## Bond Of love

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**Introduction**

The story highlights the emotional bond between human beings and animals. The narrator’s wife shares affection with a wild bear and they get attached to each other shows that animals have feelings and reciprocate to love with warmth and affection.

## Summary

In the story, the narrator highlights the emotional bond shared by his wife and their pet bear Bruno. He got the baby bear in an accident and presented it to his wife. She named the bear ‘Bruno’ and treated it like a baby. The bear was fed milk with a bottle and later it started eating different food items. He enjoyed eating and drinking everything and anything. Bruno was attached to everyone including their tenant’s children and their pet Alsatian dogs. It would play, run around the house and even sleep in their bed.
One day, accidentally, it ate a poison - Barium carbonate which had been kept in the library to kill mice and rats. Bruno was under a fit of paralysis and was taken to a veterinary doctor. He was injected twice and finally, revived. After a while, Bruno resumed eating normally. In another incident, he drank a gallon of old engine oil which the narrator had kept to fight a termite attack. This did not have any ill - effect on Bruno.
As days passed, Bruno grew bigger but remained as sweet and playful. The narrator’s wife changed his name to ‘Baba’ which was a Hindustani word for ‘a small boy’. He had learned a few tricks too. When commanded ‘Baba, wrestle’ or ‘Baba, box’, he would tackle and overpower the person. When ordered ‘Baba, hold gun’ he would point a stick at the person. When asked ‘Baba, where’s baby?’ he would take out the piece of wood and would cradle it affectionately like a baby. As he was big now, he had to be chained because he could harm the tenant’s children.
The narrator, his son and their friends advised the narrator’s wife to send Baba to a zoo as he was too big to be kept as a pet. She gave in and finally, after taking consent from the zoo incharge, they packed Baba in a cage and sent him to the zoo at Mysore. Everyone missed him but felt relieved as it was not comfortable to keep him at home. The narrator’s wife missed Baba immensely. She cried and worried about him. She wrote letters to the zoo incharge to ask about Baba’s well - being. They replied that Baba was fine but did not eat and remained sad much like her. She would ask her friends visiting Mysore to visit Baba. Everyone said that he was sad and appeared thin. After three months had passed, the narrator’s wife convinced him to take her to meet Baba. Everyone had predicted that the bear would not recognize her but she had not even reached the cage when Baba recognised her. He stood on his two paws and was delighted to see her. She petted Baba and fed him his favourite food. She spent three hours there until the visiting hours ended and left teary - eyed. She requested the zoo incharge to allow them to take Baba back for which they had to take permission from the Superintendent in Bangalore. As they got the required permission, Baba was put in a cage, the cage kept on top of their car and Baba was brought back home.
They got a special island made for Baba to live on. It was surrounded by a deep dry pit. Baba was provided with his belongings, a box to sleep in, straw to keep him warm, his stick and piece of wood to play with.
The narrator’s wife would visit Baba on the island by swinging on a rope tied to a mango tree. She would make the big bear sit in her lap for hours and would pat him affectionately.

**1) `Animals also feel the pleasure of love and the pain of separation.’ Make a presentation by giving examples from your own experience.**

It is true that animals also feel the pleasure of love and the pain of separation. I can prove this point by mentioning, the experiences from my life. Last summer vacation I visited the house of my Nanaji. He lives in a village near Bhiwani. He is a farmer and has many cows. One of the cows is Lakshmi. It is an old cow. All the family members love it very much. I too started loving it.

One day some animal traders came to my Nanaji’s house. He sold the cow Lakshmi to them. They were taking the cow, but it would not go- They took it forcibly. But when it reached its new destination it was very sad. It felt the pain of separation from the house of my Nanaji. It refused to take food and drink water and kept weeping continuously to four days. The people in that family could not bear this pain of the cow. They loaded it in a tractor-trolley and drove it back to my Nanaji’s house. As soon as the cow got down the trolley, its eyes gleamed. It was happy to be reunited. It drank water and ate grass from the hands of my Nanaji. I was so much impressed by watching all this. My Nanaji repaid their amount and kept the cow back.

**2) Pets have unique care and handling requirements and should only be kept by those with the commitment to understand and meet their needs. Give your argument in support of or against this statement.**

**Ans.** Pets have the same understanding of love and pain as human beings have. If we have any problem, we can express it to others very easily by speaking but if the animals have any such trouble, they can’t express themselves so easily because they can’t speak. We can understand their love and pain through their expression.

The pets should be kept only by those who have a commitment to understand and meet the needs of animals. If the person having pets is unable to understand the behaviour of his pets, their life becomes very troublesome. They deserve the same love and attention as we do to our dear ones.

There must be legal provisions to ban the cruelties on pets and these legal provisions must be put into practice strictly. If we are kind and noble to our pets it will be a great service to Almighty God because all these creatures are His creation.

OR

There is an on-going debate on whether snake charmers should continue in their profession. You can get some idea about the debate from the newspaper clipping (The Hindu, 16 June 2004) given below. Read it, discuss in pairs or groups, and write either for or against the profession of snake charmers.