



Learn English Through Stories

Panchatantra Tales

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18. The King's Elephant and Her Best Friend – Version 1

There once was a good king. He loved animals very much. He did not like to see any animal hungry or hurt. In his big palace, he kept many beautiful birds from different countries. The birds sang nice songs to him every day. Outside the palace, in the stables, he had many strong horses from all over the world. These horses pulled his carriage when he travelled. But the king's favourite animal was a big elephant. He loved her more than all the others.

Every time the king went to see his people, he sat on a grand throne on the elephant's back. The elephant walked slowly and carefully through the kingdom. The king wanted his favourite elephant to be very happy and healthy. So he built her a large, comfortable shelter. He also gave her a caretaker. The caretaker's job was to look after the elephant all day.

The elephant had a very good life. She ate the best fruits and vegetables every day, like bananas, apples, and carrots. She was always clean and healthy. But sometimes she felt lonely. The king was very busy with his work, so he only came to see her sometimes. The caretaker was there every day, but he was a little lazy. When he had no work, he liked to sleep. He did not play with the elephant or talk to her very much. The elephant wanted a real friend – someone to stay with her, play with her, and talk to her.

One day, a small, hungry dog came to the palace grounds. He was so hungry that he could not walk straight. He looked for food everywhere. At last, he found the elephant's shelter. He saw all the tasty food and started to eat it quickly. The elephant saw the dog eating her food, but she did not get angry. She understood that the dog was very hungry. She had a lot of food, so she let him eat.

When the dog finished eating, he felt much better. He looked at the elephant and said, "I am sorry. Thank you very much." The elephant liked how polite the dog was. She decided to make him her friend. She asked him to stay with her and share her food every day. The dog was very happy and said yes.

From that day, the elephant and the dog lived together in the shelter. They played together. They ate together. They slept close to each other. They became best friends. The caretaker did not care about the dog. He was too busy sleeping or talking to other people, so he did not send the dog away.

The dog ate good food every day and soon became fat and strong. One day, a farmer came to the palace. He saw the healthy dog and liked him. The farmer said to the caretaker, "I want this dog. I will give you money. He can

guard my fields at night.” The caretaker was greedy. He wanted the money, so he said yes. He took the money and let the farmer take the dog far away.

Now the dog was very sad. He had little food at the farmer’s house. He worked all night to guard the fields. He missed his best friend very much. In the palace, the elephant was sad too. She waited every day for her friend to come back, but he never came. She stopped eating. She became thin and weak. Soon she was sick.

The caretaker was very afraid. He knew it was his fault because he sold the dog. He was scared that the king would be angry. He went to the king and said, “Your elephant is sick. She does not eat.” The king was very worried. He loved his elephant so much. He asked the caretaker many questions, but the caretaker did not tell the truth. He said, “I do not know why she is sick.”

The king called the best animal doctor in the kingdom. The doctor looked at the elephant and said, “She is not sick in her body. She is sad in her heart. She misses someone.” The king was surprised. He called all the people who lived in the palace and asked, “Do you know why my elephant is sad?”

At last, the housekeepers told the king the truth. They said, “The elephant had a best friend – a small dog. They were always together. But one day the dog disappeared.” The king looked at the caretaker. The caretaker was very scared. He told the truth: “I sold the dog to a farmer for money.”

The king was angry, but he wanted his elephant to be happy again. He sent messengers to every part of the kingdom. They told everyone, “If you bring back the dog, you will get a big prize.” The farmer heard this news. He wanted the prize, so he came back to the palace quickly with the dog.

When the elephant saw her friend, she was so happy! She moved her trunk and made happy sounds. The dog ran to her and jumped around. They were together again at last. The elephant started to eat again. She became strong and healthy. The dog was happy too.

The king spoke to the caretaker. He said, “You must give the money back to the farmer. From today, you must take care of both the elephant and the dog. Do your job well!” The caretaker was afraid of the king. Now he worked very hard. He never slept when he had to work. He looked after both friends very well.

The elephant and the dog lived happily together for many years. They were best friends forever.

Moral: Being away from your best friend is very painful. Friends are very important.

Comprehension Questions

Question 1: Who loves animals very much?

Question 2: What is the king's favourite animal?

Question 3: Where does the elephant live?

Question 4: Why is the elephant sometimes lonely?

Question 5: Who comes to the palace because he is very hungry?

Question 6: What does the elephant do when she sees the hungry dog eating her food?

Question 7: Who sells the dog to a farmer?

Question 8: Why does the elephant become sick?

Question 9: What does the doctor say about the elephant?

Question 10: What happens at the end of the story?

Answers

Answer 1: The king loves animals very much.

Answer 2: The elephant is the king's favourite animal.

Answer 3: The elephant lives in a big shelter in the palace.

Answer 4: The elephant is sometimes lonely because the king is busy and the caretaker is lazy and does not play with her.

Answer 5: A small, hungry dog comes to the palace.

Answer 6: The elephant does not get angry. She lets the dog eat her food because she understands he is hungry.

Answer 7: The caretaker sells the dog to a farmer.

Answer 8: The elephant becomes sick because she misses her best friend (the dog) and stops eating.

Answer 9: The doctor says the elephant is not sick in her body. She is sad in her heart because she misses someone.

Answer 10: The farmer brings the dog back, the elephant and the dog are together again, they are happy, and the caretaker must take good care of both friends forever.