



Mrs. Akshataa Atul Kasturey

## Preface

These stories are the part of our SMT's Professional Development Programme. These stories are work of my imagination, which should be liked by the kids. Some stories are based on the images shared by our honourable principal Mrs. Vishakha Deshpande madam. We had a task to write a story based on the thoughts, which came to our mind seeing those images.

I express my personal thanks to Principal Mrs. Vishakha Deshpande madam for her encouragement for helping us to develop our writing skills.

I am also thankful to the Management of SMT for this valuable opportunity.

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\* Drawings credits to SMT Pri-primary students.

# 1. Minu and the Ants

One day a little girl 'Minu' woke up late in the morning. Her mother did not wake her up in the morning. She wanted Minu to get up by herself and go to the school. Everyday mother used to wake up her but, today she could not get up on her own. She got up late. She then remembered that she was feeling bored yesterday so she had not done her homework. Minu felt ashamed of her laziness. She took out her books and started doing her homework. Suddenly she saw some ants on the window. Her curiosity made her see where these ants were crawling. She observed that the ants were going to her own cupboard! Minu was surprised that, ants were going in one line inside her cupboard. Minu thought, 'apart from books and stationery I didn't have anything in the cupboard and these ants eat food particles and not paper.

So she opened her cupboard. Minu saw that ants were eating and carrying with them the biscuit, which she kept in her cupboard to hide from her brother Pinkoo. Minu remembered her mother's advice not to put any eating items inside the cupboard. With all these thoughts going on in her mind, Minu again started watching the ants. She saw, how they are going in one line, one behind the another. None of the ants were breaking the line. Minu saw two ants came together to talk to each other and went ahead with food particles. Minu felt that these

ants were talking with her, asking "Minu how come you are still at home? Don't you have school today?"

Later, Minu in a hurry finished her homework and got ready to go to the school. Her mother was observing Minu all the while from the kitchen but didn't interfere or disturbed her. So Minu got late for the school. Teacher got upset. Minu felt sorry for her laziness. She was thinking how she would be able to do so much of pending homework at one go. That whole day Minu kept feeling sad. Her mother did not speak with her. That night Minu slept crying. As she closed her eyes, in her dream she met with the same ants, whom she had seen in her cupboard. The ants were talking with her. They were asking Minu, what happened in the school when she reached late. Minu told the ants that, teacher scolded her for not doing the homework, though teacher had given it long back and there was lots of time to complete it. Remembering the school incidence, Minu again felt bad and started crying. The ants patted her back and told Minu not to cry. They tried to convince her what was wrong in her behaviour. Minu had a bad habit of postponing every activity. Though her mother pointed this mistake many a times, she failed to correct the same.

Then ants shared with Minu that they too had so much of work but they distribute their work among themselves every day. They all follow their timetable, which had become now their habit. The ants

said to Minu your teacher had given you homework long ago. If you had distributed your days' time well you could have easily completed your homework in time.

"Never keep your work pending for tomorrow".

Minu learnt her lesson from the ants. Her mother always wanted Minu to understand her mistake on her own. From that day onward, Minu never kept her homework pending and complete it on same day. So she became a good student in her class which made he happy.

## 2. Shardul's visit to his body parts!

One day Shardul returned from the school crying. His mother was worried about his health. As Shardul disliked to eat healthy food and demanded for fast food items like wafers, chips, fries etc. Today when he came crying and complained about stomach-ache, she immediately took him to the family doctor. She shared with doctor about his habit of eating fast food / packet food items.

Shardul was sitting in the doctor's clinic watching the posters on the wall. There was one poster, showing human body parts. When he was reading the names of the body parts he suddenly, he felt that he was becoming tiny and was entering into to his own body. He saw all the body parts one by one as he roamed inside.

He talked with the "**Eyes**". Eyes said, "we are important part of the body". We help you to see this beautiful and colourful world. Without us you will blind and unhappy.

Then, Shardul went to talk to the "**Ears**". Ear's started telling "we are important too" we help you to hear sounds, which make you alert, give you hearing pleasure and assist you in learning.

Then, Shardul went to talk to "**Nose**". Nose was so slippery inside due to mucus in it, he also saw small hair inside. Nose told him we make you happy by identifying different types of aromas, smells. The most important thing is we help you to breathe and that's why you are alive. The hair inside keeps the dust away from your lungs.

Then, shardul went to talk to the "**Mouth**". Here he met **tongue** and **teeth**, who were living together cooperating with each other. Tongue said I recognise test and give you the pleasure, joy of eating. I help you to speak /express your thoughts. Teeth said I chew the food that comes into your mouth and mix it with saliva and send to the stomach to digest. I also help you to speak clearly.

From there, Shardul went to talk with "**Stomach**". There were two spiral pipes inside. One was small and the other was too big. They were **intestines**. The stomach said, "they are my helping partners, which help digest the food.

Shardul realised that all these body parts help us to digest the food we eat.

**Eyes** saw the tempting colour, shape of the food.  
**Nose** smell the Aroma of the food.  
**Ear** enable us for hearing the sound of tadka - of cooking the food,

sometimes                      frying,                      cutting                      etc.

**Mouth** creates saliva and teeth chew the food and tongue taste it.

But when all the junk or fried food comes inside the stomach it takes longer time to digest, which causes us pain inside the stomach. The oily, sticky food gets stuck up inside the intestine. All the body parts started complaining to Shardul that please don't eat too much junk food as it causes hurt to us.

Shardul at that very moment, heard the words of his mother who was patting him asking him to listen to the doctor in a second Shardul returned to the real world. Shardul replied to her 'yes mom' and said, "I will not eat too much of junk food as my body parts would get hurt".

Hearing him, both his mother and the doctor started laughing.

### 3. Rama and her tiny new friends

Rama was a sweet little girl. Today, she did not go to her school as she was not feeling well. As her parents were working so they went to their office. Now Rama was alone in the house with her grandmother. She loved her grandmother and liked to play with her. Today after finishing her studies, she played with her grandmother. She listened to the stories from her. But after sometime, she wanted to go to play ground. Grandma did not allow her to go to play ground as she was unwell. Rama didn't want to play with her toys today, she wanted to try something new.

Her grandma suggested her to sit in their balcony and observe the surroundings. Rama liked the idea. She sat alone in the balcony for first time. She was watching different types of vehicles on the road. Many people were walking. Some kids were going to school in bus. Some were walking with their parents. While watching from the balcony, she noticed the plants pots, they had in their balcony. There she saw some small insects. She got curious to know which type of insects they were. After watching them carefully, she came to know they were tiny snails. She was happy to see snail in their balcony. She started observing them, the shells on their back and how they were crawling. She also saw some black ants, who were walking in straight line holding

some food particles in their mouth. Rama was surprised to see the black colour of the ants. Just then she heard a sweet voice of a bird. It was Bulbul. It was Rama's first experience to watch a bird so closely. She got overwhelmed with joy but did not make any noise, as it might frighten him away. She started watching Bulbul. How it looks, its feathers, colour of his neck, beak, and crest on his head. There was also a tiny beetle in the mud. It was so colourful. Seeing all these tiny creature's world around her she felt very happy as she got new friends whom she could watch daily. She was eager to share her new found friends with her parents and school friends. She shared this discovery with her grandma. She thanked her for giving an idea to sit in their balcony. Now Rama's world was filled with happiness due to her new found tiny little friends.

#### 4. Shy - "Silly"

Lilly a fish and silly bug where good friends. Lilly was very beautiful. It had colourful dots with sparkling skin. Silly bug was very shy in nature. He also had beautiful red sparkling skin with colourful dots on his body. Silly bug was aware of one of his own features. It spread sparkling light in the dark. Everyday Lilly fish come on the bank of the pond and silly and Lilly chatted with each other. Many a times, Lilly and silly had a nice ride in the pond. Lilly took silly on his back and they both roamed in the pond, enjoying the beautiful water world. Lilly showed silly his home and introduced to his family. But silly felt sad as he could not show his home nor his family to Lilly, as he could not stay out of the water. Silly had seen small and beautiful Shells, Starfish, Jellyfish, Seahorse, small Turtle, Tortoise and frog in the pond. They all become Silly's friend too as Lilly had introduced silly as his best friend.

One day small kids came to the pond with their families. All the water animals were watching the kids playing. While playing one of the kids fell into the pond. All kids started shouting and crying for the help. silly bug was sitting near the pond, who watched this incidence. Shy Silly was shocked but felt that he should do something to save that

drowning kid. He called his friend Lilly and asked him to help the kid, who was drowning. Lilly immediately dived in the water and searched for the kid. He called all his friends' jellyfish, seahorse, the tortoise, frog. All responded to his urgent call and Lily told them about the kid. Tortoise said, "I will take the kid on my back and bring him out of the pond. Frog told tortoise, yes you would do that till then I would ask silly to search for his parents. Frog went to silly and told him that tortoise was bringing him out of the water. Silly quickly said, "he will search for kid's parents and he left. He heard somebody talking near a big mango tree. Silly was trying to fly as fast as he can. He came near the mango tree. He thought, how he could attract their attention and he got an idea. He was aware that he sparkles in the dark so he climbed on the tree and hid himself in the dark bark of the tree. He started sparkling. One of the parents saw the sparkle and came near the tree to catch him. Silly quickly escaped from his clutches and started flying towards the pond. Seeing him flying towards the pond that woman too started running after him as she liked the glowing silly bug. Silly came to the pond and the woman was surprised to see all their kids were crying and shouting for help. She ran fast, at the same time the tortoise brought the drowning kid up from the water. All the water animals came up on the water front. The woman immediately took the kid into her lap. The kid was frightened and crying aloud. The woman was thankful to all the water animals, and the tortoise and especially the little silly bug, who brought her near the pond.

The shy Silly felt proud of himself and he thanked his best friend Lily and all the water animals for helping him. Silly and Lilly and all his water animal friends got happy and cheered for their friendship.

## 5. "Maharaj learnt a lesson"

Shivaji Maharaj and his Pradhan Nirajipant were passing by a small village. The time Shivaji Maharaj and Niraji had fled from the clutches of Aurangzeb from Agra where he held them under arrest. They had to change their identity and had to go walking, hiding from the soldiers of Aurangzeb. Shivaji Maharaj and Nirajipant had discussed himself as a gosavi i.e bairagi, who wander all around the country chanting name of God and the go door to door asking for food. People offered them Raksha and felt good for offering food to them. Shivaji has taken the identity of a Gosavi and Nirajipant as his 'Guru'. They both were enjoying their new role as they were able to mingle in the crowd and know the exact condition of their subjects. Shivaji wanted to understand his countrymen when their king was under arrest. Shivaji was observing all and was trying to understand what changes has to make when he returns back to his capital Raigad.

As they were passing from one village, they saw a small hut, properly coated with cow dung and with neat and clean courtyard. The both entered into the courtyard and said "Om bhavati bhiksham dehi". An old woman came out and saying to sadhus he invited them inside her heart. They both entered her home and she gave them jaggery and water. She asked them to take some rest as it was lunch time and sun

was in its full brightness. She said 'Deva please sit down'. I will serve you some rice. She brought hot rice in two plates. They both sat for lunch. Old woman brought curry to serve over rice and ask them to made a hollow place inside the heap of the rise to put curry in it. Shivaji and Niraji didn't understand the reason to do so and instead ask her to serve the carry on the heap of the rice served. Old woman was surprised but still smilingly she put the curry on rice. And what happened next was all the curry spread all over the plate and they could not mix the rise and the curry properly.

The old woman was watching them as to what they shall do next. She laughed and Shivaji asked her reason for laughing. She said I am sorry but explain him 'Sadhuji you have behaved like our Shivaji Raje". The Sadhu didn't understand what she was trying to convey. Niraji she was upset thinking she was making fun of Shivaji Raje. But Shivaji Raje asked Niraji to remain calm and ask the old woman the reason behind her comment. The old woman told 'not about Shivaji is a good and wise king' but his state is newly formed. You should first protect and guide the boundaries of state and then work on making the strong army but he had not done like that. As the boundaries of the state are not guarded well the enemy is getting a chance to enter into the state. You just did the same thing while eating. I told you to make the border of the of rice so that I can serve the curry inside so you can eat rice with it. That's why I said like that.

Shivaji learnt his lesson from a poor old woman and I decided to work on it. As they wear sadhu's the old woman inquired with Niraji about Shivaji Raje's well-being and safety. She asked him "when Shivaji Raje would return home". Niraji told "mataji I don't know but my disciple will answer this question". He is clever. Then Shivaji said "mataji your Raje has already reached Raigad so why are you worried". The old woman said "yes what you are saying is correct but, this is a rumour spread to fool the enemy. We all are eagerly waiting for our Raje".

Seeing her love towards the state and Shivaji Raje, Shivaji was overwhelmed. He said don't worry mataji your Raje will be back soon.

Later Shivaji Raje and Nirajipant after reaching the Raigad worked for the strengthening the boundaries of Swarajya and gifted a village as 'Inam' (reward) to that old woman who taught them a valuable lesson.

## 6. Shyam

Shyam was a quite little boy living with his mother. They lived in a small house in the village. Shyam was studying in school, which was far from his house. To reach to his school he has to cross the Jungle and go to the next village. Every day while leaving for the school, Shyam was crying and was giving excuses for not attending the school.

Shyam's mother was surprised of his behaviour. She asked him the reason, why he was not happy to go to school. Shyam said, "while going to school, I have to cross the big Jungle alone. So, I get frightened while walking in the Jungle". His mother felt bad that she could not accompany him to the school. As they were poor she had to work for wellbeing of the family. She thought God would certainly help them one day. She prayed to Lord Krishna and told Shyam not to be frightened. She told him "Shyam don't worry as your elder brother Krishna was staying in the Jungle. He would accompany you whenever you would feel alone and afraid". Shyam asked, "how he looked"? Mother described to him about Lord Krishna. She said, "he wore dhoti and had peacock's feather as his headgear and flute in his hand. He grazes cows in the jungle.

Listening to this Shyam became happy and he asked his mother, "maa you said he is my big brother then how come he never came to our home"?

Shyam's mother said, "Shyam as your brother has lot of work, he could not stay with us. But whenever you feel, you can call him to meet. Shyam was satisfied with his mother's answer and agreed to go to the school.

Next day, while passing from the Jungle he kept thinking about his elder brother. Whole day he spent happily at the school. While returning from school it was too dark so he was afraid to cross the jungle. He then remembered his mother's words about his big brother so he called his name "Krishna dada" and to his surprise, his Dada appeared before him. While waking, they talked with each other and passed through the jungle. Shyam said bye-bye to his big brother and came home happily. He told this incidence to the mother and she got overwhelmed with the tears. She felt, Lord Krishna had listened to her prayers. Shyam's trust on his mother's word made Lord Krishna to come and meet him. Shyam started going to school happily thereafter. His belief on mother's word made him confident boy.

## 7. Fledgling\* flying

Today Sumi was excited as she saw a small bird in her garden. Being Sunday, it was a holiday for the school. Early morning, Sumi went into the garden with her bicycle. All her friends had decided to ride the bicycle on Sunday. They all came to a big garden. There was one big tree in the centre and many bird nest were made on it. Sumi liked this garden as she loved listening to the chirping birds. They parked their cycles where many swings were tied on the tree. They all played on the swings. Reena said "Sumi I like this garden very much. We don't have such big gardens having big trees, swings and lots of birds nest on them in Mumbai". Sumi replied "yes Reena you are right, in Satara there are many big trees and weather too is nice. You will love to visit it". They started playing with their friends. They played 'vishamrut'. This was new game for Reena. Sumi explained the game to Reena and called friends Pinky, Montu, Sameer, Preeti, Swati, Priya to gather at one spot to play 'Vishamrut'. Once Reena understands this new game, she will be able to play with us.

Reena understood the game and joined them playing for playing. She too enjoyed playing it. While playing suddenly, she got banged on Preeti and they both fell down. Reena got hurt on her knees. She started crying. All gathered under the big tree. They started consoling her. When all were talking, just then they heard a sound 'dhup'. All started searching from where this noise has come. Pinky too searched she saw something and called everyone. One nest has fallen down from the tree. It was having two three fledglings\* inside it. (\*young birds/baby birds)

Seeing them all ran towards the nest. Sumi felt bad about the fledglings and she told everyone that we should try give first aid to these fledglings. Reena also forgot her pain and joined them. All of them collected big soft leaves from the garden and the soft grass. Sameer ran and brought his water bottle to give water to the fledglings. Meanwhile, Sumi put the fledglings on the big soft leaves. Sameer put few drops of water into their beak. The fledglings were shivering with fear and started trying to fly but their wings were not that strong to fly. Sumi lifted the nest in her hand and kept it

aside in the corner, where it would not be easily visible to anyone. She was aware that if someone touches the fledglings their mother bird would not take them back. All friends decided to visit every day in the garden to feed these fledglings. This feeling of helping helpless birds was very thrilling. 2-3 days, they all kept visiting the garden to take care of these fledglings, providing them with water and worms to eat.

Today, when they visited the garden, they saw the fledglings were trying to fly and the mother bird was sitting nearby watching them. Fledglings tried to fly and aah! wow! they all flew. All friends got happy and clapped for their team work and helping the fledglings.

## 8. Funny Shape Vegetable Shop

Prakash, Shruti, Gauri and Samar were good friends who were studying in municipal school. Every day they went to school together. One day in the school their teacher told them about a project of farming. Teacher told them to sow seeds and grow vegetables and observe them while growing.

Prakash, Gauri, Shruti and Samar decided to sow different types of vegetable seeds in their farm. All of them had a backyard. They decided to work together to grow vegetables. In Prakash's backyard, they sowed Bitter Gourd (Karela), Bottle Gourd (dudhi) and Tomato. Shruti sowed seeds of Lady's Finger (Bhindi), Chili and Brinjal. Gauri sowed seeds of Onion, Radish and Ginger and Samar sow seeds of Pumpkin, Beet Root and Cabbage. They helped each other while working in their farms. Every day they started observing their plants and taking notes of it.

While going to school, they were shared their plant development notes from the farm. Prakash said "Friends my Bitter Gourd plant is not a plant; it is a creeper. Uptill now I thought it would be a big plant but it didn't have a stiff stem so it felt down. I had to give support with a stick to the creeper and now some small yellow flowers bloomed. My Bottle Gourd plant is a creeper as well. I made a square shaped

arrangement of sticks for these creepers. My Tomato is growing quite fast.

Shruti said, "my Lady's Finger plant is also growing now. It has yellow flowers with red or purple spot on the petals and the flowers look very beautiful and delicate. My Chili plant has grown up, having white colour flower with five petals. Brinjal flowers are of two colours white and purple".

Gauri said, "Onion is a stem vegetable it has green leaves up on the soil and onion bulb under the soil. Radish is an edible root in different colours like red, white, purple too. It also has green leaves up on the soil. Ginger is a root. We use ginger as medicine.

Samar said, my pumpkin is also a creeper and the fruit is very big in size. The colour of the flower is orange. Beet root is a root having big leaves and cabbage which itself is a leafy vegetable. Time flew by as everybody in the class did some farming. Now teacher asked everyone about their experience of farming. All shared their experience and observations with each other. School had organised a market activity for the students. Everyone was going to bring the plants they had grown. Prakash, Shruti, Gauri and Samar were ready with their produce but yesterday was the toughest day for them.

When they took their vegetables from the farm, to their surprise Prakash's bitter gourd were of different shapes, some are attached together some are curved like 'chakli'. His bottle gourd were of

shapes. Some were like stick, some as round as pot. Two tomatoes hanging together and some very tiny ones or with funny shapes. Seeing this Prakash was nervous to keep his vegetables in the market.

Shruti also had different shapes instead of regular shapes. To their surprise Gauri and Samar also showed them their different funny shaped vegetables. All felt very bad and were not ready to keep their vegetables. Their teacher was very generous and creative. He asked them to bring all the vegetables and gave a new name to their vegetable shop. "Funny shape Vegetable shop". Together they kept all different shaped vegetables and the shop become multi visitor shop. Everyone started visiting and appreciating their efforts they took for cultivating and launching their funny vegetable shop.

The project ended with lots of experience and learning for all the friends.

## 9. Shadows

Ira went to school early this morning. She was so excited to go to school today. She studied in 5th standard. Their teacher taught them about the shadows. Ira was listening carefully to her teacher. The teacher said, "Light rays pass in the straight direction. When any object comes in between the light rays the shadow of the object forms in front."

Teacher asked everyone to do this activity by themselves at home and observe the different shadows. After returning from the school, Ira was eager to do the shadow activity. She called her friends and they all tried the experiment together. Everyone was excited. At night, Ira completed her homework, had dinner with her younger brother Ved and went to bed early. The next day, her cousins, Mihir and Arya had planned to visit their house. They had planned a surprise birthday party for their grandmother. Ira had an idea to play the shadow game at the party. Ira, Mihir, Arya and Ved met at the backyard of their house to decide party games and a short play to entertain all.

"Ira your shadow game is very nice" said Mihir her cousin brother. Arya said "I have an idea; we will tell one story with the help of shadows". "Yes, Arya didi you said exactly what I was thinking. I have one more idea, we will also show all different types of shadows and let

them guess the name of the object", said Ira. They declared to all family members that there is a surprise shadow show in the evening. Everyone was excited for the shadow show.

In the evening, all the family members like Ira's maternal grandparents, Arya's mother and father with grandparents, Mihir's parents and grandparents all gathered together. Ira's maternal uncle and aunt was also there. As the stage was set these four children welcomed all and started their shadow game.

Arya and Mihir narrated the story and Ira created the shadows with her hands, fingers and some objects, which formed the required shadow. Everybody was surprised and engrossed seeing and listening their story. After the story, Ira's new game of recognising the object started and it was fun for all. Everyone liked and enjoyed this game.

All appreciated the creativity of these four kids and the party ended after the dinner. Ira's grandmother was very happy that Ira invited all and together they enjoyed the function. She was happy that her grandchildren celebrated her birthday in a unique way. By the end of the day, Ira was feeling great and her day ended happily.

## 10. The Magic Match Box

Bhargavi and Sagarika were sisters. Today was their last day of the school. They were very excited that from tomorrow they would be attending one hobby workshop, where they would meet new friends and learn to make new things.

Next day when they were in the workshop their coordinator, a young college going girl, was eagerly waiting for them. She welcomed all. They called her "Didi". That day "Didi" showed them different paper craft work. Taught them new songs in different languages. The first day ended with a task, which every one has to do it on their own at home and bring it on the last day of the workshop.

Didi told everyone for collecting things as per their liking and choice. The task was, they have to take an empty match box and put those different things in it. One who has maximum things in the match box was going to get a grand prize for their "Magic Matchbox". While returning home Bhargavi and Sagarika decided that they would have the maximum things in their matchbox. The moment they entered the house both shouted in excitement "mama, we both want an empty Matchbox as our 'Didi' has given a task". Bhargavi explained what they

had to do. Mama gave them separate match boxes. Both were excited to collect the things and have a biggest "Magic Matchbox".

"Sagarika you are not going to copy me" said Bhargavi. "Didi don't underestimate me I can do it myself" said Sagarika.

They took their Matchboxes and tried to keep their favourite things like sharpener, eraser, colours, crayons etc. but the things were big and could not fit in the Matchbox. Now they have to think some new ways and for things that would fit inside the Matchbox.

Sagarika's eyes twinkled with a new idea. She remembered "Didi's" words for collecting the things as per their own choice and liking. She went into their backyard. Searching there, she found some tiny flowers, leaves, dry grass. While doing her homework, she sharpened her pencil and got a clue to put the peel of the pencil into her Matchbox. Bhargavi was also busy collecting her things to fit into the Matchbox. Both were enjoying this task and learned many new things. Every day in the workshop they learned the new things. They also got new friends to play.

Days passed very quickly and they reached the last day of the workshop. Everybody was eager to show their Matchbox to "Didi"

Didi asked whether everybody brought their Matchboxes. "Yes..ss" all said together. Everybody showed their collected things in the Matchbox. Didi was counting and observing things collected inside the Matchbox. She got surprised that everybody had collected different things. Bhargavi also collected many new and different things. Then "Didi" opened Sagarika's Matchbox and they all started counting the things the Matchbox was full of different shapes, decorative bindis, buttons, her frock's hooks, paper clips, paper pin and tiny nut-bolt. Dry grass, small leaves, tiny flowers, pencil skin, led, wrist watch hands, colourful thread, woollen thread, all types of Legumes, Rice, Wheat grain, Jawari, Nachni, Bajri, all pulses, sugar granules, fenugreek seeds, coriander seeds, sesame seeds, ajwain seeds, and incense sticks all these things made her matchbox a "Big Magic Matchbox". Sagarika was happy as she won prize of colourful crayon box. Their workshop ended with fun learning and happiness. Bhargavi and Sagarika also got many new friends to play with them in the summer vacation.



## 11. Transfer

Deepak was new in Sonpur village. His father was a banker and after every three years they have to move to the new village or city due to his job transfer. His mother was home manager. In this new village Deepak and his mother did not know any person. When they shifted to Sonpur he and his mother went to see the new village. They searched for the grocery shop, medical shop, vegetable shop and also a plumber, who will come and repair their taps, which were leaking. This new place was a small village. First day the search for basic necessities, was done and Deepak and his mother decided that tomorrow they will go around the village to introduce themselves to the villagers and get acquainted with them. In the evening, when his father returned from the bank, Deepak told him what they did that day. His father said. "Deepak tomorrow I have taken a leave and we will try take your admission in the school. Also, we will visit the important places like Post Office, Government/ Public Hospital,

Library and Bank" in the village. Hearing this Deepak got happy that tomorrow he would get a chance to go out with his mom and dad. Dad also shared with him "Do you know this small village resides on the bank of Sona river. Tomorrow we will see the Sona river too."

"There is a river in this village and I am going on the bank of the river tomorrow" Hey!.... Deepak said with joy to himself.

That night after having dinner, Deepak slept in his father's lap listening to his first day experience in his new office and dreaming about tomorrow's visit to village, river and new school.

Next morning, Deepak got up early as he was very eager to visit his new school. He dressed up quickly and went to school with his father and mother. His school building was small but the school has a big playground at the centre surrounded by the classrooms. Deepak liked the playground because he loved outdoor games like Running race, gold chain game, Vish-Amrut, Kabaddi, Football, Hide and Sick etc. They met with the principal of the school and Deepak got admission in the 2<sup>nd</sup> standard. Deepak was very happy to visit his new school and was anxious to know about his new friends there. The next day he was to attend the school.

Then the family went to visit the other places in the village. First, they visited the Post Office, where his father showed Deepak, how the post office functions. They met the Post Master uncle and Deepak

listened carefully about the working of the post office from him. He immediately asked, "can I write a letter to my earlier friends in my previous school and to the teacher who taught me in the 1<sup>st</sup> standard and post it. The Post master uncle said "Why not Deepak. You can write a letter and post it. I will give you a Post Card." The post master uncle gave a post card to Deepak. Deepak was very happy that he could write a letter to his earlier friends and his favourite teacher. Then they all went to a Public Library. Seeing lot of books, Deepak was amazed and he asked his dad to join this library so that he can read lots of story books with his mother. Then they went to the banks of small river named Sona. Deepak saw beautiful scenery around. Kids of his age were playing; some were swimming in the flowing water of river and there were elders watching them. Some villagers came to wash their cows and buffalo's and some women were washing the clothes.

Deepak asked his father, "Daddy is it hygienic to wash animals and clothes on the bank of the river"?

Daddy said; "Deepak villagers don't have water taps in their house to wash their farm animals. So, they bring their animals to the river bank and in the flowing water at a specific corner, they wash their animals. But to keep river water clean, we should not through any garbage and plastic into the river."

Deepak was observing all the activities very curiously when he saw a man approaching them with somebody sitting on his shoulders. When he came near, he was surprised to see his earlier school friend Sagar. Deepak ran towards him and Sagar got down from his grandfather's shoulder. Both the friends were very happy to meet each other. Deepak introduced his friend to his father. They both started talking and playing in the sand of the river. Their parents were watching their happiness.

Sager said "Deepak I am very happy to see you here. Along with my grandfather, I will take you to the beautiful places in the village, which you would love to see". Deepak nodded his head with great enthusiasm. After sometime they promised each other to meet every day and went to their home.

While returning home, Deepak wanted to sit on his father's shoulders. His father took him on his shoulders and it was a great experience to Deepak to sit on shoulders and watch around. Everything around was getting a new angle. Sitting on shoulders Deepak saw sky looked different. The river bank was too looking different. Till the house they walked like that. Deepak decided and told his father, "Daddy every day we will go the river bank and I will sit on your shoulders."

Daddy and mother were happy that Deepak found his friend and now he would settle down quickly in this new village.



## 12. The Beautiful Sun Rise

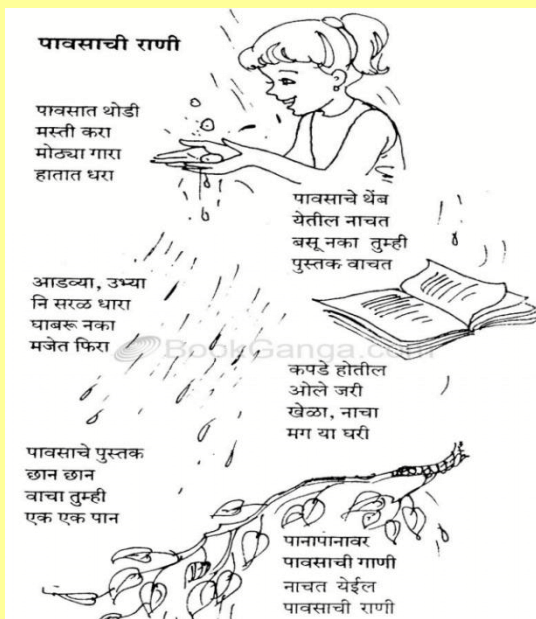
Since morning the weather was unpleasant. Metrological department had already given a high alert about heavy rains. Kaveri and Gautam had gone to their cousin sister Krishna's place in Kolhapur. They liked Kolhapur city for its natural scenic beauty. Whenever they came to their sister's place, their uncle took them to Shree. Mahalaxmi temple, Rankala talav and nearby places, which they liked most. That day they went to Rankala talav. For some time, they sat on its bank and did boating and enjoyed their time. Krishna was very happy. She asked, "Hey! Kaveri and Gautam, did you enjoy the boating in Rankala talav? We have so many historical places in Kolhapur and nearby area. We will try visit those places when you will come again in your summer vacations.

Kaveri said in excitement, "Yes Krishna, we will surely come in vacation. I want to visit Panhala Fort, Jyotiba temple, Pawankhind where Shivaji Maharaj's Warrior sardar Baji Prabhu Deshpande fought bravely."

Gautam said, "And of course, 'Shahuji Chhatrapati Museum' also."

"Sure. I also love those places. We will visit them with our whole family," said Krishna.

When they were talking, suddenly the weather started changing. The cold winds started blowing and black clouds appeared in the sky. Krishna's house was in the outskirts of Kolhapur. Krishna's father said, "Hurry up kids. We have to go home else we will get stuck in the rain." They all ran towards the car and returned home when it started raining. Krishna, Kaveri and Gautam came out in the courtyard and started playing in the rain. They were dancing and singing songs like,



येरेयेरे पावसा, तुला देतो पैसा

पैसा झाला खोटा, पाऊस आला मोठा

येगयेग सरी, माझे मडके भरी

सर आली धाउन, मडके गेले वाहुन!

Suddenly, it started raining heavily with gusty winds followed by thundering and lightning. Krishna shouted, "Kaveri and Gautam, let's go inside." All were shivering with cold but they enjoyed the rain. Uncle came out in courtyard and took them inside. Dadi gave them dry clothes and asked them to change. She brought hot kadha for all and said "Children dry your wet hair first otherwise you will catch cold and drink this hot kadha so you will feel better." Whole day it was raining with a foggy sky and blustery atmosphere.

Gautam complained "why it's raining the whole day. It should stop for some time. I want to go out and play".

Krishna's father convinced him, "Gautam I don't think it will stop raining so early. We have received high alert from the metrological department." Children became sad. But to cheer them up, Krishna's mother prepared hot onion pakoda's, which changed their mood instantly. Everyone enjoyed eating hot onion pakoda's.

Dadi called the kids," we will play something. Do you know how to play cards?"

Kaveri said, "Dadi I know how to play the memory game. Kaveri explained them how to play the memory game. They all played for a while.

Dadi said, "children can you solve this riddle?"

"Which dadi", all asked.

"Listen", dadi said - "Never resting never still. Moving silently from hill to hill. It does not run, walk or trot. All is cool where it is not. What is it?" Try answer this.

Enthusiastically Kaveri raised her hand and said, "I know, it is Sun".

Dadi claped and gave a hi-fi to Kaveri. Now all were excited and ready for the next riddle.

Dadi asked, "Ready for the next?"

"Yes", all replied.

"What goes up when the rain comes down?", dadi asked.

Gautam raised his hand and said, "Its 'water vapour' that goes up and rain comes down". "Yes correct, said dadi.

"Dadi one more riddle", said Krishna.

"Ok dear, listen carefully", dadi said.

"Eleven people are playing and thousand people are watching?"

Krishna immediately said, "It's a Cricket".

All clapped. Kids were happy to play with dadi. Then, aunty called everybody for dinner. Krishna, Kaveri and Gautam helped aunty to

arrange the dinner plates in the kitchen. They all sat on the floor in a circle and enjoyed the delicious hot food. After finishing dinner, children helped aunty for cleaning the utensils. And suddenly there was a power cut in the house. Everywhere it was pitch dark. Sharp sound of insects like cricket frightened the Children and they sat near Dadi.

Uncle said, "It looks like there will be no electricity for a while". Children slept next to each other near dadi. It was raining whole night. Next morning Krishna got up early. The sun had yet to rise. But rain had stopped. She woke up Kaveri and Gautam. The fresh air tempted them for the morning walk and three of them went towards the mountain. As the sun rose, they stood holding their hands, watching the beautiful sun and a bright day ahead with lots of positive energy. They started walking happily.



## 13. Hands Together

In the western ghats of Maharashtra there was a small village named Khadakpur. Like its name it was situated between the huge mountains with hard rocks. The Khadki river flowing near the village also had big rocks in it. The villagers of Khadakpur were hardworking and industrious. There were many types of local businesses run by the villagers like, farming, pottery, dairy, poultry, farming equipment's, manure making, mattress shop, cobbler, tailor, scrap dealer, small eateries etc. All were doing their business well. Villagers were working hard and were earning for themselves and living happily.

Every season, was at its peak during this pandemic year. Winter was very cold and Summer had just started. The scorching heat of the sun in the afternoon was unbearable. At the start of the summer season,

it was indicating that, this summer will be harsh and toughest. The Khadki river was the life line of Khadakpur. Villagers were using its water for all their daily needs like, drinking, washing and for needs of their small-scale industries and businesses in the village. So, during this harsh summer, everyone was worried about the depleting level of river water. Each year it was getting tougher to manage the river water for the whole village and more so when summer was expected to be harsher. So Sarpanch of Khadakpur called the panchayat meeting. All villagers gathered under the big banyan tree. Sarpanch addressed the meeting.

"Dear villagers, as you know we are totally dependent on the water of Khadki river. Every summer it is getting tougher and tougher to manage the available water. Till now we all could manage it but this year summer is getting harsh and at the start of the season, we are facing the scarcity of water."

One villager got up and said, "we will ask our District Collector to help us."

Sarpanch replied, "Yes we can approach District Collector for help but we should also think, on our part, what we can do. Our whole area is surrounded by Rocky Mountains and due to cutting of trees the rains are not normal."

Everybody started looking at each other and started discussing what they can do. Hari kaka was the oldest person in the village. He said,

"Sarpanch is right. We all should think together as to what we can do otherwise the situation will become worst and we will have to suffer a lot. All of us should think on some solution and we can meet tomorrow." Sarpanch and all the villagers agreed and panchayat meeting ended.

There was a young guest at Hari kaka's house. His name was Ravi. Ravi wanted to talk with Hari kaka on the present situation. He said to Hari kaka, "If we do water conservation activities like; to make small earthen dams, form small ponds, clean river banks and dig up wells and canals then it will certainly help us to be water self-sufficient. And till some action plan is decided, we have to use the present water supply smartly. Unnecessary wastage of water should be avoided." Hari kaka understood what Ravi is trying to say. He said, "Ravi when we villagers, will meet tomorrow, I will place this suggestion."

The next day all the villagers gathered under the banyan tree. Sarpanch asked everyone, "Dear villagers did you think about the solution on water scarcity?"

Hari kaka stood up and introduced Ravi to all and asked Ravi to explain what he had told him yesterday. Ravi explained all about water conservation methods and for that what they need to do. Everyone started looking at each other as they were expecting help from outside and this man was telling to find the solution by themselves. Nobody was ready to take any efforts. So, the meeting ended without

any decision. But Hari kaka was determined and decided that he will start the action himself.

Next morning Ravi and Hari kaka went to locate a place for the new well. While searching the place, Ravi suggested, "mud deposit should be removed from the river bank". Meanwhile he decided to call his friend, who was expert in the field to identify the place for the well. When they were working on removing the mud deposits and the stones, the school children who were passing by the river bank saw them working. They all came towards Hari kaka with excitement and asked him, "Kaka what are you doing?" Hari kaka explained them about the water scarcity faced by the village. Ravi uncle explained them about water conservation. After listening to Ravi uncle, the children were convinced and curiously asked, "Kaka how can we help you?" Ravi uncle explained them how they can participate.

With big helping hand from the children, they could complete that day's work swiftly. Children were so happy to work with Hari kaka and Ravi uncle that they promised them to come every day after the school. Thereafter they all worked together for two-three days. During this time, villagers were surprised as not a single kid was seen playing after school hours. They asked their kids and came to know about the help they were doing. Next day all the villagers went to the river bank and saw what their children, Hari kaka and Ravi uncle were doing. When they saw the remarkable work done by them the villagers

got amazed. They all felt that if these children can understand the importance and work for future betterment then why we can't. The next day all the villagers gathered and decided to work together. The expert visited the village and guided them as to where to dig up the well. All villagers started working together on this task. They distributed the work among themselves and made a time table of work. Now all villagers, men, women and children, everyone was participating in the conservation work to make their village water self-sufficient.

**“आत्मनिर्भर”**



## 14. The Bond of Friendship

There was a dark and dense jungle near Sitapur village. In the jungle there were many types of birds. Some were rare species. Different type of trees and lots of medicinal plants. All animals and birds were living happily in the jungle. One day early morning, Raghu the farmer was passing by the jungle. He was walking fast as he had to reach in time in the next village and finish his work and return before evening. Though the jungle was dense it was not frightening as birds were chirping and rays of sun were trying to reach to the ground through the leaves of tall trees. Raghu was in his own thoughts and suddenly he heard a sweet voice of a bird, which took him back to the old memories. Raghu looked for the bird but he couldn't find it. So, he went ahead for his work. In the evening when he was returning, he heard the same bird call but now the bird himself came towards Raghu. Raghu was surprised to see the bird. It was his 'Raghunandan'.

Raghunandan was also happy to see Raghu. He asked Raghu, "How are you sir?" Hearing to Raghunandan's talking, Raghu was surprised. He asked, "Raghunandan, in the morning, when I was passing by the jungle, I heard your sweet bird call and I remembered you but I couldn't see you anywhere. And how can you talk like humans? I am very much surprised and happy that you got your voice back."

Raghunandan replied, "Sir, in the morning you heard my son's bird call. It was not me. I saw you were passing by. I thought, you will surely come back till evening, so I was waiting here to meet you."

Raghu had tears in his eyes. He said, "Raghunandan you are so kind. Seeing you, all bad memories come back to my mind and I am feeling guilty."

"Sir don't feel guilty. It was not your fault. And now, I have got my voice back. Please come to my house, my family is very eager to meet you" Raghunandan requested.

Raghu was surprised and happy to hear that Raghunandan had a family. He said, "Sure Raghunandan, I would love to meet your family." They both went inside the deep forest. There was a beautiful nest built looking like a grass cottage. Raghu and Raghunandan reached near the nest. Raghunandan called his wife and children to meet his friend. They both sat on the bench outside the nest. Raghunandan's wife brought fruits for Raghu.

"Sir please have these fruits you must be tired and thirsty. It will make you fresh". Raghunandan's wife said.

Raghu took the fruits. Really, he felt better after eating them. It was nectarine. They had a talk for some time and Raghu said, "Raghunandan, I should leave now. I am very happy to see your family. Please forgive me, what had happened in the past. We will meet again".

Raghunandan said, "Sir I have forgotten all unpleasant memories. Please accept some fruits for your wife." Raghunandan gave a basket of different fruits. Raghu was overwhelmed with his love and walked happily towards his home.

Raghunandan's wife asked him, "Dear, why did you give fruits for that wicked lady. She ill-treated you a lot." Raghunandan replied, "my dear even though she was cruel to me, I have stayed with them for a long time. She was very greedy lady. Raghu sir, was very kind hearted. Today his happy mood would make her notice that something nice has happened and in that joyous mood he might tell her the truth. She will certainly ask him what he ate. So, I gifted some fruits for her.

Raghu reached home. His guilty mind was relaxed now. Raghu's wife Kanta was waiting for him. Seeing Raghu in happy mood, she was surprised. She immediately asked, "Raghu where, were you for such a long time? Why are you looking so happy? Raghu gave her fruit basket and said, "Dear I brought this for you."

"What is this?" asked Kanta and opened the basket. To her surprise there was different types of fruits inside and a pearl neckless. Kanta became suspicious and asked, "Raghu who gave you this?". Now seeing the neckless, Raghu was also surprised but he controlled his inquisitiveness and said, "My dear Kanta it's for you. As you work hard in our field, I thought this gift would make you happy. Seeing Raghu's love for her, Kanta felt good and she wore the neckless and looked herself in the mirror. Wicked Kanta was not satisfied by Raghu's reply but she said nothing and happily went to her work. Raghu was thinking about Raghunandan's generosity. He thought he will meet him and again express his thankfulness.

There in Raghunandan's house his children asked, "Daddy who is this Raghu? Why you were so kind to him? Raghunandan said, "come here children, I will tell you the story. Many years back, when I was young, I got hurt in the forest. Somehow, I managed to fly but I could not go far. I was lying hurt in the Raghu's field. While working in the field, Raghu saw me and offered water to drink and did some first aid to my wings. That made me comfortable but I could not fly. He took me to his house. Every day he did dressing to my wings and gave food. That made me fit to fly again. We became friends. His wife was a hard-working woman. She worked hard in the field but as the soil was not good, they could not get good crop. This was the reason; she was

always unhappy. Her nature was exactly opposite to Raghu's nature. He was a kind and generous man."

Children then asked, "but daddy we have heard that Kanta had cut your tongue. Why did she do it?"

Raghunandan said, "It happened like that Raghu sir and me talked a lot with each other. Raghu sir, knew many bhajans. We always sung together in the evening. Kanta never liked that and that day Kanta returned from the field with anger. Raghu sir was not at home and I was singing alone. That made her angry and in that fit of anger, she took a knife and cut my tongue. And, I could do nothing. When Raghu sir returned home, he came to know what had happened. Then they both had a fight. Raghu sir was sad as I was in pain and he could do nothing. He applied the medicine. After few days, when I recovered, I left Raghu sir's house. And after so many years, today I met him." Listening to this story children became speechless.

There Kanta was not satisfied with Raghu's explanation. She kept a watch on Raghu's movements. The next day when Raghu went to the fields, she secretly followed him. After walking for some time Raghu thought to meet Raghunandan. So, he walked towards the forest. Then Kanta followed Raghu and she came to know about the reality. She decided, she would come alone again and returned home. Raghu met Raghunandan and expressed his gratitude. Ragnunandan said, "Thank you sir and don't worry for me now. I can take care of myself and my

family. Whenever you want to meet me do visit my home." Raghu felt relaxed after expressing himself. And happily, he went ahead for his work.

Few days passed. Kanta was waiting for the opportunity. One day when Raghu had gone to the village market, she went to meet Raghunandan. Kanta walked in the jungle and heard the familiar bird call. She followed the voice and came near the Raghunandan's nest. She saw, two small birds were playing. They were looking identical. Kanta wanted to catch them. But her evil thoughts made them alert and they flew away. She ran behind them but fell inside a big pit. Her leg got badly hurt. Now she got frightened as there was nobody around, who will help her. Kanta started crying and realised her mistake. Second time she had troubled the bird for no reason. Suddenly, she saw Raghunandan was asking her, "madam are you ok? I will help you to get out from this pit."

Kanta was surprised. Though she had cut his tongue, how he could speak. Raghunandan took her out with the help of a rope. Kanta was not able to stand on her leg as it was badly hurt. Raghunandan's wife applied medicine on her leg. Seeing this generous behaviour of the birds, Kanta felt ashamed of herself. She felt very bad. Sensing her feelings, Raghunandan said, "Madam you had fed me when I stayed with you, so don't feel ashamed. I am doing my duty."

Kanta said, "Raghunandan I am very sorry for all my deeds. Will you please forgive me? I was cruel with you, still you helped me. But please tell me how you could speak again?"

Raghunandan smiled and said, "it was by god's grace that I got my tongue back and I could speak again. But madam I want to thank you for all your help when I was injured." Raghunandan gifted her a big basket of fruits. He said, "Madam, soon I may be leaving this place and I want you and Raghu sir to be happy in life. Please be together and kind to each other. You are very hard-working woman. And I respect you for that. God will surely help you."

Raghunandan helped her to get back home. In the evening, when Raghu returned from the village market, Kanta narrated him all the story. Raghu felt bad but also was happy that Kanta had learnt her lesson and realised her mistake. The next day morning Raghunandan came to Raghu's house with his whole family to say goodbye. Raghu and Kanta welcomed his family. Kanta made delicious food for all of them. They all had good time together. After spending some time together, Raghunandan and his family left. Thereafter, Raghu and Kanta lived happily.



## 15. Zoom Fun Class

Today children were waiting for special guest in their classroom.

Renu teacher had given them a clue with a song.

*"A ball of clay small and round,  
snowy white no colour found,  
mix, mix, mix, squish, squish, squish  
If colour shows, you will get your wish!"*

One student asked, "Renu teacher, who is our special guest today"?

Renu teacher said, "can anybody guess? who wants to try?"

Many hands were raised. This was a scene in the preschool classroom.

Whenever, special guest came to the school, children learnt different skills through their activity. Today a Potter was to come. All the children were happy to know this. Teacher told children to

sit according to their groups.

The Potter came and Renu teacher introduced him, to the class.

"Children, he is Keshav, a Potter. He is going to show us how the pots are made" said Renu teacher. All children clapped happily. Keshav was happy to see all the children sitting in a group. He showed the material, which they would require to make the pots. One child asked, Keshav uncle, do we need a special type of mud?

Keshav replied, "yes, to make a pot from mud or clay it should have elasticity". Keshav distributed the mud in the groups. Everyone got the necessary material. Now children wear observing Keshav uncle, who was mixing the mud.

Keshav said, "children let's sing a song while working on the mud. You repeat after me".

*"A ball of clay small and round,  
snowy white no colour found,  
mix, mix, mix, squish, squish, squish  
If colour shows, you will get your wish!"*

Children enjoyed the song. They mixed and squished the mud and a soft dough was prepared. Now Keshav uncle took out his Potter wheel, on which he was going to make a pot. All the children sat in a semicircle. Keshav uncle started the potter's wheel and put one mud dough on it. He showed children, how to give shape to the pot.

Children in turns sat beside Keshav uncle and tried their hands on the pot.

Teacher put an identification mark on the pot made by every child. All the children enjoyed this activity. Keshav uncle said, "children now it's time to heat up our pots".

One child stood up and asked, "but uncle if we heat up our pots what would happen to them"?

Keshav uncle replied, "children once heated up our pots may change their colour but if, we would not heat up then it would crack. If they get cracked then we cannot use them.

Keshav uncle took all the children to the ground. A pit was dug up to heat up these pots. All the pots were arranged in it and a fire was lit. Till the pots got cooked Keshav uncle told his life story that how he become a Potter. Everyone was listening with interest. Children were enlightened with the story about pots and the Potter. When the pots got ready Keshav uncle said, "children, let your pot get cooled. Now to colour or decorate your pots we would meet tomorrow".

The school day got over and all the children were happy, while returning home. The next day children were eager to colour, paint or decorate their pots. They had brought some decorating material with them. Teacher also provided them with different colours, paints, decorative materials like beads, small mirrors etc. Children enjoyed colouring, painting and decorating their own pots. These two days were a fun for all and also acquiring new skills for themselves.

While children were acquiring new skills, teachers were observing and evaluating them.

Meanwhile, the World had started facing the Corona virus pandemic. Everybody was taking utmost care to protect themselves. Our Prime Minister, had also taken the decision of 21 days complete lockdown of the nation. Schools, colleges, offices, factories, transportation everything was shut down. Everyone was requested to start the work from home. The initial days of lockdown went smoothly as parents were at home. Children were happy and helping them in household work. But as the days passed, children became restless and parents got frustrated, how to engage the kids and manage their own work. Children started complaining as they could not go out to play with their friends. So, parents approached the school, which was always ready to help about children's concern or issues. Parents started sending e-mails, "Teacher what to do to keep our kids engaged? Children were getting bored".

Renu teacher was thinking on this concern and she got an idea. She consulted with her principal and school found a solution of "Zoom online Activity Class" for kids on specific days. And the other arrangements were done.

Today, was the first day of "Zoom online Activity Class" when

children were going to see their favourite Renu teacher and friends online. All were ready with their parents to meet Renu teacher and friends.

"Hello kids", Renu teacher welcomes you on Zoom class. How are you all? There were many thumbs up, hearts sent on the screen. "Dear children do you know, why the complete lockdown was declared? There is a disease named 'Covid-19' which is contagious means which spreads, if we come in close contact with the patient. So, to protect ourselves our Prime Minister declared the complete lockdown of all the activities except for the essential services like medicine, grocery, vegetables and fruits. Children do you wash your hands for 20 seconds, whenever you visit outside and also before eating?

All said "yes teacher". Teacher said, "don't touch your face, mouth, nose every time. Don't go outside or at your friend's house to play. We all have to fight against this disease by keeping social distancing.

Renu teacher talked with the parents "Hello parents, I want to tell you something. Please make a daily timetable for your child so that you can do your work as well as spend your precious time with your kids. And, kids like you have to attend the school same way your parents also have to work. You will try help them in daily household activities so that you can spend your time together. Ok... give me a

Hi-Fi".

Children gave many Hi - Fi's

"Now let's sing our favourite song"

*"When you are happy and you know it, clap your hands*

*when you are happy and you know it, clap your hands*

*when your happy and you know it and*

*you really want to show it,*

*when your happy and you know it, clap your hands"*

Later, everyone was eager to do an activity which Renu teacher was going to tell them.

Renu teacher asked, "kids do you remember our pottery class"? Give me a thumbs up if, you remember. So today we are going to do clay work as we did in our physical class. But, because you don't have mud at your home, use your modelling clay or floor dough. Children got excited. They immediately took out their modelling clay from their bags and for the next one-hour children were engrossed in doing many items of clay along with Renu teacher.

Renu teacher asked, "children did you like this activity? Now with your parents you will to this activity. Make any item with the clay, floor dough or mud. Colour or decorate it. You will do it with your

parents according to your time table. And in the next zoom class you will show your items made and decorated by you to all your friends.

Everybody said, "yes..... sss teacher....sss"

"Bye- bye kids. Take care. Wear your masks, wash your hands and stay home, stay safe. And wait for the next zoom online class activity surprise on the coming Sunday"

All kids shouted happily, "Hey...sss"



## 16. Doll's Marriage

One day morning Gauri and Kirti were playing. Gauri wanted to play the game of doll's wedding so she asked, "Kirti, should we play doll's marriage? Will you bring your doll as the bridegroom?"

Wow! Great idea, it will be so much fun, said Kirti. Let's ask our friends to join us but do you think our parents will give us permission to play this game? said Kirti.

"Let's go and ask my mom first," Gauri said.

They both went to Gauri's mother and Gauri asked, "Mumma we want to play the doll's wedding game. My doll is the bride and Kirti's doll will be our bridegroom. Mumma can we play this game? Will you help us?"

"Great idea Gauri, mumma said. When I was young, I played this game with my friends. I will surely help you".

Then they went to Kirti's house. Kirti told her Mumma their idea of doll's wedding game. Kirti's mumma was a little hesitant to give them permission as she thought that Kirti will miss her studies. Gauri's mom met Kirti's mom and convinced her that this type of celebration helps children to learn many things like planning, co-operation, imagination, bonding, responsibility, expression and social awareness, which is a type of education. Gauri's mother asked Kirti's mother to recollect their childhood memories. Every summer vacation, they played doll's wedding game. Kirti's mother agreed and said, "call all your friends to the doll's wedding and plan together as to how you want to celebrate it." Kirti and Gauri ran happily to inform all their friends. Chitra, Sarang, Rohit, Aarti, Manas, and Mugdha, all came to Gauri's house and Gauri told everyone the idea of their doll's wedding. Everyone felt so excited.

"My doll will be bride and Kirti's doll will be bridegroom," said Gauri

"My doll will become bride's sister", said Chitra.

Aarti said, "my doll will be bridegroom's sister".

And "our doll's will be their friends" said Sarang, Rohit, Manas and Mugdha excitedly.

Now everyone started preparing the list of responsibilities of work for the wedding.

Aarti said, "I will take the responsibility of preparing invitation cards and inviting guest."

Sarang and Mugdha said, "We will take the responsibility of the food."

"We will look after the decoration", said Manas and Rohit.

Gauri and Kirti decided to take responsibility of making the dresses for all the dolls.

"I will make small flower bouquet for everyone at the wedding preparations," , said Chitra.

All the parents were happy seeing at their children and were ready to help them. Children approached to their housing society's secretary uncle for the permission, to use the society's community hall for the wedding. Secretary uncle happily gave them the permission. Then the date for the wedding was fixed.

Everyone was working hard for the wedding preparations.

Aarti took out her drawing, painting and craft papers to make invitation cards. Mugdha's mother gave her the 'mangalashtak'. As Mugdha had a sweet voice, she decided to sing the mangalashtak at the wedding.

Gauri and Kirti borrowed different types of clothes like jari border, embroidery, mirror work from their mother to stitch dresses for the bride, bridegroom and their sisters. With the help of their mom, they

stitched a mirror work sari for the bride, embroidered Kurta Paijama for the bridegroom and jari bordered lehenga for the sisters. And also made some jewellery with the leftover beads, golden threads and mirrors etc.

Manas and Rohit started decorating their community hall with colourful ribbons and balloons. Chitra and Aarti along with their other friends distributed out the invitation cards to all the members of the society, saying "friends come well-dressed for our doll's for the wedding". All the kids were learning team work through the preparation for the wedding.

The wedding day arrived. Everybody gathered in the community hall. Gauri's bride doll was ready in her room. Everybody had dressed up like they were attending a real marriage ceremony. Auspicious sound of Shehnai made joyous mood in the hall. All the Dad's had secretly arranged a 'Band party' for the doll's wedding and the barat came on Kirti's new bicycle. The bridegroom came near the hall. Gauri and Chitra welcomed them by performing aarti.

Kirti was standing on the stage with her doll bridegroom. There came Gauri with her doll bride and both Chitra and Aarti stood behind the bride and the bridegroom. Flowers were distributed to everybody. Mugdha sung the mangalashtak beautifully and showering of flowers on the bride, bridegroom completed the ceremony of marriage. All

parents came on the stage and blessed the bride and the bridegroom. After that, children danced in the barat. Everyone was full of joy and happiness

Sarang and Mugdha announced that the lunch was ready. A nice buffet was arranged. Everybody enjoyed the food. Sarang and Mugdha were attending all the guest.

Gauri, Kirti, Sarang, Mugdha, Manas, Rohit, Chitra and Aarti came on the stage and said, "Thank you to all the parents and the secretory uncle to give us permission for the doll's wedding in the society, for providing this community hall, fund for food arrangement. And a big thank you to all dad's for arranging the baarat." Gauri said, "Thank you mumma and aunties for all the help."

"Thank you everyone" they said.

On behalf of all the parents Kirti's mother came forward and congratulated all the kids for their well-planned wedding organisation, for their decoration, invitation cards, doll's costume, singing of mangalashtak and the buffet launch. All the parents clapped. Chitra gave flowers to all the guest and the ceremony ended happily.



## 17. Magic touch of love

Hari's flower farm was one of the best farms in the Sonpur Kingdom. The farm was always blooming with different types of flowers like Rose, Marigold, Hibiscus, Jasmine, Tuberose, Shevanti and Champa. There were big trees in the farm like Banyan, Neem, Mango and Gulmohar, where different types of bird nests were there. Colourful butterflies were always flying on the flowers to suck the nectar. Like every farmer, Hari worked in the farm throughout the day. In his farm he used only organic manure. He loved his farm and took utmost care of it. All the villagers envied Hari for his beautiful farm. They all felt, Hari has got magic hands and that's why his farm is always blooming with different flowers.

The Sonpur's King came to know about Hari's beautiful farm and the magic touch of his hands. He called Hari to meet him. Hari was

surprised by this invitation as well as frightened that if he had done something wrong? But his wife said, "If King has called you, there must be some valid reason. You don't worry, if you would have done something wrong, he would have sent his soldiers to arrest you"!

Hari replied, "Yes, you are right. I have not done anything wrong so why should I worry".

The next day Hari went to his farm, did his daily activities and asked his son to look after it and then went to meet the King.

The King welcomed Hari and congratulated him for his beautiful farm. He asked Hari, if he would look after his "Shahi garden"? And if he agrees to work in the king's garden, he would be rewarded handsomely and also will be honoured with the title of 'Royal Gardner'. Hari said, "Your majesty, I am glad that you offered me this opportunity but I have to think about it and discuss with my family".

Hearing this King said, "Please go back to your village and think on my offer and come soon. Shahi garden is waiting for you".

Hari returned to his village happily. He narrated this incidence to his wife and son. Both got happy to know about this offer. Hari's son Raghu said, "Baba you should accept the King's offer of becoming 'Royal Gardner' and I will take care of our flower farm". Hari felt very proud of his son. He said, "my dear son, I was expecting this response

from you. Now onwards you shall take care of our farm and I am confident that you can do it".

The next day morning, Hari went to his farm. He narrated the whole story to all his plants, trees and the birds. He told all of them to take care of themselves and be happy with his son as from next day he was going to look after them. He touched goodbye to every plant and returned home.

Hari went back to the king and took the charge of his Shahi garden. With his experience he started making the changes in the shahi garden. He planted new flower plants as well as some medicinal plants. Slowly everyone in the palace noticed the changes in Shahi garden as it bloomed beautiful. It had different types of flowering plants and non-flowering plants. Butterflies were seen flying in the garden. Birds chirping sound made the shahi garden a cheerful place to relax.

But, here in Hari's flower farm, something went wrong. Hari's son Raghu was a good farmer. He took care of the plants but slowly he observed that, blooming of flowers has reduced. As per nature cycle, the plants were growing and producing the flowers. But the cheerfulness which was observed earlier, when his father was working in the farm, had been lost. Many birds left their nest. Now there was no cheerful chirping sound of birds, no butterflies were flying on flower to flower for nectar. Villagers who earlier envied Hari's farm,

noticed this change and started commenting how Hari's magic has disappeared.

Seeing this drastic change, Raghu requested his father to visit the village, as he got upset by this situation. Hari took King's permission and went to his village. As Hari returned home, his son started crying and sharing about the farm's present condition. Hari was surprised and both of them went to the farm. Seeing the condition of his farm, Hari was shocked and he asked his son, "dear Raghu are you taking good care of our farm? Then Hari started visiting to each plant personally and started talking to them. He touched each plant and flower asked them how they are? He also talked with the trees, and spoke with the birds! Raghu was watching this and was surprised seeing his father's behaviour. He thought, he never did this act what his father was doing. He asked, "Baba do you think plants hear you? Trees, birds hear you? Hari said, "my son I know, they cannot hear me but they understand the language of touch, language of my love. It is not that you are not looking after the farm carefully. But I feel every living thing understands the power of touch. Working in our farm gives me immense pleasure. I feel that, the plants talk with me and in return I talk with them. While working, I share with them how their leaves are growing, how their green colour was energetic. About their buds and the flowers, its petals and fragrance everything in detail. I talked with them as they were my children. I thanked the trees as they gave

us shade and shelter. Nature gives us in abundance. We should be thankful for it. It is my personal way of reciprocating thanks to the mother nature".

Raghu felt this was a big lesson for him. He understood the real meaning of nurturing.

Later he started practicing the teachings, which he learned from his father. He felt the containment in his work and after some days the magic returned to the flower farm. And once again their flower farm returned to its past glory and became the talk of his town for its beauty.



## 18. Simba

In Karnataka there is a dense forest named Bandipur. It is a home for the various species of plants, unique reptiles, beautiful birds and wild animals. There leaved a lioness with her three new born cubs. The den of Lioness was deep inside the jungle, where sound of different birds could be heard. The sun rays could hardly reach the ground. Lioness has to go for hunting leaving the cubs inside the den. Out of three cubs, the youngest cub was very playful. While playing with his brothers, he was mischievous and was fighting with them. As the cubs started growing, lioness took them with herself, while going for hunting. For the youngest cub she was more careful and alert. While with their mother, the cubs observed many things like the nature around, way from their den to the jungle and learned how to hunt an animal. One day, with their mother, they were in the jungle for hunting and suddenly they heard a loud noise, which distracted all the animals and everybody started running. While running, the youngest cub lost

his way. He tried to search for his familiar foot marks on the path but all in vain. He lost his way. While running halter-skelter, he went out of the jungle near a small village. In twilight, the young cub could not see the road and entered one farm. The farmer's dog started barking loudly. The cub got frightened and he hid himself under a big drum lying there. Hearing the loud bark, the farmer came outside. He felt some thief would be there. He searched for quite some time but could not find anyone. The dog was still barking. The farmer made the dog quiet and went inside the hut. Next morning when the farmer went to his dog and patted him, he again started barking as if, he was telling someone is there. The farmer looked towards the direction and along with the dog he went towards the drum. The farmer lifted the drum and he was surprised seeing a small cub under the drum. Now he understood why the dog, was barking in the night. The cub was frightened and was shivering as he had never seen this type of animal standing on two legs. Collecting all his courage the farmer softly touched the cub. As the cub was frightened, he did not react. The farmer got confident and he lifted the cub and started patting him with love and compassion to make him comfortable. As the cub was too young the farmer gave him milk to drink. The hungry cub drank the milk immediately. The farmer's children, Kishan and Karan was watching this. Kishan was nine years young and Karan was seven years young.

Karan said, "Bapu look! this is loin's cub! How did he come here?"

"If the lioness comes here in search of his cub?" Kishan said in fear.

The farmer said, "my dear son, I think this cub must have lost his way and he took shelter of this drum to hide. He is too young. And I think there must be lioness around. We should be careful all the time as she might come in search of her cub."

Two three days passed. The farmer and his son's took good care of the cub. Now the small cub was out of fear, he started playing with Kishan and Karan. Tommy the dog also joined them. Karan named the cub as 'Simba'. Now to meet 'Simba', Kishan and Karan's friends started visiting their farm. Simba also got familiar with them. When the kids, Tommy and Simba were playing together, the farmer took their photos. The farmer was sitting and watching them play and in a fraction of second, he saw Simba jumping on Karan. Karan got frightened with the force. Just then a thought came in farmer's mind. He said to himself, "Right now Simba is too young, but when he will grow up, it will be difficult for Simba to adjust with the kids. Being a wild animal, he should be in his habitat. So better, I should send him to jungle or report this to the forest officer to take him back to the jungle."

As these thoughts came to his mind, he decided to take the help of Tommy and send Simba back to the jungle.

That night he called his kids and said, "Kishan and Karan, I want to tell you something. In our farm, we have Simba as our guest but do you know where does he live?"

"In the jungle", said Karan.

"Yes, and what he eats?", farmer asked.

Kishan said, "animal's meat".

"Yes", the farmer replied and further explained, "Wild animals should grow up in the jungle, in their natural habitat. Also, it is an offence to keep wild animals as a pet. Kids as you know there is a big dense jungle near our village, wild animals stay deep inside the jungle. No one goes inside to disturb them. I think for some reason our Simba must have lost his way and came outside the jungle. So let us try send our Simba back to his parents".

"Kids are you ready for this?", asked the farmer.

Kishan and Karan understood what their Bapu has explained and they nodded and patted Simba with love.

The next day before the dawn, Tommy, Simba and the farmer went towards the jungle. Simba got little confused but he holds Tommy's tail as if holding his hands. The farmer took a parting photo of both of them as his sweet memory. When they were in the jungle, he told

Tommy to take Simba deep inside the jungle. Farmer was also following them. But after some distance he climbed upon the tree and threw a ball inside the jungle and told Tommy to get it. Tommy ran inside the jungle and behind him Simba started running. After going inside, the young cub could see his familiar way and pug marks towards the den. Simba got happy and ran as fast as he could go near his den. Seeing that Tommy became happy. Tommy and the farmer returned back to the village happily. The farmer narrated the whole story to the kids and kids were happy as Simba has returned to his family.



## 19. Go ahead together

Nitin, Abhay, Anant and Vidya were best friends from their childhood. All were studying in same school right from kindergarten till tenth standard. After that everyone took higher education according to their liking. All were successful in their profession and migrated for working in different countries. In spite of living in different countries and working in different fields, their friendship was intact. After a long gap they all have come to their native place at Ratnagiri.

Nitin called Abhay, Anant and Vidya for dinner at his home. Nitin's mother had prepared a delicious meal which took them back to their childhood memories. Vidya said to Nitin's mother, "aunty we missed this mouth-watering Mango pickle all these years. After long time we

all are enjoying together recollecting our school's recess time memories. Those childhood memories made our day".

After dinner all friends went for a walk. Discussing each other's profession and today's pandemic situation. Their discussion took a turn and they started debating about which profession is more superior.

Nitin who was Computer Engineer said, "we are the intelligent professionals who connect this world on its click. We have power of 'Artificial Intelligence'. We will rule the world".

Anant who was Chemical Engineer said, "We are more powerful as we gave the knowledge of Nuclear Science to the world. The country which has this nuclear power rules the world".

Abhay who was a Biologist said, "friends, you don't know the power of micro-organism. The Artificial Intelligence, Nuclear Science is powerful but biological weapons are much more powerful. The country who possess them, rules the world.

Vidya who was psychologist was observing them. She said, "friends, I think we are wasting our time and energy on this silly conversation of whose profession is powerful. I feel no profession is powerful than mother nature. Let me remind you of a story of four friends, which we have heard during our childhood. Everyone was surprised with

Vidya's comment. Nitin said, "Vidya share clearly what you want to tell and don't throw puzzles at us". Vidya got annoyed on Nitin's comment. To calm her down Abhay said, "Hey! Vidya, tell us that story."

So Vidya started telling the story, "Once, four friends were going from the jungle after finishing their studies. Three were very educated in their subjects and one friend was average but smart and knew how to face any situation. While crossing the jungle they found some bones. They started discussing whose bones it would be. They thought to test their knowledge. The smart friend said friends if these bones are lying here in the jungle that means it must be of some wild animal, which could be dangerous. Our knowledge is to help the needy ones. But nobody paid attention to him. One of the four friends then joined the bones with his mantra Vidya, the second friend put skin on the bones with his mantra and they came to know that it is a Lion. The smart friend warned them the danger ahead and they are using their knowledge against the nature but nobody listened to him and instead teased him as a coward. Realising the danger, he requested them to let him climbed on the tree. As the fourth friend climb the tree the third friend brought the animal to life with his knowledge. Being a wild animal, the lion immediately attacked all the three friends and killed. The fourth friend who sensed the danger and was on the tree got saved. Others who tried to used their knowledge against the mother nature got killed."

Vidya further said, "dear friends not only we but everyone else in the world is behind the crazy race of achieving the goal, which is going against the nature. Instead, can we think with the help of our knowledge, how we can make our mother earth happy. For our pleasure, we are wasting natural resources. Testing nuclear weapons and using biological weapons to over-power the world. It will take us towards the complete destruction of the world.

Friends, let us use our knowledge to make right use of natural the resources for the benefit of the mankind. Let's save our world.

Vidya's words made them to think and all realised that they were doing the same mistake as narrated in the story.

Nitin said, "Thank you Vidya, you made us realise our mistake. You are our true friend." Abhay and Anant also agreed and all of them decided to use their knowledge for the betterment of the society.



## 20. Don't worry, I am there.

She came outside the room screaming. "Where is the picture?" she angrily asked. Kiran, her son, ran towards her trying to calm her. That was the last picture we had of him, she said crying. "I promise I'll find it maa", said Kiran.

Kiran hurriedly checking every corner of the house, seem to have found nothing. Maa sat there uttering not a single word, she was sad. Kiran's wife Shilpa tried searching for the picture as well. The picture was lost, the picture of her son, Kaustubh, was lost.

Kaustubh was a "Force One commando" who had lost his life in a terrorist attack three years back. And that was the last picture they had of him.

Somehow, they had lost all pictures of him over the last three years. That was the biggest mystery in the house. Where, did the pictures disappear?

Hearing all these loud voices early in the morning, the neighbours rushed over. No one really present there to empathize or help but simply to seek the gossip. Maa had always ignored them. She never had anybody by her side, besides her sons and her daughters-in-law. She felt quite lonely after both her boys flew away for their careers. She was extremely proud of them, for their achievements but nothing could ever fill the empty spot of loneliness in her heart.

After the death of Kaustubh, his wife Meera had moved out of the house for the good. Maa could understand how Meera felt, after-all she had lost her husband to the war. She had raised the twins, Kiran and Kaustubh on her own. Kiran and Shilpa moved back in after the incident. They didn't want maa

to be alone. Meera had not been in contact for the past three years. Maa wanted to be with her but she respected Meera's choice.

Kiran and Kaustubh always dreamt of being in the army together following the footsteps of their father. Kaustubh made it in the first go but Kiran failed. He had developed a leg condition because of which he lost all his chances of being in the military. He worked a nine to five desk job in an army office. He wasn't satisfied, always jealous of his brother. Maa knew her kids well. She sympathised with Kiran but he never recovered from wanting more, being greedy. Both the brothers were the same but Kaustubh framed his own destiny and Kiran kept blaming his luck. Maa couldn't help Kiran anymore.

Kiran sat in front of maa, on his knees. He had a confession. Maa knew it all along but she was waiting for Kiran to realise his mistake.

Kiran saw maa suffer this morning after she couldn't find the picture. Kiran couldn't be selfish any-more. He felt guilty. He missed his brother. His hatred and jealousy were his way of

expressing his sadness after he realised, he was never going to see his martyred brother again, ever again. Kaustubh sacrificed his life for his country.

Kiran confessed, "I hid the pictures, maa. I miss Kaustubh so much". "I know", said maa.

Today is indeed Kaustubh's third death anniversary. They heard a doorbell, Meera standing there. Standing behind her, a three-year-old boy peaking. "Maa, meet Kabir, your grandson" said Meera.

Maa ran to him in tears. Maa hugged Meera and Kabir. "Kabir, this is your grandma. She is your father's maa", said Meera. Just like you are my maa" said Kabir. Everyone cried happy tears.

A soldier gives up so much from his life to have everyone else have everything. He has the biggest heart.

Kabir called grandma, "Grandma, you can have this picture of my father, maa gave it to me. And now I'll give it to you." "Don't worry grandma, I'm there."