

CHAPTER-2

NELSON MANDELA-A LONG WALK TO FREEDOM

DETAILED SUMMARY

1. **First Non-Racial Government:** It was the 10th of May, 1994. The day was bright and clear. The inauguration ceremony of the first non-racial government was held at the lovely amphitheatre in the Union Buildings in Pretoria. It was the largest gathering of international leaders on South African soil. Politicians and dignitaries from more than 140 countries attended the ceremony. First of all Mr. de Klerk was sworn-in as second Deputy President. Then Thabo Mbeki was sworn-in as the first Deputy President. Then came Mandela's turn. He was sworn-in as the first black President of South Africa.
2. **Mandela's speech:** Mandela spoke how for decades South Africa was the seat of white supremacy. Now the presence of all people confer glory and hope to newborn liberty. The blacks who were considered as outlaws not so long ago were hosting the nations of the world on their soil. Their victory over 'apartheid' was a common victory for justice, peace and human dignity. Political freedom had been won. Now they would work hard to liberate their people from the bondage of poverty, deprivation and diseases. Never would South Africa again face the oppression of one by another.
3. **impressive Display of jets:** Then there was a spectacular display of jets. South African jets and helicopters roared in perfect formation over them in the sky. It was also a demonstration of the military's loyalty to democracy and to the new government. Then two national anthems were played.
4. **The sense of History:** Nelson Mandela was overwhelmed with a sense of history. A few years after the Anglo-Boer war, apartheid was introduced in South Africa. The society based on racial-discrimination was the harshest and most inhuman society in the world. Now a new system based on the equality of all men regardless of their colour and race has replaced the old and cruel system.
5. **The policy of Apartheid:** Apartheid created a deep and lasting wound in the people. The decades of exploitation and oppression of the black produced heroes like Tambo's, Siklus and others. These black heroes were men of extraordinary courage, wisdom and generosity. The greatest wealth of South Africa was not in its minerals and diamonds but in men of such great character.
6. **The struggle of Comrades:** Nelson Mandela learnt the meaning of courage from such brave comrades. Courage is the victory over fear. These comrades were ready to risk and sacrifice their lives for an idea—the idea of freedom and equality. Even in the darkest prisons their hopes and faith were not broken. They never allowed the flame of struggle to be extinguished.
7. **Twin Responsibilities:** Nelson Mandela thought that every man has twin obligations. He has a duty towards his wife and children and an obligation to his people and country. In South Africa, it was impossible for blacks like him to fulfil both those obligations. If any black tried to live like a free human being, he was punished and isolated. He was forced to live an isolated life — away from his family. He was forced to live a life of rebellion and secrecy.
8. **Joining the African National Congress:** Mandela realised that not only was he deprived of freedom but his brothers and sisters were also deprived of freedom. That was why he joined the African National Congress. It was his desire for the freedom of his people and their self-respect that totally transformed him from a weak young man to a bold one. A law-abiding lawyer was forced to become an outlaw. He realised that

freedom is indivisible. He knew the oppressed must be liberated. The oppressed and the oppressor alike are robbed of their humanity. Both of them must be liberated.

Main Points of the Story

- The inauguration ceremony of the first non-racial government was held in the Union Buildings in Pretoria.
- Politicians and dignitaries from more than 140 countries attended the ceremony.
- Nelson Mandela was then sworn-in as the President of the Republic of South Africa.
- For decades South Africa had been the seat for white supremacy.
- The blacks were considered as outlaws.
- Their victory over 'apartheid' was a common victory for justice, peace and freedom.
- Nelson Mandela was overwhelmed with a sense of history.
- The society based on racial discrimination was the harshest and most inhuman society in the world.
- The decades of oppression and exploitation of the blacks produced heroes like Tambo, Sisulu and others in South Africa.
- Mandela learned the meaning of courage from such brave comrades who were ready to sacrifice their lives for the freedom of their people.
- Every man has twin responsibilities —responsibilities towards his family and for his people and country.
- If any black tried to live like a free human being, he was punished and isolated from his family and community.
- Mandela realised that not only he but his brothers and sisters were deprived of freedom.
- His desire for the freedom and dignity of his people made him a rebel.
- He realised that freedom is indivisible.

Character Sketch:- Nelson Mandela

Nelson Mandela: Nelson Mandela was the tallest of all the black heroes who waged a relentless fight against the racial-regime in South Africa. He suffered untold sufferings and tortures in prison but led the country to install the first democratically elected government in South Africa.

He is grateful in acknowledging the unimaginable sacrifices of thousands of black heroes for the freedom of their people.

He had a wider vision of humanity. For him, freedom was comprehensive and couldn't be divided.