**Blog Story**

**Improve Reading Skills of English**

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Story - True Friends – A tale from Hitopadesha:

Article Link :

[**https://storibuzz.in/true-friends-a-tale-from-hitopadesha/**](https://storibuzz.in/true-friends-a-tale-from-hitopadesha/)

Long ago, in the forests of Dandakaranya, there lived a deer named Hiran and a crow named Kakah who were thick friends. They used to meet every day and spend happy times together.

Once, a wily jackal by name, Shrugala, chanced to see the deer when he was grazing around.

“What a healthy deer he is!” thought Shrugala. “He would make a superb meal for me!” The very thought of relishing the deer’s flesh made him drool. But he was very greedy and so thought that he would make the deer fatter before he made him his prey. So he went and tried to befriend the deer.

“Hello Deer!” he called out. Hiran was surprised to see a jackal calling out to him with a smile on his face and so raised his head. Shrugala came nearer. “I want to be your friend. My name is Shrugala”.

Hiran was confused and could not reply immediately and Shrugala went on. “You are wondering why I want to be your friend? Well I have heard elders say that the company you keep determines your character. And I know that all my friends are cunning and you are a simple straight forward deer and I admire your traits and want to become like you. So please accept me as your friend. We shall meet every day and spend the day together happily. By the way, what is your name?”

Hiran got flattered by the sweet words of Shrugala and nodded his head. “Okay! Shrugala, I will be your friend. Call me Hiran” said he. “Wait till my friend Kakah comes and I will introduce you to him. He will also be extremely happy to meet you”.

Kakah, however, was not at all pleased about Hiran’s new-found friendship. He chided Hiran. “How can you just accept somebody as your friend without knowing anything about them? You should always consider being friends with anybody only after knowing their nature” he said. He then told him the story of the Vulture and the cunning Cat which you can read by clicking here.

Shrugala became anxious that his grand plan would fail and so said to Kakah, “Well, even on the day you met Hiran, both of you were strangers to each other, but how is it that your friendship only grows stronger every day? Hiran has already accepted me as his friend and should not go back on his word.” With no other way, they accepted Shrugala in their group and they spent the days together. They used to find their own food and Shrugala always kept an eye on Hiran waiting for him to become fatter.

One day, after Kakah went in search of his food, Shrugala called Hiran. “Hiran, I have found a nice place for you to have tasty corn which you can eat to your heart’s content” said he, and took him to the field of a farmer at the edge of the forest. The field was full of lush corn crop ready to be harvested. Hiran was delighted. He thanked Shrugala for his good gesture and went to eat the corn. Day by day, eating the fresh corn, Hiran was becoming fatter and Shrugala was very happy to see this and waited for the right opportunity to strike.

As days passed, the farmer began to notice that the quantity of corn was reducing in one corner of his field and eventually found the culprit. He laid a net trap for him the next day in the field.

Hiran, unaware of the trap went merrily and got caught in the trap and suddenly found that he could not get out of there. He cried out aloud. “Shrugala! Kakah! please come and help me. I have been caught in a net” he shouted. The farmer’s house was a bit far off, from the field and he had not yet seen Hiran caught in the net.

Shrugala was lurking nearby behind some bushes and was waiting for the farmer to kill Hiran and thought that he could then pounce on the farmer and frighten him and take away Hiran’s body. But as time went by, the farmer also did not come out and see. So Shrugala went near Hiran, with a fake look of shock on his face, and started talking pitifully to Hiran.

Hiran on the other hand, was panicking and told Shrugala to somehow tear the net with his teeth and claws and set him free. “You are my good friend and a friend should always help another who is in need. Please help! Please!” he pleaded. Shrugala just did not bother and quietly slunk away much to Hiran’s anguish. He went and hid behind the bushes again waiting to see what would happen.

In a short while, thankfully Kakah arrived on the scene and he was really shocked to see his dear friend caught in a net.

“What happened Hiran? How did you get into this trap?” he asked with concern. Hiran told him how Shrugala had shown him this field and how Shrugala had refused to help now. Kakah was furious but he knew that saving Hiran was the priority and just at that time, he saw the farmer walking out of his house with a huge club in hand. He was coming towards the field.

Kakah thought fast and told Hiran, “Look, there is no time now. You lie down still and pretend to be dead. I will sit on you and pretend to peck your eyes. The farmer will think you are dead and when he removes the net, I will caw thrice and you get up and run for your life. We will catch up in the evening”.

Hiran agreed to Kakah’s idea and lay still. The farmer was coming nearer and he saw the crow sitting and pecking at the deer.

“Hmmm. He looks dead. Is he? Poor fellow! He must have died out of sheer fright” he mumbled to himself. “My effort is saved. I don’t need to unnecessarily kill this fellow. And I will get to eat fresh deer meat today Hahaha….”

He then shooed away Kakah. “Shoo, shoo” he shouted and Kakah went and perched on a nearby tree. The farmer carefully removed the net and turned to the other side to fold it since he thought the deer was dead anyway.

“Caw caw caw!” cried Kakah and the next moment Hiran was up on his fours and ran so fast even before the farmer realized what had happened. The farmer turned around and was furious that he had been outwitted. He saw Hiran run behind the bushes and raised his club and threw it with all force hoping that it would hit Hiran. It came and landed with a thud on Shrugala’s back instead, as Shrugala was hiding there.

With a shrieking howl, Shrugala ran out of the bushes limping with great difficulty as his back had almost been broken.

And he was never to be seen again near Hiran and Kakah!

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Story - The Rat Merchant:

Article Link :

<https://storibuzz.in/the-rat-merchant/>

Long long ago, in one of the port towns of Southern India there was a young man Ramu who was poor, but intelligent. Ramu was going in the market street one day, when he saw a dead rat. The Minister of the Kingdom who was also passing by with his friend looked at the rat and commented to his friend, “An intelligent man can earn thousands of gold coins with this dead rat”. Ramu who was nearby, was puzzled by the minister’s comment but nevertheless knowing that the minister was a shrewd man, picked up the dead rat in his hand and started to go home.

On the way, he was approached by the servant of the army commander, who was out to buy some food for the Commander’s cat. “Sell me this rat”, said the man. Ramu sold the dead rat to him for the price of one gold coin. This was his first earning. He was very happy.

He went to the market and got a big earthen pot and some jaggery with the gold coin. He filled up the pot with sweet water from the stream nearby. He went to the jasmine gardens near the outskirts of the city where the farmers were plucking flowers. He had powdered the jaggery and as the farmers came out tired after the work, he offered them jaggery and water. The farmers were very happy and gave him each a handful of jasmine buds. Ramu strung the buds into garlands and went to the temple a bit far from the town. He sold the flowers to the devotees and the temple and this practice went on for few weeks until Ramu had saved eight gold coins. In the process, Ramu had befriended some people of the next town and was keeping himself aware of the developments in the city.

In the next few days, there was a severe thunderstorm and the following day after the storm had subsided, as Ramu was passing the Royal Garden, he found the Royal Gardener very upset as the garden was strewn with lot of twigs and small branches and dead leaves and the garden had to be cleaned before the next day as the king was holding a party there the next day. Ramu thought for a while and told the gardener that he could clean the garden for him if he was allowed to take all the twigs and branches. The gardener was gratified and happily agreed. Ramu then went and bought some sweets from the mithaiwala with the money he had saved over the days. He found a bunch of young boys playing nearby and told them that if they helped him clear the debris in the Royal Garden, he would reward them with the delicious sweets. The boys were overjoyed and gladly cleared the garden of the twigs and branches and leaves. Ramu gave them the sweets and collected all the twigs and branches and took it home.

The next day was very sunny and Ramu cleverly dried all the twigs and branches. The next day as he was passing by the potter’s house, as he casually enquired about his well being, he came to know that the potter was not having dry wood for baking his pots that day. Ramu immediately encashed this opportunity and sold him the dry twigs and and branches and got fifteen gold coins and ten earthen pots in return. Ramu kept some of the money safely and bought jaggery with the rest.

He now bought jaggery powder and lemon and and went to the fields where a number of workers were cutting the weeds and grass. He filled the pots with lime juice and offered the workers cool lime juice after their day of hard work. They were very pleased and asked him what they could give him in return. Ramu told them that he would ask them at the opportune moment. This went on for a few days. One fine day, Ramu came to know from his friends that a merchant was coming to the city with 500 horses to be sold to the king. Ramu told his worker friends that he would take two bundles of grass from each of them that day and also requested them that they should not sell grass in the coming week. The workers agreed and each of them gave him two bundles of grass.

Over the next few days, a horse trader came with the 500 horses to the town to sell them to the king. To the horse trader’s surprise, there was not a single grass seller to be seen in the town. But as he passed by the market, he saw Ramu sitting with a lot of grass and he was the only grass seller available. The trader, in his anxiety bought all the grass Ramu had and Ramu made a quick 1000 gold coins that day.

A few days later a ship had arrived in the port carrying lot of precious stones and perfumes. Ramu, was aware that the ship was to arrive and immediately went and met the ship owner. He told the ship owner that he would take all the goods in the ship and gave the thousand gold coins in advance. A day later, the richest merchants and nobles of the town came to know of the ship and flocked to buy the cargo. But the owner said that the whole of the cargo was booked by one Ramu!! They could buy the cargo only if Ramu permitted. They were surprised as they had not known any merchant by name Ramu. Anyway, they enquired and made their way to Ramu’s house and told him that they also wanted to purchase the goods that had arrived from abroad. Ramu acted reluctant for a while and after some time told them that they may have to pay 200 gold coins each if he was to give up the goods. The merchants had no way but to agree and gave Ramu the coins. This way he collected 10000 gold coins.

He bought a tray full of fruits and a small silk bag in which he put the coins he had earned. He went to the minister’s house and told the security guard that he had come to meet his ‘guru’. The puzzled guard went in and conveyed the same to the minister. The minster was also puzzled as he had not ‘tutored’ any student, but called him in. Ramu went in and presented the fruits along with the gold coins and prostrated at the feet of the minister. He then told him how he overheard his comment on the dead rat few months back and how he had come a long way with the help of the dead rat.

The minister was overwhelmed at the sincerity of Ramu and that he had given so much importance to a casual remark made by him . He praised Ramu openly and also gave back the money placed in front of him and also announced that he would give his daughter in marriage to Ramu as he was looking for a sincere, hard working, enterprising individual!!

Ramu’s life took a full U-turn and he lived a very happy life ever after.

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Story - Who is the most virtuous of them all?

Article Link :

[**https://storibuzz.in/who-is-the-most-virtuous-of-them-all/**](https://storibuzz.in/who-is-the-most-virtuous-of-them-all/)

This time, I am going to narrate an old folk tale from Ancient India.

Long long ago in the ancient city of Varanasi there lived a learned Pandit who ran a Patashala (school) and had many students studying scriptures under him.

This Pandit had a daughter who was as beautiful as she was virtuous. The daughter was of marriageable age.

In the ancient days, weddings were performed at a very early age and the suitor for the child was generally chosen by the parents. Also, usually the boys got married as soon as they finished their studies in a Patashala.

The Pandit and his wife were anxious that they should find a bridegroom who was as virtuous as their daughter.

“You have got so many disciples who are finishing their studies this year, can we select any one of them for a bridegroom?” asked the wife.

The Pandit said, “If their intelligence was only the criteria for selection, I can do it within seconds” said he. “But, we need a boy who is has good values and virtues, not brain alone…” He paused for a while and said, “Well, I will give them a test by which we can find out who is the most virtuous of them all”.

The next day, he called a few of them who were completing their studies that year. They were going for a short break to their homes. He told them, “Boys, now I have a test for you. You have to obey as I say”.

The puzzled boys were wondering what the test was, when the Pandit said, “ In the coming ten days, when you are at your home, you will have to steal small but valuable trinkets from whomever you can, and come and give it to me. But the condition is that no one should see you stealing. I repeat, NO ONE should see you”.

The boys were baffled at this strange order but they had been taught that they should never disobey their teacher at any cost and so they did not dare to question him and meekly went off to their homes.

Whilst at their homes, they visited their relatives and friends and faithfully stole small trinkets here and there, bundled them up and took it with them when they went back. Back at the Patashala (school), each of them met the Pandit and gave the bundles containing the things stolen by them. The Pandit thought to himself, “I will have to keep them safely with identification, for I will be returning them shortly” But he did not display any emotion on his face.

All the boys except one, gave the things they had stolen to the Pandit. Ramu, the lone boy who did not bring anything for the Pandit was looking visibly disturbed. He was an extremely intelligent boy.

The Pandit called him in the evening and asked, “What happened Ramu? You look very disturbed…”

Ramu was hesitant. “Guruji… er… er…” he stuttered, not able to take the dialogue forward.

The Pandit persisted. “Tell me my boy. What happened? Why are you so disturbed? Were you able to do the job I told you to?”

The moment the Pandit talked about the ‘job’ Ramu broke down. “Panditji” he said, almost in tears, “I was not able to steal a single thing from anyone Panditji. I know I have disobeyed you but this is what it is…” He was on the verge of sobbing.

“Why Ramu?” asked the Pandit. “Why could you not get anything? Were there people around always??”

“No Panditji!” said Ramu. “There were occasions when nobody was present… but…”

“But what?” asked the Panditji. “What prevented you from stealing anything when nobody was seeing you?”

“Well” he said “I thought nobody was watching me but whenever I tried to take something, an inner voice seemed to tell me that what I was doing was wrong. It seemed that the inner being was witnessing everything right from my thoughts. Since you had told us that no one should see us while stealing, I could not steal anything as I am being watched by this inner being always. Panditji I am so sorry!”

He seemed to be sorry for not being able to follow what the teacher had said. He stood there looking forlorn.

There was so much of joy in the Pandit’s eyes. “Well done Ramu!” he exclaimed and hugged him. Ramu was at a loss to know why the teacher was so happy.

The Pandit said, “Ramu, I am not in need of any wealth. This was a test intended to find out the most virtuous student amongst you all. And I have found you!”

He then called all the other students and said, “Stealing for any cause, and on anybody’s bidding is absolutely wrong. I am not in need of any wealth as you people would have thought. I was testing your virtues and only Ramu has passed my test. I am not returning all the bundles you gave me with a request to you all to return them to where they belong”

Ramu felt happy in passing the ‘test’ of his teacher and the Panditji felt very happy at having found a suitable bridegroom for his daughter.

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Story - sleeping Beauty Fairy Tale Story ~ Bedtime Stories for Kids

Article Link :

[**https://storiestogrowby.org/story/sleeping-beauty-fairy-tale-story-bedtime-stories-for-kids/**](https://storiestogrowby.org/story/sleeping-beauty-fairy-tale-story-bedtime-stories-for-kids/)

Long ago in France there lived a King and Queen. More than anything, they longed for a child. At last, to their great happiness, the Queen gave birth to a little girl. All the bells in the land were rung with joy.

The King and Queen invited all the fairies in the kingdom to the Naming Party for the baby. And what a party it was! Plates and silverware of pure gold were set with care before each guest. But one fairy, Maleficent, who had left 50 years before and had not been seen in all that time, showed up at the door. Quickly the King and Queen found a place setting for the new guest. But alas, the plate and the silverware were not of pure gold. This made the old fairy very angry.

Soon it was time for each Fairy to give her blessing to the baby. When it came to Maleficent’s turn, she stood up and pointed her long finger at the sleeping baby girl in the cradle.

“I declare, before all of you,” Maleficent called out, “that this child, on her 16th birthday, shall prick her finger on the spindle of a spinning wheel, and die!”

With a whoosh of smoke, the evil fairy vanished. Everyone cried out with alarm, as you can imagine. But one fairy had not yet given her blessing. The King and Queen asked this fairy, whose name was Merryweather, to reverse the curse. Merryweather shook her head sadly – that was not possible. But she could soften the curse.

“On her 16th birthday,” she said, “when the princess pricks her finger on the spinning wheel, instead of dying she will fall asleep for 100 years.”

“One hundred years!” said the Queen. “After our daughter turns 16, we will not know her anymore!”

The King ordered every spinning wheel in the kingdom to be brought to the palace and burned. To be extra sure the princess would not be anywhere near a spinning wheel, he also ordered the fairy Merryweather, along with two other fairies, Flora and Fauna, to take the baby far away. The fairies would raise the child in a cottage, deep in the woods. There, they would keep her safe until after her 16th birthday. After that day it would be safe to bring back the princess, who had been named Aurora, to the castle.

Aurora grew up knowing no others than the three fairies, whom she knew as her aunts. The animals of the forest were her friends.

The birds and the deer, the chipmunks and the rabbits, followed her around as she fed them treats and cooed to them. From the time she was little, Aurora was told she must stay inside the hills that surrounded them. She did not mind that in the least. The woods were wide and deep inside the hills, and there was plenty of room for her to play.

One day, Aurora came home to the cottage to find her three aunts preparing for a party. “What’s going on?” she said.

“Tonight we will celebrate your 16th birthday!” said Flora.

“It is?” said Aurora. “That means tomorrow I go back to the castle!”

“Yes!” said Merryweather. “We have kept you safe from that spinning wheel for 16 years. Soon it will be time for you to take up your royal life as a princess.”

“And the first thing for you will be to get married,” said Fauna.

“Married, already?” said Aurora. “Do you know who I’m supposed to marry?”

“We do,” said Fauna with a wave of her hand, “but there’s no need to worry about that. Even if he’s a bit strange, some might say a bit horrid, you won’t have to spend much time with him,after all.”

“And he does come from a fine family,” Flora added with a quick smile.

“Wait a minute!” said Aurora, pulling back. “Why do you say he’s a bit horrid?”

“It’s best not focus on such things, dear,” said Merryweather.

“Just do everything your husband tells you to do,” said Flora, “and you will be fine.”

“This is not turning out like I thought!” cried Aurora. “How long do I have to stay married?”

“For the rest of your life, of course,” said Fauna.

“No, no, this is all wrong!” cried Aurora. She turned away, then said in a firm voice, “I would rather prick my finger on a spinning wheel and fall asleep for 100 years than have to marry someone I don't want to marry! Maybe by the time I wake up, people won’t have to get married if they don’t want to!” And she ran out the door.

“Dear me,” said Merryweather to the other two fairies. “I don’t believe that went over very well.”

Aurora ran deep into the woods where her animal friends lived.

A deer hopped beside her, along with the rabbits and chipmunks. “We have to get out of here,” she said to all of them. Then pointing to a mountain pass, she said, “We will go right through the hills.”

Soon Aurora came to a road. In the distance was a carriage, coming closer to her. As the rider approached, her animal friends scattered.

“Hail!” said the stranger. “I’m afraid my carriage scared away your pets. May I give you a lift?”

Aurora had never seen a man before. But she couldn’t think about that – unless she could find a spinning wheel, the very next day her aunts would take her back to the palace.

“Actually,” said Aurora to the stranger, “there is something I need a great deal.”

“What’s that?” said the stranger, hopping out of the carriage. Very nicely dressed was he, and well mannered, too.

“A spinning wheel,” said Aurora.

“A spinning wheel!” said the stranger. “But there are none left in the land – everyone knows that.”

“Well, you see,” said Aurora, rubbing her hands together, “I have this friend. She needs a spinning wheel in the worst way.” Aurora looked directly at the stranger. “It’s a matter of life or death.”

The stranger looked at Aurora’s eyes. At last, he said, “I may know of one,” he said. “But this needs to stay between you and me.” The stranger stepped closer.

“Not far from here lives an old woman who spun yarn all her life. When the orders came to burn all the spinning wheels, she could not bear to let go of her beloved spinning wheel since it had been in her family for many years. She came to me,” he said, pointing down the road, “as I’m a prince from the next kingdom. She begged me to let her store it away safely. So I put it in the attic room of my castle tower, where no one ever goes, until the 16 years had passed.”

“She begged me to let her store it away safely,” said the prince.

“Would you take me to your castle tower?” said Aurora.

“I shouldn’t,” said the prince. Then after a moment, he said, “But I will.”

She stepped onto his carriage. Soon they were at the tower, and they both stepped out. The prince said, “This is not for your friend, is it?”

“Thank you for taking me here,” said Aurora. “I will always remember your kindness. Now if you please, I must do what I must do.”

Aurora turned and went up the tower stairs to the very last stair. The door in front of her creaked open. Inside, all was dark and musty. She could barely take a step for all the spider webs. But she pushed them aside and stepped forward. There, in a far corner, was the spinning wheel. From a small window, she could tell the sun was already setting. “I hope this works,” she said, “before it’s too late.”

Aurora held out her finger to the tip of the spindle. She pricked her finger on that spindle. One tiny droplet of blood dripped from her finger. At once, Aurora felt dizzy. She fell onto an old dusty velvet blanket that lay on the attic floor, and fell into a deep sleep. Moments later, all the others in the castle, servants and royals alike, fell asleep too, and so did the prince, who was still waiting for her outside the tower. Within hours, thorns and vines had sprung up and wrapped around the castle, so thickly that no human or beast could pass through.

For 100 years, Aurora and the others slept.

After 100 years had passed, Aurora blinked her eyes awake. Then all the others in the castle also awoke. Everyone started to do what they had been doing when they had fallen asleep 100 years before. The thorns and vines around the castle melted away.

Aurora stepped down the tower stairs to find the prince.

Together, they stepped into the prince’s carriage. Down the road to the market square, they discovered a whole new world. Bicycles and streetcars, cameras and streetlights – such marvels to behold!

Perhaps best of all, they learned that in this strange new time, it was quite all right for young women and men to get to know each other, if that’s what they wanted to do, and even perhaps to fall in love. As Aurora and the Prince took each other’s hand to explore this wonderful new world together, that is exactly what they wanted to do.

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Story - The Girl Fish

Article Link :

[**https://storiestogrowby.org/story/girl-fish/**](https://storiestogrowby.org/story/girl-fish/)

Once upon a time there lived on the bank of a stream a man and a woman who had a daughter. They never could make up their minds to punish her for her faults or to teach her nice manners. As for work -- she laughed in her mother's face if she asked her to help cook the dinner or to wash the plates. All the girl would do was spend her days dancing and playing with her friends. She was no use to her parents; sometimes they thought they might as well have had no child at all.

However, one morning her mother looked so tired that even the selfish girl could not help seeing it. She asked if there was anything she was able to do so that her mother might rest a little.

The good woman looked so surprised and grateful for this offer that the girl felt rather ashamed, and at that moment would have scrubbed down the house if she had been requested. But her mother only begged her to take the fishing-net out to the bank of the river and mend some holes in it, as her father intended to go fishing that night.

The girl took the net and worked so hard that soon there was not a hole to be found. She felt quite pleased with herself,. All this time she had had plenty of company to amuse her, as everybody who passed by had stopped to have a chat with her. But by this time the sun was high overhead, and she was just folding her net to carry it home again, when she heard a splash behind her. Looking around she saw a big fish jump into the air. At once seizing the net with both hands, she flung it into the water and drew out the fish.

"Well, you are quite a fine looking fish!" she said. But the fish looked up to her and said, "You had better not kill me, for if you do, I will turn you into a fish yourself!"

The girl laughed and ran straight to her mother.

"Look what I caught!" she said gaily. She left the fish with her mother, and off she went to gather some flowers to stick in her hair.

About an hour later the blowing of a horn told her that dinner was ready.

"Didn't I say that fish would be delicious?" she cried. Plunging her spoon into the dish the girl helped herself to a large piece. But the instant it touched her mouth a cold shiver ran through her. Her head seemed to flatten and her eyes to look oddly round the corners. Her legs and arms were stuck to her sides, and she gasped wildly for breath. With a mighty bound she sprang through the window and fell into the river, where she soon felt better and was able to swim down the river to the sea, which was close by.

No sooner had she arrived under the sea than the sight of her sad face attracted the notice of some of the other fishes. They pressed around her, begging her to tell them her story.

"I am not a fish at all," said the newcomer, swallowing a great deal of salt water as she spoke, for you cannot learn how to be a proper fish all in a moment. "I am not a fish but a girl, at least I was a girl only a few minutes ago --" And she ducked her head under the waves so that they should not see her crying.

"Only you did not believe that the fish you caught had the power to carry out its threat," said an old tuna. "Well, never mind, that has happened to many of us, and it really is not such a bad life. Cheer up and come with us and see our Queen, who lives in a palace."

The new fish felt a little afraid of taking such a journey, but as she was still more afraid of being left alone, she waved her tail in token of consent. Off they all set, hundreds of them swimming together. At first our little fish felt as if she were blind in the dark waters, but by-and-by she began to make out one object after another in the green dimness. By the time she had swum for a few hours, all became clear.

"Here we are at last!" cried a big fish, going down into a deep valley. For the sea has its mountains and valleys just as much as the land. "That is the palace of the Queen of the Fishes, and I think you must confess that the Emperor himself has nothing so fine."

"It is beautiful indeed," gasped the little fish, who was very tired with trying to swim as fast as the rest. The palace walls were made of pale pink coral, worn smooth by the waters, and round the windows were rows of pearls.

The great doors were standing open, and the whole troop floated into the chamber of audience, where before them was the Queen. She was mermaid-like, having a human form from the head to the waist and a tail from the waist down.

"Who are you, and where do you come from?" said the Queen to the little fish, whom the others had pushed in front. And in a low, trembling voice, the visitor told her story.

When the fish had ended the Queen answered, "I was once a young woman too, a princess in fact, and my father was the king of a great country. A husband was found for me and on my wedding day my mother placed her crown on my head and told me that as long as I wore the crown I should likewise be queen.

For a few years I was as happy as a young woman could be, especially when I had a little son to play with. But one morning, when I was walking in my gardens, along came a giant who snatched the crown from my head. Holding me fast, he told me that he intended to give my crown to his daughter, and to put her in my place. He would enchant my husband the prince, so he should not know the difference between us. Since then she had filled my place and has been queen in my stead.

"As for me, I was so miserable that I threw myself into the sea, and my ladies, who loved me, declared that they would die too. But instead of dying, some wizard, who pitied my fate, turned us all into fishes, though he allowed me to keep the face and upper body of a woman. And fishes we must remain until someone else brings me back my crown."

"I will bring it back if you tell me what to do!" cried the little fish, who would have promised anything that was likely to carry her up to earth again. And the Queen answered, "Well then yes, I will tell you what to do."

She sat silent for a moment, and then went on.

"There is no danger if you will only follow my counsel. First, you must return to earth and go up to the top of a high mountain, where the giant has built his castle. You will find him sitting on the steps weeping for his daughter, who has just died while my husband, who had been a prince but is now king of the land, was away hunting. But I warn you to be careful, for if he sees you he may kill you. Therefore I will give you the power to change yourself into any animal creature that may help you best. You have only to strike your forehead, and call out the name of the animal you wish to be. Mind you, you may not become any human or magical creature, but you may choose to become any animal of the forest, field or stream.

This time the journey to land seemed much shorter than before. When once the little fish reached the shore, she struck her forehead sharply with her tail and cried, "A deer, that's what I'd like to be!"

In a moment the small slimy body disappeared, and in its place stood a beautiful beast with soft fur and slender legs, quivering with longing to be gone. Throwing back her head and snuffling the air, she broke into a run, leaping easily over the rivers and walls that stood in her way.

It happened that the King's son had been hunting since daybreak, but had killed nothing. When the deer crossed his path as he was resting under a tree, he determined to have her. He flung himself on his horse, which flew like the wind, and as the prince had often hunted in the forest before and knew all the shortcuts, he at last came up with the panting beast.

"By your favor let me go, and do not kill me," said the deer, turning to the Prince with tears in her eyes, "for I have far to run and much to do." And as the Prince, struck dumb with surprise, only looked at her, the deer cleared the next wall and was soon out of sight.

"That can't really be a deer," thought the Prince to himself, reining in his horse and not attempting to follow her. "No deer ever had eyes like that. It must be an enchanted maiden, and I will marry her and no other." So, turning his horse's head, he rode slowly back to his palace.

The deer reached the giant's castle quite out of breath, and her heart sank as she gazed at the tall, smooth walls which surrounded it. Then she plucked up courage and cried; "An ant, that's what I'd like to be!" And in a moment the soft fur and beautiful shape had vanished, and a tiny brown any, invisible to all who did not look closely, was climbing up the walls.

It was wonderful how fast she went, that little creature! The wall must have appeared miles high in comparison with her own body, yet in less time than would have seemed possible, she was over the top and down in the courtyard on the other side. Here she paused to consider what had best be done next. Looking about her, she saw that one of the walls had a tall tree growing by it, and in this corner was a window very nearly on a level with the highest branches of the tree.

"A monkey, that's what I'd like to be!" cried the ant. Before you could turn around, a monkey was swinging herself from the topmost branches into the room where the giant lay snoring.

"Perhaps the giant will be so startled at the sight of a swinging monkey that he may never give me the crown," thought the monkey. "I had better become something else."

Then she was a pink and gray parrot who hopped up to the giant, who by this time was stretching himself and giving yawns which shook the castle. The parrot waited a little, until he was really awake. Then she said boldly that she had been sent to take away the crown, which was not his any longer, now that his daughter the queen was dead.

On hearing these words the giant leapt out of bed with an angry roar, and sprang at the parrot in order to wring her neck with his great hands. But the bird was too quick for him and flying behind his back, begged the giant to have patience, as her death would be of no use to him.

"That is true," answered the giant, "but I am not so foolish as to give you that crown for nothing. Let me think what I will have in exchange!" And he scratched his huge head for several minutes.

"Ah, yes!" he exclaimed at last, his face brightening. "You shall have the crown if you bring me a collar of blue stones from the Great Arch."

Now when the parrot had been a girl she had often heard of the wonderful Great Arch and its precious stones and marbles. It sounded as if it would be a very hard thing to get them away from the stone structure of which they formed a part. Still, all had gone well with her so far, and at any rate she could but try. So she bowed to the giant, and made her way back to the window where the giant could not see her. Then she called quickly, "An eagle, that's what I'd like to be!"

Before she had even reached the tree she felt herself borne up on strong wings ready to carry her to the clouds if she wished to go there. Seeming a mere speck in the sky, she was swept along until she beheld the Great Arch far below, with the rays of the sun shining on it. She swooped down and, hiding herself behind a buttress so that she could not be detected from below, set herself to dig out the nearest blue stones with her beak.

It was even harder work than she expected but at last it was done, and hope arose in her heart. She next drew out a piece of string that she had found hanging from a tree. Sitting down to rest, she strung the stones together. When the necklace was finished she hung it round her neck and called, "A parrot, that's what I'd like to be!" So she quickly flew back, the necklace around her neck, and a little later the pink and gray parrot stood before the giant."Here is the necklace you asked for," said the parrot. The eyes of the giant glistened as he took the heap of blue stones in his hand. But for all that he was not minded to give up the crown.

"They are hardly as blue as I expected," he grumbled, though the parrot knew as well as he did that he was not speaking the truth. "You must bring me a bag of stars from the sky. If you fail, it will cost you not only the crown but your life!"

The parrot was stunned. But what could she do? She turned away and as soon as she was outside she murmured, "A toad, that's what I want to be!" Sure enough a toad she was, and off she set in search of the bucket of stars.

She had not gone far before she came to a clear pool, in which the stars were reflected so brightly that they looked quite real to touch and handle. Stooping down, she filled a bag she was carrying with the shining water and returned to the castle. Then she cried as before, "A parrot, that's what I'd like to be!" And in the shape of a parrot she entered the presence of the giant.

"Come outside to see it," she said. And when the giant stood under the stars she opened the bag and said, "Here is the bag of stars you asked for." This time, the giant could not help crying out with admiration. He knew he was beaten and he turned to the girl.

"Your power is greater than mine. So be it: Take this old crown, anyway."

The parrot did not need to be told twice. Seizing the crown, she sprang on to the window, crying, "A monkey, that's what I'd like to be!" As a monkey, the climb down the tree into the courtyard did not take half a minute. When she had reached the ground she said again, "An ant, that's what I'd like to be!" And a little ant at once began to crawl over the high wall. How glad the ant was to be out of the giant's castle, holding fast the crown which had shrunk into almost nothing, as she herself had done, but grew quite big again when the ant exclaimed, "A deer, that's what I'd like to be!"

Surely no deer ever ran so swiftly as that one! On and on she went, bounding over rivers and crashing through tangles till she reached the sea. Here she cried, "A fish, that's what I'd like to be!" And plunging in, she swam along the bottom as far as the palace, the crown held fast in her fins. There the Queen and all the fishes were gathered together awaiting her.

The hours since she had left had passed very slowly -- as they always do to those who are waiting -- and many of them had quite given up hope.

"The young flies will be coming out about now," grumbled one of the fish, "and they will all be eaten up by the river fish. It would really be too bad to miss them." When suddenly, a voice was heard from behind: "Look! look! What is that bright thing moving so swiftly towards us?" And the Queen started up and stood on her tail, so excited was she.

A silence fell on all the crowd, and even the grumblers held their peace and gazed like the rest. On and on came the fish, holding the crown tightly in her fins, and the others moved back to let her pass. On she went right up to the Queen, who bent and, taking the crown, placed it on her own head. Then a wonderful thing happened. Her tail dropped away or, rather, it divided and grew into two legs while her maidens, grouped around her, shed their scales and became young women again. They all turned and looked at each other first, and next at the little fish who had regained her own shape also.

"It is you who have given us back our life - you, you!" they cried, and fell to weeping from very joy.

So they all quickly swam to the surface and went back to the Queen's palace on land. But they had been away so long that they found many changes. Still the Queen's husband, now King, recognized her at once since the spell had been broken the moment the Queen had placed her rightful crown upon her head. The little boy she had left behind was now all grown up! Even at his joy at seeing his mother again, an air of sadness clung to him. At last the Queen could bear it no longer and she begged him to walk with her in the garden. Seated together in a bower of jasmine -- where she had passed long hours as a bride -- she took her son's hand and entreated him to tell her the cause of his sorrow. "For," said she, "if I can give you happiness you shall have it."

"It is no use," answered the Prince, "nobody can help me. I must bear it alone."

"At least let me share your grief," urged the Queen.

There was a silence between them for a moment. Then turning away his head, the Prince answered gently, "I have fallen in love with a beautiful deer!"

"Ah, if that is all," exclaimed the queen joyfully. And she told him in broken words that, as he had guessed, it had been no deer but was in fact an enchanted maiden, the very one who had won back the crown for her and had brought her home to her own people.

"She is here, in my palace!" added the Queen. "I will take you to her."

When the Prince stood before the girl, he lost all courage, and stood before her with bent head.

The maiden's eyes, as she looked at him, were the very same eyes of the deer that day in the forest. She whispered softly, "By your favor let me go, and do not kill me."

And the prince remembered her words, and her eyes, and his heart was filled with happiness. The Queen, his mother, watched them both and smiled. In the days and weeks that followed, the Prince and the girl spent more time together, and found that they seemed to be as comfortable together as time went by, as they had been the very first time they had met.

The girl invited her parents to the royal wedding, a three-day feast that everyone enjoyed. And of course, the Queen saw to it that the missing blue stones in the Great Arch were restored.

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Story - The story of the vulture and the cunning cat

Article Link :

[**https://storibuzz.in/the-story-of-the-vulture-and-the-cunning-cat/**](https://storibuzz.in/the-story-of-the-vulture-and-the-cunning-cat/)

Long long ago in the forests of central India , there was a huge banyan tree. The tree was house to hundreds of birds who had built nests on the innumerable branches. All the birds left the tree during the day to look for food and came back by nightfall.

During a particular time of the year, lots of chicks had hatched on the tree and the parent birds were compelled to leave them and go to look for food.

One day, late in the evening, a very old vulture by name Grudhra , battered by age and could barely fly , came to the tree. His eyesight had also become very bad due to his age . He was walking very slowly and was almost about to hit the tree when some of the birds saw him. He was a huge figure and they were frightened by him but soon realised that he was almost blind and had blunt claws and beak and so could not harm anyone.

Some of the bolder birds came down and asked him ” Who are you Sir and may we ask what you are doing here??” The vulture said “My name is Grudhra and I am an orphan. I have become very weak due to age that I have to struggle to get food every day. I have not had food for days and have come wandering in search of food.” The birds felt pity on him and offered him a deal. They told him, “Sir, we have our chicks on the tree and we have to go out the whole day for food and there is no one to look after them. So if you stay in the hollow at the bottom of the tree and look after our chicks from danger while we are out, we shall bring you food everyday”. Grudhra was happy and he agreed to the deal.

Accordingly, from the next day, the vulture used to come out of the hollow and stand under the tree the whole day and the small animals like fox and cats who were on the prowl to hunt the chicks were intimidated by the imposing figure of the vulture and kept away. In the evenings the birds used to bring food for the vulture. This arrangement went on well for quite some days and both the vulture and the birds were happy.

One day a cunning cat by name Bidaala slowly came near the tree. He had seen so many chicks and was very eager to devour some of them. But suddenly he noticed Grudhra and was taken aback. He thought the vulture would pounce on him and he would be minced meat in moments. But to his surprise, Grudhra slowly turned around and in a deep voice asked “Who is there???” The clever Bidaala understood that the vulture was blind but he could not underestimate the power of a vulture. So he said in a meek voice , “I am a mendicant cat by name Bidaala and I am on a yatra to see the holy places in this part of the country. Sorry if I have disturbed you Sir”. Grudhra could not see the cat clearly and the voice of the cat was so meek that he believed what he said.

“Oh! Welcome. I am Grudhra , an old vulture and guardian of these birds” said the vulture. “You may be my guest in the hollow of the tree where I reside for as many days as you please Sir.” he continued. The cat said ,”Oh! call me Bidaala. I am much younger to you Sir and it is my good fortune to serve elderly souls like you”. Grudhra was very pleased as he had got a companion to talk during day time.

Slowly Bidaala won the confidence of Grudhra. He stayed in the hollow being careful enough to come out of the hollow only when the last of the birds had left and go back in before the birds came back in the evening.

One day he tried his fortune and deftly caught a chick by its neck from one of the lower branches, so quickly that it could not make noise. Swiftly he ran into the bushes and devoured the chick. All the other chicks made lot of noise but Grudhra could not see any animal nearby and soon the noise died down. This started happening once in three days and later became more frequent. The parent birds noticed the missing ones but were at a loss to find out who was behind it. Bidaala was careful to leave the bones in the bushes.

One day a crane who had also lost one of her chicks happened to see the bunch of bones in the bushes. Coincidentally, the vulture was not able to eat much food in the evenings as he was feeling little sick. The crane told the birds of the heap of bones and they came to a conclusion that it was Grudhra who had devoured their little ones and therefore was not eating well in the evenings.

Poor Grudhra! The birds had unanimously decided to attack Grudhra and they swooped on him, swarmed around him pecking him with their beaks and claws making lot of noise .Grudhra tried to protest as Bidaala watched in horror from the hollow. Finally, Grudhra, not able to bear the attack sank and fell down senseless. He could not speak and life was ebbing away.

Then , the birds flew up the tree their anger still simmering. Just then, Bidaala slinked out of the hollow and started running towards the bushes where he used to devour the chicks. The birds , only then noticed Bidaala and understood that it was Bidaala, not Grudhra who was the real culprit.

Alas! it was too late. They had killed a member of their own clan who was innocent and was so old.

P.S. This happens with us human beings too. So choose your friends carefully and do not act in a haste.

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Story - Kacha and Devayani

Article Link :

[**https://storibuzz.in/kacha-and-devayani/**](https://storibuzz.in/kacha-and-devayani/)

This is one story which is etched in my childhood memory and has been in my ‘to narrate’ list for a very long time and so here it is:

The Devas led by Indra, had Brihaspati, who was the son of Sage Angirasa as their Guru. The Asuras, on the other hand had Sage Shukracharya who was the son of Sage Bhrigu as their Guru. Both Brihaspati and Shukracharya were extremely knowledgeable and had a healthy rivalry between them though they had immense respect for each other’s knowledge. This was the time when there were frequent wars between the Devas and Asuras.

The Asuras had an advantage, that their Guru Shukracharya had the complete knowledge of “Mritsanjeevani Mantra” the key to the science of bringing back the dead to life. He had, due to his great ‘Tapasya’ gained this knowledge from Lord Shiva and he used this to resurrect all the Asuras who died in the wars with Devas. Naturally, the Asuras did not lose manpower and had the same strength every time while the army of the Devas was depleting. This was very disturbing to the Devas.

The King of the Devas, Indra expressed this concern of theirs to their Guru Brihaspati. “We feel they have an unfair advantage” he said bowing to his Guru. “It is becoming increasingly difficult to fight them with our depleting army and we will have to do something about this. How do we gain the knowledge of the Mritsanjeevani Mantra O Guru?” asked he.

Sage Brihaspati thought for a while. Meanwhile the son of Sage Brihaspati, a young lad by name Kacha, was present there overhearing this conversation.

“I will go and learn the Mantra from Guru Shukracharya, father!” said Kacha.

Kacha was a young, handsome and extremely charming and intelligent boy who was very capable of going and learning the Mantra. Both Indra and Brihaspati were sure of Kacha’s success, if he went.

Sage Brihaspati agreed. Though he was worried to send his son to the dreaded Asura kingdom to learn this knowledge, for Brihaspati, it was commitment to his king which came first before everything else. Therefore, much to the joy of Indra, it was decided to send Kacha to Guru Shukracharya to learn this Mantra.

Kacha travelled to the kingdom of the Asuras as instructed by his father and met Guru Shukracharya.

“O Gurudev, I am the grandson of Sage Angirasa and son of Sage Brihaspati” said Kacha to Shukracharya introducing himself. “I have come here to be your pupil and serve you and learn all that is to be learnt. I promise to serve you with utmost sincerity and will never indulge in anything which will bring a bad name to you. Kindly accept me as your student” he said, with all humility.

Shukracharya was pleased with the humility and sincerity of the lad and the way in which he had openly stated his background and intention. So, he accepted him as his student. “Your father Brihaspati is my friend and I see you as Brihaspati and so I grant you permission to stay in my hermitage and be my pupil” said he.

Kacha was happy that he had been accepted by Guru Shukracharya and started staying in the hermitage. He learnt with great sincerity whatever was taught to him. He was otherwise also very dutiful, looking after his Guru and preparing the things needed for his meditation, fire sacrifice, collecting flowers for worship etc. He also tended to the cattle belonging to the Ashram leaving no worries for his Guru.

Shukracharya had a very beautiful daughter Devayani. She was very dear to her father and she did not have her mother. Her mother Jayanti had left Shukracharya and gone away years before. So Shukracharya had always wanted to bring up his daughter without she realizing her mother’s absence. This resulted in Devayani being a spoilt child, pampered to the greatest extent and getting whatever she wanted, with no questions asked.

Devayani was almost the same age as Kacha when he came and joined as her father’s pupil and therefore she developed a special liking for him. Kacha was also devoted to her and took good care of her as his Guru’s daughter while being fully focused on his studies and the purpose for which he had come there. He never got distracted from his mission and was waiting to learn the Mritsanjeevani Mantra from the Guru which seemed to be eluding him. Even after long years of study with the Guru, the Guru was open to teach him anything but the Mantra for which he had come. He would see Shukracharya resurrecting dead Asuras with the Mantra being silently chanted by Shukra, but Kacha had to be initiated and learn it properly for it to be used by him.

Slowly the Asuras somehow guessed the purpose of Kacha’s studying under their Guru. They had their doubts even as Kacha had joined Shukracharya years back, but could not bring themselves to tell their Guru what he should do. They were afraid of his wrath and had kept quiet. But now, they were discussing their fears amongst themselves and decided to do away with Kacha before he learnt the Mantra. They knew his daily routine and so planned to kill him.

Accordingly, once when Kacha had taken the cattle out for grazing into the woods, they stealthily followed him, pounced on him and killed him. They then cut him up and fed the pieces of the body to wolves. In the evening, the cattle returned on their own to the hermitage without Kacha. Devayani was worried. She waited patiently for some more time, often peering at the entrance to the hermitage, but there was no sign of Kacha. It was time for the evening prayers of the Guru. Fresh water had not been brought for his rituals. The mat was not spread and the lamps not lit. Guru Shukracharya came for his prayers and was puzzled. Kacha, had not for once, been negligent in his duty in all these years.

Just then Devayani came up to him with teary eyes. “Kacha has not come back with the cattle” she said, almost sobbing. “I fear that the Asuras would have harmed him father. Please do something and save him” she went on. “I cannot live without Kacha, dear father. Please save him. My instinct says something has happened to him”.

Shukracharya could not bear to see his darling daughter in tears. He sat down and started to meditate. With his divine power, could see what had happened to Kacha. He immediately visualized Kacha and chanted the Mritsanjeevani Mantra. All the pieces of Kacha’s body came tearing out of the wolves’ bodies and rejoined themselves and lo and behold! Kacha appeared in his charming form at the hermitage. He narrated to the Guru how he had been attacked by the Asuras. Shukracharya called the offenders and sternly warned them against acting in this manner. But Asuras were Asuras, and so after some months, they planned the second attack on Kacha.

This time they wanted to make sure that he was completely decimated and so they killed him, burnt the corpse and mixed the ash in the sea waters. This time again, with the intervention of Devayani, Guru Shukracharya, by chanting the Mritsanjeevani Mantra, collected him from the sea and he came back whole and bowed to his Guru and told him what had been done to him by the Asuras. The Guru reprimanded the Asuras with strong words once again and warned them. However, they would never change their habits.

And the third time, they decided that they would do something so severe that it would be impossible for Kacha to be retrieved. They lay low for some time and when they got an opportunity, they killed Kacha, burnt the corpse, mixed the ash in wine and served it to the Guru. Shukracharya unwittingly drank the wine and now Kacha was inside the Guru’s stomach.

In the evening, once again Devayani noticed that Kacha had not returned and when she told her father, he in his deep meditation, realized that Kacha was in his stomach. He told Devayani. Devayani who was pleading with her father to bring Kacha back, was in a total dilemma. She knew that if Kacha came out of her father’s stomach, her father would die. She loved both the men dearly and wanted both of them to live.

Now there was only one way, that was, to impart the Mritsanjeevani Mantra to Kacha so that Kacha could resurrect Guru Shukracharya, once he came out of Guru Shukracharya’s stomach. Guru Shukracharya also had developed a soft corner for this boy who had been so loyal, sincere and dutiful. So, with no other option left, he taught him the Mantra and explained the method in which it had to be chanted to resurrect the dead. Kacha heard and learnt the Mantra staying inside the stomach of Sage Shukracharya. The Guru then chanted the Mantra in the prescribed manner praying for Kacha to come back alive. Kacha came out tearing the stomach of Shukracharya. Shukracharya now lay dead, much to the shock of Devayani.

Kacha could have walked away back to his kingdom, but a gem of a person, that he was, he knew that there was no repentance for betrayal of the trust of anyone, especially of the teacher who had given him everything. He immediately meditated and chanted the Mantra the way it was taught to him, so that Guru Shukracharya would come back to life and slowly the Guru rose up, having been resurrected by the Mantra chanted by Kacha.

The plan of the Asuras had badly backfired.

Shukracharya felt so ashamed that he vowed not to touch any intoxicant from then on. Further he also forbade Brahmins from touching liquor, due to his own nasty experience.

Devayani was ecstatic as both the people she loved dearly were alive now. Kacha wanted to take leave of his Guru and go back to Indra’s kingdom as his mission was over now and the Guru gladly gave leave to him.

Devayani now took the opportunity to express her love for Kacha and requested him to marry her. Kacha however, refused her proposal. “I have come out of your father’s stomach” he said. “Just as a part of your father is in you, he is in me also and hence I can only look upon you as my sister and it is not proper for me to marry you”. The firmness and decisiveness in Kacha’s voice made Devayani extremely furious. She had never been refused anything before in her life and here was a man who was telling her “No”.

“I curse you!” she said, her face red with anger. “I curse you that this knowledge you have acquired will be of no use to you!”

Kacha remained calm. “I cannot swerve from the code of conduct Devayani” said he. “I had always considered my Guru as my father and more so now, since I have come out of him. Therefore, I cannot even think of you as my wife. Well, if this knowledge I have learnt will not be of use to me, I will teach it to others so that they can benefit. I am leaving!”

So saying he bowed to his Guru Shukracharya, who did not say a word against what Kacha had said, for he knew the worth of Kacha whose esteem had gone up multifold in his eyes.

Devayani eventually went on to marry King Yayati which is another interesting story I will narrate sometime later.

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Story - Knowledge beyond books

Article Link :

[**https://storibuzz.in/knowledge-beyond-books/**](https://storibuzz.in/knowledge-beyond-books/)

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, the Guru of Swami Vivekananda often used little tales and stories to impart his teachings to his devotees. Earlier I have narrated another tale, ‘Gopal and the cow-herd’ narrated by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa which you can read [here.](https://storibuzz.in/little-gopal-and-the-cowherd/)

Another tale of his that I am going to narrate illustrates that mere bookish knowledge is not enough to survive in this world.

Once there was a very learned man (Pandit) in a village. He had learnt a lot of things like grammar, Upanishads, six philosophies of Sanskrit (Shad-Darshana), Astronomy etc. and was very proud of his knowledge. Whenever he got a chance, he never failed to show off his knowledge.

One day he had to cross the river to go to another village. It was monsoon time and the river was huge and very deep. Therefore it was necessary for the Pandit to travel by a boat. He got into a boat with five others and when the boat started to move, he struck a conversation with his neighbour.

“Where are you from, young man?” asked the Pandit.

“From the village across the river, sir” said the man.

“What do you do for a living?” the Pandit asked.

“I am a carpenter, sir. I make things from wood” said the man.

“Up to what level have you studied?”

“To a certain extent, sir” replied the man.

“Have you studied the Upanishads?” asked the Pandit.

“No. I have not even heard of that” said the man.

With a scornful smile the Pandit said “Well, if you have not, a quarter of your life has been wasted. Have you at least heard of Vyakarana (grammar)?”

The man shook his head. “No Panditji. I have never heard of that either”

“What? You do not know Vyakarana? Hmm. Then half of your life is gone” said the Pandit in a sarcastic tone. “Okay, tell me if you at least know that there is something called Shad-Darshana, the six philosophies”.

The man blinked and after few moments shook his head to indicate that he did not know what the Pandit was speaking about.

“Heh heh! You don’t know about this also? Then three fourths of your life is gone. Ha!” said the Pandit laughing mockingly.

Just then, a storm started to blow and the boat was twisting left and right, jumping up and down. All the passengers lost their balance and were struggling to sit on the seats. The boat-man tried to veer the boat to safety but the storm was much stronger and his efforts were in vain.

“All of you please be ready to swim to safety if the boat capsizes” announced the boat-man and all the passengers tied up their dhotis ready to jump into the river as the Pandit was watching in panic.

The carpenter, who the Pandit was mocking at earlier, looked at the Pandit and asked, “Panditji, do you know swimming?”

“N..No…No” said the Pandit in a voice filled with panic.

The carpenter said “Oh! So sad! If you don’t know swimming your whole life is gone!”

It was then that the Pandit realised that bookish knowledge is not everything in life.

Alas! It was too late by then.

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Story - Kuroor Amma and her little Krishna

Article Link :

[**https://storibuzz.in/kuroor-amma-and-her-little-krishna/**](https://storibuzz.in/kuroor-amma-and-her-little-krishna/)

With Janmashtami, the birthday of our beloved Krishna, round the corner, I am bringing you the story of one of the devotees who was so very dear to Krishna.

She was from Kerala and Kuroor Amma was her name.

Kuroor Amma was born as Dhathri Kutty in Kerala in Purayannur Mana to a pious Namboodiri couple in 1570 CE. Some say her name was Gauri Antarjanam. Dhathri Kutty was very attached to Lord Shri Krishna from a very young age.

Once an enlightened Yogi happened to visit her father’s house when Dhathri Kutty was still a young maiden yet to be married. As was customary, the Yogi was welcomed with due respect and was served a nice meal for lunch along with Payasam. The Yogi, tasted the Payasam and said to the Namboodiri, “This Payasam must have been offered to Lord Krishna which is why it is so tasty. Who made this Payasam? I want to see the person who made this”

Namboodiri was pleased and said “Yes Swami. This Payasam was prepared by my daughter Dhathri Kutty. But, she is a young maiden and so…” Namboodiri was hesitant, as it was not the practice, for young girls to meet men who were strangers.

“It is okay, please bring her. She is a blessed soul and I want to see her and there is nothing wrong” said the Yogi.

When he saw the shy Dhathri Kutty who looked so saintly, he asked her what she desired. Dhathri, without batting an eyelid replied that she wished to see the Lord of Brindavan and hear his flute always.

The Yogi said, “Well my girl, I will teach you a Mantra, which if you chant with sincerity and devotion, your wish shall be fulfilled.” He went on to teach her the Venugopala Mantra which she received with great devotion and chanted faithfully.

In due course of time, she was married to the Namboodiripad of the Kuroor Mana family which was near Vengilasery and she regularly worshipped with utmost devotion, the deity Venugopala, of Adat temple near her house. Guruvayoor was slightly farther away and she visited Guruvayoor also whenever she could and prayed to Lord Guruvayoorappan who was none other than Krishna.

Shortly afterwards, when she was in the prime of her youth, she was widowed. She had no children. Now Venugopala was her sole refuge. She, being the eldest daughter-in-law of the Kuroor Mana, came to be known as Kuroor Amma. And she considered herself Amma, to the little Venugopala and was a fiercely protective mother like any normal mother.

Years rolled by and age caught up with Kuroor Amma. All the other family members of Kuroor Mana had migrated to other places and she was left alone in that big house with no help whatsoever. Still she did not give up her routine of visiting the Venugopala temple and Guruvayoor.

Once it so happened that Kuroor Amma had gone to Guruvayoor to have darshan of her Krishna and that day it was raining heavily. In those days people had to go by walk only and Amma had to go back a long distance to reach her home. It was evening and as the rain reduced to a drizzle, Kuroor Amma set out to walk back to her home. The sun had set and there was no electricity in those days and Amma, due to old age, darkness and anxiety, missed the correct route and went into the deep dense jungle.

After going some distance, she heard the noises of wild animals. It was then that she realized that she had lost her way. Not knowing what to do, she started to pray to her Krishna. “Narayana, Narayana, Guruvayoorappa, Krishna” were the only words she was chanting. Suddenly she heard the sound of anklets nearby and as she turned around, a small boy who looked like a cowherd appeared.

“Amma, why are you going into the deep jungle?” he asked her.

“I lost my way Unni” she said. Unni is the word in Malayalam denoting ‘small boy’

“Come I will show you the way” said Unni and led her hand and slowly both of them walked back to Kuroor Mana.

Amma was so overwhelmed with gratitude and wanted to gift him something. But the boy refused. When Amma insisted, Unni said with a shy smile, “Amma, my loin cloth has become wet due to the rain and I need a dry cloth”

Kuroor Amma, unhesitatingly tore a piece of cloth from her red saree and gave it to Unni. The lad ran out of the house and vanished.

The next day Amma again went to Guruvayoor temple for the morning darshan which is called “Nirmalyam”. When the door of the sanctum sanctorum opened, Guruvayoorappan was dazzling in all the jewels and finery with which he had been draped, the previous evening, but what shocked everyone was that a piece of an old red saree was adorning him as his loin cloth. No one knew how it had come on the person of Lord Krishna. Why would anyone drape a piece of a used saree on the Lord?

Kuroor Amma recognized the red cloth. Indeed it was the piece of her saree she had given to the boy the previous day! She was in tears when she realized the Krishna had come as Unni and led her home.

Few more years passed and Kuroor Amma had aged even more. She was not able to walk long distances or go to the temple. She found it difficult to do even small chores and wished for some company to be with her and help her. One day a small boy came to her.

“I don’t have a place to stay Amma” said the boy. “May I stay with you?”

Kuroor Amma smiled sadly and said, “Unni, I am not able to do my own chores as I have grown very old. How will I look after you?”

The boy replied, “Amma need not look after me. I will look after Amma!”

He stayed on in her house. He helped her in everything right from washing clothes, cleaning the house, cooking and arranging for Pooja and all the household work and was of great solace to Amma.

Now in the same period, there lived a Sanyasi by name Vilvamangalam Swamiyar who was also a devotee of Shri Krishna having been initiated by the same Yogi who gave the Mantra to Kuroor Amma. And Swamiyar was lucky for Krishna played with and teased him many a time showing his true form as a little boy, to Swamiyar’s eyes.

One day Kuroor Amma invited Vilvamangalam Swamiyar to her house for Bhiksha (Feeding). The Swamiyar was supposed to go to Kuroor Mana, perform Pooja to Lord Krishna and accept the food offered by Kuroor Amma. On the same day another family from Chemmangat Mana also had called Vilvamangalam Swamiyar to their house for Bhiksha. Kuroor Amma came to know of this and was worried, but Unni consoled her and said with great confidence that Swamiyar would certainly come to their house only. Unni also made all the arrangements for the Pooja.

Although he had promised Kuroor Amma that he would come to her house, Swamiyar changed his mind at the last moment and asked his group to move with him to Chemmangat Mana for Bhiksha. The protocol was that, before the Swamiyar left for any place, a conch would be blown by a person of the entourage and only then the Swamiyar would start. Now, when the conch was attempted to be blown, no sound emanated from it. Different persons tried to blow the conch but of no avail. Then the Swamiyar realized that it was because he was breaking his promise made to Kuroor Amma. He told his disciples to change the direction and move towards Kuroor Amma’s house and then, when the conch was blown sound emanated beautifully from the conch.

Now, Swamiyar went to Kuroor Mana to be welcomed by a small boy who washed his feet and led him and his group in. The Swamiyar went inside the Pooja room to find a beautifully decorated altar and all the requirements perfectly fulfilled. Swamiyar looked up questioningly at Kuroor Amma as he wondered how she could have done such elaborate arrangements at this age and Amma smilingly indicated that Unni had done all the arrangements. Swamiyar sat down to perform Pooja and started offering flowers at the feet of the Murthi of Krishna which was kept on a pedestal. To his shock, the flowers went and fell at the feet of Unni who was standing nearby.

One of the Swamiyar’s disciples chided Unni and told him to move further away. Still the flowers fell near Unni’s feet leaving Swamiyar puzzled. Krishna then decided not to tease Swamiyar anymore.

After the Pooja was over, Swamiyar was to be offered Bhiksha and traditionally the protocol was that rice should be served by a married man of the household where the Bhiksha was offered. When he sat down to eat, Unni came and served the rice and Swamiyar got really angry.

“Is there no Grihasta (married man) belonging to this household? Don’t you know that Bhiksha to a Sanyasi is to be done by a Grihasta and not a small boy?” he asked.

Unni curled his lips and gave a sarcastic smile.

“Thrilokee Grihastaya Vishno Namaste” he chanted. “Adi Sankara said that. Don’t you know?” he asked Swamiyar. This verse meant “I pay obeisance to that Vishnu, the householder of the universe”

Swamiyar was taken aback. Praying to Lord Krishna, he looked at Unni. Unni showed his true form to Swamiyar, but signaled to him to not tell Kuroor Amma. It is said that in 1640 CE Kuroor Amma blissfully reached the Lotus feet of her Krishna after relishing his divine company for many years without even realizing that it was He who was at her service, in return for her unwavering faith in Him.

P.S: I am thankful for the grace of Yogini Kuroor Amma and Shri Krishna without which I would not have stumbled upon the article of Shri Chittoor Narayanan which has been published in the Bhavan’s Journal in August 1984 and which gave me lot of inputs for this story.

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Story - Dharmabuddhi and Papabuddhi – A tale from the Panchatantra

Article Link :

[**https://storibuzz.in/dharmabuddhi-and-papabuddhi-a-tale-from-the-panchatantra/**](https://storibuzz.in/dharmabuddhi-and-papabuddhi-a-tale-from-the-panchatantra/)

This is a tale from the chapter Loss of friends (Mitra Bheda) of Panchatantra.

In a city in the north of India, there lived two young men, Dharmabuddhi and Papabuddhi who were friends. Both were doing business. Dharmabuddhi had good business skills. Papabuddhi decided to take advantage of that and make quick money.

One day, in a very friendly manner he spoke to Dharmabuddhi. “Dharma” he said. “You are very wise and have good business skills. Should we not go to far-off places and earn well while we are young? Once we are old, we need to have enough wealth to sustain ourselves as we may not be able to work so hard then”

Dharmabuddhi thought that it was a very sensible advice coming from his friend Papabuddhi and immediately agreed to it. “What you say is very true Papa” he said. “We will both go to far-off places and trade in the goods we deal in, earn enough money and come back in some months. Make arrangements for the travel.”

And so, off they went carrying their wares in a huge bullock cart. They visited places far and wide and made good money mainly due to Dharmabuddhi’s efforts. Papabuddhi’s contribution was lesser both in terms of stock and enterprise. But Dharmabuddhi, as his name suggests, was very magnanimous and so on the way back, thanked Papabuddhi for his excellent idea due to which they had earned a good amount of money. He further told him, “We will share whatever we have earned equally.”

Papabuddhi’s crooked mind was at work already. He pretended to agree with Dharmabuddhi. Then, he said, “Dharma, if the people in the city come to know that we have earned a lot of money, there may be people who will trouble us for loans. So, I suggest that we find a spot in the woods, before we reach our village and bury the major portion of the money there and we will come later and take it”

Dharmabuddhi agreed with the idea and accordingly, and when they were nearing the village found a spot in the dense woods and dug a deep pit, counted and put the coins earned in two bags distributing them equally, keeping very less money with them.

Days passed and one day, Papabuddhi cunningly went to the woods and dug the place and took both the money bags to his house. In the evening, he went to Dharmabuddhi’s house on a usual friendly visit and invited him to come with him to the woods the next day as he needed some money.

The next day when both of them went to the spot and dug the pit there was nothing to be found as Papabuddhi had already taken away all the money.

Papabuddhi started yelling at Dharmabuddhi. “How dare you steal my bag of money huh? Do you not have any shame? Or one bit of gratitude that it was because of me that you were able to earn so much money? Where have you hidden my money? Give it to me right now!”

Dharmabuddhi was shell-shocked, not able to correlate anything that Papabuddhi was speaking. “Calm down, calm down my friend Papa. I am not able to understand how the bags disappeared” said he.

“Don’t pretend not to know anything Dharma!” said Papabuddhi. “You have gone before me and stolen my money too. Since only you and I know this matter and also the place where we buried the money, no one else could have stolen the money. Come on, tell me where the money is else we may have to call for a Panchayat” he said angrily. (Panchayat was the body consisting of the elders of the village and whenever there was a dispute it was presented before the Panchayat and their judgement and punishment was accepted by all parties concerned).

Dharmabuddhi was really in a state of utter disbelief. All the money gone? And stolen by him? What had happened? He was not able to figure out anything.

Papabuddhi would not let him think and went on ranting. “You are a thief. I believed you and spent my money and effort and this is what I get in return! Give me back my money bag or let’s go to the Panchayat”.

Dharmabuddhi did not know what to do but Papabuddhi insisted that he wanted this to be taken to the Panchayat and Dharmabuddhi was forced to agree.

Accordingly the Panchayat assembled under the huge Peepul tree in the village as was the usual custom and both Papabuddhi and Dharmabuddhi were asked to narrate their side of the dispute. Papabuddhi repeatedly accused Dharmabuddhi of stealing the money and Dharmabuddhi repeatedly pleaded ignorance.

The elders in the Panchayat were in a fix. They asked Papabuddhi, “Was there any evidence when the money was buried?” Papabuddhi immediately said, “Yes the there was a big tree with a hollow very near to the pit we dug and the Tree God would surely know the truth. So let’s go to the woods tomorrow and ask the Tree God” said he. The elders had to agree as this seemed the only way to find the truth.

The same day, Papabuddhi told his father of what had happened. He said, “If you want your son not to be punished, you will have to sit inside the hollow and reply when the elders ask questions. I shall take you early in the morning and help hide you in the hollow of the tree”.

The father, instead of condemning the wrong done by his son Papabuddhi, wilfully agreed to sit inside the hollow and pretend to be the Tree God. So, off they went early next morning before sunrise, so that no one would see them and Papabuddhi helped his father hide inside the hollow of the tree near the pit.

As the day dawned all the elders of the Panchayat and Dharmabuddhi assembled near the tree where the pit was said to have been dug and money hid and stolen. True. The tree had a very broad trunk and also had a huge hollow.

Papabuddhi explained to the elders about where they dug the pit and buried the money which had disappeared for which Dharmabuddhi was the suspect. He pointed to the tree and told the elders to ask the Tree God. The elders went nearer to the tree and the oldest member folded his hands and addressed the Tree God. “Oh Tree God!” said he. “Please tell us who came and took the money from this pit in front of you. Please O’ Tree God! Please guide us.”

There was silence for a while and then, an elderly voice sounded from the tree.

“It was Dharmabuddhi” said the voice. “He came and took all the money and I am the witness to that!”

The members of the Panchayat were shocked as every one of them had a high opinion about Dharmabuddhi and what the Tree God said was in stark contrast. They were all expressing their shock and talking vociferously to each other. They were so busy that they did not notice what Dharmabuddhi was doing.

Dharmabuddhi had collected lot of dry twigs and leaves and arranged it around the trunk of the tree and before anyone could notice, he set fire to it.

Just as the fire began to burn brightly, it caught the attention of the elders and they all looked with horror as the “Tree God” started yelling. And as they looked on, a figure jumped out of the hollow. “Ouch!” he cried as he stepped on a burning twig and went around hopping on one leg. His dhoti caught fire and then he was recognized by the people there and he collapsed.

“Hey that is Papabuddhi’s father!” exclaimed one.

“Yes, it is him. How come?” asked another.

They all guessed what could have happened and one of them rushed and caught hold of Papabuddhi and raised his hand to slap him.

“I am sorry, I am sorry! Please do not beat me!” cried Papabuddhi. “It was I who stole the money. It was I who told my father to hide in the hollow!”

All the others surrounded Papabuddhi as he confessed to his crime. The elders decided the harshest punishment for Papabuddhi and Dharmabuddhi’s money was rightfully restored to him.

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Story - Story of Meiporul Nayanar

Article Link :

[**https://storibuzz.in/story-of-meiporul-nayanar/**](https://storibuzz.in/story-of-meiporul-nayanar/)

Dear Readers, this time I am bringing a story of the Nayanmars after a long time.

If you are reading a Nayanmar story for the first time, you may read the background guide on Nayanmars by clicking here.

This is the story of Meiporul Nayanar. I do not know the exact timeline of Meiporul Nayanar but it should be before the 8th century since the eighth century saint-poet Sundaramoorthy Nayanar (Sundarar) has mentioned him in his Thiruthonda Thogai.

Meiporul was a chieftain of Miladu Nadu, which was the area around the modern Tirukkoyilur in Tamil Nadu. These chieftains had the title of Chedi Rayars and Meiporul was one of the best rulers Miladu Nadu had seen. He had all the qualities of a noble ruler and was strong both physically and mentally. No enemy could defeat him in whatever manner they tried. His subjects were extremely happy and satisfied under his rule.

Not only was he a good king, but he was also an ardent devotee of Lord Shiva. So much was his devotion, that he would regard any one sporting holy-ash (Vibhuti) and Rudraksha as the form of Lord Shiva and worship them. Hence any Saivite saints (called Shivanadiyaars) could go to his palace to meet him at any time of the day or night without any security check.

Now, there was a chieftain of a neighbouring kingdom, by name Muthanathan who was envious of Meiporul and the prosperity of his kingdom. He was always aiming at annexing Meiporul’s territory. He had attacked the Tirukkoyilur a couple of times but met with defeat every time. He was fuming with the insult he had had to swallow and was wondering how he could kill Meiporul and usurp his territory. Meiporul did not have any vices and there was no way by which he could be enticed and trapped.

Muthanathan thought for a long time and got a wicked idea.

After a few weeks, one night, a Saivite saint (Shivanadiyaar) was seen walking towards the palace of Meiporul. It was late night and very dark. The saint was dressed in saffron robes, sported a long beard and had Vibhuti smeared all over his body and forehead. He wore strings of Rudraksha beads on his neck, ears and around his arms too. He was carrying something that seemed to be old palm leaf manuscripts wrapped in a cloth. His hair was tied up in a bun on the top of his head.

The saint was walking straight into the palace as if he had an appointment with Meiporul. None of the security guards could stop and check him as they had strict instructions never to stop or question any Shivanadiyaar who wanted to meet Meiporul.

He entered the palace and walked past room after room looking for Meiporul. Meiporul had gone to rest. The saint seemed to realize that Meiporul had gone to sleep and started walking towards the bedroom chamber. This was guarded by one Dathan. Instinctively Dathan did not like the sight of the saint walking right up to the bedroom chamber at this odd hour. He tried to prevent the saint from walking in.

The saint just brushed Dathan aside and went into the bedroom. Meiporul’s wife who had still not slept, stood up on seeing the saint and woke up Meiporul. Meiporul was extremely delighted to see a Shivanadiyaar walk straight in to meet him. He hurriedly fell at the saint’s feet and told his wife to bring a golden plate and some scented water to wash the feet of the saint. He offered the saint a seat.

“No need of any offering to me Meiporul. I have come here to impart to you some rare knowledge on emancipation from this mortal life. This knowledge was imparted to me by none other than Lord Shiva himself” said the saint pointing to the packet he was carrying.

“I am ready to learn what you want to teach me O holy one!” said Meiporul as he sat at the feet of the Shivanadiyaar.

Dathan was watching from the entrance of the room with suspicion and Meiporul’s wife was also in the room.

The saint noticed them and told Meiporul, “Please ask everybody to go out of the room and close the door. What I teach must be heard only by you as per the instruction of Lord Shiva”.

Meiporul told his wife and Dathan to leave the room. He went and closed the door.

He came back and sat on the ground, at the feet of the saint who was seated on a seat. He bowed his head expecting the saint to tell him the secret knowledge in a low tone. The saint also bent down, pretending to open the cloth bundle and take out the palm leaf scripts and within seconds had stabbed Meiporul repeatedly on the back with a dagger which was hidden in the cloth bundle. All one could hear was the muffled sound of Meiporul. The saint was none other than Muthanathan.

Dathan’s sharp ears picked up the sound as he was just outside and he rushed in to see his beloved king on the ground in a pool of blood. Dathan recognized Muthanathan now and came swiftly towards him with a raised dagger when Meiporul stopped him. In a weak voice and panting for breath, he said, “Datha, do not harm him. Even if he is our sworn enemy, he is Lord Shiva to me as long as he is wearing the attire of a Shivanadiyaar. Please escort him to outside the city as our people will not spare him if they know what has happened. So please go and leave him safely and come back”

Dathan was in terrible sorrow and was crying bitterly, overwhelmed by Meiporul’s devotion to Lord Shiva and his magnanimity. He had to, however obey the king and he escorted Muthanathan. By this time many people had come to know what had happened and charged at Muthanathan with sticks and stones, but Dathan shielded him and told the people about Meiporul’s order. He then went and left Muthanathan at the outskirts and returned back to the palace and conveyed to Meiporul that his order had been complied with.

As Meiporul’s life was ebbing away Lord Shiva appeared to Meiporul and all present and blessed Meiporul to come with Him to Kailash. Meiporul breathed his last in this mortal world and entered the world of bliss with Lord Shiva. He came to be known as ‘Meiporul Nayanar’.

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Story - The story of the vulture and the cunning cat

Article Link :

[**https://storibuzz.in/the-story-of-the-vulture-and-the-cunning-cat/**](https://storibuzz.in/the-story-of-the-vulture-and-the-cunning-cat/)

This is a story from the Hitopadesha.

Long long ago in the forests of central India , there was a huge banyan tree. The tree was house to hundreds of birds who had built nests on the innumerable branches. All the birds left the tree during the day to look for food and came back by nightfall.

During a particular time of the year, lots of chicks had hatched on the tree and the parent birds were compelled to leave them and go to look for food.

One day, late in the evening, a very old vulture by name Grudhra , battered by age and could barely fly , came to the tree. His eyesight had also become very bad due to his age . He was walking very slowly and was almost about to hit the tree when some of the birds saw him. He was a huge figure and they were frightened by him but soon realised that he was almost blind and had blunt claws and beak and so could not harm anyone.

Some of the bolder birds came down and asked him ” Who are you Sir and may we ask what you are doing here??” The vulture said “My name is Grudhra and I am an orphan. I have become very weak due to age that I have to struggle to get food every day. I have not had food for days and have come wandering in search of food.” The birds felt pity on him and offered him a deal. They told him, “Sir, we have our chicks on the tree and we have to go out the whole day for food and there is no one to look after them. So if you stay in the hollow at the bottom of the tree and look after our chicks from danger while we are out, we shall bring you food everyday”. Grudhra was happy and he agreed to the deal.

Accordingly, from the next day, the vulture used to come out of the hollow and stand under the tree the whole day and the small animals like fox and cats who were on the prowl to hunt the chicks were intimidated by the imposing figure of the vulture and kept away. In the evenings the birds used to bring food for the vulture. This arrangement went on well for quite some days and both the vulture and the birds were happy.

One day a cunning cat by name Bidaala slowly came near the tree. He had seen so many chicks and was very eager to devour some of them. But suddenly he noticed Grudhra and was taken aback. He thought the vulture would pounce on him and he would be minced meat in moments. But to his surprise, Grudhra slowly turned around and in a deep voice asked “Who is there???” The clever Bidaala understood that the vulture was blind but he could not underestimate the power of a vulture. So he said in a meek voice , “I am a mendicant cat by name Bidaala and I am on a yatra to see the holy places in this part of the country. Sorry if I have disturbed you Sir”. Grudhra could not see the cat clearly and the voice of the cat was so meek that he believed what he said.

“Oh! Welcome. I am Grudhra , an old vulture and guardian of these birds” said the vulture. “You may be my guest in the hollow of the tree where I reside for as many days as you please Sir.” he continued. The cat said ,”Oh! call me Bidaala. I am much younger to you Sir and it is my good fortune to serve elderly souls like you”. Grudhra was very pleased as he had got a companion to talk during day time.

Slowly Bidaala won the confidence of Grudhra. He stayed in the hollow being careful enough to come out of the hollow only when the last of the birds had left and go back in before the birds came back in the evening.

One day he tried his fortune and deftly caught a chick by its neck from one of the lower branches, so quickly that it could not make noise. Swiftly he ran into the bushes and devoured the chick. All the other chicks made lot of noise but Grudhra could not see any animal nearby and soon the noise died down. This started happening once in three days and later became more frequent. The parent birds noticed the missing ones but were at a loss to find out who was behind it. Bidaala was careful to leave the bones in the bushes.

One day a crane who had also lost one of her chicks happened to see the bunch of bones in the bushes. Coincidentally, the vulture was not able to eat much food in the evenings as he was feeling little sick. The crane told the birds of the heap of bones and they came to a conclusion that it was Grudhra who had devoured their little ones and therefore was not eating well in the evenings.

Poor Grudhra! The birds had unanimously decided to attack Grudhra and they swooped on him, swarmed around him pecking him with their beaks and claws making lot of noise .Grudhra tried to protest as Bidaala watched in horror from the hollow. Finally, Grudhra, not able to bear the attack sank and fell down senseless. He could not speak and life was ebbing away.

Then , the birds flew up the tree their anger still simmering. Just then, Bidaala slinked out of the hollow and started running towards the bushes where he used to devour the chicks. The birds , only then noticed Bidaala and understood that it was Bidaala, not Grudhra who was the real culprit.

Alas! it was too late. They had killed a member of their own clan who was innocent and was so old.

P.S. This happens with us human beings too. So choose your friends carefully and do not act in a haste.

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Story - Devotion to Mother – Story of Bayazid Bostami

Article Link :

[**https://qsstudy.com/devotion-to-mother-story-of-bayazid-bostami/**](https://qsstudy.com/devotion-to-mother-story-of-bayazid-bostami/)

Bayazid Bostami was a small boy. His mother was ill. One night the entire village was in deep sleep. He was studying by the side of the bed of his ailing mother. But all on a sudden, his mother woke upraised her head and told her son to give her a glass of water. Bayazid went to the kitchen to bring water but he found no water there. He looked for water everywhere in the house. He was so much devoted to his mother and loved her very dearly. He felt great pity for his thirsty mother. As a result, he went to a distant fountain to fetch water. But the nearby water hole was far away from the home. He took the pitcher and started walking to the water hole. Reaching to the hole he filled the pitcher and returned home as early as possible. He came back with water and found his mother asleep. He did not wake her. He thought awakening his mother may sour up her illness. Holding a glass of water in a hand, he is still beside his mother’s bed. He was waiting for his mother’s waking. But she was sound asleep.

When it was dawn Bayazid’s mother woke up and instantly discovered her son standing beside her bed with a glass of water in hand. At first, she could not understand anything. She wondered for a moment. Then she could realize the fact. She could not control her tears. She embraced her son with deep love and blessed him from the core of her heart. The mother impressed with his son’s devotion to her and blessed him from the core of her heart. Then she remembered and embraced her son with deep love. She earnestly prayed to Allah to bless her son with the highest honor in spiritual life. Allah granted her prayer and Bayazid became a great saint in his later life.

[Note: This is Bayazid’s devotion to his mother or Bayazid’s love for his mother’s short story or Bayazid and his mother or Bayazid Bostami completing the story in short in English with morals.]

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Story - The Thirsty Crow

Article Link :

[**https://www.moralstories.org/the-thirsty-crow/**](https://www.moralstories.org/the-thirsty-crow/)

One hot day, a thirsty crow flew all over the fields looking for water. For a long time, he could not find any. He felt very weak, almost lost all hope. Suddenly, he saw a water jug below the tree. He flew straight down to see if there was any water inside. Yes, he could see some water inside the jug!

The crow tried to push his head into the jug. Sadly, he found that the neck of the jug was too narrow. Then he tried to push the jug to tilt for the water to flow out, but the jug was too heavy.

The crow thought hard for a while. Then, looking around it, he saw some pebbles. He suddenly had a good idea. He started picking up the pebbles one by one, dropping each into the jug. As more and more pebbles filled the jug, the water level kept rising. Soon it was high enough for the crow to drink. His plan had worked!

Moral: Think and work hard, you may find solution to any problem.

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Story - Time and Tide Wait for None

Article Link :

[**https://www.toppr.com/guides/essays/time-and-tide-wait-for-none/**](https://www.toppr.com/guides/essays/time-and-tide-wait-for-none/)

Time and tide wait for none this idiom is apt in today’s world. As the world is moving at a fast pace nobody has got time to waist. Moreover, time never stops, the clock is always ticking. Therefore to use our time we should work hard every second. Because if time once has gone, we cannot regain it. It is the most precious thing a person can have.

Time and Tide Wait for None Essay

With time everything is possible, it’s just that you should have a dedication towards utilizing it. Also, various successful people know how to manage their time. And that is the reason they are successful. You can earn money by using time but you can never earn time by using money.

Story on Time and Tide Wait for None

Since we all know the story of the rabbit and the tortoise, this story is perfect for the idiom. But if you don’t know anything about the story let me narrate it. Once there was a tortoise who was slow in running he was always criticized by others for his slow pace.

But instead, there was a rabbit in their community who used to run fast. Moreover, everyone praised him for his speed. So to show his skills and to humiliate tortoise the rabbit challenged him for a race. The tortoise accepted the challenge because he never wanted any more humiliation.

The race was scheduled after two days. To win the race, the rabbit practiced hard. Moreover, he started celebrating his victory beforehand. The tortoise was humble he had never thought of winning the race. Yet he was eager to give his best.

So the race started on the third the day of the challenge. Everyone knew that the rabbit would win. Therefore the rabbit was overconfident of himself. The rabbit ate a lot before the race thinking if he would even walk then also he will win the race. But the tortoise had a determination to give his best.

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After some time the race started the tortoise was very slow but he kept on moving. On the other hand, the rabbit was running at a very fast pace.

Therefore he was able to reach half the distance of the race track within a few minutes. After reaching that distance he thought that he should take rest. So he lied down under a tree to take a little rest. But soon he went to sleep without realizing because he had eaten so much food before the race. While he was sleeping the tortoise constantly moved with time. Neither did he stop nor did he take any rest.

Thus he was able to cross the rabbit while he was sleeping. When he was about to reach the finish line the rabbit woke up. He rushed towards the finish line. But it was too late till then the tortoise was much ahead than him. So he crossed the finished line in the first place. The Rabbit cried after losing the race. While the tortoise was celebrating the victory.

After reading the story you must be sure that ‘time and tide wait for none’. Because the tortoise worked hard and utilized the time so he was able to succeed in the race. Also, our life is like that only, to achieve success we must work hard with time. Moreover, we should always utilize our time in the best manner. Only then we will be able to achieve success in life.

FAQs on Time and Tide Wait for None

Q1. Why was the rabbit not able to win the race?

A1. The rabbit was not able to win the race because he wasted his time in sleeping.

Q2. What is the meaning of the idiom ‘Time and Tide waits for none’

A2. The meaning is that time moves. In other words, it never stops for anybody.

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Story - The Story Of Aladdin And The Magic Lamp For Kids

Article Link :

[**https://www.momjunction.com/articles/the-story-of-aladdin-and-the-magic-lamp\_00353880/**](https://www.momjunction.com/articles/the-story-of-aladdin-and-the-magic-lamp_00353880/)

Once upon a time, there was a poor boy named Aladdin who lived with his mother. One day, a rich stranger came to their house looking for Aladdin. ‘I am a merchant,’ he told Aladdin’s mother. ‘I have come all the way from Arabia. I want to take your boy with me for a little work, but I will pay him so much that you will not be poor anymore.’

Aladdin’s mother soon agreed because they really needed the money. However, she did not know that the man who said he was a merchant was actually a magician.

The next day, Aladdin packed his things and left with the merchant. They traveled for many hours, after which the merchant stopped. Aladdin was surprised, as it was a lonely spot and there was nothing or no one anywhere.

The merchant took out some colored powder from his pocket. Then he threw it at the ground and the next moment there was smoke all around. As the smoke cleared away, Aladdin saw a big opening in the ground like a cave. The merchant asked Aladdin to go inside the cave. ‘You will see lots gold inside, more than you will ever see in your life. Take as much as you want. Inside the cave, you will also see an old lamp. Just get it out for me.’ Aladdin became suspicious, but he entered the cave.

Inside, he saw the cave was filled with gold. He filled up his pockets with gold and stuffed in as much as he could. When he could take no more gold, he looked for the lamp and found it. It was old and dirty. He took the lamp and called out to the merchant to help him out. ‘Give me the lamp first,’ the merchant said. Aladdin was afraid that if he gave the lamp to the merchant, he would leave him there. So he said ‘Please pull me out first.’

The merchant got angry and took out some more powder from his pocket. He threw it at the cave and the opening of the cave became shut with a huge rock. Aladdin was scared. He waited inside and shouted, hoping that someone would come and help. But many hours passed and no one came. As Aladdin was sitting alone, he started cleaning the lamp. Suddenly, a strange fog filled up the room and a voice said, ‘My Master, I am the genie of this lamp. What is your wish?’ It was a huge man who looked very strange and Aladdin was afraid of him. But the genie assured him that he would do as Aladdin asked him. ‘Take me to my home’ he said.

The next instant, Aladdin was home and with his mother. They hugged each other and Aladdin told her all about his adventure. Aladdin called the genie again and he appeared, but now they were not afraid of him. He asked the genie for a palace and soon they were living inside a beautiful palace instead of the old hut where Aladdin had lived all his life.

As people got to know about the rich Aladdin, he became more famous. He was now married to the princess, the daughter of the Sultan, and they were very happy. The magician too heard all about Aladdin. He came to Aladdin’s palace pretending to be an old man who exchanged old lamps and gave new. Aladdin had not told the princess about the magic lamp. She got it to give the magician. As soon as he saw the lamp he recognized it, and grabbing it, ran away.

He summoned the genie and he was now the new master. ‘Shift away Aladdin’s palace far away from here to the desert’ he said.

When Aladdin returned home he could not find his palace or his princess and mother. He was very worried, but then realized it must be the work of the evil magician who wanted to take revenge. Aladdin thought hard and remembered that he had a ring that the magician had given him and that it could still help him. He rubbed the ring and another genie appeared. ‘Take me to wherever my princess is,’ he commanded the genie.

The next moment Aladdin found himself in the desert in his palace. His princess was there and he was glad to see she was safe. The evil magician was also there and the magic lamp was placed on a table next to the magician. Before the magician could realize what was going on, Aladdin quickly jumped and grabbed the lamp. He quickly rubbed the lamp and lo and behold, the genie appeared.

‘My master,’ the genie said, ‘I am so happy to serve you again. What do you wish for?’ he asked. Aladdin looked at the magician and said, ‘I want you to send this evil magician to a different place, from where he can never return again or harm anyone. ‘

‘Whatever you wish for my master,’ said the genie, and the evil magician disappeared, never to return again.

The genie helped transport Aladdin back to where his palace was. There, Aladdin lived happily with his princess wife and his mother. The genie was also there along with Aladdin and his family, and they lived happily ever after.

Did you like the retelling of the famous Aladdin and the magic lamp short story summary here? Do share it with your kid by reading it out loud.

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Story - The Fisherman and His Wife

Article Link :

[**https://sites.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm019.html**](https://sites.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm019.html)

Once upon a time there were a fisherman and his wife who lived together in a filthy shack near the sea. Every day the fisherman went out fishing, and he fished, and he fished. Once he was sitting there fishing and looking into the clear water, and he sat, and he sat. Then his hook went to the bottom, deep down, and when he pulled it out, he had caught a large flounder.

Then the flounder said to him, "Listen, fisherman, I beg you to let me live. I am not an ordinary flounder, but an enchanted prince. How will it help you to kill me? I would not taste good to you. Put me back into the water, and let me swim."

"Well," said the man, "there's no need to say more. I can certainly let a fish swim away who knows how to talk."

With that he put it back into the clear water, and the flounder disappeared to the bottom, leaving a long trail of blood behind him.

Then the fisherman got up and went home to his wife in the filthy shack.

"Husband," said the woman, "didn't you catch anything today?"

"No," said the man. "I caught a flounder, but he told me that he was an enchanted prince, so I let him swim away."

"Didn't you ask for anything first?" said the woman.

"No," said the man. "What should I have asked for?"

"Oh," said the woman. "It is terrible living in this shack. It stinks and is filthy. You should have asked for a little cottage for us. Go back and call him. Tell him that we want to have a little cottage. He will surely give it to us."

"Oh," said the man. "Why should I go back there?"

"Look," said the woman, "you did catch him, and then you let him swim away. He will surely do this for us. Go right now."

The man did not want to go, but neither did he want to oppose his wife, so he went back to the sea.

When he arrived there it was no longer clear, but yellow and green. He stood there and said:

Mandje! Mandje! Timpe Te!

Flounder, flounder, in the sea!

My wife, my wife Ilsebill,

Wants not, wants not, what I will

The flounder swam up and said, "What does she want then?"

"Oh," said the man, "I did catch you, and now my wife says that I really should have asked for something. She doesn't want to live in a filthy shack any longer. She would like to have a cottage."

"Go home," said the flounder. "She already has it."

The man went home, and his wife was standing in the door of a cottage, and she said to him, "Come in. See, now isn't this much better?"

There was a little front yard, and a beautiful little parlor, and a bedroom where their bed was standing, and a kitchen, and a dining room. Everything was beautifully furnished and supplied with tin and brass utensils, just as it should be. And outside there was a little yard with chickens and ducks and a garden with vegetables and fruit.

"Look," said the woman. "Isn't this nice?"

"Yes," said the man. "This is quite enough. We can live here very well."

"We will think about that," said the woman.

Then they ate something and went to bed.

Everything went well for a week or two, and then the woman said, "Listen, husband. This cottage is too small. The yard and the garden are too little. The flounder could have given us a larger house. I would like to live in a large stone palace. Go back to the flounder and tell him to give us a palace."

"Oh, wife," said the man, "the cottage is good enough. Why would we want to live in a palace?"

"I know why," said the woman. "Now you just go. The flounder can do that."

"Now, wife, the flounder has just given us the cottage. I don't want to go back so soon. It may make the flounder angry."

"Just go," said the woman. "He can do it, and he won't mind doing it. Just go."

The man's heart was heavy, and he did not want to go. He said to himself, "This is not right," but he went anyway.

When he arrived at the sea the water was purple and dark blue and gray and dense, and no longer green and yellow. He stood there and said:

Mandje! Mandje! Timpe Te!

Flounder, flounder, in the sea!

My wife, my wife Ilsebill,

Wants not, wants not, what I will

"What does she want then?" said the flounder.

"Oh," said the man sadly, "my wife wants to live in a stone palace."

"Go home. She's already standing before the door," said the flounder.

Then the man went his way, thinking he was going home, but when he arrived, standing there was a large stone palace. His wife was standing on the stairway, about to enter.

Taking him by the hand, she said, "Come inside."

He went inside with her. Inside the palace there was a large front hallway with a marble floor. Numerous servants opened up the large doors for them. The walls were all white and covered with beautiful tapestry. In the rooms there were chairs and tables of pure gold. Crystal chandeliers hung from the ceilings. The rooms and chambers all had carpets. Food and the very best wine overloaded the tables until they almost collapsed. Outside the house there was a large courtyard with the very best carriages and stalls for horses and cows. Furthermore there was a magnificent garden with the most beautiful flowers and fine fruit trees and a pleasure forest a good half mile long, with elk and deer and hares and everything that anyone could possibly want.

"Now," said the woman, "isn't this nice?"

"Oh, yes" said the man. "This is quite enough. We can live in this beautiful palace and be satisfied."

"We'll think about it," said the woman. "Let's sleep on it." And with that they went to bed.

The next morning the woman woke up first. It was just daylight, and from her bed she could see the magnificent landscape before her. Her husband was just starting to stir when she poked him in the side with her elbow and said, "Husband, get up and look out the window. Look, couldn't we be king over all this land?"

"Oh, wife," said the man, "why would we want to be king? I don't want to be king."

"Well," said the woman, "even if you don't want to be king, I want to be king."

"Oh, wife," said the man, "why do you want to be king? I don't want to tell him that."

"Why not?" said the woman, "Go there immediately. I must be king."

So the man, saddened because his wife wanted to be king, went back.

"This is not right, not right at all," thought the man. He did not want to go, but he went anyway.

When he arrived at the sea it was dark gray, and the water heaved up from below and had a foul smell. He stood there and said:

Mandje! Mandje! Timpe Te!

Flounder, flounder, in the sea!

My wife, my wife Ilsebill,

Wants not, wants not, what I will

"What does she want then," said the flounder.

"Oh," said the man, "she wants to be king."

"Go home. She is already king," said the flounder.

Then the man went home, and when he arrived there, the palace had become much larger, with a tall tower and magnificent decorations. Sentries stood outside the door, and there were so many soldiers, and drums, and trumpets. When he went inside everything was of pure marble and gold with velvet covers and large golden tassels. Then the doors to the great hall opened up, and there was the entire court. His wife was sitting on a high throne of gold and diamonds. She was wearing a large golden crown, and in her hand was a scepter of pure gold and precious stones. On either side of her there stood a line of maids-in-waiting, each one a head shorter than the other.

"Oh, wife, are you now king?"

"Yes," she said, "now I am king."

He stood and looked at her, and after thus looking at her for a while he said, "Wife, it is very nice that you are king. Now we don't have to wish for anything else."

"No, husband," she said, becoming restless. "Time is on my hands. I cannot stand it any longer. Go to the flounder. I am king, but now I must become emperor."

"Oh, wife" said the man, "Why do you want to become emperor?"

"Husband," she said, "go to the flounder. I want to be emperor."

"Oh, wife," said the man, "he cannot make you emperor. I cannot tell the flounder to do that. There is only one emperor in the realm. The flounder cannot make you emperor. He cannot do that."

"What!" said the woman. "I am king, and you are my husband. Are you going? Go there immediately. If he can make me king then he can make me emperor. I want to be and have to be emperor. Go there immediately."

So he had to go. As he went on his way the frightened man thought to himself, "This is not going to end well. To ask to be emperor is shameful. The flounder is going to get tired of this."

With that he arrived at the sea. The water was all black and dense and boiling up from within. A strong wind blew over him that curdled the water. He stood there and said:

Mandje! Mandje! Timpe Te!

Flounder, flounder, in the sea!

My wife, my wife Ilsebill,

Wants not, wants not, what I will

"What does she want then?" said the flounder.

"Oh, flounder," he said, "my wife wants to become emperor."

"Go home," said the flounder. "She is already emperor."

Then the man went home, and when he arrived there, the entire palace was made of polished marble with alabaster statues and golden decoration. Soldiers were marching outside the gate, blowing trumpets and beating tympani and drums. Inside the house, barons and counts and dukes were walking around like servants. They opened the doors for him, which were made of pure gold. He went inside where his wife was sitting on a throne made of one piece of gold a good two miles high, and she was wearing a large golden crown that was three yards high, all set with diamonds and carbuncles. In the one hand she had a scepter, and in the other the imperial orb. Bodyguards were standing in two rows at her sides: each one smaller than the other, beginning with the largest giant and ending with the littlest dwarf, who was no larger than my little finger. Many princes and dukes were standing in front of her.

The man went and stood among them and said, "Wife, are you emperor now?"

"Yes," she said, "I am emperor."

He stood and looked at her, and after thus looking at her for a while, he said, "Wife, it is very nice that you are emperor."

"Husband," she said. "Why are you standing there? Now that I am emperor, and I want to become pope."

"Oh, wife!" said the man. "What do you not want? There is only one pope in all Christendom. He cannot make you pope."

"Husband," she said, "I want to become pope. Go there immediately. I must become pope this very day."

"No, wife," he said, "I cannot tell him that. It will come to no good. That is too much. The flounder cannot make you pope."

"Husband, what nonsense!" said the woman. "If he can make me emperor, then he can make me pope as well. Go there immediately. I am emperor, and you are my husband. Are you going?"

Then the frightened man went. He felt sick all over, and his knees and legs were shaking, and the wind was blowing over the land, and clouds flew by as the darkness of evening fell. Leaves blew from the trees, and the water roared and boiled as it crashed onto the shore. In the distance he could see ships, shooting distress signals as they tossed and turned on the waves. There was a little blue in the middle of the sky, but on all sides it had turned red, as in a terrible lightning storm. Full of despair he stood there and said:

Mandje! Mandje! Timpe Te!

Flounder, flounder, in the sea!

My wife, my wife Ilsebill,

Wants not, wants not, what I will

"What does she want then?" said the flounder.

"Oh," said the man, "she wants to become pope."

"Go home," said the flounder. "She is already pope."

Then he went home, and when he arrived there, there was a large church surrounded by nothing but palaces. He forced his way through the crowd. Inside everything was illuminated with thousands and thousands of lights, and his wife was clothed in pure gold and sitting on a much higher throne. She was wearing three large golden crowns. She was surrounded with church-like splendor, and at her sides there were two banks of candles. The largest was as thick and as tall as the largest tower, down to the smallest kitchen candle. And all the emperors and kings were kneeling before her kissing her slipper.

"Wife," said the man, giving her a good look, "are you pope now?"

"Yes," she said, "I am pope."

Then he stood there looking at her, and it was as if he were looking into the bright sun. After he had looked at her for a while he said, "Wife, It is good that you are pope!"

She stood there as stiff as a tree, neither stirring nor moving.

Then he said, "Wife, be satisfied now that you are pope. There is nothing else that you can become."

"I have to think about that," said the woman.

Then they both went to bed, but she was not satisfied. Her desires would not let her sleep. She kept thinking what she wanted to become next.

The man slept well and soundly, for he had run about a lot during the day, but the woman could not sleep at all, but tossed and turned from one side to the other all night long, always thinking about what she could become, but she could not think of anything.

Then the sun was about to rise, and when she saw the early light of dawn she sat up in bed and watched through the window as the sun came up.

"Aha," she thought. "Could not I cause the sun and the moon to rise?"

"Husband," she said, poking him in the ribs with her elbow, "wake up and go back to the flounder. I want to become like God."

The man, who was still mostly asleep, was so startled that he fell out of bed. He thought that he had misunderstood her, so, rubbing his eyes, he said, "Wife, what did you say?"

"Husband," she said, "I cannot stand it when I see the sun and the moon rising, and I cannot cause them to do so. I will not have a single hour of peace until I myself can cause them to rise."

She looked at him so gruesomely that he shuddered.

"Go there immediately. I want to become like God."

"Oh, wife," said the man, falling on his knees before her, "the flounder cannot do that. He can make you emperor and pope, but I beg you, be satisfied and remain pope."

Anger fell over her. Her hair flew wildly about her head. Tearing open her bodice she kicked him with her foot and shouted, "I cannot stand it! I cannot stand it any longer! Go there immediately!"

He put on his trousers and ran off like a madman.

Outside such a storm was raging that he could hardly stand on his feet. Houses and trees were blowing over. The mountains were shaking, and boulders were rolling from the cliffs into the sea. The sky was as black as pitch. There was thunder and lightning. In the sea there were great black waves as high as church towers and mountains, all capped with crowns of white foam.

Mandje! Mandje! Timpe Te!

Flounder, flounder, in the sea!

My wife, my wife Ilsebill,

Wants not, wants not, what I will

"What does she want then?" said the flounder.

"Oh," he said, "she wants to become like God."

"Go home. She is sitting in her filthy shack again."

And they are sitting there even today.

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Story - THE FOUR CLEVER BROTHERS

Article Link :

**https://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/175/grimms-fairy-tales/3135/the-four-clever-brothers/**

‘Dear children,’ said a poor man to his four sons, ‘I have nothing to give you; you must go out into the wide world and try your luck. Begin by learning some craft or another, and see how you can get on.’ So the four brothers took their walking-sticks in their hands, and their little bundles on their shoulders, and after bidding their father goodbye, went all out at the gate together. When they had got on some way they came to four crossways, each leading to a different country. Then the eldest said, ‘Here we must part; but this day four years we will come back to this spot, and in the meantime each must try what he can do for himself.’

So each brother went his way; and as the eldest was hastening on a man met him, and asked him where he was going, and what he wanted. ‘I am going to try my luck in the world, and should like to begin by learning some art or trade,’ answered he. ‘Then,’ said the man, ‘go with me, and I will teach you to become the cunningest thief that ever was.’ ‘No,’ said the other, ‘that is not an honest calling, and what can one look to earn by it in the end but the gallows?’ ‘Oh!’ said the man, ‘you need not fear the gallows; for I will only teach you to steal what will be fair game: I meddle with nothing but what no one else can get or care anything about, and where no one can find you out.’ So the young man agreed to follow his trade, and he soon showed himself so clever, that nothing could escape him that he had once set his mind upon.

The second brother also met a man, who, when he found out what he was setting out upon, asked him what craft he meant to follow. ‘I do not know yet,’ said he. ‘Then come with me, and be a star-gazer. It is a noble art, for nothing can be hidden from you, when once you understand the stars.’ The plan pleased him much, and he soon became such a skilful star-gazer, that when he had served out his time, and wanted to leave his master, he gave him a glass, and said, ‘With this you can see all that is passing in the sky and on earth, and nothing can be hidden from you.’

The third brother met a huntsman, who took him with him, and taught him so well all that belonged to hunting, that he became very clever in the craft of the woods; and when he left his master he gave him a bow, and said, ‘Whatever you shoot at with this bow you will be sure to hit.’

The youngest brother likewise met a man who asked him what he wished to do. ‘Would not you like,’ said he, ‘to be a tailor?’ ‘Oh, no!’ said the young man; ‘sitting cross-legged from morning to night, working backwards and forwards with a needle and goose, will never suit me.’ ‘Oh!’ answered the man, ‘that is not my sort of tailoring; come with me, and you will learn quite another kind of craft from that.’ Not knowing what better to do, he came into the plan, and learnt tailoring from the beginning; and when he left his master, he gave him a needle, and said, ‘You can sew anything with this, be it as soft as an egg or as hard as steel; and the joint will be so fine that no seam will be seen.’

After the space of four years, at the time agreed upon, the four brothers met at the four cross-roads; and having welcomed each other, set off towards their father’s home, where they told him all that had happened to them, and how each had learned some craft.

Then, one day, as they were sitting before the house under a very high tree, the father said, ‘I should like to try what each of you can do in this way.’ So he looked up, and said to the second son, ‘At the top of this tree there is a chaffinch’s nest; tell me how many eggs there are in it.’ The star-gazer took his glass, looked up, and said, ‘Five.’ ‘Now,’ said the father to the eldest son, ‘take away the eggs without letting the bird that is sitting upon them and hatching them know anything of what you are doing.’ So the cunning thief climbed up the tree, and brought away to his father the five eggs from under the bird; and it never saw or felt what he was doing, but kept sitting on at its ease. Then the father took the eggs, and put one on each corner of the table, and the fifth in the middle, and said to the huntsman, ‘Cut all the eggs in two pieces at one shot.’ The huntsman took up his bow, and at one shot struck all the five eggs as his father wished.

‘Now comes your turn,’ said he to the young tailor; ‘sew the eggs and the young birds in them together again, so neatly that the shot shall have done them no harm.’ Then the tailor took his needle, and sewed the eggs as he was told; and when he had done, the thief was sent to take them back to the nest, and put them under the bird without its knowing it. Then she went on sitting, and hatched them: and in a few days they crawled out, and had only a little red streak across their necks, where the tailor had sewn them together.

‘Well done, sons!’ said the old man; ‘you have made good use of your time, and learnt something worth the knowing; but I am sure I do not know which ought to have the prize. Oh, that a time might soon come for you to turn your skill to some account!’

Not long after this there was a great bustle in the country; for the king’s daughter had been carried off by a mighty dragon, and the king mourned over his loss day and night, and made it known that whoever brought her back to him should have her for a wife. Then the four brothers said to each other, ‘Here is a chance for us; let us try what we can do.’ And they agreed to see whether they could not set the princess free. ‘I will soon find out where she is, however,’ said the star-gazer, as he looked through his glass; and he soon cried out, ‘I see her afar off, sitting upon a rock in the sea, and I can spy the dragon close by, guarding her.’ Then he went to the king, and asked for a ship for himself and his brothers; and they sailed together over the sea, till they came to the right place. There they found the princess sitting, as the star-gazer had said, on the rock; and the dragon was lying asleep, with his head upon her lap. ‘I dare not shoot at him,’ said the huntsman, ‘for I should kill the beautiful young lady also.’ ‘Then I will try my skill,’ said the thief, and went and stole her away from under the dragon, so quietly and gently that the beast did not know it, but went on snoring.

Then away they hastened with her full of joy in their boat towards the ship; but soon came the dragon roaring behind them through the air; for he awoke and missed the princess. But when he got over the boat, and wanted to pounce upon them and carry off the princess, the huntsman took up his bow and shot him straight through the heart so that he fell down dead. They were still not safe; for he was such a great beast that in his fall he overset the boat, and they had to swim in the open sea upon a few planks. So the tailor took his needle, and with a few large stitches put some of the planks together; and he sat down upon these, and sailed about and gathered up all pieces of the boat; and then tacked them together so quickly that the boat was soon ready, and they then reached the ship and got home safe.

When they had brought home the princess to her father, there was great rejoicing; and he said to the four brothers, ‘One of you shall marry her, but you must settle amongst yourselves which it is to be.’ Then there arose a quarrel between them; and the star-gazer said, ‘If I had not found the princess out, all your skill would have been of no use; therefore she ought to be mine.’ ‘Your seeing her would have been of no use,’ said the thief, ‘if I had not taken her away from the dragon; therefore she ought to be mine.’ ‘No, she is mine,’ said the huntsman; ‘for if I had not killed the dragon, he would, after all, have torn you and the princess into pieces.’ ‘And if I had not sewn the boat together again,’ said the tailor, ‘you would all have been drowned, therefore she is mine.’ Then the king put in a word, and said, ‘Each of you is right; and as all cannot have the young lady, the best way is for neither of you to have her: for the truth is, there is somebody she likes a great deal better. But to make up for your loss, I will give each of you, as a reward for his skill, half a kingdom.’ So the brothers agreed that this plan would be much better than either quarrelling or marrying a lady who had no mind to have them. And the king then gave to each half a kingdom, as he had said; and they lived very happily the rest of their days, and took good care of their father; and somebody took better care of the young lady, than to let either the dragon or one of the craftsmen have her again.

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Story - The Farmer and His Lazy Sons

Article Link :

[**https://www.lizstoryplanet.com/moral-stories-kids-industriousness/farmer-lazy-sons/**](https://www.lizstoryplanet.com/moral-stories-kids-industriousness/farmer-lazy-sons/)

Once there lived a farmer in a village. He was very hardworking. He had made a good fortune with great toil and sweat over years. He had three sons. All strong and healthy, but very lazy. This worried the farmer.

The farmer grew old and sick. But still, his sons spend their time sleeping, eating and playing. He became more and more anxious about their future. He wanted his sons to take care of his fields as he did. So, one day, he called his sons to his side and said: “dear sons, there is a great treasure hidden in one of my fields to make sure that you three never go hungry”. After a few days, the farmer died and the sons were very sad for some time. After that, the sons decided to search for the treasure which their father had told. The Farmer and his lazy sons storyThey took the farmer’s spades and mattocks and dug every portion of their field hunting the treasure. But they found nothing.

A friend of their father saw this and suggested them to sow some seeds as they have already tilled their fields. They accepted the suggestion and did the same.

It rained well that season. Days passed. The fields rewarded their labour with abundant crops that season. The sons were delighted to see crops swinging with the wind in their fields. The Hidden TreasureThe sons realized what was the hidden treasure and said to each other “this is the treasure our father wanted us to find”. From that day on the sons did away with their laziness and started working hard.

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Story - The story of the vulture and the cunning catArticle Link :

[**https://storibuzz.in/the-story-of-the-vulture-and-the-cunning-cat/**](https://storibuzz.in/the-story-of-the-vulture-and-the-cunning-cat/)

Long long ago in the forests of central India , there was a huge banyan tree. The tree was house to hundreds of birds who had built nests on the innumerable branches. All the birds left the tree during the day to look for food and came back by nightfall.

During a particular time of the year, lots of chicks had hatched on the tree and the parent birds were compelled to leave them and go to look for food.

One day, late in the evening, a very old vulture by name Grudhra , battered by age and could barely fly , came to the tree. His eyesight had also become very bad due to his age . He was walking very slowly and was almost about to hit the tree when some of the birds saw him. He was a huge figure and they were frightened by him but soon realised that he was almost blind and had blunt claws and beak and so could not harm anyone.

Some of the bolder birds came down and asked him ” Who are you Sir and may we ask what you are doing here??” The vulture said “My name is Grudhra and I am an orphan. I have become very weak due to age that I have to struggle to get food every day. I have not had food for days and have come wandering in search of food.” The birds felt pity on him and offered him a deal. They told him, “Sir, we have our chicks on the tree and we have to go out the whole day for food and there is no one to look after them. So if you stay in the hollow at the bottom of the tree and look after our chicks from danger while we are out, we shall bring you food everyday”. Grudhra was happy and he agreed to the deal.

Accordingly, from the next day, the vulture used to come out of the hollow and stand under the tree the whole day and the small animals like fox and cats who were on the prowl to hunt the chicks were intimidated by the imposing figure of the vulture and kept away. In the evenings the birds used to bring food for the vulture. This arrangement went on well for quite some days and both the vulture and the birds were happy.

One day a cunning cat by name Bidaala slowly came near the tree. He had seen so many chicks and was very eager to devour some of them. But suddenly he noticed Grudhra and was taken aback. He thought the vulture would pounce on him and he would be minced meat in moments. But to his surprise, Grudhra slowly turned around and in a deep voice asked “Who is there???” The clever Bidaala understood that the vulture was blind but he could not underestimate the power of a vulture. So he said in a meek voice , “I am a mendicant cat by name Bidaala and I am on a yatra to see the holy places in this part of the country. Sorry if I have disturbed you Sir”. Grudhra could not see the cat clearly and the voice of the cat was so meek that he believed what he said.

“Oh! Welcome. I am Grudhra , an old vulture and guardian of these birds” said the vulture. “You may be my guest in the hollow of the tree where I reside for as many days as you please Sir.” he continued. The cat said ,”Oh! call me Bidaala. I am much younger to you Sir and it is my good fortune to serve elderly souls like you”. Grudhra was very pleased as he had got a companion to talk during day time.

Slowly Bidaala won the confidence of Grudhra. He stayed in the hollow being careful enough to come out of the hollow only when the last of the birds had left and go back in before the birds came back in the evening.

One day he tried his fortune and deftly caught a chick by its neck from one of the lower branches, so quickly that it could not make noise. Swiftly he ran into the bushes and devoured the chick. All the other chicks made lot of noise but Grudhra could not see any animal nearby and soon the noise died down. This started happening once in three days and later became more frequent. The parent birds noticed the missing ones but were at a loss to find out who was behind it. Bidaala was careful to leave the bones in the bushes.

One day a crane who had also lost one of her chicks happened to see the bunch of bones in the bushes. Coincidentally, the vulture was not able to eat much food in the evenings as he was feeling little sick. The crane told the birds of the heap of bones and they came to a conclusion that it was Grudhra who had devoured their little ones and therefore was not eating well in the evenings.

Poor Grudhra! The birds had unanimously decided to attack Grudhra and they swooped on him, swarmed around him pecking him with their beaks and claws making lot of noise .Grudhra tried to protest as Bidaala watched in horror from the hollow. Finally, Grudhra, not able to bear the attack sank and fell down senseless. He could not speak and life was ebbing away.

Then , the birds flew up the tree their anger still simmering. Just then, Bidaala slinked out of the hollow and started running towards the bushes where he used to devour the chicks. The birds , only then noticed Bidaala and understood that it was Bidaala, not Grudhra who was the real culprit.

Alas! it was too late. They had killed a member of their own clan who was innocent and was so old.

P.S. This happens with us human beings too. So choose your friends carefully and do not act in a haste.

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Story - Landslides may occur at places in hills:

Article Link :

<https://www.thedailystar.net/country/landslides-may-occur-at-places-in-hills-says-met-office-1421047>

Of those, only 76 have clearance certificates.

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