



Learn English Through Stories

Panchtantra Tales

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31. The Blind Vulture



Once upon a time, there was a hill that sloped down to the banks of a river. At the bottom of the hill, there was a tree which made the shelter for many birds. One day, a blind old Vulture came to live in the hollow of the tree. The birds welcomed the blind vulture and decided to give him a share of their food since he was old.

When the Blind Vulture saw birds' concern for him, he was overwhelmed with gratitude. He thought to himself, "As these birds are being so kind to me, it has become my duty to protect their young ones when they are away gathering food". After this, the Vulture used to get his food from the birds and in return, he took care of their young ones while they were away. So like this, all of them were passing their days happily.

One day, a cat passed by that tree when the birds were away. Hearing the noise of the young ones, she came near the tree with the hope of catching and eating the baby birds. But when the young ones saw her coming, they made a chirrup. The blind Vulture heard them and shouted, "Who is there?" On seeing the Vulture, the Cat got frightened and said to herself, "O God! I am as good as dead. But I need to be brave. I should try to gain his confidence."

At once, the Cat replied, "O wise one! I just came to pay my homage to you." The Vulture asked, "Who are you?" The Cat answered, "I am a Cat". The Vulture shouted, "Go away otherwise I'll eat you up". The Cat was clever and she made quick responses to the Vulture. She innocently said to the Vulture, "Sir, Listen to me first then you can decide further. It is not good that you are discarding me as I belong to a particular race."

The Vulture decided to listen to her. The Cat said, "I live on the other side of the river. I don't eat meat and take bath everyday in the river. I am doing great penance for my sins. I have heard much about your intelligence from the birds on the banks of the river. They told me that I should learn more about religion from you as you possess all knowledge. So, I came here to become your disciple and seek your blessings".

She further said, "But, I don't feel what the birds told me is true, when you got ready to kill a poor cat. You should have treated me well, after all guests are form of God. Even if you don't have any food to offer me, at least you could say something kind to me". The Old Vulture replied, "How can I trust you since you are carnivorous and young birds reside here". The Clever Cat was well-versed in tantrums.

She touched the ground and her ears as a sign of her honesty and replied, "I've read all scriptures and came to know that killing is immoral. The entire forest is full of herbs and vegetables. So why should I commit sin by killing birds?" The Vulture believed her and allowed her to stay with him in the hollow of the tree. With the passing days, the Cat started eating the young birds one by one without the knowledge of the Vulture.

When the birds found that their young ones were missing, they started looking for their kids. As soon as the Cat realized that situation is not in her favour, she quietly slipped away. Unknown about the happening, the blind Vulture lay down near the hollow of the tree where the Cat had thrown the bones of some of the birds eaten by her. When the Birds saw the bones of their young ones, at once they shouted, "The blind Vulture has eaten our innocent kids."

All of them got enraged by the ingratitude of the Vulture and they pecked him to death. The poor Vulture didn't even get the chance to defend himself.

Moral: Never treat someone whom you hardly know as a friend.

32. Fighting Goats and the Jackal



One day while a sage was going through a jungle, he saw two golden rams (billy goats) fighting each other.

Even though both were wounded, and blood was oozing out from their heads and bodies, they did not stop fighting and rammed at each other.

At the same time, a hungry jackal was passing by. When he saw all the blood, he started licking the blood from the ground without caring for the fighting rams.

Watching all this, the sage thought to himself, "This jackal is a fool as it has become greedy by the smell of blood. If he comes between the fighting rams, it will get rammed and get hurt himself."

No sooner had the sage thought of it, the jackal craving for more blood came nearer to the fighting rams, and got caught in the middle of their fight.

Both the rams rammed into him by mistake. He got hit on his head, and fell down because he was severely wounded.

The wise indeed say:

Do not close your eyes to the impending danger due to greed.

33. The Hunter and the Dogs



Once there lived a hunter. His name was David Cook. He lived on a farm. He had many animals on the farm: two rabbits, three sheep, four chickens, five quails, and several his hunting dogs.

One year, it was a snowy weather. Every day, it snowed thickly. He could not go hunting. One day, he was very hungry. He made a soup of the five quails he had. The soup was quite tasty and he ate it all. The next day he looked outside, it was still snowing. He roasted his four chickens with tandoori masala and sprinkled some lemon on them. They tasted delicious and he gobbled up all of them. Next day his stomach was quite bloated and he stayed in bed all day and night.

A few days later he looked outside, it was snowing even more thickly. He prepared a rabbit madras curry and put one too many chillies in it. The curry was too hot so he couldn't eat much, and he had to wash it down with a lot of beer. The curry lasted more than a couple of days.

He looked outside, and there was no sign that the snow would stop. He only had one sheep left with him, the other two he had given to his dogs while he ate other meat.

David shared his last sheep with his dogs. A few days more went by, but it continued to snow. One night when David went to sleep, the dogs had a meeting.

Spotty the Dog spoke, "Dear friends, a thought came to my mind that I would like to share with you. It is still snowing. Nobody knows when it is going to end. There is no more food left in the farmhouse. All the animals and the birds except us have gone. What would happen next?"

Brownny the Dog said, "We will not be able to dance because you cannot dance when your tummy is empty."

Spotty the Dog shouted, "Shut up, you Brownny, it is a serious matter."

Then Oldie the Dog spoke, "I got your point, Spotty. We must leave this farmhouse as soon as possible.

As they say: 'If our neighbour's house is on fire, we should take measures to save ourselves'."

34. The Big Fish



Dand Bora was a fisherman. Why was he called by this name? There is a story behind it. Once, he involved himself in a small fight and lost his tooth. Why did he involve himself in the fight? We will talk about it some other time.

He usually went to a big ponds for fishing. But one day, he decided to fish in a small, local pond. The pond was full of small fish. His net was not suitable for catching small fish. However, he threw his net into the pond. When he drew it up, he was surprised to see a variety of his catch. When he was pulling the net, most of the small fish managed to escape through the holes in the net, and they jumped back into the water.

But one of the big fish had no choice. It was trapped and could not move. As soon as he threw it into his basket, the fish died.

He took the fish home and gave it to his wife for cooking. His wife asked, “Dear Husband, Dand Bora Sahib, only one fish?”

The husband replied, “Dear Wife, Ganji Mem Sahib, I did catch a variety of fish. But most of them were small, and they escaped through the holes of the net.”

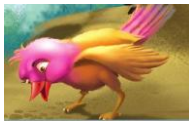
Ganji, the wife, is highly educated but a stupid woman. Why is she called Ganji? Obviously, she has no hair. How did she lose her hair? Once, while she was washing her hair, the electricity went off. She used bleach instead of shampoo. Now, she wears a wig and looks quite fashionable. She is a teacher, so she cannot go to school without hair. She can, but she would look more stupid than she is already.

Anyway, one day, she asked her class a question:

What would they prefer: a big fish in a small pond or a small fish in a big pond?

We will discuss the answers some other time.

35. The Greedy Little Bird



Long ago, a flock of birds stayed on a tree near a lake. The flock was ruled by an old queen bird. Every morning, she would divide the birds into groups and send them in different directions in search of food. All the birds worked equally hard all day long.

Whenever a bird found food anywhere, she or he would promptly bring the food back to the nest where the queen bird lived. If the food was too much for a bird to carry alone, she would inform the whole group. The bird in the group would then carry it back to the nest.

Every evening, the queen bird would divide the food equally among all the birds as they had all worked equally hard in search of food. This ensured that no bird would go hungry.

One day, while searching for food, a young bird came to a village. She saw many bullock carts carrying sacks of grain from the fields to the nearby market. She noticed that lots of grain were falling on the road as the carts moved.

She was delighted to see this. She became greedy and thought to herself, "Every day, I fly far and wide in search of food. Maybe God has rewarded me with such abundant supply of food. These grain belong to me and I should not share it with anyone else.

She immediately thought of a plan. She flew back to the nest and met the queen bird and told her, "O, Queen, not far away from this place, I saw a village road scattered with fresh grains." She also told about the carts that were carrying the grains from the fields to the market.

"But I must warn that it is very dangerous to fly down on the road to peck at the grains as there are plenty of carts on the road," she continued. "It is very likely that any bird which tries to peck the grain may get crushed under the

wheels of the cart. Hence, my suggestion would be that no bird should go in that direction.”

The queen thought that the young bird was talking sense. She called up all the birds and warned them not to go in the direction of the village.

The young bird was very happy to see this. All the food on the village road now belongs to her. She was confident that she would face no danger from the carts. She would watch out for the carts and move aside whenever she would see an oncoming cart. Her young age and agility would help her in this operation.

Every day, the young bird would secretly fly in the direction of the village and enjoy the fresh grains alone. She did not have to work hard in search of food now and had plenty to eat without much effort.

Soon the young bird became very fat as he didn't have to fly much. He also lost her quickness and agility.

One day while the bird was busy pecking, she did not notice an oncoming cart. While she was busy pecking at the grains, the bullock cart crushed her under its wheels.

The greedy bird lay dead on the village road.

[One who desires more, loses all.](#)

