

## General Introduction

### *(A) William Golding: The Author*

William Golding who shot into fame with the publication of his first novel, *Lord of the Flies* in 1954, is a living modern English novelist. Modern English novel falls into two categories: the novel of ideas as written by such novelists as Wells and Huxley and the novel of more artistic value such as those written by those written by Henry James and Somerset Maugham. But of course we rarely have a contrast as clear as that between Peacock and Jane Austen or between Wells and Henry James. Most often it is a question of degree rather than of absolute distinction. Thus Forster and Lawrence are also men of ideas as Wells and Huxley often approach close to the novel conceived as a work of art. The true novelist of ideas are those like Wells, Huxley, Orwell and Koestler whose works are built upon or against the ideas current at the time of writing. Hence they run the risk of becoming dated as soon as the ideas cease to be current. The literary artist on the other hand, puts down deeper roots: the beliefs behind his work are the fundamental moral or spiritual views of mankind rather than the ideas we read about in the newspapers. Conrad, Forster, Powys rather than Wells, Huxley, Orwell give the humanist position its greatest depth in human feeling. Thus it is to Greene, Waugh and Golding that we should go to find any comparable depth of feeling on the Christian side rather than to Chesterton or C.S. Lewis.



William Golding was the younger contemporary of Greene and Waugh. His first and the most famous novel *Lord of the Flies* (1954) was a deliberate attempt to bring Ballantyne's *Coral Island* up to date, to probe deeper than Ballantyne into the recesses of the human heart, to prove as Golding wrote in his volume of essays *The Hot Gates* (1965) that "man produces evil as a bee produces honey." 'Lord of the Flies' remains a useful parable for the times as does his second novel *The Inheritors* (1955) considered the best novel about primitive man since Jack London's *Before Adam*. Golding's later works include *Pincher Martin* 1956, *The Spire* 1964 and *The Scorpion God* 1971.

William Golding was born son of a distinguished school master on September 19th, 1911 in Cornwall a small village in England. He led a very quiet life until he became famous as a writer. He did his primary education at the Marlborough Grammar School and joined the Brasenose College, Oxford. He took his degree in English literature. Academically he was interested both in science and the Humanities. But philosophy dominates his writings and he has a passion for literature. He started his career as a school master at Bishop Wordsworth's School in Salisbury. During the Second World War he joined the Royal Navy and was present at the sinking of the 'Bismarck.' After the war he resumed teaching and gave it up only in 1962. He is now a full-time writer. At first his novels were not accepted. But *Lord of the Flies* was welcomed immediately as 'a most absorbing and instructive tale.' It is about this novel that we are going to make a critical study and analyse how far it is absorbing and instructive.

### (B) '*Lord of the Flies*': An Introduction : Theme and Message

*Lord of the Flies* is a deliberate attempt by Golding to bring Ballantyne's *Coral Island* up to date, to probe deeper than Ballantyne into the recesses of the human heart. It is a novel of boyish adventure in its external framework and Golding has obviously borrowed the external from Ballantyne's *Coral Island* published almost a century back in 1857. Ballantyne deals with the adventures of three English boys marooned on an island. We have a similar

work in J.R. Wyss's *Swiss Family Robinson*. But the story in Golding's hand is never stereotyped nor stale but has an originality of design and development of plot.

The reader is kept thrilled and in suspense from scene to scene. The various incidents in the novel lead to a stunning climax and unconsciously we will cry out: "This is a story—this 'reality.'" We become more and more aware as the story proceeds, of Golding's understanding of boyish character—the relation between the older boys and the younger. A whole set of boys are displayed before our eyes and we see in them several familiar types—the fair sporting Ralph, the scheming vengeful Jack, the simple intelligent Piggy, the philosophic intuitive Simon, the timid frightened Percival etc. Golding being a school master must have met all these types in the course of his teaching career and now he displays them for our consideration and evaluation.

As a novelist of artistic value Golding also excels here as a portrayer of Nature. There is vivid description of the Coral Island brightened by the sun, the stars and the moon. The beach, the blue ocean, the calm lagoon, the swaying palm trees and the fruit-trees linger on in our imagination long after we have read through the novel and deposited it on our shelf.

But the novel conveys a theme, a message which goes beyond the simple story of boyish adventure. It is the story of man—the development of the human society in reverse order. The boys had reached the island from a civilised society but gradually they fall back to savagery and primitive way of life. We find them becoming victims of primary passions like anger, revenge, pride and fear. It gives us the lesson that civilised man can easily descend into barbarism. Jack Merridew seeks to appease the Beast by offering it a part of their kill—the head of a sow. The very same Jack who had resented killing in the beginning because of "the enormity of the knife descending and cutting into living flesh; because of the unbearable blood" ends up by advocating hunting and murdering his own fellow-beings.

The boys' behaviour on the island has been interpreted variously. Some see it as a parable of man stripped of sanctions, customs and civilization; others see it as a tract



about democracy and anarchy. There are still others who relate it to the story of the Fall of Man and the Garden of Eden. We shall keep in mind these various interpretations as we analyse the various incidents narrated in the novel. The world of the boys in the island makes us realize that good and evil exist side by side in the darkness of man's heart. Golding drives home to us his theory that the world should restore principles in unprincipled world, restore belief to a world of disbelievers. This is the message of the novel. Remember, Golding wrote the novel in the post war era when there was much misunderstanding and disbelief among the nations of the world.

The title of the novel may be traced back to the Jewish hierarchy of demons where Beelzebub is called, 'Lord of the Flies.' He is supposed to be the chief representative of false gods. The title is most appropriate because Golding tries to convey the moral that the world is not a reasonable place and that all power corrupts and that one has to live with the darkness of man's heart. The novel ends with a sobbing scene of the boys gathered before the English naval officer. Golding writes, "In the midst of them, with filthy body, matted hair and unwiped nose, Ralph wept for the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart and the fall through the air of the true, wise friend called Piggy." What we realise is that once the restraints of civilization are removed, the Lord of the Flies or Evil begins to rule over us. The grown-ups are engaged in a deadly warfare and the children on the island move into an open conflict. The majority of them turn into savages and worship the Lord of the Flies or Evil.

### (C) The Story in Outline

We saw that the novel, *Lord of the Flies* is the story of a boyish adventure. The story opens in the terrifying atmosphere of a nuclear war in Europe. A group of English School children are being evacuated in an aeroplane to an unknown destination. The plane lands at Gibraltar and Addis Ababa for fueling and continues its flight south-eastwards. It is soon attacked by enemy planes and its crew are killed. But its 'passenger tube' carrying the children is released and it crash-lands on an unnamed island in mid-ocean. A fierce storm is raging over the island

at the moment and the boys are scattered over the jungle as they scramble out of the tube to safety. Soon the wind sweeps the tube out to the sea. Thus the school children whose ages range between twelve and six find themselves alone in an uninhabited island away from the control and guidance of grown-ups. This is a peculiar situation and the novel deals with the adaptation of these children to their new tropical background. They find themselves in entirely new surroundings—the climate is new, the land is strange and there is not a single grown-up to guide them.

But the civilization they had left recently had its influence on them. They organized themselves in the known pattern. Ralph, a fair boy of twelve and Piggy, a bespectacled boy of almost the same age discovered a conch and used it to summon the others scattered over the jungle. The assembled boys elected Ralph their leader almost unanimously though Jack, the leader of the school choir had claimed the leadership. But he too acquiesced and was satisfied with the deputy leadership as the head of the "Hunters." Thus the boys start off in a civilised manner, having their regular assemblies to discuss and decide things. They pursued their life within law and rule in a democratic manner. Even Jack Merridew agreed, "We've got to have rules and obey them. After all, we're not savages." But the irony is that this very same Jack will flout the rules and turn them to savages. He becomes a virtual dictator leading to tyranny and anarchy in the ordered life of the boys. They turn into savages—naked, painted, gorging on pig-flesh and dancing in a frenzied manner. They come to participate in exploring the meaning and consequence of the creation of evil.

One of the first acts of the boys was to make an exploration of the land to discover where they were. They came to know that they were on an uninhabited island where there were pigs and plenty of fruit trees to sustain them. It was decided that the conch would be the symbol of authority among them and only the person having the conch in hand alone should speak in an assembly. Similarly the importance of a signal fire was stressed and the boys in great excitement rushed to the mountain top to light a fire. But they set up a great fire which turned into a huge conflagration, burning down their life



sustaining fruit-trees and even causing the death of one of the small boys, the one with a mulberry coloured birth mark. Piggy alone remonstrated against this show of emotion and warned them against the foolishness of their action. He advised them to "put first things first and act proper." It was more important to build shelters immediately and the fire could be seen to in due course. Everyone now admired the intelligence of Piggy and it was decided to build shelters on the beach. The fire would be attended to, by the hunters in turn. But things did not move as Ralph wished. He became more and more dejected. According to him their assemblies were mere talk and none cared to implement their decisions. He became more and more disillusioned and even thought of giving up his leadership. Democracy and ordered life prove to be a failure. They fail to deliver the goods. In this situation there is every possibility of dictatorship and anarchy raising head. This is exactly what happens with the school children in the island.

At this juncture a very important thing took place. Ralph saw a ship passing by far out in the ocean. His heart was full of joy and excitement, thinking of the possibility of their escape from the island. He rushed to the mountain top to blaze up their signal fire. But he found that the fire had been dead for hours. The hunters had neglected their duty. Jack had led them out for a hunt. Ralph was filled with anger, despair and frustration. He accused Jack for this serious dereliction of duty. Jack too was equally irritated by this public denouncement and a rupture in their relationship was imminent. But a temporary patch up was achieved by the apology tendered by Jack. Ralph, however, considered it a verbal trick of Jack to win sympathy of the boys. Soon their relations would be strained and they would break away from each other.

Soon another incident threatened their very existence on the island. Sam and Eric who were on duty at the fire one night saw the beast on the rock near by. The boys were already frightened of the existence of the beast which had been seen by the small boys in various forms. It was decided to search for the beast and they set out immediately to a far corner of the island where alone Jack had not gone so far. But there was no trace of the beast

there. So they returned. But on the way back Jack wanted to climb the mountain in a final attempt to trace the beast. Ralph followed him reluctantly. It was dark and they saw a huge figure crouching on the rock. They were now sure of the reality of the beast. They held an assembly and during the course of it Jack quarrelled with Ralph and wanted a change in the leadership. But the majority of the boys still remained with Ralph. So he left the group and with him went the hunters. Thus the boys on the island were split into rival camps and this marked the end of democratic way of life and ordered life.

Jack set up his rival camp in the Castle Rock. There his word was law and he organized the boys into a tribe of savages. They went out hunting and offered part of their kill as an offering for the beast. They held a feast and lured away the boys from the camp of Ralph by the offer of roasted pork. Even Ralph and Piggy could not resist the temptation. Now the boys accepted Jack because he gave them meat and a sense of security from the beast. Simon, who had discovered the truth of the beast was murdered by the frenzied dancers under Jack before he could reveal the truth. Jack was supreme now and he took away the spectacles of Piggy by force. Ralph, Piggy and the twins went to get it back but there ensued a fight. A stone was hurled at Piggy who was knocked down and killed. The conch that was in his hands was smashed to pieces, making the end of the rule of law. Soon the twins were made prisoners and Ralph was chased. Jack wanted to hunt Ralph down like a pig. Since Ralph was hiding in a thicket, he set fire to it to force him to come out. But the fire spread and caused a huge conflagration. The fire and the smoke attracted a passing ship. Ralph fleeing away from his pursuers fell and stood up to see that he was in front of an English naval officer. Soon the others too appeared, naked and painted. The sea captain thought they were playing a game. He did not like their appearance and expressed his resentment, "I should have thought that a pack of British boys would have been able to put up a better show than that." Ralph answered that it was like that at first "Jolly good show. Like the Coral Island." Soon he burst into tears and the boys joined him in sympathy. "Ralph wept for the end of innocence, the



darkness of man's heart, and the fall through the air of the true, wise friend called Piggy." The officer gave them time to pull themselves together before taking them to the cruiser in the distance. As if by a miracle their dark days ended. After a strange adventure on the island, they were on their way back home.

## Chapter Analysis

### *Chapter 1. The Sound of the Shell*

Soon after the crash-landing of the passenger tube, the school children scramble out to safety and pick their way to the beach. The first boy to realise their peculiar fate is a fair-haired boy of twelve, Ralph. He makes his way through the creepers to the calm blue lagoon below. He is soon joined by a short fat boy with thick spectacles, Piggy. They talk of the air attack in which the entire crew were killed. Only the children in the passenger tube have perhaps survived but they are scattered over the jungle. Piggy, we notice, is frightened at the prospect of a life without grown-ups. But Ralph is delighted at the thought of a realized ambition.

They soon reached the beach and found a cool pool in the sand. They threw off their clothes and jumped in for a swim. It was a relief from the tropical heat and sweat. Ralph told his friend that his father was a commander in the navy and sure enough he would come to rescue them. But Piggy shattered his belief by declaring that the crew of their plane as well as the people in the airport were killed in the nuclear attack. There was little possibility of Ralph's father knowing where they had crash-landed. He said in consternation, "We may stay here till we die." Ralph now realised the gravity of their situation.

Just then they saw something shining in the water. It was a beautiful shell, deep cream in colour and eighteen inches long. Piggy immediately understood that it could be used as a trumpet to summon the children scattered



over the island. Ralph blew it and after a few trials, he succeeded to produce a sound. Hearing the sound the children started to assemble. The first boy to appear was Johnny, six years old. Soon they found a crowd of boys in black cloaks, with black caps and silver badges marching towards them. Jack Merridew was their leader and they were a school choir.

After the boys were introduced by Piggy, Ralph told them that they were holding a meeting. There were no grown-ups with them and they would have to fend for themselves. Hence it was necessary to have a chief to decide things. Jack immediately put forward his claim as he had already a well-organised group under him—the choir. But Roger suggested that they should rather vote for the chief as at school. The boys liked the idea and they shouted out in great excitement, "Vote for Chief!". Soon their clamour turned to an acclaim of Ralph. They wanted "him with shell" to be the chief. Jack naturally was depressed but he cheered up when he was made second in command as the leader of the "Hunters."

Their first decision was to explore the land and find out if they were really on an island. Jack, Simon and Ralph would go on the expedition. Piggy wanted to accompany them but Ralph asked him to stay back and make a list of the boys. He knew that the exertion would be too much for the asthmatic Piggy. But he was dejected at the refusal and murmured to himself: "I was with him when he found the conch. I was with him before anyone else was."

The explorers climbed up the mountain and felt the thrill. They reached the summit and found water all round them. They were indeed on an island. On their way back they came upon a piglet caught in the creepers. Jack drew his knife but it ran away to safety before he could stab it. He excused himself saying he was just waiting for a moment to decide where to stab him. But "they knew very well why he hadn't: because of the enormity of the knife descending and cutting into living flesh, because of the unbearable blood." But things would soon change when Jack would become the chief.

#### *Comment*

In this introductory chapter we get the background of the

novel through the conversation of Ralph and Piggy, the first two boys to appear in the novel. They hint at a nuclear war raging in Europe. Piggy is frightened at the prospect of a life without grown-ups. Piggy, we will realise later, is the symbol of intelligence. He is perhaps looking into the future and seeing the grim tragedy that awaits them under the dictatorship of Jack.

Another important development is the discovery of the shell and the consequent election of Ralph as leader. The shell's particular use is pointed out by Piggy. It is used to summon an assembly. Later it will become the symbol of authority and ordered life. They will lay down the rule that only the person having the conch in hand should alone speak. But once Jack sets up his rival camp he does not acknowledge the authority of the shell. He will tell Ralph, "The conch doesn't count at this end of the island". In fact very soon the shell is smashed to a thousand pieces by the stone hurled at Piggy. The murder of Piggy and the destruction of the shell are simultaneous. It is significant because it marks the end of ordered life and democratic ways.

The election of Ralph as leader is resented by Jack. He bides his time and soon he will usurp the power and establish his dictatorship. The boys in the beginning still believed in the civilization they had recently left. But Jack would be the threat to democracy and he had his choir with him. Their uniform reminds us of the Nazis. The Nazi dictatorship of Germany had hit hard at the democratic Europe. The very same thing would be enacted on this unknown island too.

Finally the exploration provides Golding the opportunity to expand on nature description. We mentioned in the beginning that he is a novelist of artistic value and description of Nature. In the very first chapter he gives ample evidence of it.

#### *Chapter 2. Fire on the Mountain*

The second chapter begins with a meeting in which Ralph explains the result of their exploration. They were on an uninhabited island. But it was a beautiful island with plenty of fruits. There were also pigs which could be



hunted for meat. There were no grown-ups and they would have to fend for themselves. Hence it was necessary to have certain rules and regulations to guide them. Thus Ralph suggested that only the person having the conch in his hand, should alone speak in an assembly. He cried excitedly, "We'll have rules! Lots of rules!" Even Jack agreed with him, "We've got to have rules and obey them. After all, we're not savages." In this way the boys gradually got into an ordered way of life.

At this moment Ralph noticed a commotion at the back. A group of small boys were urging forward one of them. It was a boy with a mulberry coloured birth mark. He had something to say and stretched out his hand for the conch. But he was so much shaken that he could not utter a word. Piggy knelt by his side and interpreted for the assembly. The little boy was speaking of a beast—a snake like thing! Ralph tried to explain that snakes were found only in big countries like Africa and India and not in an island like theirs. When the little boy repeated he had seen it in the dark, Ralph quipped that he might have been dreaming. But fear had spread among the little ones and in course of time this fear would strengthen. Jack assured them that he would hunt down the snakes too when they went to hunt pigs.

Ralph now told them that perhaps one knew where they were, not even the people at the airport. Thus they might have to be there for a long time. It was, therefore, imperative for them to think of being rescued. For that they would have to make their presence known to passing ships. This could be achieved only by lighting a fire on the mountain top. No sooner had he mentioned it than the boys rushed to the mountain under the leadership of Jack, shouting, "A fire! make a fire!" Everyone had gone. Ralph and Piggy alone were left on the platform. Piggy did not like this show of emotion. He shouted out in disgust, "Like kids! Acting like a crowd of kids." But even Ralph was moving up and piggy too followed him. Soon a huge heap of dry wood was gathered. But then only they realised that they had no matches with them. How were they going to light the fire? Then came Piggy labouring up the mountain side. Jack suggested that his specs could be used as burning glasses. Immediately his specs were snatched away and Ralph used them to light the fire. As the heap

of dry wood burst into flame, the boys danced round it in sheer joy. But the fire soon died out and they found it difficult to keep up such a huge fire. A smaller fire alone could be kept burning day and night. Ralph suggested that someone should take up the responsibility of tending the fire. Jack offered the services of his hunters. They would take turns to keep the fire burning.

Piggy now started to tirade them about the stupidity of the conflagration they had set on. The fire in fact, had spread down the forest and the boys were cheering in sheer joy. But Piggy alone understood the consequences of such a huge fire. He pointed out that it was burning out their precious firewood and fruit tree. They had acted foolishly and reminded them, "Put first things first and act proper." "What they most needed in the circumstances was shelter and not a signal fire. But the boys only laughed him down. They realised the gravity of his words only when he recollected that one of them was missing—the boy with the mulberry coloured birth mark. There might be others too. This struck gloom among the boys. They were awe-struck and a silent horror spread among them. Here was the first death on the island.

#### *Comment*

In this chapter we find the boys organizing themselves. They still have recollection of their civilised school life. At school they had plenty of rules and here too they are willing to accept the rules laid down by their chosen leader, Ralph. Even Jack hints at the importance of rules but he would be the first to flout them. He who claims, "We're not savages" will soon turn them to savages.

Another interesting development is the mention of the beast. The beast plays an important role in the novel. The beast appears under various shapes and forms. Here it is a snake-like thing. Even though the bigger boys try to explain it away, fear has come to grip them. The fear of the beast will bring a great, stupendous change in their life. The beast stands for evil and evil is within all of us. Golding gives up the hint "man produces evil as a bee produces honey."

Thirdly, we have the lighting of the fire. Only Piggy sees their stupidity. The fire that is meant to rescue them causes the death of one of them. They were indeed acting



like kids neglecting the priority of things. This is only natural. The boys' psychology is to act out of emotion rather than by reason. This is what we find here too. The fire too plays an important role—in the novel. The fire has a double role—the one of purification and salvation and the other of destruction and death.

### *Chapter 3. Huts on the Beach*

In this chapter we find the frustration of both the leaders in the island. Their frustration leads to a rub of feelings and the beginning of rivalry. Following the advice of Piggy it was decided to build shelters. Everyone was to help building the shelters except the hunters who went out to hunt pigs. But the bitter experience of Ralph was that no one seemed to take things seriously. In fact Simon alone remained with him. The others went off to bathe, eat or play as they pleased. Jack too found himself in a similar situation. He had set out with his hunters along a pig trail. But soon they had left him alone. He moved on by himself and at last found some fresh warm droppings. He was very close to a pig. He heard something moving and hurled his spear. But the pig ran away to safety. So Jack returned to the camp exhausted and frustrated. There he found Ralph and Simon working at a shelter.

Ralph complained that no one took things seriously. Their decisions were never carried out. Their assemblies were mere talk. Even the hunters rarely helped. The hint made Jack smart and he turned upon Ralph in anger, "Are you accusing?" They had come to the verge of open antagonism. Their values were different. Ralph stood for shelter and fire while Jack was only interested in hunting. But somehow they calmed down when Simon mentioned about the fear among the little ones. Some of them even screamed out in sleep. Jack agreed that even he felt fear at times. When he was alone in the forest, he sometimes felt that he was being hunted. Ralph then said that it was because of that they needed shelter for the night and signal fire to be able to escape from the place at the very first opportunity. But Jack's retort was, "you and your fire." His thoughts were about the pigs, where they might be resting in the heat of the afternoon. Suddenly he got an

idea and cried out, "Got it." Ralph's reaction to it was, "All you can talk about is, pig, pig, pig." Antagonism had again raised its head. But soon they calmed down.

Ralph explained how people were never quite what they were thought to be. No one was there to help him with the shelters except Simon. Jack now offered his help before his bath. So they both moved towards the shelters. But then Simon was missing. He had gone into the forest to pluck fruits and enjoy his solitude among the flowers and creepers until dark. So the two boys decided to have a swim and their bitter feelings were forgotten.

#### *Comment*

The most important development in this chapter is the beginning of antagonism between Ralph and Jack. They hold contrary views and their values of life are different. Ralph stands for the fire and their rescue while Jack is interested in hunting and producing meat for them. Both of them are frustrated, Jack was left alone in the forest by his hunters and Ralph was left alone to build shelters. Thus we find boys' psychology once more in action. They never take anything seriously. 'They're off bathing or eating or playing' as they please.

### *Chapter 4. Painted Faces and Long Hair*

The author here gives us an idea of the life of the little boys who were around six years of age. They were given the generic name, "littluns." They lived a distinct life of their own. They ate a lot of fruits and consequently suffered from constant stomach aches and diarrhea. Another characteristic of them was their fear which made them huddle together. They obeyed the summons of the conch and Ralph was for them the link with the adult world. They were used to the school bells and monitors. They generally enjoyed the meetings and played together on the beach building castles with sand. They were happy in their own way. Thus on this particular day three of them, Henry, Johnny and Percival were playing on the sand. Henry was a relation of the boy with the mulberry-coloured birth mark but he thought little of his vanished brother. Roger and Maurice were on duty at the fire. When they



because to Jack. Besides his verbal apology had put him in good light among the hunters. But Ralph hated him and their hatred for each other would increase from now on until they break off from each other. Jack reveals his ability to win over people to his views. A dictator knows when to give in to achieve his final triumph. Ralph, too, in the meanwhile asserts his leadership by ordering them to light the fire.

### *Chapter 5. Beast from Water*

Ralph had walked down the mountain after announcing the assembly. Now he was walking along the beach, thinking about the points he wanted to make in the speech. He did not want this meeting to break up in confusion as their assemblies usually did. A chief had to think and be wise. But he realised, "I can't think. Not like Piggy." He had, however, become a specialist in thought and could recognise thought in others. When the assembly finally met, there was an air of gravity and solemnity.

Ralph told them that he summoned the assembly to put things straight. "We decide things but they don't get done." There were innumerable examples like the decision to store fresh water from the stream, the building of shelters, the place for lavatory and above all the tending of the fire. He asked, "How can we ever be rescued except by luck, if we don't keep a fire going?" The smoke is more important than the pig. "We ought to die before we let the fire out." This made the hunters giggle and Ralph was irritated. He then made a very serious announcement. In future there would be only one fire—that on the mountain. If anyone wanted to cook anything he should go up. There should be no more small cooking fires all over the place. This announcement was received with shouts from all sides. But Ralph remained cool and reminded them, "You voted me for chief. Now you do what I say." Finally he mentioned the fear that had spread among them. It was nonsense to fear a beast that did not exist. Jack now snatched the conch from Ralph and spoke of the silly fear of the 'littluns'. He wished a beast would swallow them and it would serve them right. But there was no such beast on the island.

He had moved all over the place and had not met it so far. There could be no big animals in small islands like theirs. Piggy too told them that they need not fear as there could be no beast on the island. But he wanted to hear what the little boys had to say.

One of them, Phil spoke of a dream he had the previous night. He saw some twisty things and woke up. He started calling Ralph out of fear. But then suddenly he saw something big and horrid moving among the trees. Ralph tried to explain it away as his nightmare. But Phil insisted that he was fully awake and it was not a dream. Ralph now asked the assembly if anyone had gone out in the night and Simon stood up. He had been taken short. Thus the beast seen by Phil was discovered. Then there was another littlum, Percival. He was weeping and the others joined him in sympathy. He had seen the beast coming out of the sea. Maurice supported that there were huge animals in the sea. The boys were thoroughly frightened because they were so close to the sea. Someone now mentioned the beast being a ghost. This frightened them all the more because it was already becoming dark. There followed a heated discussion on the ghost and angry words were exchanged between Piggy and Jack. Jack said that he would hunt down the beast. He started chanting their hunting song and the crowd of boys moved away as if in mock hunting. Only Ralph, Piggy and Simon were left on the platform. Piggy wanted Ralph to blow the conch and call them back but Ralph hesitated. He was not sure they would return. He felt dejected and even expressed his desire to give up the leadership. But Piggy and Simon would not allow it because that would mean that Jack would become leader. "He'd have all hunting and no fire." He hated Ralph because he was elected chief and because he had reprimanded him about the fire. Simon agreed with the views of Piggy and asked Ralph to continue as chief. They thought of what the grown-ups would have done in the circumstances. "If only they could get a message to us," cried Ralph desperately.

### *Comment*

Ralph wants to hold a serious meeting in the wake of



serious developments—the ship passing away and the fire being neglected by the hunters. But this meeting also ends up in commotion. For one thing Ralph becomes unpopular with his decision to have only one fire. The purpose in Ralph's mind is to make sure that the fire is kept burning constantly. Jack on the other hand, becomes more popular. He assures them that he will hunt down the pig. He leads the boys out in a mock hunting and Ralph hesitates to summon them back because he is not sure they will return.

Secondly, we find the beast appearing in another form. This time it comes from the sea and it is a frightening situation because they are surrounded by the sea. Fear accentuates among them. Ralph finds himself helpless and in despair he even thinks of giving up the leadership. He wishes for a message from the grown-up world and soon he will get it too.

### Chapter 6 : Beast from Air

Ralph had wished for a sign from the world of grown-ups and the sign came in the night. But the boys were fast asleep and none heard or saw anything. A battle was raging high up in the sky. Though no sound could be heard, there were flashes of light as the guns burst fire. There was a sudden bright explosion and a trail of fire was seen across the sky. An aeroplane had caught fire and a figure dropped down beneath a parachute. It landed on the mountain and got entangled with the rocks and bushes. It was held by the parachute strings in such a way that when the wind blew, the figure lifted its head and peered across the mountain. But when the wind dropped, the figure bowed forward with its head between the knees. It was the dead body of a pilot but the boys would mistake it as the "beast from air."

The twins were on duty at the fire that night. But as usual they had slept and found the fire almost dead. They were frightened of what Ralph would say and hurriedly blew the embers to flame. Eric happened to look across the rock and found something bulging out of the rock. They thought it was the beast and ran for their life. They wakened up Ralph and told what they had seen on the

mountain. The children were chilled with fear and an immediate assembly was summoned. Sam and Eric described their frightening experience and how they had been pursued by the beast. Jack suggested that they should hunt it down. He was ready to set out that very moment. But Ralph pointed out that they had no weapons to face the beast. It would be foolish to approach it with their wooden spears. Piggy was of the opinion that they should remain where they were: "May be the beast won't come near us" But Jack carried the day and they decided to set out for the hunt. But someone had to remain back to protect the littluns. Piggy alone could do nothing and he was frightened that the beast might attack them when they were away. Jack became irritated and disregarding the rule of the conch he shouted at Piggy, "It's time some people knew they've got to keep quiet and leave deciding things to the rest of us." Ralph, however, calmed him down. He was only anxious about the fire which have to be neglected.

There was only one corner of the island where Jack had not been. So they decided to search that place first. They set out along the beach and left Piggy with the little ones. Jack led and Ralph brought up the rear. Simon was walking in front of Ralph. He did not believe the story of the twins. How could there be a beast with claws, which could not reach up with Sumneric. They soon reached the spot and found it was a castle rock. There was a narrow ledge of rock leading to a peak. As chief Ralph decided to go and investigate. Soon Jack too joined him. They saw a sort of half-cave but there was no sign of the beast. It was an ideal spot for a fort. Soon Ralph thought of the fire and wanted to return to the mountain to light it. The boys were enjoying rolling down rocks to the sea. The thunderous plume of spray leapt half-way up the cliff. They were reluctant to leave the place. Roger voiced their desire. "We've got plenty of time." But Ralph was adamant. "We'll go to the mountain," to make smoke. The boys reluctantly retraced their steps and Jack led the way down the rock.

#### Comment

Jack had wished for a sign from the world of the grown-



ups. It comes in the figure of a dead pilot. It is going to make a great revolution in the life of the boys. So for only the littluns had seen the beast but now the twins saw it. Jack alone courageously comes forward with the idea of hunting it down and he carries the day. Thus he becomes a symbol of courage among the boys.

It is true Ralph takes the risk and shows his courage at the castle rock. But his insistence to return to the mountain against the wishes of the majority, makes him unpopular. He is obsessed with the idea of the fire smoke and rescue. He forgets the simple desires of the boys who like to linger there rolling down rocks to the sea. Jack understands that it is an ideal spot for a fortress. Later when he will break away from Ralph, he established his camp here and succeeds to wean away more and more boys.

### *Chapter 7. Shadows and Tall Trees*

They returned from the castle rock along a pig trail. When they reached the area of fruit trees, Ralph sent word to Jack to halt. They were hungry and had their meal of fruit. Ralph was sitting on a rock, thinking of his dirty cloths, overgrown hair and long finger nails. He saw the water all round him and thought of the impossibility of their escape. Suddenly Simon appeared above him, clinging to a rock. He said as if he had read the mind of Ralph, "You'll get back to where you come from." Simon's intuition was working.

Roger showed Jack the droppings of a pig and they followed it. The hunters moved on eager to hunt. Ralph remained alone thinking of home and the joy he had experienced watching the snow flakes fall. He thought of the books he had read. Suddenly he heard the rush of hoofs. A pig was running towards him. He raised his spear and hit it. But it ran away to safety. Jack came up and told him he should have waited a little more. Nevertheless Ralph was thrilled because he had hit the pig and joined the hunters. They surrounded Robert as if he was a pig and started a mock hunt. Everyone enjoyed the fun and they chanted, "Kill the pig! Cut his throat! Bash him in!"

After this they decided to move towards the mountain. It was already late afternoon and Maurice suggested they should get back to Piggy and the 'littluns' before dark. Only then Ralph thought of it and felt it would be better that someone went to inform Piggy that they would return only after dark. Since they could not spare more, the offer of Simon to go alone was accepted. The others moved towards the mountain. But soon evening drew near and Ralph felt it to be better to return to the camp and leave the climbing for the next day. The majority of the boys agreed with the idea because by now, they were completely exhausted. But Jack alone insisted that they should go on. He said decidedly, "I am going up the mountain to look for the beast-now." He turned to Ralph and enquired scornfully, "Coming?" It was a challenge and Ralph accepted it. While the two of them went up, the others returned to the camp. Soon Roger too joined the two. They reached the place where they lighted the fire. It was now completely dark and Ralph felt that they were acting foolishly. The three of them would be able to do nothing against the beast. Jack taunted him and suggested that if he was frightened he could stay back. Ralph in anger told him to go on by himself. Jack did so after some hesitation. He had seen something bulging out of the rock. It was making a 'plop' 'plop' noise. The three of them now moved up cautiously and sure enough there it was where there was a gap in the rock. It looked like a huge ape asleep with its head between its knees. There was a wind now and the creature raised its head and peered at them. It had a smashed up face. Ralph turned and ran, followed by the others. "The mountain was deserted, save for the three abandoned sticks and the thing that bowed."

### *Comment*

The search for the beast ends successfully. But only three of them saw it—Jack, Roger and Ralph. They were the most darling boys and so the reality of the beast is now accepted without doubt. But before that there had developed a difference of opinion. The majority of the boys were exhausted and wanted to return to the shelters and Ralph agreed with them. But Jack insists on climbing there and



then. He wants to accuse Ralph of cowardice. Seeing through his intention, Ralph follows him and finds the beast. The discovery of the beast will cause a great split. The boys would be split into rival camps under Jack and Ralph. Jack would lead them away from civilization and turn them to a tribe of primitives.

Simon alone will discover the truth behind the beast. It is only the dead body of a pilot. But he is able to reveal it to his companions, he is murdered. The truth dies with him. In the mean while we are at the climax of the development of the plot. The beast will dominate the story now onwards. The beast spoken of by the 'littluns' has become a reality even for the bigger boys. The beast gives Jack the opportunity to usurp power and establish his unquestioned dictatorship.

### *Chapter 8. Gift for the Darkness*

Ralph, Jack and Roger told the others what they had seen on the mountain top. Piggy was visibly frightened and was asking Ralph if he was sure of the beast and whether they would be safe down on the beach. Ralph was sure of one thing of that they would not be able to fight a thing of that size. Even Jack and his hunters would be powerless against it. The hunters were after all "Boys armed with sticks." This remark made Jack furious and he blew the conch to summon an assembly. When the boys gathered around the platform, Jack addressed them. He told them about the beast they had seen on the mountain top. "The beast sat up and looked at us." They could not kill it. Ralph had insulted him and his hunters as cowards running away from the "boar and the beast." But Ralph was the real coward. He was like Piggy and he was not a proper chief. "He just give orders and expects people to obey for nothing." Under the changed circumstances he wanted a change in the leadership and asked for a vote to remove Ralph. But no hands went up to support him. In frustration he announced his decision to break away from Ralph. "I'm not going to play any longer. Not with you." Any one who wanted to hunt pigs could join him. He put down the conch, jumped off the platform and walked away along the beach. Ralph called after him to return but he went on. Piggy thought that they could do without Jack. Especially now that

the beast was up in the mountain, there could be no hunting.

Piggy then suggested that they should light a fire on the beach since they could not have it on the mountain because of the beast. Ralph admired him and said that it was a good idea. "Only Piggy could have the intellectual daring to suggest moving the fire from the mountain." Immediately they set on building a fire on the beach between the bathing pool and the platform. Everyone worked to gather fire-wood and they were happy to have the fire near them even in the night. Soon a pyramid of leaves, twigs, branches and logs was built and Piggy himself lighted the fire. The littluns were wildly excited and they danced and sang around the fire. Soon the fire burnt out and the excitement too calmed down. Ralph looked around and found that there were very few biguns left with him. The rest had gone after Jack. Piggy thought they could be happier without them. He wanted to celebrate the occasion and went into the forest with the twins to gather some fruits. When they sat down to have the feast of fruits, Ralph noticed that Simon too was missing. He was climbing the mountain all by himself.

In the meanwhile Jack too was happy with his small group of hunters. He announced that he would be their chief. His word would be the law and he took decisions. They would go for a hunt that very afternoon and hold a feast to draw away more of the biguns from Ralph. They would forget about the beast and perhaps leave a part of their kill as an offering. They went into the refuge of the pigs in the heat of the afternoon. They came upon a sow with her piglets and attacked her with their spears. After a chase the sow fell and the boys set on her and killed her. Jack cut her throat and the hot blood spouted over his hands. They would take the meat along the beach to the castle Rock which would be their camp. But before they left they wanted to leave part of the kill for the beast. Jack cut off the sow's head and planted it on a sharpened stick in the gap of a rock. He said, "This head is for the beast. It is a gift." Soon they moved away with the meat.

Simon who had wandered off by himself was resting in a shade when he witnessed the drama of killing the sow and the gift for darkness. He became afraid thinking that perhaps the beast might come to accept the gift. It



was swarmed with flies and it seemed to tell him "Run away. Go back to the others." The Lord of the Flies hung on his stick and grinned. In Simon's right temple a pulse began to beat on the brain and one of his epileptic fits was coming on. The Lord of the Flies spoke to him, "You are a silly little boy. Why don't you run off and play with the others. There's none to help you except me and I'm the beast. I am part of you?" Simon soon fell to the ground in a fainting fit.

Ralph and Piggy were lying on the sand thinking of the fire and how they could keep up the signal fire. Suddenly there was a shriek and some painted creatures rushed at their fire and carried off half burnt logs. Jack stayed back to announce that they were having a feast of park that night. If they came and joined him they could have meat. He had sown the seed of discord in the camp of Ralph. Several of them were attracted by the meat and the fun of hunting. They wanted to go to the camp of Jack and they went. Finally even Ralph and Piggy went to join the feast.

#### *Comment*

This chapter marks the final rupture between Jack and Ralph. Jack cannot bear the insulting remarks of Ralph about his hunters. He summons an assembly to remove Ralph from leadership. But he does not get any visible support and he goes away all by himself. But his hunters follow him and he is able to organise his camp. Life on the island is not going to be the same. Life under Jack is that of autocracy. There is no election of the leader. He simply announces that he is chief. His word is the law and he takes decisions without inviting opinions from others as Ralph had done through the assemblies. The democratic way of life is thrown overboard and we will soon notice more and more aspects of dictatorship. He uses his clique of hunters to topple the leadership of Ralph. Meat is used as an enticement to draw away more and more boys.

Another thing we notice about Jack is his attempt to take the boys back to primitive life away from civilization. The primitive man in the face of natural calamities, like earthquakes and volcanoes, thunderstorms and avalanches considered them to be the result of the anger of some deity.

The god or goddess had to be appeased through sacrifice and offerings. Thus here we find Jack deciding, "We'll leave some of the kill for it. Then it won't bother, us may be." For Jack the beast becomes a necessity. The boys will stand behind him as long as they have the fear of the beast. Thus we find him leaving the head of the sow they kill as an offering. "This head is for the beast. It's a gift." Soon the hunters will be turned into a tribe of primitives. They will leave civilization for the life of savages and Jack will be their undisputed chief.

Another important development in this chapter is the Lord of the Flies' Scene. For the first time in the novel there is mention of the 'Lord of the Flies.' It is the head of the killed sow swarmed with flies. It tells Simon in his fit, "There's none to help you except me and I'm the beast." Thus the beast and Lord of the Flies are identified with each other. Further it tells him, "I am part of you." The beast or evil is within every man and we cannot escape from it. "Man produces evil as a bee produces honey." From now on Evil plays the dominant role in the novel. It is the rule of Jack, the rule of autocracy and dictatorship and anarchy. The smooth happy life of the boys under the democratic rule of Ralph has ended. They start the evil by stealing fire as Prometheus stole fire from heaven and brought all evils to earth through the anger of Zeus.

#### *Chapter 9. A View to a Death*

The evening came on and the island was darkened by rain clouds. There would be a heavy downpour. The flies blackened their lord and did not bother about the blood rushing out from Simon's nose. Simon's fit had passed into the weariness of sleep. He woke up and found it was already evening. But he walked on and suddenly found a humped thing on a rock. It was also swarmed with flies. The life-like movements of the figure would scare off the flies for a movement. But they would again settle down on it as it bowed forward with the fall of wind. It was the beast spoken of by the twins and Ralph. He understood it was only a dead body entangled on the rock. The parachute strings had given it the life-like movements. He released the strings from the rocks and released it from the wind's



indignity. He wanted to tell his companions the truth. He found that there was no fire by the platform. He, however, noticed a fire farther down the beach. He guessed that they had shifted camp to be farther away from the beast. He walked down in that direction and in spite of his great exhaustion, he staggered on with this sole purpose in mind.

Ralph and Piggy were swimming in the pool. They soon realised that they were alone. Even Bill and the twins had left for the camp of Jack. There was no point in their staying back alone. So Piggy suggested that perhaps they should also go. After all they could have meat and enjoy the fun of being savages. Soon they too set out. When they reached the place the feast was almost over. Jack sat in the centre on a great log. He was painted and garlanded like an idol. There were piles of meat on green leaves by his side. There were also fruits and coconut shells filled with fresh water. The boys were enjoying their meal and talking away. As soon as Ralph and Piggy were sighted, they fell silent. Jack ordered meat for them and they too sat down and ate. He wanted a drink and Henry brought him a coconut shell. He then asked if they had their fill and the boys ate faster. Finally he stood up and the boys gathered round him eagerly. He ordered them to sit down and asked them, "Who is going to join my tribe? I gave you food and my hunters will protect you from the beast." Ralph protested at this move and declared that he was still their chief. They ought to keep the fire going instead of running after food. But Jack taunted, "You ran yourself. Look at that bone in your hands." Ralph went crimson but he still insisted that he was the chief and he had the conch with him. Again, Jack ridiculed him pointing out that he had not got it with him. Besides he reminded the assembly "The conch doesn't count at this end of the island." There seemed to be no support for Ralph and the boys one by one declared that they would join the tribe of Jack. Piggy realising the situation told Ralph to come away.

At this moment there was a thunder and big drops of rain began to fall. Somewhere in the crowd a littlun was heard whining. Ralph now taunted them about their shelters. How would they escape from the downpour. The littluns were running about screaming. Something had to be done immediately and Jack called for their war dance.

He moved to the open space of rock beyond the fire and the boys followed him clamourously. Roger became the pig, grunting and charging. The boys surrounded him with their spears, spits and clubs of firewood. They moved in a circle and started chanting their song: "Kill the beat! Cut his throat! Spill his blood." Even Piggy and Ralph under the treat of the sky, took a place in this demented but partly secure society. The circles went round and round as though repetition would achieve safety of itself. There was thunder and lightning. The littluns screamed and blundered about. One of them broke the ring of the biguns.

The circle now became a horseshoe, and into it a thing was crawling out of the forest. The beast stumbled into the horseshoe. It was Simon and he was crying out something about a dead man on a hill. But none heard him. They thought it was the beast and the sticks fell on him. He struggled forward and fell over the edge of the rock to the sand by the water. The crowd surged after it, leapt on to the beast, screamed, struck, bit, tore. Suddenly there was the heavy downpour and the boys scattered into the forest for shelter. Only the beast lay still, a few yards from the sea and it was a small beast. The wind grew strong and carried up the released parachute and the dead body and dropped them in the sea. The waves beat violently against the shore and washed out the body of Simon to the open sea. Thus there would be no sign of the dead body on the mountain nor any sign of Simon on the shore. The mystery of the beast would still remain unexplained.

### *Comment*

Simon in his dogged determination finds the beast they had feared. It was only the dead body of a pilot entangled in the parachute strings. He feels the urge to reveal the truth to his companions and he staggers to the camp in spite of his weariness. So he reaches the camp, crawling on all fours. He is mistaken for the beast and is beaten to death. His dead body is carried out to the open sea by the waves as also the dead body of the pilot and the parachute. Thus there would be no vestige of the beast. Jack exploits the situation and tells his tribe that the beast cannot be killed. It has escaped once again. For him the beast



becomes a necessity to keep his hold on the boys. He little regrets the murder of Simon. A dictator has scant regards for human life. This is what we realise from Jack's attitude too. But Ralph is having pricks of conscience even though he was not directly involved in the murder.

Jack has established his tribe and he becomes the chief. He disregards the claim of Ralph. He reminds him, "The conch doesn't count at this end of the island." That means the end of regular, ordered democratic way of life. The conch stands for democratic values but now Jack has set up his dictatorship. He can no longer be questioned. He draws away the boys with the lure of meat and a sense of security. This is what every dictator promises—prosperity of the nation and security from external aggression. This is what Hitler promised Germany and this is what Mussolini promised Italy and this is what Jack promises the boys on the island. The boys are won over and they flock around Jack disregarding their erstwhile leader, Ralph and their democratic civilised life. Jack is leading them back to barbarism. He places himself as the idol for them to adore. He has become their god. He sits in their midst garlanded and painted like an idol. He is tightening his grip in every possible way.

### *Chapter 10. The shell and the Glasses*

Only Piggy, Samneric and a few littluns were left with Ralph. All the others had joined Jack. Ralph was thinking of the previous night's incidents. He looked on Simon's death as murder and had great pricks of conscience. Piggy tried to rationalise it: "It was dark. There was that—that bloody dance. There was lightning and thunder and rain—we were scared." It was a pure accident. It was all Simon's fault, crawling like that out of the dark. The twins came with a log of wood for the fire. They had left the dance early but had lost their way.

Things at the camp of Jack were in perfect order. A sentry was posted to guard the place. Thus Roger found himself challenged by Robert. Everyone that entered had to be challenged. In case he did not halt, there was a rock balanced on a lever. If the lever was pulled the rock would crash down on the enemy. Roger admired the scheme of

Jack and admitted, "He's a proper chief." There was more news. Wilfred had been tied up and was going to be beaten up by Jack for some unknown reason. Roger pondered on the possibilities of irresponsible authority. He found Wilfred moaning away in a corner. Jack naked and painted to the waist was giving directions. He cautioned the guard against Ralph and party though there was no obvious reason for them to break in. He could only say, "They try to spoil things we do." Then he spoke of the beast—how he had crawled in, disguised. They had not killed it. "No! How could we kill it?" So they had to be careful and leave the mountain alone. They had better keep on the right side of him to be safe. But then Bill asked him what they would do about the fire. It was decided that Maurice, Roger and Jack would raid the camp again, they would do their dance again.

In the meanwhile Ralph was trying to light a fire. The wood was damp and it was the third time that he had tried. He did not want another night without fire. For the first time he had admitted the double function of the fire—as a signal and as a source of warmth and comfort. The fire glowed and they brought more wood. Then they went to gather fruits for their meal. When they returned the sun was already setting. But they found the fire was dying out and they could not get fire-wood anymore in the dark. So finally Ralph allowed the fire to die out that night. Soon they went off to sleep and all the four bigger boys occupied the same shelter.

Ralph thought of his home and his native town. He heard a noise and found the twins fighting each other in sleep. Soon he too was fast asleep. Suddenly Piggy called him. There was something moving outside. It had come—the beast. A voice called Piggy. Piggy was frightened out of his wits. He had his attack of asthma and fell over. Ralph rolled away from him. Soon the attackers burst in and Ralph hit out. There seemed to be a dozen of them hitting, biting and scratching. The shelter collapsed in the melee and the attackers withdrew. Ralph knew they were Jack and his hunters. Piggy thought they had come for the conch but it was safe on the platform. They had come for the Specs of Piggy and this would lead to a real crisis.



*the meal provider* Comment

*changed into an evil planner*

We find the picture of Jack as a director. He has seen to the protection of his camp. A sentry is posted and a rock is balanced on a lever. No enemy can steal on them unawares. He has tied up and beaten Wilfrid for some unknown reason. The dictator will brook no opposition. We find Roger pondering on the possibilities of irresponsible authority. The dictator is responsible to no one. He does things as he pleases. We find Jack cautioning his supporters against Ralph and party for no obvious reason. The dictator often harps on an external aggression to strengthen his hold on the suppressed people. Similarly he holds up the fetish of the beast. The existence of the beast is a necessity for him. Thus he does not admit the beast has been killed. They did not see the dead body. That means the beast has escaped. The boys must be kept in constant fear. Then only they will feel the need of the protection he promises them. Again the dictator keeps the nation in a tension of war. So we find Jack leading his small group to skirmish the camp of Ralph. He snatches away by force the Specs of Piggy who would be quite helpless without his glasses. But a dictator has no feelings for others.

*leader changed into a dictator*

Ralph had always looked on the fire as a source of their escape from the island. But now that he is deserted by most of the boys, he realises the double function of the fire. The fire will also be a hearth and a comfort until they slept. But then the means of getting the fire, is taken away by his enemies. This had to be questioned. They want to get their rights established. But little do they realise that they are dealing with a dictator who has no respect for the rights of individuals.

### Chapter 11. Castle Rock

Early next morning Ralph and his companions were trying to blow the fire to life. But there was no hope and they gave it up in despair. Ralph blew the conch and few littluns came out of the shelters. They held an assembly though they were so few. Ralph once more repeated his usual words about the fire—how they could not be rescued without the fire. Once Jack had neglected the fire and gone

*from beasts to enemies*  
 hunting. Now he had stolen it and made it impossible for them to keep up the signal fire. Piggy wanted that they should go to ask Jack to return his glasses. He might be stronger but he had to do it because 'what's right's right.' So they decided to set out for the camp of Jack, the Castle Rock. They went as clean as they could. They wanted to show that they were civilized as opposed to the savage life led by Jack.

They had their food of fruits and set out, Ralph leading and Piggy bringing up the rear. Piggy carried the conch. When they reached the place, they were challenged by the guard. Ralph blew the conch and the savages appeared and all of them were painted. He wanted to know where Jack was. Robert told him that Jack had gone out hunting and they were not to let them in. Just then Jack came and his hunters were carrying a headless pig. He told Ralph to go away and keep to his end of the island. Ralph said that he should return Piggy's specs. He was quite helpless without them. There was no need to steal them because they could have the fire whenever they needed. Jack immediately became furious because he was accused as a thief. He rushed at Ralph with his spear and a fight ensued between the two. When they separated for a moment, Piggy reminded Ralph why they had come—to ask for his specs. Ralph then announced that they should return Piggy's specs because he could not see without them. But the savages only giggled and he this unnerved Ralph. Then he spoke of the fire and the savages burst into laughter. A gust of rage shook Ralph and he called them a pack of painted fools. The twins were between the savages and Jack. He ordered them to be grabbed and tied up. He expected Ralph to make an attempt to rescue them. Ralph broke out in anger. "You're a beast and a swine and a bloody, bloody thief." Both of them charged at each other and the flight was resumed.

Piggy held up the conch and told them that they were acting like a crowd of kids. He asked them "Which is better—to be a pack of painted niggers like you are or to be sensible like Ralph is." But the savages broke into a great clamour. Ralph felt that stones were being hurled at him. Jack was yelling and there would be a charge. Roger was pulling at the lever on which was balanced the huge rock. Ralph heard



the rock and threw himself flat on the ground. It flew over and struck Piggy a glancing blow. The conch exploded into a thousand pieces. Piggy fell forty feet and landed on his back across the square red rock in the sea. "His head opened and stuff came out and turned red." This was the tragic end of Piggy. When the waves rolled back, the body of Piggy was gone too. Ralph turned and fled. He felt spears flying around him. He was being pursued. But soon the savages returned to their camp. Jack prodded the twins with his spear. He wanted them also to join them. Sam was yelling out of pain. Soon Roger advanced upon them as on wielding a nameless authority saying, "That's not the way."

### *Comment*

Ralph makes a last attempt to revive reason but fails. He goes to the camp of Jack to restore back the specs of Piggy. But that only ends up in a flight and the tragic death of Piggy. We find Ralph and party going as clean as they could. They want to show that they are different from the savages. The glasses of Piggy should be returned because what's right's right. But of course Jack is in no mood to see reason. He tells Ralph to get back to his end of the island.

The fight between the two leaders signify the struggle between democracy and dictatorship. The world had recently witnessed such a monstrous struggle between totalitarianism and democracy. Totalitarianism had its initial successes as here too Jack wins for the moment. The twins are made captives and Ralph is unable to rescue them. Piggy, the symbol of intelligence and reason, is mercilessly murdered and the conch shattered to a thousand pieces. The conch was the symbol of ordered life and democratic ways. With the smashing of the conch, the dictatorship of Jack is firmly established. Ralph has no choice but run for life like the historic evacuation of Dunkirk. The followers of Jack pursue him for a while but return to the camp to torture the twins and force them to join the tribe. They have no choice but to succumb. They realise Roger is worse than Jack. He seems to wield a nameless authority.

### *Chapter 12. Cry of the Hunters*

When his pursuers returned to the camp, Ralph lay down

in a covert wondering about his wounds. He had a wound over his right ribs where the spear had pierced him. He was now all alone. Piggy was dead and the twins were made captives. As the evening advanced he was filled with fear. He needed human company and he moved towards the Castle Rock. He found Robert on guard. Behind him was rising a column of smoke and he knew they were busy with the pig. Someone came up and gave Robert a piece of pork. They had already started their feast. So he knew he would be safe for the time being. He argued within himself that perhaps they would leave him alone. But he thought of the death of Simon and Piggy. He shuddered to himself: "These savages would go further and further." He moved towards the beach and had his meal of fruits. He could not remain alone in the shelters and almost unconsciously he retraced his steps to the Castle Rock. Suddenly he saw the skull of a pig on a tick. "The skull regarded Ralph like one who knows all the answers and won't tell." He was filled with fear and rage. He hit at it with his first and broke it to pieces.

When night came Ralph was in front of the castle Rock. He was tired but he could not sleep for fear of the tribe. He knew that he was an outcast. He heard the savages having their dance, "Kill the beast! Cut his throat! Spill his blood!" The twins were on guard and he felt relieved. They had become part of the tribe. There was now no chance of rescuing them and building up an outlaw tribe. He reached close to them and whispered he had come to see them. They warned him to leave the place immediately. The next day the tribe was planning to hunt him down like a pig. Someone was now coming up from the tribe and Ralph had to retire in haste. But before he left he told the twins that he would be hiding in the thicket close to the Castle Rock. Perhaps they would not look so close. They should keep the hunters away from the spot. Sam gave him a chunk of meat and he moved away hastily. But he could hear cries of pain from Samneric. Perhaps Roger had come with a 'stick sharpened at both ends.'

Ralph crawled himself into the thicket and soon fell off to sleep. He woke up hearing the shouts of the savages searching for him. He wriggled deeper into the fears and the hunt seemed to move farther away. But suddenly he



heard a voice close to where he was hiding. It was Jack questioning the twins. Roger was also present. They were being tortured to reveal the place he was hiding in. Soon the voices moved away to the cliff and he heard them heave a huge rock. It crashed onto the thicket and he heard them cheering. Soon a second rock came, tearing away the bushes and creepers but fortunately it had not hit his spot. Someone now was moving up through the thicket and Ralph hit out with his sharpened stick and the savage withdrew in pain. It was Jack. Since it would be impossible to reach him, they decided to smoke him out. They set fire to the thicket and soon Ralph was choked with the smoke. He could not remain there any longer. He rushed out towards the forest and hit down a savage he found. He ran along a pig-run and the whole tribe was now after him.

He knew that his end had come. He had only very few choices left. He could climb a tree but that would be putting all his eggs into one basket. If he was discovered there would be no chance of escape. He could break the cordon and rush back. But then the cordon would turn and pursue him again. The third choice before him was to hide and in case he was discovered he could flee again. He heard the signal of the pursuers approaching nearer. He ran on and found an ideal place to hide. He crept into the bushes and kept quiet. Soon he heard someone close by. He was looking into his face. He knew he was discovered. The fire too was rolling up. He could feel the heat. The fools had set fire to the whole island. He had no time to lose. He rushed out hitting down the savage and fled madly towards the beach. He was hotly pursued. Suddenly he fell over a root. He put up his arm to ward off the blow, he felt coming. He staggered to his feet crying for mercy. But to his great surprise he was looking into the face of a British naval officer. He could not believe his eyes.

The officer asked him if there were any grown-ups. Ralph answered that there was no one. Soon the painted boys appeared and they were armed with sharpened sticks. The officer thought they were having a game. He explained that he had seen their smoke and had come to investigate. Ralph answered his question and said that two of them were killed and he was the boss. Jack took a step forward but said nothing. The officer seeing their dirty appearance

reprimanded them. "I should have thought that a pack of British boys—would have been able to put up a better show..." Ralph replied that it was like that at first. "Jolly good show. Like the Coral Island." He thought of the strange glamour that had once invested the beaches. But now the island was scorched up—Simon was dead—Piggy was murdered—Jack had turned them to savages. He burst into tears and the boys gathered round him also wept as if in sympathy. Ralph wept for the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart and the fall through the air of the true, wise friend called Piggy. The officer was moved and a little embarrassed. He gave them time to pull themselves together before taking them to the cruiser in the distance.

#### Comment

The final chapter of the novel ends up in joy for all. The boys are finally rescued by a passing ship and their life of loneliness ends. They get back to the civilization they had left. But in the meanwhile several things happen.

We find Ralph going back to the Castle Rock. He cannot live alone. He needs the company of his companions. Man is a social being and he has to live in the society he finds himself even if he does not like it. Ralph finds the skull of the pig and smashes it to pieces. It was the fetish of fear and the source of evil. With its destruction their safety comes closer. In the mean while he still has to endure much. He finds out from the twins who were on guard that he is going to be hunted down. Torture makes the twins reveal his hide out. But the savages cannot get at him and they set fire to the thicket. The fire spreads and the whole island is ablaze. They cause their own destruction because the fruit trees and even the pigs will be burnt out. But fortunately for them the fire and smoke attract a passing ship. The naval officer comes to rescue them and take them home. The fire does its double function of destruction and salvation.

The naval officer is ashamed of their appearance and reprimands them. A pack of British boys should have behaved better. This is the message that Golding seems to give through the novel. Whatever be the circumstances in which a British subject finds himself, he should hold up



his traditions, his civilization and not fall into barbarism as the boys under Jack does. Ralph alone tries to hold up his beliefs in human values and in civilization. But he is isolated and hunted down. So he weeps for the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart and the fall through the air of the true, wise friend called Piggy. Only now the boys regret their action. They should have continued to put the jolly good show, "Like the Coral Island." The mention of the coral Island shows Golding's obligation to Ballantyne's novel for the framework of this novel "*Lord of the Flies*."



were relieved from duty they came for a swim and walked through the castles built by the little boys. Percival started to protest and Roger trotted away. They now stopped their play and Henry wandered off to sit at the edge of the pool. Roger followed him and hiding behind a palm, threw stones to splash water on Henry. But he never dared to throw at Henry because there was the taboo of the old life. "Round the squatting child was the protection of parents and school and policemen and the law."

Roger soon heard himself addressed. It was Jack who was standing under a tree about ten yards away. There were also Bill, Sam and Eric. Jack had with him two large leaves, one containing white clay and the other red. There was also a stick of charcoal. He soon started to paint himself with the clay. He explained, "They don't smell me. They see me." The only way to approach close to the pigs was to paint himself and he wished for some green clay too to complete his camouflage. "The mask was a thing on its own, behind which Jack hid, liberated from shame and self-consciousness." He compelled the twins too to join his hunting party. They were supposed to be on duty at the fire. But the mask compelled them.

Ralph was having a swim in the pool when he noticed a spiral of smoke out in the horizon. He knew for certain that it was a ship. He was excited. Their rescue was close at hand. He immediately thought of the signal fire and rushed to the mountain top to make sure. Some of the other boys too had seen the smoke and followed Ralph, Piggy, alone could not understand the reason for this commotion because he was unable to see the smoke. But he too struggled up after the others. Ralph reached the top to find that the fire had been out for hours. He raved in fury and helplessness. His attempt to revive the fire was in vain and the ship was moving farther and farther away. He could only stand there and shout in despair, "Come back! Come back."

Ralph now noticed a procession moving towards them. It was Jack and his hunters. They were chanting a song and a pig was swimming from a pole. They were talking in great excitement about the way they hunted down the pig. Ralph was visibly annoyed and he spoke gravely, "You let the fire out." Jack could not understand Ralph's mood

and was irritated by the irrelevance of his w. However he explained that even the twins who were supposed to be on duty at the fire, were needed to complete the ring. The fire could be lighted again. Then Ralph told him how a ship had passed and they lost their opportunity for rescue. It was all because of Jack's eagerness for hunting. Even Piggy now turned against Jack and he flew into a rage and hit Piggy on head and stomach. His spectacles flew off and a lens was broken. But soon he calmed down and apologised about the fire. This put him in the right and Ralph obscurely in the wrong. The hunters admired him for his generous apology. But Ralph considered it a dirty verbal trick. "Anger instead of decency passed his throat." He asserted his leadership and ordered to light the fire. The positive action of gathering fire wood relieved the tension. The pig was roasted over the fire and they had a glorious meal of pork. They soon started talking excitedly about the hunt and chanted their song of triumph, "Kill the pig, cut her throat, Bash her in." When the noise died down, Ralph announced that he was going to hold an assembly and walked down the mountain, all by himself.

### *Comment*

In the chapter we get some serious developments. First of all there is mention of the 'littluns' and their way of life.

There is a good relationship between the bigger boys and the smaller ones. We find Roger having fun with Henry. The little ones are left free to enjoy their own life without interference.

Another thing is the passion of Jack. Hunting has become a passion for him and he is ready to go to any extent to succeed. He paints himself so that the pigs might not notice him. He weans away even the twins who were supposed to be on duty at the fire. For him the fire is only secondary. He succeeds to kill a pig but he caused the neglect of the fire and consequently they lost their golden opportunity to be rescued. The mask compelled them. It is the mask that people put on, that often compels them to actions they otherwise would not do.

Ralph naturally becomes furious because the ship passed their island without noticing them. It was all