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# Summary of The Tunnel

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The story "The Tunnel" by Ruskin Bond narrates the adventure of a boy named Suraj who visits a jungle tunnel to watch a steam train pass through. Suraj is fascinated by the train and the mysterious tunnel. He meets the watchman, Sunder Singh, who takes care of the tunnel and ensures the safety of trains passing through it. Suraj learns about the watchman's responsibility and the presence of a leopard that occasionally visits the tunnel. One evening, Suraj accompanies Sunder Singh to drive the leopard out of the tunnel to prevent it from being harmed by an oncoming train. The story highlights the interaction between humans, nature, and technology, and the courage and curiosity of a young boy exploring the unknown.

## Key Elements

- **Characters:** Suraj (the curious boy), Sunder Singh (the watchman), the leopard (wild animal visiting the tunnel)
- **Setting:** A jungle tunnel with railway tracks passing through a hillside
- **Themes:** Adventure and curiosity, coexistence of humans and nature, responsibility and courage
- **Literary Devices:** Similes (train compared to a dragon), personification (jungle seeming to breathe), imagery (descriptions of the tunnel and forest)

## Textual Evidence

Suraj describes the train as "some green, black, and gold dragon, some beautiful monster out of Suraj's dreams," illustrating his imaginative view of the steam engine. The jungle is described as "very still, very silent," creating a calm yet mysterious atmosphere. The watchman's careful inspection and waving of a red flag show his responsibility in ensuring safety.

## Solved Example

**Question:** Why does Suraj want to walk through the tunnel?

**Answer:** Suraj wants to walk through the tunnel simply to know what the inside of a tunnel is really like. He is curious and adventurous, wanting to experience the darkness and atmosphere inside the tunnel.

## Practice Set

### Level 1 – Easy

- Who is the watchman of the tunnel?
- What does Suraj compare the train to?
- What animal does Suraj see near the tunnel?

### Level 2 – Moderate

- Describe the watchman's duties related to the tunnel.
- Explain why the leopard is not dangerous to Sunder Singh.
- What sounds does Suraj hear in the jungle at night?

### Level 3 – Challenging

- Analyze the theme of coexistence between humans and nature as depicted in the story.
- Discuss the significance of the tunnel as a symbol in the story.
- Explain how Ruskin Bond uses imagery to create the atmosphere of the jungle and tunnel.

## Answer Key

- The watchman of the tunnel is Sunder Singh.
- Suraj compares the train to a "green, black, and gold dragon," a beautiful monster from his dreams.
- Suraj sees a leopard near the tunnel.

- The watchman inspects the tunnel daily to ensure it is clear of obstacles and signals the train driver if there is any danger.
- The leopard is familiar with Sunder Singh and minds its own business; it does not attack them.
- Suraj hears the sharp call of a barking deer, the cry of a fox, and the tonk-tonk of a nightjar among other night sounds.
- The story shows humans and nature living side by side, with mutual respect and understanding, as seen in the watchman's care for the tunnel and the leopard's presence.
- The tunnel symbolizes a passage between the known and unknown, safety and danger, and the connection between human civilization and the wild.
- Ruskin Bond uses vivid descriptions of sounds, sights, and sensations to immerse the reader in the jungle's mysterious and lively atmosphere.

## Quick Reference

- **Author:** Ruskin Bond
- **Main Characters:** Suraj, Sunder Singh, Leopard
- **Setting:** Jungle tunnel with railway track
- **Themes:** Adventure, nature, responsibility
- **Important Vocabulary:** shimmered, cutting, plume, lithe, sinewy, snarling

## Glossary

- **Shimmered:** Shined with a light that appears to move.
- **Cutting:** A narrow valley cut through a hill for a railway line.
- **Plume of smoke:** A long, thin cloud of smoke.
- **Lithe:** Thin and graceful.
- **Sinewy:** Lean and muscular.
- **Snarling:** Growling in a threatening way.

## Character Sketches

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**Suraj:** Suraj is a curious and adventurous boy who loves exploring new places. He is brave and eager to learn about the world around him. His fascination with the train and the

tunnel shows his imaginative and bold nature.

**Sunder Singh:** The watchman of the tunnel, Sunder Singh is responsible, calm, and knowledgeable about the jungle and the railway. He is friendly and protective, especially towards the leopard, showing his respect for nature.

**The Leopard:** The leopard is a wild animal that visits the tunnel area. It is described as lithe and sinewy, cautious but not aggressive towards humans. It symbolizes the wildness of the jungle and the balance between nature and human activity.

## Themes in The Tunnel

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**Adventure and Curiosity:** Suraj's desire to explore the tunnel and watch the train reflects the human spirit of adventure and the quest for knowledge.

**Coexistence of Humans and Nature:** The story shows how humans and animals share the same environment and how respect and understanding can lead to peaceful coexistence.

**Responsibility and Courage:** Sunder Singh's duty as a watchman and his courage in dealing with the leopard highlight the importance of responsibility and bravery.

## Literary Devices Used in The Tunnel

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- **Simile:** The train is compared to a "green, black, and gold dragon," creating a vivid image of its power and beauty.
- **Personification:** The jungle is described as if it breathes and lives, giving it a mysterious and lively character.
- **Imagery:** Detailed descriptions of the tunnel, jungle sounds, and the train create a strong sensory experience for the reader.
- **Onomatopoeia:** Words like "snorting," "puffing," and "roared" imitate the sounds of the train and the leopard, enhancing the realism.

## Important Quotes from The Tunnel

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"The steam engine shot out of the tunnel, snorting and puffing like some green, black, and gold dragon, some beautiful monster out of Suraj's dreams." – This quote shows Suraj's imaginative view of the train and sets a magical tone.

"The jungle was still again. No one moved." – This line emphasizes the calm and silence of the jungle after the train passes, highlighting the contrast between nature and technology.

"It is truly my tunnel, since no one else will have anything to do with it. I have only lent it to the Government." – Sunder Singh's words show his personal connection and responsibility towards the tunnel.

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