



Learn English Through Stories

Panchtantra Tales

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6. The foolish Cats



Once upon a time, two cats — Mano and Rano — used to live in a village. They were good friends and both used to live very lovingly with each other.

One day both the cats became very hungry while playing. They saw a piece of bread at some distance. They started fighting over that bread. One cat said, "I found it first so it is mine." The other cat was saying the same thing.

The first cat took two pieces of bread and extended one piece towards the second cat. Seeing this, the other cat said again, "What is this, you gave me a small piece. That is wrong.

A monkey on the tree was seeing them fighting over the bread and wanted to eat that bread too. He said, "Why are you quarrelling? I can help you because I have a scale which can divide the bread into equal amounts."

Both cats liked the monkey's advice. The monkey climbed the tree and brought the scale. He put each piece of bread on each pan and said, "Left side is heavier." He ate a little bit from the left side piece and said, "Right side is heavier." He ate a little bit from the right side piece.

In this way, every time the scale became heavy, he broke a little bread from that side and started putting it in his mouth. Both the cats were now terrified. They still quietly waited for the monkey's decision as they did not want to give each other more amount of bread.

At last small pieces of bread were in pans of the scale. The monkey said, "As you have seen that I have done the hard work of dividing bread with my scale so I must get the wages of my hard work". He ate the rest of the pieces of bread. The poor cats went on empty stomachs from there.

Both the cats had realized their mistake and felt that others could take advantage of their weakness.

Moral:

When two people fight, it's always the third person who gets the benefit.

7. The Greedy Jackal

In a faraway forest there lived a greedy jackal. He was always eating. No matter how much he ate Jackal always remained hungry. All the animals in the jungle hid their food from the jackal. They knew that if the jackal came to know about their food he would either steal or snatch it from them.

One day the jackal was very hungry. He could not find any food in the jungle so he decided to go to the adjacent village to find food. He walked to the village and hid behind the trees. He saw a few huts and children playing around them.

Suddenly a door opened and an old woman came out. She called out to one of the children. The jackal ran to hide behind the bushes to listen to what she said to the child. His name was Raju.

Raju's grandmother had called Raju to tell him about the rice pudding she had made for him. She was taken by surprise when she saw a jackal run and hide behind the bushes. She told Raju about the pudding and asked him to be cautious while playing outside.

The jackal heard Raju and his grandmother's talk about the rice pudding. His mouth watered with the thought of rice pudding. He hatched a plan to eat the rice pudding. He stayed behind the bushes to wait for the night to descend. At night he planned to go inside the hut and eat the pudding.

The jackal did not know that Raju's grandmother had seen him hide behind the bushes. She was hatching her own plan to get rid of him. Afternoon changed into evening and she could still see the jackal hidden behind the bushes. She thought for some time. Then she put a big pot of water on the stove. She then called Raju to come inside the hut as it was getting dark.

When the jackal saw the children going back home, he decided to go closer to Raju's hut. He ran to the hut and hid under the window. He heard the old woman and the child talk.

"Grandma, why is there a hole in the kitchen ceiling?" asked Raju.

"To allow fresh air into the hut," said Grandma.

"I hope no animal enters our hut," said Raju.

"Nothing will happen. I will take care of it tomorrow morning," said Grandma lovingly.

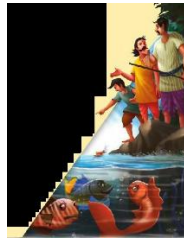
The jackal heard about the hole. He could not believe his ears. Now he did not have to struggle to find his way into the hut; he already had a perfect entrance

ready. He climbed to the roof of the hut and saw a hole in the roof. He lay down on the roof and decided to wait till everyone went off to sleep. He started feeling hungry but he tried his best to stay calm. After waiting for a few hours he could hear people snoring inside the hut. He stood up and decided to jump into the hole.

And when he jumped down.... he fell into the pot of boiling water. The jackal gave a cry of pain and ran outside the hut. The grandmother and Raju both were awake now and saw the jackal running outside in pain. They both laughed. They had cleverly saved the pudding from the jackal.

As they say: Greed is curse.

8. The Tale of the three fish



Three fish lived in a pond. All the three were very good friends. One day, some fishermen passed by the pond. One of the fishermen said, "This pond seems to be full of fish.

Let us come at dawn tomorrow and catch some of them."

But the fish had overheard them, the wisest one of the three fish said, "We must move out of this pond tonight."

The second fish agreed. But, the third fish laughed loudly at the suggestion and said. "Why should we leave tills pond, the ancient home of our forefathers? We cannot escape death even if we go elsewhere." Unable to convince him, the other two fish left the pond. The next day, the fishermen took a big catch of fish in the pond. And the third fish was one of t hem.

9. The Curious monkey and the Wedge



There was once a merchant who employed many carpenters and masons to build a temple in his garden. Regularly, they would start work in the morning; and take a break for the mid-day meals, and return to resume work till evening.

One day, a group of monkey arrived at the site of the building and watched the workers leaving for their mid-day meals.

One of the carpenters was sawing a huge log of wood. Since, it was only half-done; he placed a wedge in between to prevent the log from closing up. He

then went off along with the other workers for his meal.

When all the workers were gone, the monkeys came down from the trees and started jumping around the site, and playing with the instruments.

There was one monkey, who got curious about the wedge placed between the log. He sat down on the log, and having placed himself in between the half-split log, caught hold of the wedge and started pulling at it.

All of a sudden, the wedge came out. As a result, the half-split log closed in and the monkey got caught in the gap of the log.

As was his destiny, he was severely wounded.

The wise indeed say:

One, who interferes in other's work, surely comes to grief.

Curiosity killed the cat.

10. The Vain Crows



Once a poor little maynah (a female parrot) lost the way to her nest and it was getting dark. So she stopped on a tree. There were many crows perched on this tree, who shouted. "Get off our tree!"

The maynah pleaded. "It might rain. Let me stay for a while." But the crows wouldn't listen.

At last, the maynah flew to another tree where she found a cavity to rest in comfortably. And one day, there was this huge hailstorm and heavy rain. Many crows were hurt and some even died. When the weather calmed down, the maynah came out and started to fly home.

Just then, one of the crows asked the maynah. "I low come you are not hurt?"

"God helps humble creatures and lets arrogant ones like you suffer." The maynah replied and flew away.

As they say:

One should never be arrogant because God punishes those who are.