

# Love and Learn



Children's Short Stories

By: Rachna Srivastava

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Rachna Srivastava



To my little “angel”, whose sweet and beautiful activities fill my heart with joy and warmth. You are my inspiration. Mommy loves you.

- *Rachna*

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# The Christmas Tree

Little Johnny came running inside the house. He said, "Grandma, I love Christmas. It is so much fun. Everything looks beautiful. Please come and see; our Christmas tree is just wonderful."

Grandma took Johnny in her arms and said, "Yes dear, it's a wonderful time. We meet our friends and relatives. The days and nights are full of joy, celebrations, and parties."

Johnny was thrilled with the thought of candies and went on, "And Grandma, we also eat lots of cakes, candies, and sweets. I like them a lot!"

Grandma smiled.

After supper Johnny asked, "Grandma, can you tell me a story tonight? I really love listening to your stories."

Grandma answered, "Sure, dear. Tonight I will tell you about Christmas Tree."

Johnny, full of enthusiasm, asked, "Do you know Grandma, I helped Mother in decorating Christmas Tree. I hung bells, stars, flowers, and lights on the branches."

Grandma replied, "Yes dear, I saw; that is wonderful. The decorated tree shows the hard work you all did. But do you know that Christmas Tree also teaches us about the coming new year?"



Johnny replied with a curious look, "No Grandma, I do not know. Can you please tell me?"



Grandma continued, "Yes, Christmas Tree gives us a very important message. The beautiful flowers tell us to fill the world with the fragrance and goodness of our deeds. Shining stars remind us to glow and grow as high as the sky and fill the world with the light of our knowledge and wisdom."



"Grandma, what about the bells and candies?" Johnny asked.

Grandma explained, "The bells tell us to sing along the journey of life and spread happiness all around. We must fill the world with our love and joy. And the candies symbolize sweetness. Always speak with gentleness and kindness to everyone; this will make you happy and make the world a better place."

Johnny was thrilled to see Christmas tree from this perspective. He said, "Christmas is not only wonderful, but you have made Christmas Tree even more special for me. Thanks a lot, Grandma." Grandma kissed on his forehead and adjusted his hair.

He wished her good night and went to bed.





# Best Christmas Gift

It was a beautiful sunny morning. After two days of continuous snow; Sun finally came out and made the day all beautiful and bright. This weather was more special as there were only two days until Christmas, and everybody had many plans. Everybody was very excited for Christmas. Robin had also made preparations. He had purchased cards and other gifts for his parents. In spite of all this excitement, Robin was sad from deep within. He did not tell anybody, but he was missing his grandmother.



His grandmother lived in a village. These days she was not doing well and was bed-ridden, so she could not come for Christmas. But Robin wanted to make her Christmas happy anyhow. While everybody was busy, Robin planned to find a way to meet his grandmother.

His mother had made a variety of delicious looking, tempting cakes for Christmas. Robin went to his mother and asked if they could send one cake to Grandma to make her Christmas special. Mother said, "It is a nice idea, honey, but who will go to the village to give her the cake? Everyone is much too busy in the preparations."



Robin said, "Mother, the weather looks good today. I can go visit Grandma and come back by evening before it gets dark."

Mother thought for a while and said, "Fine Robin, you can go, but come home before evening."

"Sure, Mother," Robin said, and started for grandmother's place.

After a three hour bus ride, Robin reached his grandmother's place. When he came in, she was lying in bed with her eyes closed. Robin put the cake on the nearby table that was lit with candles and silently went to his grandmother and sat near her bed. After some time, Grandma opened her eyes and saw Robin. She was very happy. She hugged Robin and pampered him. Robin got the cake in his hands and said, "Grandmother, I have a Christmas gift for you. Mother has sent this cake!"



Grandma said, "O, my sweet baby! You came all this way to wish a Merry Christmas to your Grandma!" She loved him with tears in her eyes, blessed him, and said, "You are my Christmas gift, and you are the best gift I ever received."



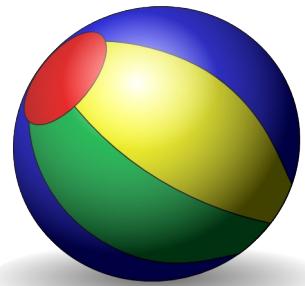


# Forgive and Forget

Ryan called out, "Mother, I am ready. Can we go?" Mother quickly wrapped up her work and accompanied him to the nearby park. The park was filled with kids on swings and slides, and kids running around aimlessly. After enjoying the slides, Ryan moved to the swings. While he was having fun swinging, Henry came and greeted him. Ryan immediately left from there without saying anything. Mother, who was sitting on the bench; noticed Ryan's rude behaviour towards Henry, she wondered why he had behaved in this way.

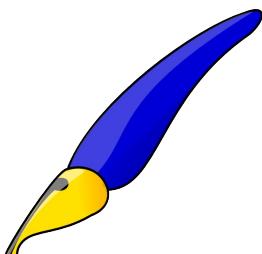
On the walk back home Mother asked Ryan, "Son, why did you not speak to Henry?"

Ryan denied that he had been rude. Mother insisted that he tell the reason. Finally, Ryan admitted the truth. He said, "Mother, do not like Henry. He is no longer my friend. Yesterday at school he was showing a nice pen to everyone which his father had given him. When I asked if I could try writing with it, he refused, saying that the pen was very delicate and might get broken."



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Mother listened calmly and asked, "Is this the reason why you did not talk to Henry?"



Ryan nodded his head.

Mother cuddled Ryan tightly in her arms and said, "My dear, this is a very small thing. Remember you are also possessive of the toys which you like most. You do not like to share them with your friends.

This is the same for Henry. Anyway, it is best to forget about this and be nice to Henry next time."

Ryan said, "But why? He was not nice to me. I will not talk to him."



Mother added, "If you keep accumulating these petty issues in your mind, there will be no space left for good thoughts and new learning. So, you need to discard these and make room for fresh ideas."

Ryan asked, "Is that so, Mother?"

Mother nodded and said, "If someone hurts you, you should forgive and forget. This makes life simple and easy. Accumulating bad feelings will only hurt."

Ryan became thoughtful for a while. Then he said, "Mother, you are right. I will be nice to Henry and never keep bitter feelings for anyone."





# Witty Cat and Lazy Monkey

One day a monkey saved a cat that was being chased by wild dogs. After this, Cat and Monkey became friends. Cat was always very grateful to Monkey. Their friendship grew with time. They lived close by to one another. Monkey lived on a branch while Cat made her home in a hole of the tree's trunk.

Cat was quite hard working, but Monkey was lazy. Cat would rise early every morning, clean up her house, and then go out to search for food. Often she would get food from nearby houses.

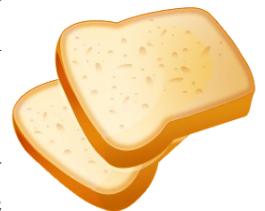
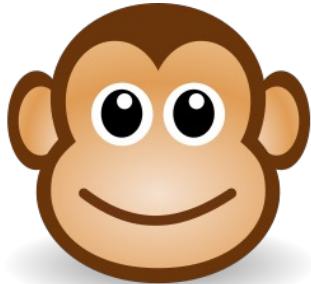
Monkey, on the other hand, would lie down the whole day and do nothing. He seldom searched for food. Many times he would come and ask Cat if she had anything to eat. Cat would give her leftovers to him.

Winter was setting in and the days were getting harder. Cat diligently collected food for the long winter ahead by storing some of her food every day in a basket.

One day when she opened the basket to put a few slices of bread inside, she noticed that some slices were missing. She thought that she might have forgotten the exact count, but next day she noticed the same. She wondered who had taken the bread. The only one with access to her house was Monkey. She went to Monkey and

inquired about the missing bread, but Monkey pretended to be completely ignorant about the matter. Cat said nothing to him and left.

The next day Cat put pepper and chilli paste on the top few slices in the basket and left in search of food. When she returned home, she saw Monkey running here and there and tearing badly.



Cat knew that Monkey had eaten her bread, and she went inside and got him some water. Monkey drank the water and calmed down. He asked Cat to forgive him, as he had learned his lesson. He promised to never cheat her again. Cat forgave the monkey and they were good friends once again.





# Looks

God had created this world and made every animal unique in looks and qualities. Every creature has different characteristics to represent its importance on earth. Dog is vigilant and active, which makes it a good friend of human beings. Humans keep dogs as pets to watch over their house at night and herd farm animals. Bull has a lot of muscle power, which make it very useful for farming. No animal can match a horse's speed and endurance and this quality enables humans to travel fast and farther.

One of the nicest creatures was Camel. Camel had a shiny, soft and smooth skin and a well-shaped body. It was neither too small nor too large in size. Kids liked Camel, so humans kept it as a pet in their house. Amongst all the animals, Camel enjoyed the best life. It received love, care, and a lot of human attention. It just sat in the sun for the entire day and enjoyed delicious meals. It did not do any work at all. All of these things made Camel boastful and proud. It started making fun of other animals.

The other day, Camel was mocking Dog, and said, "You are a complete slave to humans; you stay awake all night guarding their houses. Your life is completely pathetic."

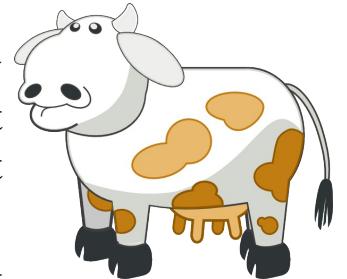
Dog became very sad, but couldn't say anything, and so went away.

God observed all this, but ignored Camel's mistakes for quite some time. He was thinking that Camel would correct its mistakes through self-realization. But Camel's



pride and haughtiness kept increasing over time. Eventually, God decided to punish Camel for its wrong behaviour towards other animals.

One morning when Camel woke up, things had changed. Camel couldn't believe its eyes. Its skin became rough, patchy and pale. Camel got scared. It tried to wash itself with water, but this did not help. It started scratching its skin, but this made it worse. It began crying helplessly. When the kids saw Camel, they could not understand what had happened. They left and nobody visited Camel for the rest of that day. The next morning when it woke up it saw that its body had grown deformed with a big hump and long, thin legs. It was now ugly.



Adults and children were no longer interested in having Camel as a pet. Camel was useless for humans, as it didn't do any work, so they abandoned Camel. Camel wandered for days, but no animal would help it, as Camel had never treated anyone nicely. After wandering for weeks, Camel reached the desert. It decided to stay there, since no one in the city cared for him. This is how Camel came to live in the desert, lonely and without any friends.



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## About The Book

**Love and Learn** is a collection of short, poignant children's stories and animal fables. Each tale portrays a child's confusion when encountering a challenge, and illustrates their understanding and growth. The lessons learned are an important part of growing up, and make an entertaining read.



## About The Author

**Rachna Srivastava** is author of children's story books. She strives to convey everyday morals and sensitivities in young minds. Her stories use simple characters and sometimes animals as characters to allow children to imbibe the values from the stories easily. Rachna lives in Canada with her husband and son. She enjoys watching cartoon movies, reading and writing children's books.



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