

# JUGGUT SINGH IN TRAIN TO PAKISTAN: THE STORY OF A DACOIT TO BEING HERO

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## **1.0 Introduction:**

Train to Pakistan is a historical novel by Khushwant Singh. It tells the story of Partition of India and Pakistan and the humanity which was shattered due to this partition. But at the same time the novel is about the Journey of a man, Juggut Singh, from being a dacoit to a hero at the end of the novel. A man who sacrifices his life in the end to save the lives of others while the world around him was filled with hatred and people never left a chance to kill the other people.

Jugga or Badmash No. 10 as the police records call him, is a dacoit of Mano Majra village in Punjab. He is the tallest man his area around six foot four inches and broad too. And according to Sub Inspector he is like a stud bull. Badmashi is rather a legacy in his family as his Grand Father was a badmash, then his father Alam Singh became one and now he is a known badmash in his area. In the beginning of the novel we see that Juggut Singh's character is leaning towards villainous side rather than on heroic side, for he loots the people, is a regular visitor to jail, has to report himself to the Lambardar every day and is forbidden to leave the after the sunset. But, on the whole, he is not a villainous character neither he is a hero. He is just like a normal human being who has various dimensions to his character-anger, humor, honesty fear, loyalty and lust.

We are, first, introduced to Juggut Singh in the novel when five dacoits throw bangles in his house and make fun of him. Later bit by bit we come to know of his character. Juggut directly, for first time, is introduced when he was going to sneak from his house to meet his lover, Nooran, daughter of a Muslim weaver. Though it is forbidden for him to leave the village after sunset he still leaves to meet her. we might think here that he loves Nooran therefore he takes risks to meet her but unexpectedly this is not the case. He might care for her but he doesn't love her. There his lust for her is shown. After Juggut Singh meets Nooran we realize, that he is having a liaison with her, a Muslim girl, and their chance of getting married are next to nil because this type of relationship was taboo at that time. Whole village knows of their clandestine meetings except Nooran and her father. It is, his affair with nooran that keeps him out of trouble most of the time, as Sub Inspector says. "She is dark, but her eyes are darker. She certainly keeps Juggut in the village." Juggut Singh's lusty side also is shown when he cracks obscene jokes with policemen and Iqbal, a comrade in left wing party, in the jail.

Anger is another dimension in his character. Juggut Singh most of the time displays his humorous side but there are instances in the novel when we meet his angry side. He loses his temper when his manliness is joked by Malli by throwing bangles in his home. Juggut Singh also raises his hands on head constable when he questions him mockingly "who leaves you bangles". Other instance when he loses his temper is when someone brings out his affair with Nooran in public and degrades her. On the way to police station in tonga, when tonga driver brings out his affair in public Jugga loses his control and says:

If these handcuffs and fetters had not been on me, I would have broken every bone in your body you are lucky to have escaped today, but if I hear you repeat this again I will tear your tongue out of your mouth. [TTP, 13]

In the Jail also he loses his temper when Malli crudely remarks about Nooran and brings out his affair:

Jugga's hands shot through the bars and gripped Malli by the hair protruding from the back of his turban. Malli's turban fell off. Jugga yelled murderously and with a jerk brought Malli's head crashing against the bars. He is shook Malli as terrier shakes a piece of rug from side to side, forward and backward, smashing his head repeatedly against the bars. [TTP, 121-122]

The last instance, we see Juggut Singh angry getting angry is when he comes to know that Muslims are leaving village and hoped that his mother would not have turned nooran out. If she had, in his anger he thinks that would walk out of his home and never come back thus making his mother regret her choice.

Humor has also a big side in Juggut Singh's character. And we are introduced to his humorous side from time to time. He would crack jokes with policemen and Iqbal and other people from time to time whenever

he is in a good mood. In the jail Jugga pursues Iqbal to teach him some git-mit and his humorous could be easily detected from their conversation when he rhymes him a verse his cousin taught him and A.B.C:

Pigeon-Kabootar, oodan-fly

Look-dehko, Usman-sky

.....

.....

A.B.C. where have you been?

Edward's dead, I went to mourn [TTP,115]

Although Juggut Singh is a badmash but honesty is a big part of his character. He doesn't cover his face when police takes him parading through his village because he knows that he has not committed murder of his village man hence he is honest to himself. He is honest when admits to Iqbal himself that he is a badmash and thus all governments would put him in a jail. Therefore is not all bothered about change of government. At last he is honest to himself and Iqbal, when Iqbal says government makes him a bad character and a criminal and Jugga replies:

No Babu Sahib it is our fate. It is written on our foreheads and on the lives of our hands. I am always wanting to do something when there is ploughing to be done or the harvest to be gathered, then I am busy, when there is no work, my hands still itch to do something. So I do something, and it is always wrong. [TTP,65]

Fear is a part of human being and Jugga is no different because he has also fears. Though he is abadmash and has a robust body but he is not invincible. He fears the police's treatment of him which he went through once. His hands and feet were pinned under legs of charpais with half a dozen of policemen sitting on them. Powered red chills were thrust up his rectum by rough hands and on the top of that, hot spicy food was given with cool water out of his teach. This memory is a nightmare for him and he is not ashamed to let his fear show to policeman by flunging himself at his shoes because he knows that he could never endure such a torture again.

Last side of his character is his loyalty. Jugga is loyal to his village and to his love for nooran though it is in end of the novel that his lust changes to love for Nooran. Juggut is loyal to village because he commits many robberies but never loots his village. It is an unspoken rule that no matter how much big Badmash you are you should not rob your village because villagers are your brothers and sisters and Jugga also adheres to the same rule. Second it is his love for Nooran to which he is loyal. When he hears that Muslims are leaving village, he hopes that his mother would not have turned nooran out. He comes to God to show him right path and a way to save nooran and before goes to save nooran he has learnt an important lesson from the Guru's word:

If you are going to do something good, the Guru will help you; if you are going to do something bad, the Guru will stand in your way. If you persist in doing it, he will punish you till you repent, and then forgive you. [TTP, 183.]

It is these words which makes Jugga's resolution firm that he is taking a right path and is not blinded and coward like everyone else in his village. Jugga to save Nooran's life, along with train filled of Muslims, sacrifices his life. He knew there was a risk to his life and probably he would be killed but to save others he sacrificed himself. He didn't fear the death when he was near but feared for the safety his love. His story started with nooran with lust but ended with his love and his life. He didn't waver when the leader of gang shot him and train was nearing him but pushed his last breath to save her:

The leader raised his life to his shoulder and fired. He hit his mark and one of the man's by came off the rope and dangled in the air....He slashed away in frantic haste. The engine was only a few yards off, throwing embers....Somebody fired another shot. The man's body slid off the rope, but he clung the rope under his left armpit, and again started hacking with his right hand..... He went at it with the knife and then with his teeth. The engine was almost on him. There was a volley of shots. The man shivered and collapsed. The rope snapped in the centre as he fell. The train went over him, and went on to Pakistan. [TTP, 190]

At the end he becomes a hero from a dacoit... A hero who saved the life of others from a dacoit who killed others. A hero whose own life acted as a shield for the life of others and reached them to their destination.

In the conclusion that we can say that Juggut Singh was *Badmash* of his village because his father was *badmash*, his grandfather was *Badmash*. But he had his own morals. He never looted or killed anybody from his village. He had an affair with *Nooran*, a Muslim girl, but couldn't bear when anybody badmouth her. He had a humorous and vulgar side to him but never closed any limit. All these things made him a normal man but at the

end of the novel he did something which elevated his status to a hero. He did something which was supposed to be the work of commands like Iqbal Singh and Police but a Badmash like him did it. He saved the life of others at the cost of his own life. And became a hero..... a selfless hero.

**2.0 References:-**

Singh, Khushwant. Train to Pakistan. India, Penguin Random House.