
READ AND FIND OUT

- Who does 'I' refer to in this story?
- What is he "a fairly successful hand" at?
- What does he get from Anil in return for his work?

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- How does the thief think Anil will react to the theft?
- What does he say about the different reactions of people when they are robbed?
- Does Anil realise that he has been robbed?

Think about it

1. What are Hari Singh's reactions to the prospect of receiving an education? Do they change over time? (*Hint*: Compare, for example, the thought: "I knew that once I could write like an educated man there would be no limit to what I could achieve" with these later thoughts: "Whole sentences, I knew, could one day bring me more than a few hundred rupees. It was a simple matter to steal — and sometimes just as simple to be caught. But to be a really big man, a clever and respected man, was something else.") What makes him return to Anil?
2. Why does not Anil hand the thief over to the police? Do you think most people would have done so? In what ways is Anil different from such employers?

Talk about it

1. Do you think people like Anil and Hari Singh are found only in fiction, or are there such people in real life?
2. Do you think it a significant detail in the story that Anil is a struggling writer? Does this explain his behaviour in any way?
3. Have you met anyone like Hari Singh? Can you think and imagine the circumstances that can turn a fifteen-year-old boy into a thief?
4. Where is the story set? (You can get clues from the names of the persons and places mentioned in it.) Which language or languages are spoken in these places? Do you think the characters in the story spoke to each other in English?