



THEMES OF LIFE OF PI 2

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Storytelling *'I have a story that will make you believe in God'*

At the beginning of novel the author asks of fiction is not *'the selective transforming of reality?'* *The twisting of it to bring out its essence?'*

- This means that even stories **contain some truth**
- Conversely at the end of the novel, Pi says that even the **truth is a story** because its **someone else's narrative**
 - Their **version** of the truth
 - Storytelling is a **integral part of life**
- Pi: Storytelling is **key to his survival**
 - He reminds himself of the **religious stories** he as read and **makes ones up**
 - The **manual recommends 'yarn spinning'** as a way to pass time
 - Stories not only keep Pi **distracted** but enable him to **cope with the trauma** he endures and the inner **turmoil he experiences** doing **awful** things to survive
- When the Japanese police officers do not believe his story he gives them **one without animals**
 - This is bland and unsurprising
 - He tells them what they want and **they are horrified**
- He asks them which one do they prefer
 - They prefer the **ones with animals**
 - Pi responds *'Thank you. And so it goes with God.'*
 - Novel suggests that we as readers choose **which story we prefer**
 - Implies our lives are **stories that we choose ourselves**
 - We choose **a life with God or without**
 - **The novel advocates that a life with God and with love and faith that go with this belief is richer and better**

Madness

Suffering drives us to **extremes**

- We are capable of doing things that others would consider **insane**
- Madness is a way to **ensure survival**

On the lifeboat

- Pi equates his **experiences to madness**
- **Extreme thirst** → Enough to make him go **mad**
- When he catches a fish, has a **staredown** with a tiger and gets the **fish**
- His **extreme hunger** made him **eat some of the dead Frenchman**

Pi's version of his time at sea → can be seen as **crazy**

- **HE LIVED WITH A WHOLE TIGER AND STILL TAMED HIM!**
- This story is Pi's way of keeping himself **alive** by **protecting himself** from the truth
 - Inventing the imaginative story and creating the character of Richard Parker is a way to **cope with solitude**
 - Pi **'hears'** Richard Parker speaking to him and concludes **he has gone mad**

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