

2. The Very Expensive Coconut (By Sudha Murty)

Chandrakant was a miserly man. He didn't want to spend money on anything. One day, he went to a grand wedding ceremony. There he was served some Coconut Burfi.

He liked the burfi so much that he decided that he would tell his wife to make it for him. His wife was angry when she heard this. She said- " You hardly give me enough money to cook dal and rice for you. Now how will I make burfi for you with so less money? Go and buy a coconut at least then I will make burfi for you." So Chandrakant set off for the market.

There he saw a man with a heap of coconuts. He went to the man , selected a coconut and asked him- " How much is this coconut for?" The coconut seller knew him well like all the others in the market. The coconut seller said- " Five Rupees". Chandrakant nearly fainted when he heard this. Five rupees for a coconut!

The seller saw Chandrakant's expression and said- " Walk ten kilometres from here and you will find another coconut seller. He will give you a coconut for three rupees.

Chandrakant thought: I will save two full rupees! I would love to go there. So

Chandrakant was off to the three rupee coconut seller now.

As he reached the coconut seller, he felt like haggling again. He said: " Can you give me the coconut for one rupee? The coconut seller was upset. He told him that he should walk ahead and he will reach the seashore. There he will get a coconut for free.

Chandrakant walked and reached the seashore

. He climbed on a tree with a juicy- looking coconut on it. Up and up he went. When he caught hold of the coconut, a huge gust of wind came and the tree shook.

Chandrakant was left there, hanging on the coconut. Chandrakant held on to the coconut for dear life. He was stuck. After a while, a fat mahout came. Chandrakant begged and pleaded him to stand on the elephant and pull him down. The mahout asked for a hundred rupees to do this job. Chandrakant silently agreed. As the mahout stood on the elephant and clinged on Chandrakant legs, the elephant ran away. Both of them were left hanging there. After a while, a horseman was coming with a trotting healthy horse. Both Chandrakant and the mahout begged him to stand on his horse and pull both of them down. The horseman asked for a thousand rupees for the job. Chandrakant, very sadly agreed. The horseman stood on the horse but the horse ran away. All three of them fell down and a heap of coconuts fell on them. Chandrakant had to pay a thousand rupees for their treatment.