

# The Enchanted Pool Prose Summary, Chapter 1

## English Class 10th

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### Introduction

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“The Enchanted Pool” written by Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, is an extract from the great Indian epic ‘Mahabharata’. The small prose throws light on the character of Yudhishtira, the Dhram Raj, about his patience, intelligence, and affection for his brothers. The story also intends to highlight the importance of rules and warnings that they should be taken seriously and the person who follows the rules are the ones who are praised and rewarded while the person who disobeys the rules might face inevitable consequences.

The Pandavas were sent to an exile of thirteen years by Duryodhana after being defeated in the game of dice to the Kauravas. Throughout this difficult time, the Pandavas had to wander from place to place for security and to satisfy their appetite. One day in the twelfth year, the Pandava brothers wandered deep into the forest in pursuit of a deer. The sun was scorching and the five brothers were extremely exhausted and thirsty so they began to search for a water pool.

### The fatal pool

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Yudhishtira thus requested his younger brother, Nakula to go and search for water. Nakula following the command of Yudhishtira ascended to the top of the tree and looked around. He was extremely glad after spotting water in the pool. After approaching the pool, an invisible voice warned Nakula for drinking the water. The voice even threatened him of the dangerous consequence he might face for disobeying the command given to him. The warning voice said that before having the water Nakula had to answer few questions of the formless voice.

Nakula was so tired and thirsty that he did not pay any attention to the warning and he knelt and sipped some water. As a result of this disobedience, Nakula felt unconscious and fell down. When Nakula did not return for a long time, Yudhishtira sent Sahadeva to look after the matter. On reaching the pool side, Sahadeva also heard a voice which warned him not to drink the water and if he wants to have the water, then he had to answer its questions.

Carried away by his intense thirst and heedless of the warning, Sahadeva also knelt down and began to drink water. At once he began to feel terribly drowsy and then fell down appearing as dead. After Sahadeva too failed to return, Yudhishtira then sent Arjuna to see whether the brothers had met with any danger.

After seeing his brothers lying dead near the pool, Arjuna was heart-broken with sorrow and vowed to avenge their deaths. However, he too was overwhelmed by a monstrous thirst which forced him to move towards the fatal pool and after drinking the water he too fell down dead.

Yudhishtira was completely puzzled and he dispatched Bhima, who had power of sixteen thousands elephants, to investigate the situation. As expected, Bhima too ignored the voice's warning and suffered the same fate as his three other brothers.

## **Triumph of Wisdom**

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When the four brothers did not return, Yudhishtira became very cautious and proceeded to find out what had really happened to his brothers. When he got close to the pool, he noticed all his four brothers lying dead and motionless on the ground. Before investigating what had actually happened, he went into the water to quench his thirst.

Immediately the formless voice warned him not to drink water before answering its questions or he would suffer the same fate as his brothers who did not answer his questions before drinking the water. Yudhishtira instantly recognised these words as Yaksha's words and inferred what had happened to his siblings.

Yudhishtira agreed to the condition put by the bodiless voice that was to answer all its questions. He faced all its questions bravely and confidently like "what makes the Sun shine everyday, What rescues man in danger, what is faster than wind, what befriends a traveller, who accompanies a man in death, who is the friend of one who stays at home, which is the biggest vessel, what is happiness, What makes a real Brahman, and many other questions posed by Yaksha.

Yaksha was extremely delighted by all the answers of Yudhishtira and as a reward he asked him to name any one brother whom he wanted to be revived. Yudhishtira replied that it is Nakula who shall be revived. On inquiry why did he opt to rescue Nakula instead of powerful and courageous Arjuna and Bhima, Yudhishtira replied that Kunti and Madri were the two wives of his father. Being the surviving son of Kunti, it was his prime duty to rescue Madri's son, Nakula, so as to pay justice.

Being impressed by Yudhishtira's intellect, Yaksha granted lives to all his four brothers and then informed that he was none other than Yama, the lord of Death, who had taken the form of a deer and the Yaksha so as to test him. He embraced Yudhishtira and blessed him that none of his enemies would be able to discover them and he will successfully fulfill his undertaking.