Pooh! I'm not to be bluffed like that.

PHILIP *(suddenly)* : You're quite right; you're not that sort. I made a mistake. *(Aiming carefully)* I shall have to do it straight off, after all. One – two –

JAMES *(on his knees, with uplifted hands, in an agony of terror)* : Philip! Mercy! What are your terms?

PHILIP *(picking him up by the scruff, and helping him into the chair)* : Good man, that's the way to talk. I'll get them for you. Make yourself comfortable in front of the fire till I come back. Here's the paper.

*(He gives his uncle the paper, and goes out into the hall).*

*JAMES opens his eyes with a start and looks round him in a bewildered way. He rubs his head, takes out his watch and looks at it, and then stares round the room again. The door from the dining-room opens, and PHILIP comes in with a piece of toast in his hand).*

PHILIP *(his mouth full)* : You wanted to see me, Uncle James?

JAMES *(still bewildered)* : That's all right, my boy, that's all right. What have you been doing?

PHILIP *(surprised)* : Breakfast. *(Putting the last piece in his mouth)* Rather late, I'm afraid.

JAMES : That's all right. *(He laughs awkwardly).*

PHILIP : Anything the matter? You don't look your usual bright self.

JAMES : I-er-seem to have dropped asleep in front of the fire. Most unusual thing for me to have done. Most unusual.

PHILIP : Let that be a lesson to you not to get up so early. Of course, if you're in the Army you can't help yourself. Thank heaven I'm out of it, and my own master again.

JAMES : Ah, that's what I wanted to talk to you about. Sit down, Philip.  
*(He indicates the chair by the fire).*

PHILIP *(taking a chair by the table)* : You have that, uncle; I shall be all right here.

JAMES *(hastily)* : No, no; you come here. *(He gives PHILIP the armchair and sits by the table himself.)* I should be dropping off again. *(He laughs awkwardly).*

PHILIP : Righto.

*(He puts his hand in his pocket. UNCLE JAMES shivers and looks at him in horror. PHILIP brings out his pipe, and a sickly grin of relief comes into JAMES'S face).*

JAMES : I suppose you smoked a lot in France?

PHILIP : Rather! Nothing else to do. It's allowed in here?

JAMES *(hastily)* : Yes, yes, of course. *(PHILIP lights his pipe.)* Well now, Philip, what are you going to do, now you've left the Army?

PHILIP *(promptly)* : Burn my uniform and sell my revolver.

JAMES *(starting at the word 'revolver')* : Sell your revolver eh?

PHILIP *(surprised)* : Well, I don't want it now, do I?

JAMES : No....Oh no.... Oh, most certainly not, I should say. Oh, I can't see why you should want it at all. *(With an uneasy laugh)* You're in England now. No need for revolvers here – eh?

PHILIP *(staring at him)* : Well, no, I hope not.

JAMES *(hastily)* : Quite so. Well now, Philip, what next? We must find a profession for you.

PHILIP (*yawning*) : I suppose so. I haven't really thought about it much.

JAMES : You never wanted to be an architect?

PHILIP (*surprised*) : Architect?

(JAMES  *rubs his head and wonders what made him think of architect*).

JAMES : Or anything like that.

PHILIP : It's a bit late, isn't it?

JAMES : Well, if you're four years behind, so is everybody else.

(*He feels vaguely that he has heard this argument before*).

PHILIP (*smiling*) : To tell the truth, I don't feel I mind much anyway. Anything you like – except a commissionaire. I absolutely refuse to wear uniform again.

JAMES : How would you like to come into the business?

PHILIP : The jam business? Well, I don't know. You wouldn't want me to salute you in the mornings?

JAMES : My dear boy, no!

PHILIP : All right, I'll try it if you like. I don't know if I shall be any good – what do you do?

JAMES : It's your experience in managing and – er – handling men which I hope will be of value.

PHILIP : Oh, I can do that all right. (*Stretching himself luxuriously*) Uncle James, do you realize that I'm never going to salute again, or wear a uniform, or get wet – really wet, I mean – or examine men's feet, or stand to attention when I'm spoken to, or –oh, lot more things? And best of all, I'm never going to be frightened again. Have you ever known what it is to be afraid – really afraid?

JAMES (*embarrassed*) : I – er – well (He coughs).

PHILIP : No, you couldn't – not really afraid of death, I mean. Well, that's over now. Good lord! I could spend the rest of my life in the British Museum and be happy.....

JAMES (*getting up*) : All right, we'll try you in the office. I expect you want a holiday first, though.

PHILIP (*getting up*): My dear uncle, this is holiday. Being in London is holiday. Buying an evening paper – wearing a waistcoat again – running after a bus – anything – it's all holiday.

JAMES : All right, then, come along with me now, and I'll introduce you to Mr. Bamford.

PHILIP : Right. Who's he?

JAMES : Our manager. A little stiff, but a very good fellow. He'll be delighted to hear that you are coming into the firm.

PHILIP (*smiling*) : Perhaps I'd better bring my revolver, in case he isn't.

JAMES (*laughing with forced heartiness as they go together to the door*) : Ha, ha! A good joke that! Ha, ha, ha! A good joke – but only a joke, of course. Ha, ha! He, he, he!

(PHILIP *goes out*. JAMES, *following him, turns at the door, and looks round the room in a bewildered way.*

*Was it a dream, or wasn't it? He will never be quite certain.*)

## CURTAIN

### GLOSSARY

air of decisiveness – self - possessed, sure of oneself

put about – ordered around

ham – the cooked part of a pig's leg

trench – a long deep hole dug in the ground where soldiers can be protected from enemy attacks

absurdity – ridiculousness

legislation	– law passed by a parliament
boast	– to talk with too much pride about oneself
propose	– intend to do
drop off	– start to sleep
impertinence	– rudeness
came into	– inherited
temptation wrong	– the desire to do or have something which you know to be bad or wrong
fondle	– touch gently, affectionately
tomfoolery	– playful behaviour

### **FIND OUT**

1. How many characters are there in the play?

---

2. Who is the character that gets mentioned but never gets to speak?

---

3. Identity the characters that are young.

---

4. Philip served in the \_\_\_\_\_ for four years. (civil services / army)
  5. The play has more \_\_\_\_\_ characters. (elder /younger)
  6. Who among the characters undergoes change in behaviour?
- 

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Reading through the play assess how you developed sense of
  - a. situation
  - b. character
  - c. background
2. What is the conflict that is central to the play?
3. Compare and contrast Uncle James' attitude to Philips
  1. **having breakfast late**
  2. **smoking pipe**
  3. **refusal to work under James**

at the beginning of the play to his attitude at the end of the play.

4. Compare the atmosphere prior to Philip wielding the revolver and the one after it?
5. Make a projection of how the James-Philip relationship will progress under the changed equation.
6. What significance does Philip's four year service in the army hold for the play?

## ACTIVITIES - SPEAKING

1. Should youth be allowed total freedom to develop or controlled by the wisdom of the elders?

Form groups of six and debate the issue. The leader of each group will present a report highlighting the arguments for and against.

2. When elders want to control you they do it mostly out of genuine concern. Is this the case with Mr. James in the play? Does he act out of concern or a desire to enjoy power and control? (To be discussed in groups)
3. Choose an incident from your life where you wanted to take a course of action while your father / boss / teacher prescribed some other which was not to your liking. Now write an account of it using the format given below (250 words)

1. State the issue
2. Explain your state of mind
3. Your father's / boss' / teacher's stand
4. Your response / reaction to that stand
5. Their response / reaction to your stand
6. Outcome
7. What you could have done to avoid arguments / confrontation and promote understanding

## LISTENING

4. 'The Boy Comes Home' is replete with tone indicators. A list of them is given for your convenience. Go to the text and say aloud the dialogue that follows the indicators in the tone indicated.

absently	shortly	recovering himself	mildly
coldly	resigned	with an effort	parade voice
curtly	sleepily	smiling	thoroughly claimed
doubtfully	staggered	regretfully	sternly
reproachfully	unimpressed	rather upset	hastily

awkwardly	quietly	angrily	suddenly
vaguely	sadly	reminiscently	
surprised	thoughtfully	pleasantly	
timidly	sharply	amazed	
unconvinced	with a sneer	angry and frightened	

5. Note the body language indicators

**with his back to the fire  
thumping the table  
looking at his watch, snapping it shut and putting it back**

and identify the personality traits suggested by them.

## **GRAMMAR**

1. Note the use of present tense in stage descriptions. Study it carefully and attempt a small passage of your own using one of them as models. You may compare your writing with the model you chose from the text.

### **2. Rewrite as directed**

**Convert the following into indirect speech:**

- i. Philip: "I want some breakfast, please, Mary."
- ii. Emily: "Philip? Did you sleep well?"
- iii. Philip: "I suppose I shall have to think of another argument."
- iv. Philip: "You wanted to see me, Uncle James."
- v. James to Philip: "I expect you want a holiday first."

**Change into passive voice:**

- i. Philip picked up the paper.
- ii. James takes out his watch.

- iii. James trumped the table angrily.
- iv. Philip fondles the revolver affectionately.
- v. Philip picked up James by the scruff.

**3. Make sentences using the following :**

- i. put about
- ii. to get on with
- iii. give it a chance
- iv. more of a
- v. to talk things over
- vi. came in to

**Model Questions**

1. Sketch the character of Uncle James. (100 words)
2. Comment on the background of war. (100 words)
3. Describe how Philip succeeds in forcing Uncle James into agreeing with him.  
(250 words)

# **THE REFEREE**

**W.H. ANDREWS AND GEOFFREY DEARMER**

## **LINK**

We like watching movies especially comedies. They are full of improbabilities made to appear as probable. In some of the movies, dual role is played by the hero or heroine. Either knowing or unknowingly, when their places are changed the comic element reaches its peak. Mistaken identity is a popular device to generate comedy and we have any number of instances from Shakespeare to Hollywood–Bollywood–Kollywood movies.

In this one-act play “The Referee” the induction of the timid and ignorant Beltwood to impersonate the celebrated referee Potts for the Derby match provides the right start to the play.

## **TEXT**

# **THE REFEREE**

**W.H. ANDREWS AND GEOFFREY DEARMER**

## **CHARACTERS**

**COLONEL WORTLEBURY**, Chairman of “The Rovers” Football Club

**BERYL**, his daughter

**ROBERT BARKER**, Manager of “The Rovers” Football Club

**DIANA**, his wife

**SAMMY**, the assistant trainer

**KETTLE**, “The Rovers” Captain

**BOFFIN**, “The Celtic” Captain

**POTTS**, a famous referee

**JOHN BELTWOOD**, his unwilling deputy

## **A FOOTBALL REPORTER**

**Note** – **POTTS** and **BELTWOOD** should be played by the same actor.

The action of the play takes place within the precincts of the stand belonging to the Rovers F.C., just before, during, and after the local ‘Derby’ Match with the Celtic on a

Saturday afternoon. The curtain falls twice during the play to denote a lapse of time. The noise of the football match should continue through these time curtains.

### **THE REFEREE**

SCENE : The referee's room of a famous football team under the grand stand.

A small table, three wooden chairs, and a strip of carpet on the floor. In one corner is a wooden screen behind which the end of an ordinary hip bath can be seen. Several prints of football teams and individual foot-ballers in various attitudes, cut from newspapers and periodicals, fill the whitewashed walls. There is a door on each side and one in the middle at the back. Faintly can be heard the playing of a band and a dull murmur, doubled in the volume when a door is opened.

The time is a quarter to three on any Saturday afternoon in any large town or city.

WORTLEBURY and BARKER are in the room, talking anxiously and looking at their watches. WORTLEBURY is a large man. He wears his overcoat and hat, and smokes a cigar. BARKER is smaller, quieter, and wears a blue suit and bowler hat.

WORTLEBURY : I tell you, Barker, he should have been here half an hour ago.

BARKER : I know, sir, but it's surprising how quickly referees change nowadays.

WORTLEBURY : Their decisions-yes. But their clothes-br-r-impossible - impossible.

BARKER : Perhaps he'll come ready to go on. Some of them change on the train, I believe.

WORTLEBURY : Rubbish. He's not coming. I can tell. My gout's troubling me. (*Limping slightly*) Hang it. This infernal worrying will drive me crazy. He must come, Barker. He must. Understand?

BARKER : Yes, sir, but if –

WORTLEBURY (*fiercely and balancing on one leg*) : No buts – he must be here to officiate. Who else can control this match and keep that crowd in order, fifty thousand of 'em, eh? One of those weak-kneed linesmen? Brr ! In my time linesmen were never under six foot high nor under thirteen stones, and besides, they could use their feet.

BARKER : One of them might rise to the occasion.

WORTLEBURY : Might ! One of those chaps in there? (*Pointing*) The first decision they gave, the crowd would get wild and the players would start kicking each other about.

BARKER : All referees make mistakes – even Potts.

WORTLEBURY : Of course Potts does. More than any of ‘em. But nobody disputes him on the field – afterwards, perhaps, but not on the field. He has a way with him, I’ve seen him. He keeps ‘em quiet somehow.

BARKER (*reluctantly*) : That’s right, (*slowly*) and today we need him more than ever. We can’t afford mistakes. If we don’t win today the championship goes – pop!

WORTLEBURY : And down go gates, and instead of a profit we have to explain to a mob of shareholders why we’ve made a loss, and all because Potts didn’t referee the Derby match between Celtic and Rovers. (*Agitatedly*) It won’t do. Potts must be there. Understand?

BARKER : Yes, sir.

WORTLEBURY : At three o’clock Potts must be on the field.

BARKER : But suppose----- (Enter BELTWOOD.)

WORTLEBURY (*hopping on his sound leg*) : Suppose – hell!  
(*Turning and mistaking BELTWOOD for POTTS*) Oh, so you’ve come at last, eh? We thought you might come sooner – or later.

BELTWOOD : Really, I –

WORTLEBURY : Don’t stand staring, man. Get ready quickly. You’ve only five minutes to do it in. (*Looking at watch*) No, four and a half.

BARKER : But, sir, I think –

WORTLEBURY (*turning furiously*) : There you go again. Taking up precious time talking. Help him undress.

BELTWOOD : Er – pardon me, but really, I-er-don’t want to undress.

WORTLEBURY : Look here, Potts, get ready and explain afterwards. You’ve got something in front of you.

BARKER : My brother-in-law, John Beltwood. John, this is our Chairman of Directors, Colonel Wortlebury.

WORTLEBURY : I could have sworn - (*Turning to BARKER*)  
Why do you do these things, Barker? Fancy having a man like this rambling round and leading every one astray.

BARKER : I'm afraid you've made a mistake. This is not Potts the referee.

WORTLEBURY (*spluttering*) : Not Potts? Impossible. I've met him many a time. Same face. Same figure – who is it then?

BARKER : Well, you see, being my wife's brother, I –

WORTLEBURY : Yes, yes. Of course. Charming girl, your sister. Very charming. (*To BARKER*) But damn it, man, why did he have a face like Potts? (*Hysterically*) He has a face like Potts. He walks like Potts. The crowd want Potts, and he isn't Potts. (*Feebly*) He's Beltwood ! (*He collapses in a chair.*)

BELTWOOD (*coming forward*) : If I'd known I wouldn't have come. I only wanted to peep in and see what it was like. Just a look, you know, at the place where these rough chaps array themselves for the game, knickers and jerseys and-er-embrocation and that sort of thing. (*Confidentially*) Of course, I am slightly to blame, for I was once taken for Potts before. Awfully disturbing to be sort of connected with a name like Potts. So liable to misconstruction. I think. Don't you?

WORTLEBURY (*recovering*) : So you have been taken for him before?

BELTWOOD : Yes. At the only other football match I ever attended. Some rough fellows had almost forced me into a pair of short trousers and a whistle, frightfully annoying it was, when the real Potts arrived. Jove, I was glad, and then they even took those trousers off me. But they left me the whistle; I have it still. Sort of jolly old souvenir, you know. Look! (*Producing a whistle*) Here it is. (Blows.)

WORTLEBURY : Hm, hm. Of course, of course. Barker, a moment. (*They talk. BARKER demurs.*)

WORTLEBURY : Mr.Beltwood, I hate to say it, but though you did it unwittingly, nevertheless, the blame is yours. Listen. The moment you entered the passage to come to this room, the pressmen above, the players on either side, the crowd all round, and the band playing *Rule, Britannia* ! were informed that the referee had arrived. Potts had come. You understand your responsibility? (*BELTWOOD gazes in awe.*) Fifty thousand people expect to see Potts, the infallible referee, today. Fifty million listeners-in expect to hear magic words such as “Potts has blown Prollope offside” or “Potts has given a foul” over the ether today.

BELTWOOD (*stammering*) : Oh, s-sir ! (*Sadly*) If I'd thought –

WORTLEBURY : You think too late. Without Potts the match is a fizzle. Fifty thousand people will throw stones, jam-jars, and clods at the ground, and (*with a shrug*) the shareholders will receive no dividend.

BARKER : Surely, sir, you –

WORTLEBURY (*calmly*) : Allow me, Barker. (*To BELTWOOD*) There's only one way out. Your brother-in-law quite agrees with me – don't you, Mr. Manager?

BARKER : Oh, yes, yes.

BELTWOOD : Wh-what's the way out ?

WORTLEBURY : For today you are to be Potts, the man the crowd want. The only man who can keep the two roughest teams in the country in order and get away with it. The one man who can give the Rovers the championship. That's you.

BELTWOOD : Me ! But I don't even know what the white lines are for.

BARKER : But this is absurd, sir. He knows absolutely nothing about the rules, let alone control two teams who are, to say the least, deadly rivals.

WORTLEBURY : Tut, tut, Barker. You exaggerate. Nobody will know that he isn't Potts, and that name counts for something. Why, it's an honour. We won't discuss it further. This man takes the field in Potts's place today, and remember, (*To BARKER*) instil it into him that the Rovers play in white. (*To BELTWOOD*) understand, the Rovers are white, and don't you make any mistake when it's near their goal. Errors today are unforgivable unless they help us. Well, so long, I'll send Sammy in to help you, Beltwood. (*He limps out.*)

BELTWOOD : I say, old chap. This is a bit thick, you know. Sort of slaying the lamb, I think.

BARKER : Quite.

BELTWOOD : I won't have it. Blow the Colonel. I positively refuse.

BARKER : Why didn't you tell him before?

BELTWOOD : I was flabbergasted. But I will (*Starting for the door*) I'll soon settle it.

BARKER (*restraining him*) : Too late, old top. He's sort of headstrong. Likes his own way, and if you refused to do what he says now, well-

BELTWOOD : Well, what?

BARKER : Old man, you see, he might think I'd influenced you, you know, and well-I'm married and jobs aren't plentiful.

BELTWOOD : You mean he'd fire you?

BARKER : I'm not saying he would, but there's always the danger lying around like a thunderstorm. Gives you an uncomfortable feeling.

BELTWOOD : All right, it's their funeral, not mine.

BARKER : Don't be so sure of that.

BELTWOOD (*anxiously*) : What? Nothing can happen to me?

BARKER : Of course not. They always give the referee a police escort.

BELTWOOD : Good heavens! Are policemen even necessary?

BARKER : Only when the crowd disagrees with the referee's decisions.

BELTWOOD : Oh! I'm going cold all over. No, I'm going hot. What's decision, anyway?

BARKER : A decision is a thing that penalizes one side and wins the match for the other, throws thousands of football coupons wrong, supplies football critics with material for three weeks, and causes the spectators to weep in anguish.

BELTWOOD (*faintly*) : O Gawd ! And when do I –er- make one of these decisions?

BARKER : When you blow that (*the whistle*).

BELTWOOD : This is awful. Am I a tramguard or something? Do tell me, when do I blow this?

BARKER : Whenever you see a man on the line waving a flag-blow. If you see a man in the middle with red hair, in a blue jersey, standing fifty yards from anyone else and the ball coming to him, blow offside. If two chaps knock another chap down when the ball is nowhere near-blow. If a player hands the ball-blow. And finally, if you see two players kicking each other, send them off.

BELTWOOD : Send'em off?

BARKER : Sure, you're the boss.

BELTWOOD (*bucking up*) : Oh! I'm the boss, am I? (*Springing up*) By Jove, I'll make every one remember this match. Believe me.

BARKER (*fervently*) : I know you will. (*Enter SAMMY.*) Hello ! Sammy.(*To BELTWOOD*) This is Sammy, our assistant trainer. He's come to help you. (*Hurriedly*) I think I'll leave you to him. See you later.

BELTWOOD : Here I – (BARKER *goes out. Murmuring to himself*) If a man with red hair in the middle of the field – (To SAMMY) Oh, I'm sorry. Pleased to meet you. You're Sammy, eh?

SAMMY : That's me. (*Rolling up his sleeves*) Say when you're ready; we haven't much time.

BELTWOOD (*alarmed*) : Ready for what?

SAMMY : You get your clothes off, and I'll rub you down.

BELTWOOD (*retreating*) : Rub me down?

SAMMY: Of course.

(*Going to table and bringing it C.*)

BELTWOOD (*nervously*) : Er – yes, I was forgetting.  
(*Unfastens his collar and tie.*)

SAMMY(*spreading a blanket on the table*) : Not even you, Mr.Potts, would last the game without it.

BELTWOOD : Well, I don't usually –

SAMMY(*arranging a low screen round the table and bringing a large bottle of coloured embrocation and a towel out of a bag.*) Come, on, now, please.

BELTWOOD : All right.

(*He goes behind the screen with SAMMY.*)

SAMMY : Come on, off with 'em. How do you expect me to do my job through those?

(*There is a scuffle behind the screen. BELTWOOD's head is seen, his face twisted in anguish.*)

BELTWOOD : Oh, this is awful. Don't use your knuckles.

Ow ! My knee. Be careful. I have water on it.

SAMMY : Perhaps it's travelled downward.

BELTWOOD : Please be more gentle. Oh-oh! My back. Ow! You've broken something. O-oh! Ow!

*( He gradually goes quieter and finally stops talking, his face becomes calm and fixed, while SAMMY keeps rubbing and slapping.)*

VOICE AT THE DOOR : Time. The teams are out.

SAMMY : *(ceasing work with a vigorous slap at the object in front of him).* Right-oh. He's ready.

*(BELTWOOD emerges, runs round in a dazed condition, and finally bolts out Back. SAMMY emerges leisurely and replaces screen.)*

SAMMY : The artistic temperament, I suppose. *(Exit) (A loud burst of cheering. The game starts. We hear the murmur of a big crowd and the first interruption of a whistle. Curtain.)*

*(When the curtain rises, BARKER enters, followed by his wife, DIANA, JOHN BELTWOOD'S sister.)*

BARKER : For goodness' sake, speak quieter, Di. These places are only built of wood.

DIANA : They aren't the only things made of wood round here. And old Wortlebury's the same.

BARKER : Why do you always leave the door open when we're having a little argument?

*(Goes to shut door, when an unusually fierce whistle is heard, followed by a particularly loud outbreak of shouts, etc.)*

DIANA : All the shut doors in the world won't keep that whistle out of my brain. Listen, there it goes again. I wonder who he's given a penalty for now or who he's sent off? How many has he sent off, dear?

BARKER : Only two – so far. But, I think Sooker was at fault to do what he did. Any decent referee might have done it.

DIANA : A decent referee wouldn't referee this match. The teams aren't trying to score at all.

BARKER : May be. But there's something in stopping the other fellow, you know, Di.

DIANA *(sharply)* : I know nothing of the sort. All I know is that you have inveigled my brother into going on to that ground disguised as a referee. Referee, indeed ! He doesn't know the first thing about the game.

BARKER : But Di, -please-

DIANA : Don't interrupt. There he is, rambling about the field, looking larger than life in clothes too small for him. A public exhibition of idiocy, reflecting on the family.

BARKER : But Di, you're hardly one of his family now, you're my wife.

DIANA (*angrily*) : I wasn't born a Barker, was I ?

BARKER : No, marriage made you one. Now, don't be silly, nobody knows except, of course, you and I and Wortlebury.

DIANA (*sarcastically*) : So fifty thousand people out there are to think that that exhibition of refereeing is being given by Potts? Potts, the infalliable Potts, the wonder referee. Just imagine. It's five minutes off half-time and the score already seven-six for the Rovers, two men sent off, eleven penalties, fifteen fights in different sections of the ground and extra police sent for. Do you think they'll stand for that? Do you think you can bluff them into thinking that Potts is doing that? Good heavens, Robert, you're mad.

BARKER : Why not? It's only for a couple of hours.

DIANA : I don't believe the likeness is so great.

BARKER : You'll have to believe it. See that?

(*Points to a photo on the wall.*)

DIANA : You dared to put that photo of John here?

BARKER (*triumphantly*) : That's not John. That's Potts.

DIANA (*calmly*) : I meant Potts.

BARKER : You know perfectly well that John is as near like that photo as Potts himself is.

DIANA : May be. But that doesn't make this all right. And what about Potts? What will he say when he hears of this?

BARKER (*doubtfully*) : Oh, I think we can square him all right. Influence and –er- all that, you know.

DIANA : And will influence, persuade him to let this example of how *not* to referee be attributed to him? To let the newspapers criticize it as his doing? To be on everybody's tongue for weeks?

BARKER (*shrugging his shoulders*) : We'll let it rest and hope for the best.

DIANA : Let it rest, indeed ! You may, but I won't. (*A loud, long whistle.*) Half-time. I'm off to find Colonel Wortlebury.

BARKER (*opening the door*) : For heaven's sake be careful, Di.

DIANA : Huh! (*Exit, followed by BARKER.*)

(BELTWOOD *enters, erect, sprightly, and self-satisfied, swinging his whistle by its cord. He calls to someone outside,*) "Come in, trainer."

(SAMMY *enters.*)

BELTWOOD (*taking off his jacket*) : Well, that's that. I showed 'em who held the whistle.

SAMMY : Sure you did, and you showed 'em you could use it, eh?

BELTWOOD : I did that. (*Confidentially*) What do you think of my handling of the game, trainer?

SAMMY : It will live in my memory for ever.

BELTWOOD (*pleased*) : I say that's good of you, you know. I wonder what my brother – in-law thinks of me now.

SAMMY : You brother-in-law?

BELTWOOD : Yes, Barker, you know. My sister's husband. He never did think me much good at games.

SAMMY (*puzzled*) : Oh, didn't he? That's funny. I never knew that he married into the Potts family. I thought his wife's maiden name was Beltwood.

BELTWOOD (*realizing his blunder*) : Of course. She was Diana Beltwood Potts. She dropped the Potts by-er-force of habit, you know. Terrible crockery bill, we had.

SAMMY : Oh!

BELTWOOD : Yes. Simply awful. Of course she had an object. Wanted us to have an extra maid, and by Jove, we had to at the finish. It was cheaper.

SAMMY : Beltwood Potts, eh?

BELTWOOD : Yes, Beltwood, after my grandmother's auntie.

SAMMY : Hm. Oh, well. (*Briskly*) Are you ready?

BELTWOOD : For what?

SAMMY : Rubbing down, of course.

BELTWOOD (*alarmed*) : But surely there's no need now the match is over.

SAMMY : Over? Say, what's the matter? IT's HALF - TIME.

BELTWOOD (*gasping*) : Oh, of course. Just my fun. I really am confused to-day. It's my birthday, you see I'm always the same on birthdays.

SAMMY : Come on. I have to help to rub the boys down after you.

BELTWOOD : Never mind me. I'll be quite all right, thanks.

SAMMY : Orders is orders.

BELTWOOD : I say, this is intolerable, being rubbed twice. I won't stand it. Who are you, anyway?

SAMMY : I'm the assistant trainer. See? I'm responsible for your fitness. Get me? Now get those clothes off Quick.

BELTWOOD : But, I say-

SAMMY : Come on.

(BELTWOOD *reluctantly takes his shirt off. A knock is heard. SAMMY goes to the door.*)

Hello ! Who is it?

VOICE : It's me-Colonel Wortlebury's daughter. Can I come in?

SAMMY (to BELTWOOD) : Quick, it's old Wortle's daughter.

(BELTWOOD *can't find his shirt.*)

(To BERYL) Certainly. Come right in.

(*Enter BERYL.*)

BERYL : Is Mr. Potts here? (*Sees BELTWOOD.*) Oh!

BELTWOOD (*breezily*) : Just having a cold shower.

BERYL : How nice! Oh, I forgot. Let me introduce myself. I'm Colonel Wortlebury's daughter, Beryl.

BELTWOOD : Well, well, that's topping. I owe a lot to the Colonel.

BERYL : I wanted to speak to you about that.

BELTWOOD (*to SAMMY*) : Oh, trainer, just run along and see if you can help with some of those players. I dare say you're needed.

SAMMY (*embarrassed*) : Yes, I am. (Exit.)

BERYL : I hope you don't mind my intruding?

BELTWOOD : No. Of course not. Oh !

(*Finds shirt, puts it on backward, struggles out of it. BERYL helps him to put it on correctly. He stands looking like a man in a nightgown.*)

BERYL : I suppose you are wondering why I've come.

BELTWOOD (*gallantly*) : I'm delighted, delighted !

BERYL (*blushing*) : Oh! (*A pause.*) I know all about you.

BELTWOOD : You don't really!

BERYL : Yes, I do. I know that you aren't Potts at all. You are Mrs. Barker's brother. You aren't a referee.

BELTWOOD : Oh, Lord!

BERYL : Aren't you frightened?

BELTWOOD : Not I.

BERYL : They're saying such horrible, nasty things outside.

BELTWOOD : Very nasty things?

BERYL : Awful. And the newspaper men, too. They're criticizing so hard they keep breaking their pencils. And the police are having a terrible job to keep the crowd in hand, and as for the players, I believe some of them are frantic (*admiringly*), and yet you, the centre of all this excitement, are as cool as a cucumber.

BELTWOOD (*not so brave now*) : Really, you flatter me.

BERYL : Like all really big men, you're modest, and to think that I-

BELTWOOD : Yes?

BERYL : I thought you'd be so depressed and down-hearted by the way every one shouted and howled out there every time you did anything-mind you, I thought you were perfectly justified myself-that I, well, I sort of felt sorry for you.

BELTWOOD : For me? You really felt sorry?

*(He comes nearer to her.)*

BERYL *(recovering herself)* : Well, if not-sort of-er- responsible. You see, father told me who you were and how he had persuaded you to referee instead of Potts. Well, I know father's method of persuasion. *(Posing and speaking loud)* "Dammit, sir, you must do it. Every one expects it. You can't draw back. Gad, sir, you must." So I thought I'd come and tell you. That's all. Good-bye !

BELTWOOD *(fervently)* : Good-bye.

*(She goes, almost colliding with a man in football clothes. This is BOFFIN, the Celtic captain.)*

BOFFIN *(heavily)* : So there you are.

BELTWOOD *(jumping)* : Who is?

BOFFIN : So. You're Potts, the big referee. eh? The best referee in the country. And they sent you here to look after this match, the most important match of the season.

BELTWOOD : Y-yes. I suppose they did.

BOFFIN : What do you mean by it?

BELTWOOD : What do' you mean, what do I mean by it?

BOFFIN *(ironically)* : What do I mean? What should I mean? How many penalties did you give against us?

BELTWOOD : I-er-don't know exactly.

BOFFIN : I do. Six. Six penalties-five goals.

BELTWOOD *(brightly)* : But I gave you some as well.

BOFFIN : What's that got to do with it! We deserved all our five. Theirs were dirty fouls.

BELTWOOD : Roosters.

BOFFIN : Eh?

BELTWOOD : Who are you? You've no right here.

BOFFIN : Who am I? Great Scott ! I'm the Celtic Captain, Boffin.

BELTWOOD : Well. I'm delighted to meet you, Mr.Boffin.

BOFFIN (*fiercely*) : Don't get fresh with me. (Threatening) See ! (A pause.)

And then those goals you disallowed. Three of them.

BELTWOOD (*feebly*) : Yes-er-yes. I remember. Offside. Palpably offside, all of them.

BOFFIN : What ! Mick, our centre-forward, offside ? Impossible. He's too old at the game for that. He was onside all the way.

BELTWOOD : I simply couldn't stand it. The way he strutted about the field was awful. I had to do something.

BOFFIN : And so you disallowed three good goals?

BELTWOOD (*cheerfully*) : Of course. Serve him jolly well right.

BOFFIN (*almost frantic*) : And the man you sent off? What did he do?

BELTWOOD (*chucking*) : Oh, yes. The red-haired chappie. Yes, yes. You know when I sent the other man off? You know, the Rover player? Well, I sort of felt sorry for him, so I sent the red-haired chappie off to keep him company.

BOFFIN (*stuttering*) : To-to keep him company?

BELTWOOD : Sure. Jolly good idea, I think. Don't you?

BOFFIN (*struggling with rage*) : Well-I ! You ! I don't know whether you're mad or not, but mad or not, remember if anything like that happens next half, heaven help you ! Understand !

BELTWOOD : I think so.

BOFFIN (*shaking his fist as he goes stamping out*) : If the Celtic don't win the League there'll be no more Potts.

*Exit.*

*(The crowd is heard murmuring impatiently.)*

VOICE AT THE DOOR : Time's up.

BELTWOOD (*feebly*) : Very well. I'm coming.

(*He goes, but a FOOTBALLER enters and pushes him back. This is KETTLE, the Rovers' Captain.*)

KETTLE : Just a minute. I want a word with you. You're the referee?

BELTWOOD : Ye-yes. Who are you?

KETTLE : Who am I-?

BELTWOOD : Of course. You're Kettle, the Rovers'

Captain. I remember now. I called you the man without a handkerchief. You always used your sleeve.

KETTLE (*roughly*) : Never mind my handkerchief. It's the game that matters.

BELTWOOD (*wearily*) : Is the game everything?

KETTLE : You don't seem to think so. I've never seen a worse example of refereeing in my life. It's been nothing but whistle, whistle, whistle. Offside ! Foul ! Penalty ! I want an explanation.

BELTWOOD : Well, you see, it's like this. I'm very short-winded and when I sort of-you-know-let my breath out, the whistle, being in my mouth, blows.

KETTLE : Can't you take it out?

BELTWOOD : I might lose it.

KETTLE : And the sooner the better. But what I want to know is this. You remember the third penalty we had ?

BELTWOOD (*brightly*) : Yes, yes. The one you kicked in their goal. Of course I do.

KETTLE (*groaning*) : Their goal! (*Recovering*) You disallowed it. The goalie never saw it. A lovely goal it was, and you disallowed it. What for? That's what I want to know.

BELTWOOD (*rising and moving towards the door*) : You really want to know?

KETTLE : Of course I do.

BELTWOOD : Well, I'll tell you-just as a favour.

VOICE AT DOOR : Time's up. Come on, or you'll be murdered.

BELTWOOD : Right-oh ! (*Nearer door than KETTLE*) Well, he kicked the ball with his left foot. A very mean trick, I think, to attempt to deceive the goalkeeper. (*KETTLE gazes at him dumbfounded.*) Well, so long.

*(He goes out, and KETTLE, running his hands through his hair in anguish, follows.)*

*(Cheers, shouts, etc., as the game recommences, punctuated by frantic whistles. Curtain.)*

*(When the curtain rises, enter WORTLEBURY, who flops into a chair.)*

*(DIANA enters)*

DIANA : So there you are, Colonel.

WORTLEBURY *(rising)* : Mrs. Barker !

DIANA : I've been looking all over the stand for you. I think that you and Robert have been perfectly horrid and most inconsiderable.

WORTLEBURY : You mean?

DIANA : The way John does it is terrible. If this gets out I shall never hold up my head again. Poor mother and father, it will break their hearts. Father's so respected in the country that he would never forgive John for doing this awful, horrid thing.

WORTLEBURY *(upset)* : My dear Mrs.Barker, I'm awfully sorry. Neither your husband nor myself ever thought it would turn out like this.

DIANA *(brightening)* : But I'd almost forgotten. My husband says you may be able to keep Potts quiet when he finds out?

WORTLEBURY *(glumly)* : He has found out.

DIANA : Then the game's up. *(Weeps on his shoulder.)*

WORTLEBURY : There, there we may find a way out, yet.

*(BERYL enters.)*

DIANA : Colonel, Colonel, why did you do it?

WORTLEBURY : My dear Mrs.-*(Seeing the surprised BERYL)* Beryl, I'm afraid Mrs.Barker isn't well.

DIANA *(turning)* : Oh, Beryl, Beryl, my Robert will be ruined ! *(Howls.)*

WORTLEBURY : If I'd thought-

BERYL : That's just it, father. You didn't think. You simply forced that nice young man into this beastly football match, and goodness knows what the end will be.

WORTLEBURY : Really, Beryl. I don't think that-Dammit,I-

BERYL : Father, please !

WORTLEBURY : I'm sorry. *(A shrill blast of a whistle is heard, followed by a roar.)*

It's over, thank heaven !

DIANA : The match may be over.

BERYL : We two had better run along.

WORTLEBURY : Perhaps you had.

DIANA : Not I. I'm going to see the end of this now, no matter what happens.

BERYL : Me, too!

WORTLEBURY *(shrugging his shoulders)* : Very well. You won't have long to wait. Potts is coming back, and the evening papers will soon be out.

*(A thud is heard outside. The door opens. BARKER and SAMMY stagger in with a sack.)*

What have you got there?

BARKER : Beltwood. It was the only way to get him off without Potts seeing him. We were lucky to manage it.

WORTLEBURY : Potts, is he still here?

BARKER : Yes. You see, the crowd swarmed on the field when the final whistle went, so we dashed on, put the sack over him, and smuggled him through the small door. A good move, I think. *(to BELTWOOD)* We saved you from serious injury.

BELTWOOD *(through the sack)* : Thanks.

BERYL : Are you hurt?

BELTWOOD : No but I never thought I should be carried shoulder-high.

WORTLEBURY : Don't talk, Beltwood.

BELTWOOD : Well, open this sack, then.

BARKER : We daren't let you out, old man. Potts is coming. *(Enter SAMMY.)* Oh, it's only Sammy.

WORTLEBURY : How many was it, Sammy?

SAMMY : Thirteen each.

WORTLEBURY : Great Scott! ! Thirteen all.

SAMMY : I know it's bad, but I tell you he gave them every chance, even to another penalty each in the last minute, which they both missed.

WORTLEBURY : But why?

BELTWOOD : To get off the unlucky number.

WORTLEBURY- BARKER : Ye gods !

BELTWOOD *wriggles.*

BERYL (*consolingly to the sack*) : I think that was wonderful.

DIANA : Wonderful? That's rich, that is.

BELTWOOD (*To BERYL*) : You don't blame me?

BERYL : Not I. You're a hero.

VOICES OFF : Potts. Potts. Three cheers for the referee.

*(Ironic cheering.)*

WORTLEBURY : Quick! (*Pointing to a room L.*) Get him in there.

BARKER : Come on, old chap. We don't want a scene with Diana and Beryl here.

*(They carry him off, sack and all. BERYL runs to the door C.)*

BERYL : He's coming. My word, he does look angry.

*(They crane forward, rather frightened. POTTS, wearing a sweater and cap, enters a moment later. He is furious.)*

*(Re-enter WORTLEBURY and BARKER.)*

POTTS : Look here, Colonel, where the devil have you put him? I want-*(Seeing the girls)* Oh! I beg your pardon.

WORTLEBURY : This is Potts, the referee. Mrs. Barker, my daughter.

DIANA : What a remarkable likeness!

POTTS : So you know my impersonator?

DIANA : Very well. He's my brother.

POTTS (*grimly*) : Well, I'm sorry you're his sister. Where is he?

BERYL : He's gone-shattered.

POTTS : So is my reputation. My self-respect is gone, and the men responsible must pay. Colonel Wortlebury for one, Mr. Barker for another, and your brother. Where is he?

BARKER : Don't be so rough, Potts. Everything will be all right if-

POTTS : All right nothing. Where is he?

WORTLEBURY : He's gone, we tell you.

BARKER : Have a look round if you like.

POTTS : He's not worth it. I'll see him again. In the dock, side by side with you two. Now I'm off to tell the reporters my story.

WORTLEBURY (*philosophically*) : All right. Good-bye.

POTTS : Au revoir.

( *He moves to the door, but it is opened and a young man enters quickly. He is dressed in a light suit, wears hornrimmed glasses, and carries a note-book and pen. He is very excited.*)

YOUNG MAN : Which is Potts? I'm a reporter.

POTTS: I'm he. You've saved me looking for you.

BARKER: This finishes it. *(He sinks into a chair.)*

REPORTER (*joyfully*): No need to look for me. I know everything.

POTTS : I don't think.

REPORTER( *with a knowing air*) : You nearly pulled the blinds over my eyes same as the others, but I got you at the finish. Gee! It was some idea.

WORTLEBURY }  
BERYL } Idea?  
DIANA }

REPORTER (*To POTTS*) : By Jove! You sure have them. (*To the others*) Don't you see?

Haven't you noticed how this match has been refereed? The whistle blowing all the time, Penalties galore, and men sent off?

BARKER : We couldn't miss it.

REPORTER : Didn't you wonder why? Didn't you think there was something behind it? Thirteen goals each with a referee like Mr. Potts here? It's absurd.

POTTS : Sure, it's absurd; that's why-

REPORTER (*chuckling*) : I know. Don't stop me. Listen, folks. Did you notice how the game started? It started with the prospects of being the dirtiest match on record. It finished up like milk and water. Do you see now? (*They shake their heads.*) That's just it. This match will be the most unique and talked of in the history of football. Every foul or attempted foul was penalized. You see the result. The match is a sensation. The whole country's attention is drawn to it. It will bring rough and dirty play into the white light of national criticism. Do you see now? It's the work of a genius to kill for ever the dirty play that is ruining the game. Mr. Potts, I congratulate you. Your name is made for ever. Tonight mine will be also. It's out now in big headlines: "Potts the Genius," "Rough Play Burlesqued," "The Death Knell of Dirty Football."*(Chuckling)* And the other papers will get it a day late. Well, so long. Can I have your personal version to-morrow, Mr. Potts?

POTTS (*gasping*) : Sh-shure, anything.

REPORTER : Thank you. So long, everybody. *(Exit.)*

WORTLEBURY : Well! Well!

BARKER : Did you ever hear anything like that before?

BERYL : I never did. What an imagination!

BARKER (*to the still dumbfounded POTTS*) : Well, Potts, I guess that just about puts matters straight.

POTTS : I reckon it just about does. Who would have thought it?

*(Exit POTTS, dazed. The rest follow. Loud cheers off and shouts of, "Paper, paper. Football Speshul.")*

*(BERYL enters reading a paper. BELTWOOD (still in sack) staggers in.)*

BERYL: Hullo, hero!

BELTWOOD (*muffled and strained*): Let me out!

*(Tears an eye-hole with his fingers)*

BERYL: Read this.

(She holds the paper to the face in the sack. A hand emerges and grasps it. He is just able to read the headlines. He drops the paper and stands swaying.)

(WORTLEBURY, BARKER, and DIANA enter shouting, “ Good Old John.”)

(One by one they shake the protruding hand.)

### **CURTAIN**

Note – A deputy may play BELTWOOD when in the sack, as his face is not seen.

### **GLOSSARY**

gout	- a disease that causes painful swelling in joints, especially of the toes, knees and fingers
limp	- to walk slowly or with difficulty
infernal	- extremely annoying
dispute	- disagreement
spluttering	- speaking quickly and with difficulty
hysterically	- in an extremely excited manner
embrocation	- a liquid for rubbing on sore muscles to make them less painful
annoying	- causing danger
Jove	- by Jove, an idiom used to express or to emphasize a statement
souvenir	- a thing you buy / keep to remind yourself of a place, occasion, holiday etc.
demur	- to say that you do not agree with something
unwittingly	- without being aware of what you are doing
infallible	- never wrong, never making mistakes
ether	- air

awe	- feelings of respect and slight fear; feelings of being very impressed by something
stammer	- to speak with difficulty, repeating sounds or words and often stopping, before saying things correctly
fizzle	- to gradually become less successful and end in a disappointing way
clod	- a lump of earth or clay
dividend	- an amount of the profits that a company pays to people who own shares in the company
instil	- to gradually make somebody feel, think or behave in a particular way over a period of time
flabbergasted	- extremely surprised and shocked
headstrong	- determined to do things in one's own way and refusing to listen to advice
anguish	- mental suffering
offside	- in football or hockey when a player is in a position usually ahead of the ball; offside is not allowed
fervently	- in the manner of showing very strong and sincere feelings
fierce	- angry and aggressive
inveigle	- to achieve control over somebody in a clever and dishonest way
disguised	- changed in appearance so that people cannot recognize
persuade	- to make somebody do something by giving them good reasons for doing it
sprightly	- full of life and energy
crockery	- plates, cups, dishes etc
breezily	- in a cheerful and relaxed manner
embarrassed	- shy, awkward or ashamed
intrude	- to go where you are wanted

gallantly	- bravely
frantic	- done quickly and with a lot of activity
ironically	- in the manner of showing you really mean the opposite of what you are saying
palpably	- in the manner of being easily noticed
horrid	- very unpleasant or unkind
wriggle	- to twist and turn your body with quick short movements
console	- to give comfort or sympathy
au revoir	- good bye
galore	- in large quantities
chuckle	- to laugh quietly
burlesque	- performance which tries to make something look ridiculous by representing in a humorous way.
death knell	- an event that means that the end or destruction of something will come soon
stagger	- to walk with weak, unsteady steps
dumbfounded	- unable to speak because of surprise
reckon	- to think something or have an opinion about something

## **FIND OUT**

1. Where does the action of the play take place?

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2. Who is impersonated and for whom?

---

3. What are the names of the teams?

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4. The game that is referred to in the play is \_\_\_\_\_  
(Football / Volleyball)

5. The whole play brings up the sensation of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Humour / thrill)

6. Distinguish the verb from the noun in the line “A decent referee wouldn’t referee this match.”

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. How does the conversation between Barker and Diana give the audience a feel of the way the match is progressing?
2. When an angry Potts enters shouting, he suddenly checks himself when he sees the ladies and says “beg your pardon.” How would you explain this behaviour?
3. Uncle James in ‘A Boy Comes Home’ and Wortlebury in ‘The Referee’ are time-conscious and are shown looking at the watch. How would you explain this behaviour and assess the personality type suggested?
4. When everything seems to be over, the reporter reading the match in an entirely different perspective converts Beltwood’s goof-up into a stroke of genius in Potts. How would you assess the impact of this sudden reversal?
5. In both the plays we have people reading others’ behaviour, emotions, feelings etc. They either exploit or support and comfort based on their reading. Study the way how this is done in the plays and using the knowledge gained you may observe behaviour, communication taking place in real-life situations.

### **ACTIVITIES**

#### **SPEAKING**

1. ‘The Referee’ is a hilarious comedy. Beltwood impersonates the famous referee Potts, because of the compulsion of the situation. Is it correct? Discuss in groups and present your views to the class.
2. ‘The Referee’ contains repetition of words for dramatic emphasis. Eg. Colonel,

Colonel / whistle, whistle, whistle. Say them aloud to feel the impact. You may think of situations where this device can be used and practise such repetitions.

**3. Read the following excerpt from the ‘Know Your English’ column in the The Hindu dated 10.07.07.**

**What is the difference between ‘stammer’ and ‘stutter’?**

Both words are used to refer to a defect in an individual’s speech. We often meet people who have difficulty speaking; sometimes, they merely repeat the first sound or syllable of a word. They are unable to produce anything beyond that. Careful users of the language maintain that the word ‘stutter’ is used to refer to a person who has a chronic speech defect. ‘Stammering’, on the other hand, is considered temporary. All of us have ‘stammered’ sometime or the other. Human beings can stammer or stutter; machines only stutter. Speech therapists in Britain prefer to use ‘stammer’, while those in America and Canada prefer ‘stutter’. Aristotle, Aesop, Darwin, Napoleon, and Marylyn Monroe are some famous people who stuttered.

**After reading the excerpt go to the play where these two speech defects are indicated and study the relevant lines. You may observe these defects in conversation with people and in yourself when angry or nervous.**

**READING**

As the play progresses Beltwood shows a variety of comic moods which make us to laugh. Laughter has different degrees, from mild to wild. In English we use different words to different kinds of laughter. Given below are the five kinds of laughter. Find out the suitable sentences from the play to denote the kind of laughter.

**KIND OF LAUGH**

1. Laugh – expression of amusement.
2. Smile – facial expression of amusement.
3. Chuckle – quiet or suppressed laugh.
4. Giggle – give small bursts of half-suppressed laughter.
5. Titter – laugh covertly or secretly.

**LISTENING**

Listen to a running commentary of football match in Radio / Television or in a recorded tape. Find out the incidents that made you laugh. List out the words that used to refer to laughter.

## **WRITING**

1. Life is full of experiences, bitter or better. How did some of them fascinate you as a child, and What is your attitude to them now? Write a paragraph describing your childhood experiences and compare and contrast them with your present views about them.

2. Read the following excerpt from the 'Know Your English' column in **The Hindu** dated 10-07-07 which is about an expression supposedly having originated from the game of football.

### **What is the meaning and origin of 'back to square one'?**

When you have been working on a problem for a long time, and you are unable to find a solution, what is it that you normally do? Since you have been able to make any progress, you go back to the beginning and start all over again. When you tell someone that you are 'back to square one', what you mean is that you've returned to the original starting point. In other words, you are going to begin all over again.

After three days of house hunting, I found one that I really liked. When I went to pay the advance the next morning, the landlord said that he had decided not to rent the house. So, it was back to square one.

According to some scholars, this expression was made popular by sports commentators of the BBC. Since football is a game that is difficult to follow on the radio, what some enterprising radio commentators did in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was to divide the field into eight squares. The commentators informed the audience of what was happening on the field by telling them which square the ball was in. On the day of the game, most newspapers and sports magazines carried a drawing of the playing field with the squares clearly marked and numbered – this made it easy for listeners to follow the action. Square one was where the goalie stood. Others believe that the idiom has its origins in board games like Snakes and Ladders.

### **List expressions you know that have originated from games.**

3. Watch a (recorded or live) football match on one of the sports channels and attempt a review of it. You may use the exercise to visually understand some of the football terms used in the play like offside, penalty etc.

## **GRAMMAR**

The play consists of Imperative Sentences. Choose any five sentences of your choice and rewrite them

- a) Direct to Indirect
- b) Active to Passive

**Make sentences using the following**

1. put matters straight
2. pull the blind over one's eyes
3. do it in

## **COMPREHENSION**

### **A. Very Short Answer Type**

1. Who is the chairman of the 'Rovers Football Club'?
2. How is Barker related to Beltwood?
3. What is the unluckily number referred in the play?

### **B. Answer the following in a paragraph each (100 words)**

1. How Beltwood was made to impersonate Potts.
2. Write a note on the compliments of the Reporters.

### **C. Essay (250 words)**

1. Write in your own words the story of 'The Referee'.
2. Contrast the real situation with the reporter's perception and interpretation of it.