

# Of white hairs and cricket

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



“ A Horse and Two Goats” is a short story written by R. K. Narayan, from India. Basically, the story is about two individuals, an American and an Indian, trying to converse and communicate, but they can not seem to understand each other because of the lack of knowledge in the other’s language and culture. The story passes a very short time, perhaps a half an hour. As it is revealed in the very beginning of the story, it takes place in a very small village called Kiritam, which is only represented by a tiny dot on the local survey map.

The narration of the story goes chronologically, in a third-person omniscient view, with the main characters being an American tourist and an old Indian man. Both of the characters seem a little bit ignorant and ethnocentric, as none of them have competent background knowledge of the other’s culture and language. The fact that they can not understand each other can be looked upon as the main conflict.

However, by what is told, it seems like if the American should know more about Indian culture, than what the old man should know about the western ways. This is because the American is a wealthy person, probably a businessman, from New York, who has had a lifelong dream of visiting and seeing India. Somebody like this should probably had more cultural knowledge than what is shown. Along with this, he shows lack of respect when he sees a statue he finds to his liking, and wants it in his possession at once. He thinks he can just purchase it from the old man, without considering what the statue means for him or the native people. This way, the American is presented as a typical wealthy western person, who is quite materialistic and

thinks that money solves all problems. What can be considered as odd, and perhaps just another example of western ignorance, is that the American naturally assumes that because the old man stands beside the statute, he owns it.