**TESTAMENT OF A WALKER**

**R.K NARAYAN**

**SUMMARY**

The author R.K Narayan says that he is impervious to the fine values in a car. He is not interested in the facilities or luxuries that a car can provide. He is satisfied if he is provided a seat and four-wheels that can roll. However, he happened to own an 'imported car, which is flashy and full of sophistication. Anybody would be ecstatic to see its easy steering man ever ability, concealed air-conditioner, and Tape recorder- digital alarm with a calculator. But the author never understood the purpose of most of the buttons, switches, and gadgets. The air conditioner in the author's car, which was supposed to make one's journey comfortable, was switch on, during the ten years for a total period of thirty minutes, i.e., less than three minutes in a year. Whenever the air-conditioner was on, the windows were to be closed; which inhibited his driver, whose habit was to show right or left turn by thrusting his arm out, who, when the glass was raised, constantly hit it with his fist. He had a habit of gesticulating at erring pedestrians and addressing them volubly in passing. And in the car with the air-conditioner on and the windows closed, the driver felt constricted, encapsulated and tongue-tied, and drove without spirit. The author thinks that he was in fact, conditioned to driving to the tune of the rattle and roar of other vehicles beside, behind, and ahead.

The author confesses that he does not have automobile sensibility. And he does not regret for it. He believes that man's ultimate destiny lies in walking, and that is why he is endowed with a pair of legs, which can operate without petrol or gears. It is this philosophy which leaves him indifferent to any 'hike' in the petrol price. He says that there will be a time when it may cost a thousand rupees to travel one kilometer, and then the only man will discover the use of his feet. The most ambitious work the author has been planning tor years is to be called "Testament of a Walker". However, he has not started writing the book. But the philosophy is deeply rooted in him. There was a time when he used to walk ten miles a day. Even in bad weather, he did his walking in the verandah. He thinks that for a person like him possessing a sophisticated and imported car is irrelevant and nuisance.

Privacy and anonymity are the two things the author value. And both the things are lost when he travels in a gaudy car. He becomes conspicuous to all. In a small city like Mysore, it becomes very difficult for the author to hide from the people. He generally avoids all public engagements and invitations with the excuse that he will be away Bangalore or Madras or Delhi. Apart from that, the author is constantly in a tear that the driver might drive the car in a reckless manner and it might break down. As his car was of a special pedigree, it was not advisable to allow any ordinary workshop to open the bonnet. The accredited workshop with special tools was a workshop a hundred miles away at Bangalore. There in the workshop, one would be made to pay high prices for the replacement of parts or any repair. The spare parts are available in an exclusive shop only. A customer entering this shop should be ready to pay any price they ask for.

The author had to visit the workshop every other week to get some kind of repairing of his car and shed his savings. He started fearing that at this rate he would soon reach the border of bankruptcy. One day two cyclists collided and fell on his car parked in front of the hospital, and smashed the parking light on the left side. It could not easily be replaced in India. The elite shop could produce one if the author was prepared to pay two thousand for the piece. The mechanic, after examining the broken light, declared that it could be repaired - he would fabricate a cover in plastic. So, he unscrewed off the whole assembly of the light and left. After that, he was away from the workshop for ten weeks on sick leave. And later on, when the author met him, he denied that the light was with him. And the author had no other way but to accept what the mechanic said.

All these made the author come to the conclusion that he had no use of a car. It seemed to him that the most thoughtless thing he had done in his life was to have acquired the car. He decided to get rid of it, lock it up in the shed as soon as possible to turn his energies to writing stories.

The author declares that he is not sort of a person who would enjoy getting under the car on a Sunday, as is the case with a friend of his, who generally spends his leisure hours under his imported car. He spends all his time collecting spare parts from far and near. And he can repair his car on his own. The author can appreciate his Competence but can never accept his advice- "Don't give up your car…the thing to do is to be on the lookout for a similar model, buy it at any price, and then you could transfer all the necessary parts from one car to another. It will work out cheaper that way. Ultimately you can sell away the shell of the remaining car to any fellow who is planning to set up a wayside tea-stall, or you could convert it into a little garden house in your own compound."