

# CHAPTER - 8

## "War" by Luigi Pirandello

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### The Setting of the Story

The story opens in a small, stuffy, and uncomfortable railway carriage in Italy during the night.

ഒന്നാം ലോകമഹായുദ്ധകാലത്ത് ഇറ്റലിയിൽ രാത്രിസമയത്ത് തിരക്കേറിയതും അസ്വസ്ഥത നിറഞ്ഞതുമായ ഒരു തീവണ്ടി മുറിയിലാണ് കഥ തുടങ്ങുന്നത്.

### The Shared Grief of Parents

All the passengers in the carriage are parents whose sons have been sent to the war front to fight.

തീവണ്ടിയിലുള്ള എല്ലാ യാത്രക്കാരും തങ്ങളുടെ ആൺമക്കൾ യുദ്ധമുഖത്തേക്ക് അയക്കപ്പെട്ടതിന്റെ സങ്കടം അനുഭവിക്കുന്ന മാതാപിതാക്കളാണ്.

### The Argument Over Suffering

They begin to argue about who suffers more—parents with an only son or those who have many children at war.

ആരുടെ സങ്കടമാണ് വലുത് എന്നതിനെച്ചൊല്ലി അവർ തർക്കിക്കുന്നു—ഒരേയൊരു മകനുള്ള മാതാപിതാക്കളുടേതാണോ അതോ കൂടുതൽ മക്കളുള്ളവരുടേതാണോ കൂടുതൽ ദുഃഖം എന്നാണ് അവരുടെ ചർച്ച.

### The Fat Man's Strong Entry

A fat man, whose eyes are light and watery, enters the conversation with a very strong and different opinion.

തിളങ്ങുന്ന കണ്ണുകളുള്ള ഒരു തടിച്ച മനുഷ്യൻ വളരെ വ്യത്യസ്തവും ശക്തവുമായ ഒരു അഭിപ്രായവുമായി ഈ ചർച്ചയിൽ പങ്കുചേരുന്നു.

### Sacrifice for the Nation

He says that parents should not think of their children as their own property, but as belonging to the Country.

മക്കൾ മാതാപിതാക്കളുടെ സ്വന്തം സ്വത്താണെന്ന് കരുതരുതെന്നും, അവർ രാജ്യത്തിന് അവകാശപ്പെട്ടവരാണെന്നും അയാൾ പറയുന്നു.

### The Concept of a Heroic Death

He argues that if a young man dies for his country, he dies happy and satisfied, so parents should not cry.

ഒരു യുവാവ് തന്റെ രാജ്യത്തിന് വേണ്ടി മരിക്കുകയാണെങ്കിൽ അവൻ സംതൃപ്തനായിട്ടാണ് മരിക്കുന്നത്, അതിനാൽ മാതാപിതാക്കൾ കരയേണ്ടതില്ലെന്ന് അയാൾ വാദിക്കുന്നു.

### Hiding the Inner Pain

The fat man claims he does not wear mourning clothes for his dead son because his son died as a hero.

തന്റെ മകൻ ഒരു വീരനായി മരിച്ചതുകൊണ്ട് താൻ ദുഃഖസൂചകമായ കറുത്ത വസ്ത്രങ്ങൾ ധരിക്കാറില്ലെന്ന് അയാൾ അവകാശപ്പെടുന്നു.

## The Woman's Unexpected Question

A woman, who was listening in deep silence, suddenly asks him: "Then... is your son really dead?"

അതുവരെ എല്ലാം നിശബ്ദമായി കേട്ടുകൊണ്ടിരുന്ന ഒരു സ്ത്രീ പെട്ടെന്ന് അയാളോട് ചോദിക്കുന്നു: "അപ്പോൾ... നിങ്ങളുടെ മകൻ ശരിക്കും മരിച്ചതാണോ?"

## The Reality Hits Hard

This simple question makes the man realize that his son is gone forever and he will never see him again.

ഈ ലളിതമായ ചോദ്യം തന്റെ മകൻ ഇനി ഒരിക്കലും തിരിച്ചു വരില്ലെന്നും അവനെ കാണാൻ കഴിയില്ലെന്നുമുള്ള കഠിനമായ സത്യം അയാളെ ബോധ്യപ്പെടുത്തുന്നു.

## The Final Breakdown

The man's "brave mask" falls off, and he starts to sob uncontrollably, showing that a father's pain is deeper than any words.

അതുവരെ അയാൾ ധരിച്ചിരുന്ന ധീരതയുടെ മുഖംമൂടി അഴിഞ്ഞുവീഴുന്നു. ഒരു പിതാവിന്റെ സങ്കടം വാക്കുകൾക്കും അപ്പുറമാണെന്ന് തെളിയിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് അയാൾ പൊട്ടിക്കരയുന്നു.

**Frontier:** The border or war zone : (യുദ്ധമുഖം അല്ലെങ്കിൽ അതിർത്തി).

**Property:** Something that belongs to someone : (സ്വത്ത്).

**Mourning clothes:** Black clothes worn after a death : (മരണാനന്തര ദുഃഖം പ്രകടിപ്പിക്കാൻ ധരിക്കുന്ന വസ്ത്രം).

**Inconsolable:** Not able to be comforted : (ആശ്വസിപ്പിക്കാൻ കഴിയാത്ത).

**Sacrifice:** Giving up something valuable : (ത്യാഗം).

**Sobbing:** Crying noisily : (തേങ്ങിക്കരയുക).

**Philosophy:** A way of thinking : (ചിന്താഗതി).

**Stuffy** A place with no fresh air : കാറ്റും വെളിച്ചവുമില്ലാത്ത അല്ലെങ്കിൽ വീർപ്പുമുട്ടിക്കുന്ന അന്തരീക്ഷം.

**Bulky / Fat** Large and heavy : തടിച്ച അല്ലെങ്കിൽ വലിയ ശരീരപ്രകൃതിയുള്ള.

**Agony** Extreme physical or mental pain : കഠിനമായ വേദന അല്ലെങ്കിൽ മനോവിഷമം.

**Frontier** The border between countries where war happens : അതിർത്തി അല്ലെങ്കിൽ യുദ്ധമുഖം.

**Stoic** A person who can hide their pain : സങ്കടങ്ങൾ പുറത്തു കാണിക്കാത്ത വ്യക്തി.

**Patriotism** Love and devotion to one's country : ദേശസ്നേഹം.

**Sacrifice** Giving up something important for a reason : ത്യാഗം.

**Mourning** Showing sadness because someone died : വിലാപം അല്ലെങ്കിൽ മരണാനന്തര ദുഃഖം.

**Sobbing** Crying loudly with short breaths : തേങ്ങിക്കരയുക.

**Shabby** Looking old and in bad condition : മോശമായ അല്ലെങ്കിൽ മുഷിഞ്ഞ വസ്ത്രധാരണം.

**Inconsolable** Very sad and cannot be comforted : ആശ്വസിപ്പിക്കാൻ കഴിയാത്തവിധം ദുഃഖിതനായ.

**Uproar** A loud noise or disturbance : ബഹളം അല്ലെങ്കിൽ തർക്കം.

**Hysterical** Losing control of emotions : മാനസിക നിയന്ത്രണം വിട്ട അവസ്ഥ.

**Self-centered** Thinking only about oneself : സ്വയം കേന്ദ്രീകൃതമായ അല്ലെങ്കിൽ സ്വന്തം കാര്യം മാത്രം നോക്കുന്നത്.

**Grief** Deep sorrow or sadness : കഠിനമായ സങ്കടം.

**Heroic** Showing great bravery : വീരത്വം നിറഞ്ഞ

**Frightfully** Very or extremely : വളരെയധികം അല്ലെങ്കിൽ ഭയാനകമാംവിധം.

**Ventilated** Allowing fresh air to enter : ശുദ്ധവായു കടക്കുന്ന (ഇവിടെ കാറ്റും വെളിച്ചവുമില്ലാത്ത മുറിയെക്കുറിച്ച് പറയാൻ ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്നു).

**Distress** Great pain, anxiety, or sorrow : കഠിനമായ ദുരിതം അല്ലെങ്കിൽ മനോവിഷമം.

**Snarling** Speaking in an angry or aggressive way : ദേഷ്യത്തോടെ സംസാരിക്കുക.

**Indignant** Feeling or showing anger at unfair treatment : അനീതിക്കെതിരെയുള്ള അമർഷം അല്ലെങ്കിൽ കോപം.

**Nipping** To pinch or squeeze sharply : നുള്ളുക അല്ലെങ്കിൽ വേദനിപ്പിക്കുക.

**Shudder** To shake or tremble with fear or cold. : വിറയ്ക്കുക (ഭയം കൊണ്ടോ സങ്കടം കൊണ്ടോ).

**Vitality** The state of being strong and active : ജീവശക്തി അല്ലെങ്കിൽ ഉന്മേഷം.

**Flushed** Red in the face from emotion or heat : മുഖം ചുവന്നുതുടിക്കുക.

**Gaze** To look steadily and intently : ഉറുനോക്കുക.

**Lump** A heavy feeling in the throat due to sadness : സങ്കടം കൊണ്ട് തൊണ്ടയിടുന്ന അവസ്ഥ.

**Wretched** In a very unhappy or unfortunate state : വളരെ ദയനീയമായ അല്ലെങ്കിൽ നിർഭാഗ്യകരമായ.

**Groan** A deep sound of pain or despair : മുളൽ അല്ലെങ്കിൽ ഞരക്കം.

**Vanity** Excessive pride in one's own achievements : അഹങ്കാരം അല്ലെങ്കിൽ പൊങ്ങച്ചം.

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### Important Phrases from the Story

**"Country is a Natural Necessity"** The idea that fighting for the nation is unavoidable. രാജ്യത്തിന് വേണ്ടി പോരാടുക എന്നത് ഒരു സ്വാഭാവികമായ ആവശ്യമാണ്.

**"Mouth Wide Open"** Expressing extreme shock or surprise. വായി പൊളിച്ചുനിൽക്കുക (അമ്പരപ്പോടെ നോക്കുക).

**"Inner Struggle"** The fight happening inside the mind. മനസ്സിനുള്ളിലെ പോരാട്ടം.

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1. Question: Prepare a **character sketch** of the fat man in the story "War".

### Character Sketch: The Fat Man

The fat man is the main character in the story "**War**". He has light, watery eyes and a large body. At the start of the story, he acts like a very brave person. He tells other parents that they should not cry for their sons. He says that children belong to the **Country**, not to the parents. He claims he is proud that his son died as a hero.

But at the end of the story, his character changes. When a woman asks him if his son is "really dead," he realizes the truth. He cannot hide his sadness anymore. He stops his big talk and starts to **cry loudly**. This shows that he was only pretending to be brave. Underneath, he was a father who missed his son very much. His character shows that the pain of losing a child is the same for everyone.

2. Question: Imagine you are the mother in the train carriage. Write a diary entry about your journey.

Date: 17 March 2026

Tuesday

Today was a very sad day. I was traveling in a small, crowded train. My only son is going to the war, and I am very scared. I felt like my life was ending. In the train, I met a fat man. He was talking about **patriotism**. He said we should be happy when our sons die for the country. I was surprised. I asked him, "Is your son really dead?" Suddenly, he started to sob. He cried so much. I realized that his heart was also broken. Now I know that war gives only pain to all parents. I hope my son comes back soon.

3. Question: Prepare a speech for the school assembly about the "Uselessness of War" based on this story.

Good morning everyone,

Today I want to talk about the story "**War**". This story shows us that war is very cruel. We see many parents in a train who are very sad. They are worried about their sons who are fighting in the war.

Some people say that war is about glory and being a hero. But the truth is that war only brings death. It takes away children from their parents. In the story, even the man who talked about "Country" started crying in the end. This proves that no one can win in a war. We should always choose **Peace** over war.

Thank you.

4. Question: Prepare a news report about the condition of parents during the war time.

### **PARENTS IN DEEP GRIEF**

**By Staff Reporter**

**Rome, March 17:** As the war continues, the parents in our country are suffering a lot. Yesterday, in a railway carriage, many parents were seen crying for their sons. They are worried because their children are on the front lines.

One father said that children are the property of the nation. When a woman asks him if his son is "really dead," he realizes the truth. He cannot hide his sadness anymore. He stops his big talk and starts to **cry loudly**. This shows that he was only pretending to be

brave. This shows that the people are mentally tired of the war. Families are losing their only children. The public is now hoping for peace so that their sons can return home safely.

## 5. Interview Questions

**Question:** Prepare 6 simple questions to interview the Fat Man.

- Sir, why did you say that children belong only to the country?
- Did you really feel happy when your son died?
- Why were you not wearing mourning clothes?
- How did you feel when the woman asked about your son?
- Do you think war is a good thing now?
- What is your advice to other parents who are sad?

6. Question: Write a paragraph about the message or the theme of the story "War".

### "War"

The story "**War**" gives us a very important message about the reality of life. It shows that **war is a great tragedy** that only brings pain and suffering. The main message is that big words like "patriotism" and "duty" cannot hide the natural love of a parent. Even if someone pretends to be brave, the loss of a child is a pain that no one can bear. The story also teaches us that **human emotions are the same everywhere**. Whether a person is rich or poor, or has one child or many, the grief of death is equal. In the end, the fat man's tears prove that **peace** is much more important than war. The author wants us to understand that we should show compassion to others because everyone is fighting their own silent battle.

6. **Question:** "War" by Luigi Pirandello is a touching story about the human cost of conflict. Prepare a write-up on the theme and message of the story.

### "War" by Luigi Pirandello

"**War**" by Luigi Pirandello is a powerful story that explores the deep pain of parents during wartime. The main theme is the conflict between **patriotism** and **parental love**. Set in a small, stuffy railway carriage in Italy, the story shows passengers arguing about whose grief is greater. A fat man argues strongly that children belong to the **Country** and not to their parents. He claims that if a son dies as a hero for the Motherland, parents should not mourn but feel proud.

However, the story takes a sharp turn when a woman asks him, "**Is your son really dead?**" This simple question breaks his brave mask. He suddenly realizes the hard reality of his loss and starts to sob uncontrollably. The story teaches us that big words like "honor" cannot hide the true sorrow of losing a child. It is a call for **peace** and compassion.

The author successfully shows that war is a "natural necessity" for the state but an "unnatural tragedy" for the individual. The imagery of the "stuffy carriage" reflects the suffocating grief of the parents. Pirandello proves that human emotions are more powerful than any political ideology. It is an excellent read that makes us think about the value of human life and the need for a world without conflicts.

**8. Question:** After reading the story "War," you decide to write a review for your school magazine. Prepare the review highlighting the plot and the author's style.

**"War" by Luigi Pirandello**

The short story "**War**" is a masterpiece that highlights the **futility of war**. The author uses a limited setting—a train compartment—to represent the entire suffering society. The characters are not given names, which shows that their pain is universal. The most striking part of the story is the **irony** involving the fat man. He speaks like a stoic philosopher, preaching about duty and national pride, only to collapse emotionally at the end.

This transformation proves that human emotions are more powerful than any political ideology. The narrative begins on a dark night in a crowded train carriage in Italy. The atmosphere is heavy with the sadness of parents whose sons are at the war front. A debate starts among the passengers about who is the most miserable. Then, a bulky man interrupts and tells everyone to stop crying, saying that children are the property of the nation.

But when a quiet woman asks him if his son is truly dead, the man's heart breaks. He stops his patriotic speech and breaks into painful cries. The journey ends with the realization that all their sorrows are one. The story is very touching and makes us think about the **uselessness of war**. The language is simple but the message is deep. It shows that no matter what we say, the loss of a loved one is the greatest pain.

**7. Question:** Narrate the events that took place in the railway carriage, focusing on the discussion between the passengers and the climax of the story.

**"War" by Luigi Pirandello**

The story takes place during the night in a small, crowded train carriage in Italy. The passengers are all parents who are deeply worried because their sons are fighting in the Great War. A husband and wife enter the carriage; the wife is in deep distress because her only son is leaving for the front. Soon, a heated argument breaks out among the passengers. They try to decide whose sacrifice is greater—those with many children or those with an only child.

Suddenly, a bulky man with watery eyes joins the conversation. He speaks loudly and tells the other parents that they should not be selfish. He explains his philosophy that children do not belong to parents, but to the **Motherland**. He claims that his own son died as a hero and that he is happy about it. He speaks with great strength about **duty** and **patriotism**, making the other passengers listen in silence. He even claims that he does not wear black mourning clothes because his son's death was a fulfillment.

However, the atmosphere changes when a woman, who was listening quietly, asks him: "**Then... is your son really dead?**" This simple question hits the man like a physical blow. He suddenly stops talking and his face turns red with pain. He finally realizes that his son is gone forever and no words can bring him back. The man's "brave mask" falls off, and he breaks into loud, uncontrollable sobs. The narrative ends by showing that the personal pain of a parent is far more powerful than any national idea.

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OXFORD