

Life of pi: plot summary



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

I have a story that will make you believe in God. (Yann Martel, x) That's how the epic tale of Life of Pi begins. Our protagonist, Piscine Molitor Patel, grew up in Pondicherry, India.

He gives himself the nickname Pi, because of some cruel remarks by his classmates. At the age of fifteen, Pi decides to adopt Christianity and Islam, along with already practicing Hinduism. Bapu Gandhi said ' All religions are true.' I just want to love God. (Martel, 68) Throughout his whole life, Pi follow this precedent. In India, his family owned a zoo, where Pi learned very early on that all animals are dangerous. Starting at the top with the biggest of tigers, and the smallest of guinea pigs. ... to grab a wild guinea pig with your bare hands would be like taking hold of a knife by the blade. (Martel, 39) As a result of a government catastrophe, at age sixteen, Pi and his family decide to move to Canada for a better life. Together they board the Tsimtsum along with most of the zoo's animals to sell in the Americas. After a few days on the sea, Pi wakes to what he thinks may have been an explosion and walks out to the deck to find the Tsimtsum has been caught in a storm. Somehow, animals start flowing onto the deck, and everything quickly becomes chaos. Pi is the only human to make it onto a lifeboat and survive the sinking of the ship.

Stranded and alone, he is stuck with four other survivors: a hyena, a zebra, an orangutan, and Richard Parker the tiger. While at sea, Pi faces many challenges, tragedies, and miracles. Only the reader can really decide how it all ends. Characterization of the Protagonist In Yann Martel's Life of Pi, we meet protagonist Piscine Patel, also known as Pi. The story is told by a future version of Pi, who is now middle-aged and shy. In contrast to where we last

saw him, he has a family and lives a happy life in Canada. As a teenager, Pi enjoys reading because of his influential mother and in school, he focuses on learning as much as he can about religion and zoology. If you remember, at the age of fifteen, Pi decides to adopt Christianity and Islam, along with already practicing Hinduism. He realizes these religions all share a common base: a belief in a loving higher power. In India, his father owned a zoo, which sparked his interest in zoology. But when the *Tsimtsum* sinks and Pi are stranded at sea for 227 days, his whole world is turned upside down. He's lost his family, home, and is left to question his values. No longer has he the luxury of being a vegetarian or someone to care for him. And not only that, but he is stranded with one of the most ferocious creatures to walk among us, a 450-pound Bengal tiger. With all hope lost, it's Pi's belief in God that inspires him to stay alive.

At that point, he realizes he has been given a miracle: God is with him. He quickly finds a survival guide and emergency provisions in a lockbox under one of the seats. He masters fishing and gathering fresh water. Miraculously, he manages to train his tiger stowaway, Richard Parker. And even through the hardship, he continues to pray every day. Analysis of Plot & Conflict In my opinion, Yann Martel's, *Life of Pi* is equally engaging, exciting, and interesting. Although the story is told to seem like it is true, it is only fantasy. Martel has a talent for writing realistically while maintaining the ability to get his point across. Pi faces many challenges in this fabrication, including all three types of conflict. He struggles against himself when deciding what is more important: his life or staying true to tradition. Tears flowing down my cheeks, I egged myself on until I heard a cracking sound The flying fish was

dead I was now a killer. (Yann Martel, 183) This quote describes how Pi chose to kill this fish for food, even though it went against what he believed. He was forced to go on like this throughout the tale because he had no vegetarian option. At a young age, he battles society when he chooses to be apart of more than one religion: Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam. Pi chooses this lifestyle because he discovered they all share a common belief in a loving higher power. He also quotes Gandhi when he says, Bapu Gandhi said ' All religions are true.' I just want to love God. (Martel, 68)

His society, as do most, frown upon believing in more than one religion, they have their differences, and it is the person's job to choose the best. Finally, throughout most of the story, Pi scuffles with nature as he withstands the harsh conditions of the sea in order to survive. Through storms and infection, radiation and hunger, Pi perseveres. Another important nature factor includes being under the watchful eye of a tiger the entirety of his strandedness. True or not, this fantasy proves to be a groundbreaker, as the narrator perseveres with God. Identification of Theme Two themes that stuck out to me in the Life of Pi where the will to live, and the basis of religious belief, as one may put it. The topic of life and religion reoccur again and again throughout the tale, and so it only makes sense for these to be two main themes. The first theme I brought up was, the will to live. Yann Martel wants to show us how far we, and other animals, will go to survive. Tears flowing down my cheeks, I egged myself on until I heard a cracking sound The flying fish was dead I was now a killer. (Yann Martel, 183) Here we see how Pi abandons his luxury of vegetarianism in order to avoid starvation. ' You just ate a piece!... He's your own kind!... He ate another strip. (Martel,

308) In Pi's human version of his story, he describes how the Frenchman turned to cannibalism to survive, a shameful act that shows how some of us will cross the line of survival. At the end of the novel, when Pi raises the possibility that he represents Richard Parker, the reader must decide what kind of lengths should be taken in a life-or-death situation.

The novel begins with, I have a story that will make you believe in God. (Martel, x) Making a reasonable theme, the basis of religious belief. It is said that Pi is a follower of three religions, Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam, Pi enjoys the similarities between beliefs. Remarkably though, Pi admires atheists. He [Mr. Kumar] became my favorite teacher at It was my first clue that atheists are my brothers and sisters of a different faith Like me, they go as far as the legs of reason will carry them (Martel, 28) To him, it is important to believe in something, and atheists believe in the absence of God. However, It is not atheists who get stuck in my craw, but agnostics To choose doubt as a philosophy of life is akin to choosing immobility as a means of transportation. (Martel, 28) Pi sees agnostics as lacking imagination, they claim it is impossible to know either way. Final Recommendations In Yann Martel's Life of Pi, we follow young Piscine Patel, or Pi, on his unique journey across the sea, alone minus a 450-pound, ferocious Bengal tiger. I recommend Life of Pi to anyone who has the stomach for it.

This book does contain some graphic scenes such as, The zebra was being eaten alive from the inside. (Yann Martel, 125) With descriptions only getting worse, yet necessary. In addition to that, this book is somewhat complex and may be harder for younger readers to comprehend. Otherwise, this book is

<https://assignbuster.com/life-of-pi-plot-summary/>

five-star. This fantastical tale makes you think about the world around you, from the nature of religion to man's will to live. It is inspirational, and the ending will leave you satisfied, though there is a significant decision the reader needs to make. Overall, most people will find this a thrilling tale, and everyone should add it to their must-read list.