

16

KHAMBA'S FIGHT WITH THE TIGER



Characters :

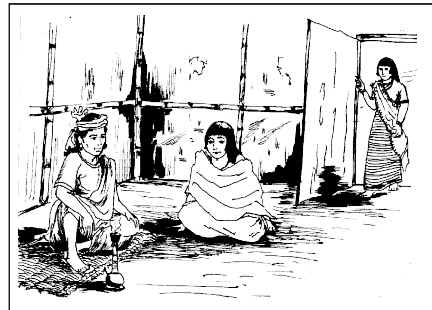
Khamnu Khamba

Thoibi Nongban

Senu Pheiroijamba

Prince Chingkhuba

Some male characters.



SCENE - I

(KHAMNU'S HOUSE)

Khamnu – There's never an end to human sorrow. All along I've been suffering. Tomorrow too, my only brother is to fight the fierce tiger. How can a feeble woman like me bear it?

Pheiroijamba – A sister of a brave and strong brother should not speak like that.

Khamnu – It's hard for me even to think of it. He is allowed to use only a spear.

Pheiroijamba – I fully understand your brother's strength, my dear. Let alone one tiger, he can fight seven tigers at one go, as his father Puremba once did.

Khamnu – I doubt it.

Pheiroijamba – Don't worry, the good will always succeed.

(Thoibi and Senu enter.)

- Thoibi – I'm lucky to see you together.
- Pheiroijamba – We were discussing certain problems.
- Thoibi – May I know, what problems are they ?
- Pheiroijamba – Tomorrow at Khoirentak, Nongban and my brother-in-law are to face the tiger. Nongban and the Prince, your father, are secretly planning to send Khamba to the tiger.
- Thoibi – Is that so?
- Pheiroijamba – Khamba is a good person. I'm sure he will win. I too will help him.
- Thoibi – (*to Senu*) Come, let's go. Let's offer flowers to our local deity.
- Pheiroijamba – Khamnu, go and prepare food for your brother. We have to reach Khoirentak early in the morning.

SCENE - II

(KHOIRENTAK – ENCLOSURE FOR THE TIGER)

(Prince Chingkhuba, Nongban and followers enter.)

- The Prince – Do you know the area?
- Nongban – Yes, my Lord.
- The Prince – You should be careful. The moment he fights the tiger, you are to shout loudly. No one must hear his cry for help.
- Nongban – Yes, my Lord.
- The Prince – Don't forget to send Khamba to where the tiger is. That shall be the secret of your success. Once he is dead, you shall have no obstacle to my daughter's hand. Good luck. (exit)
- [Khamba enters.]*
- Nongban – So, you have come.

- Khamba – Yes, friend. How are we to fight the tiger? Together? Or by turns?
- Nongban – If we face it together, people will say we are cowards. So we will move in different directions looking for it. You go to the south, while I go to the north. If one lands in trouble, there should be cry for help.

[Khamba starts moving, Nongban comes across two men.]

- 1st Man – Oh! (sits down.)
- 2nd Man – What has happened?
- 1st – Uncle! I saw among the shrubs the red, striped animal.
- 2nd – I too have started shaking at the news.
- 1st – There, you hear the growl.
- Nongban – *(joining them.)* What noise is that?
- 2nd – He saw the tiger. The sound is its growl.

- Nongban – The tiger! This way! Come, I'll guard you.

(He sees the tiger that is within.)

Oh! It's very big! (aside) I cannot run away in front of them. I'll have to get my hands on it. If I kill it, I marry Princess Thoibi right under the nose of Khamba.



(He pulls the spear and rushes in while the two exit on the other side.)

(Sound of fighting is heard from within.)

(Ah! It has snatched my spear. I have to fight with my bare hands.

Friend! Khamba! Where are you? I'm hurt. The tiger has hurt me.)

(Nongban comes out wounded. Khamba too enters from the other side.)

Khamba – Friend! Has the animal hurt you? How bad is the wound? Oh, I should have come earlier!

Nongban – Water! Water!

Khamba – Let me get it *(He goes out and comes in bringing it.)* There, have it.

Nongban – I am satisfied, Khamba. I beg you to forgive me. I have always been cursing you and speaking ill of you. I have done you much harm. I send you to the tiger to be killed. Instead I am being killed. Life is a mystery, friend. You are here nursing your enemy.

Khamba – You are making yourself weaker by talking much.

Nongban – I am dying, I shall not live long.

Khamba – You'll live, brave one. *(exit carrying Nongban.)*

[Khamba re-enters with Pheiroijamba and followers.]

Pheiroijamba – You are now to fight the tiger that has killed Nongban.

Follower – The tiger has become wilder after killing Nongban.

Khamba – Where is it now?

Follower – Running all over the enclosure.

(The tiger growls within. Khamba rushes in holding the spear.)

[Sound of fighting is heard, then Khamba comes out, carrying the dead tiger.]

Pheiroijamba – You did it all alone! You are now the bravest man in Moirang. Princess Thoibi will be rejoicing at the news. Come, let's present it to the king.

EXERCISES

1. Answer the following:

- (i) Why is Khamnu worried?
- (ii) Why does Pheiroijamba think that Khamba will win?
- (iii) What is the secret plan of Nongban and Thoibi's father?
- (iv) Why is Thoibi going to worship the local deity?
- (v) How is Nongban thinking of marrying Thoibi?
- (vi) Why are they not fighting the tiger together?

**2. In a play you know something about the characters from their talks.
Now answer.**

- (a) What do you know of Khamba from the words spoken by Pheiroijamba?
- (b) What do you know of the Prince from his own words?

3. Look at the sentence :

'How are we to fight the tiger? Together? Or by turn?'

The phrase 'by turn' means one after another.

Now find the meanings of the phrases :

- (a) On the turn
- (b) Out of turn

4. Complete the rest of the sentences as done in the first one.

- (i) People will call us cowards if we fight together.
- (ii) We will get high marks in the examination if
- (iii) The teacher will scold us if
- (iv) I shall not go to school if
- (v) My parents will be happy if
- (vi) Ramu can be included if
- (vii) The house can be easily built if

V. (b) In the sentence 'He can fight seven tigers at one go', the phrase at one go

means (a) going only once

(b) at one single try

Now, frame three more sentences using the phrase

5.(a) Fill in the blanks with this, that, these and those :

- (i) flowers do not look as beautiful as
- (ii) Amma bought some frocks. are for her sisters.
- (iii) apple looks rotten, but in the basket look fresh.
- (iv) apples in the shop look unripe.
- (v) pair of shoes fits me.
- (vi) I gave her ribbon.
- (vii) building is taller than in Delhi.
- (viii) is my sister are my cousins.
- (ix) boy in the last bench is good sitting near him are also good.
- (x) planet is Mercury.

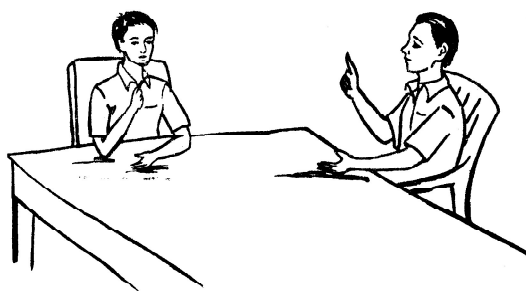
(b) Fill in the blanks with such or same :

- (i) I don't believe ghost stories.
- (ii) It is the dress she wore yesterday.

- (iii) I hate telling lies.
- (iv) The song is sung over and over again.
- (v) happenings of yesterday should be forgotten.
- (vi) Your father won't like you to do work.

8. The Past continuous (I was doing)

Study the following situation.



I had a wonderful dream last night. I was sitting in a park. The sun was shining, and the birds were singing. Children were playing and laughing. I had a peaceful mind. I didn't want to wake up.

The Past Continuous means that at a time in the past we were in the middle of an action.

Again, read this conversation:

Robert : I rang at about three yesterday afternoon, but you weren't in. I didn't know where you were.

David : Oh, I was helping Tom. We were repairing his car. We were working on it all afternoon.

Robert : It was raining. I hope you weren't doing it outside.

David : No, we were in the garage. So I didn't get wet.
But I'm afraid I got oil all over my new trousers.

Robert : Why were you wearing your new trousers to repair
a car.

David : I don't know. I forgot I had them on.

It was raining at three o'clock means that at three o'clock we were in the middle of a period of rain. The rain began before three and stopped some time after three. We were working all afternoon means that the action went on for the whole period. David is stressing the length of time that the work went on.

Now, complete the following conversation. Put in the past continuous forms.

Jamini : I was looking (I/look) for you, Kiran. I'm afraid
I've broken this dish.

Kiran : Oh no! What (you/do) ?

Jamini : (I/take) it into the kitchen. I bumped
into Mina. (she/come) out just as
..... (I/go) in.

Kiran : I expect it was your fault. (you/not/
look) where (you/go).

Jamini : Sorry. I'll buy you another one as soon as I have
some money.