



Annual Haircut Day - ONCE AGAIN!

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Level 3



"Parvati, look at this calendar," shouted Sringeri Srinivas, the banana farmer.

"I have made a promise to my Gods. I must cut my hair on this Annual Haircut Day!"



"Well, don't ask me!" Parvatamma declared.

"You know I have so much extra work now. There is the cooking and the cleaning and the farm work. I also have to teach the children. Today, I have no time to cut such long hair."



"Why should I need you?" asked Sringeri, puzzled.

"As usual, I will go to Bhimanna, the barber."



OHO! Suddenly, he remembered. Bhimanna's shop was closed. It was because of the COVID-19 pandemic. There was a lockdown everywhere. Neighbour Shivanna's family was in quarantine. His uncle had caught the disease.



The village, the country, and in fact, the whole world was troubled because of one little virus, named SARS-CoV-2. The virus was dangerous. Many people had become very, very sick.

Sringeri Srinivas peeped out from his gate. The main road of the village was quiet. He could see the closed barbershop in the distance.



Out came Sringeri's famous frown. "Hmph!" he growled. "Am I going to let one tiny little virus prevent me from keeping my promise to my Gods? Never. You hear me?" He turned to the children, who had scuttled away. "NEVER."



He picked up his phone and called Bhimanna.

"How are you, my friend? You know, it is my Annual Haircut Day today. Can you help me, like you did last year?"



In a kind voice, Bhimanna replied, "Sringeri Anna, you know I cannot help you this time. Not until the lockdown is lifted. It is dangerous for both of us. Also, I want to obey the law. Please find another way."



"What shall I do? Nobody will help me. Even the tiger cannot help me now," wailed Sringeri.

(Have you met the tiger in the book *Annual Haircut Day*?)



Suddenly, little Uma stepped up bravely to her angry father.

"Appa, until the lockdown is over, why don't you try a new hairstyle?
We will help you."



Soon, the children had crowded around their father. Shiva checked the Internet to find ways to style hair. Shankari pulled out a chair, a comb, and a mirror. Little Uma found some pins and ribbons.



The children had a jolly time, styling Sringeri's long, thick hair into many, many shapes.



Even their mother helped. She was happy to see her husband so relaxed on his Annual Haircut Day. It was the best time the family had enjoyed since the lockdown.



"Idea! Idea! I have an idea!" shouted Sringeri, jumping out of the chair.
All the combs and pins and ribbons went flying about.



Sringeri Srinivas stormed out of his house and out of the farm gate, right on to the village street. His family followed him, one by one.

"Devare! My Gods!" he said, waving his hands at the sky. "I have an idea."



Sringeri Srinivas was so loud, that all the villagers peeped out of their homes. Youngsters came out, wearing masks. The cows ambled up. The monkeys swung by. The birds flew closer. The dogs pricked up their ears.

After so many weeks, something was happening in the village. Everyone was curious.



"Devare, I had made a promise to you that I would cut my hair on this auspicious day every year. And I have kept my promise. Even on that day, when the tiger had to help me."



"But now, because of this... this virus-birus, I cannot get a good haircut,"
Sringeri explained to his Gods.

"So, *Devare*, I am making a new promise. Until our scientists find a cure for this illness, I will NOT cut my hair."



"Even if it becomes as long as the... as the king cobra in my cousin's village.
Even if it becomes as long as... as..."

"As Amma's sari," Shankari piped up, helpfully.



"Yes! Even then I will not cut my hair. Not until our scientists succeed. And I will make a donation to help them too," Sringeri swore, putting his hand to his heart.

The whole village roared in approval.



Somebody picked up a drum. Byrappa began to sing. The little children began to dance. They tried their best to stay apart, because of the pesky virus.



Soon the news spread far and wide. Sringeri Srinivas was doing a special penance for the health of his village, and of the world!



People already loved the SS FARMS banana halwa. They already doted on Laxmi the cow that went Miaow.

When the lockdown lifted a little, they now also came to see Sringeri Srinivas's long, amazing hair.



Many villagers were inspired to grow their own hair too!

"I hope our scientists find a cure SOON," prayed Parvatamma, standing outside the village temple.



"I really hope so too," whispered Bhimanna, the barber.



What is a Pandemic?

A pandemic is a disease that spreads quickly throughout the world.

How can you stay safe and prevent the spread of COVID-19?

By staying indoors | By wearing a mask when you go out | By washing your hands with soap



1. Masks must cover the nose and mouth completely to prevent the virus from spreading.

Who is wearing the mask incorrectly in the above image?

2. Which of these should never be done?

Spitting on the road | Washing hands with soap often | Sneezing into your arm

3. On page 16, what should be the distance between Sringeri and the man on the street? 1m, 10m, 0m

Answers: 1. Byrappa, the singer. 2. Spitting on the road. 3. At least, 1m



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Annual Haircut Day - ONCE AGAIN!

(English)

Sringeri Srinivas is back! It is Annual Haircut Day, once again. But there is a lockdown in his village due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The barbershop is closed. What will the lovable banana farmer do this time?

This is a Level 3 book for children who are ready to read on their own.



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