

DREAMLAND

101

GRANDMA STORIES



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1. KING BRUCE AND THE SPIDER

King Robert Bruce ruled Scotland but was defeated by the King of England. His throne fell, and he ran away to save his life, taking shelter in a cave. After regaining his strength, he gathered his army and waged war against the King of England. He was defeated. He tried again, and again, but was defeated each time. Saddened, he gave up the fight altogether. One day, he saw a spider trying to climb up to its web. It kept falling but kept trying. King Bruce began to count the number of times it fell. To his great astonishment, the spider reached its web at the seventeenth attempt! King Bruce jumped to his feet, thinking: 'If a tiny creature does not lose heart, why should I?' He brought together his army again to wage another hard-fought war. This time he regained the throne of Scotland.



2. THE BIRD WHO GAVE MILK

Tarla, a poor man, worked in the fields with his wife. One day, they made the field ready for sowing and left. The next morning, the field was as before, so they had to dig again. The third day, again the field appeared untilled. Tarla stayed back that night. He saw a beautiful bird settled on the bush where he was hiding, which began singing to the field to turn around! And the field turned around! Tarla was about to kill it, when the frightened bird promised to give him and his family a lot of milk if he let it live on. Tarla told the bird first to have the field turned around, ready for sowing. The bird did that. Then, Tarla placed the bird into a bag and carried it home.

Tarla took care of the bird and daily it gave a lot of milk, which Tarla and his family drank heartily. They became healthy. When the villagers asked about the secret of their health, Tarla distributed the milk to them also, and they were overjoyed.



3. THE MAGIC MIRROR

A boy, called Tembo, had a tomcat for a constant companion. Once, Tembo saved a large snake which gave him a magic mirror as a reward! When Tembo commanded the mirror to give him a house, in a flash, the house was ready! Tembo went to the King and asked for his daughter's hand. The king said: 'If you can build a house in one minute, you can marry my daughter.' Tembo did that! The unhappy king had to keep his word, but sent his soldiers after Tembo. Tembo tricked the soldiers, but they learnt of his magic mirror. The king sent an old woman to steal it, and again sent his soldiers. This time they took his wife back to her parents, and put Tembo with his cat in jail! The cat caught a rat, which knew where the mirror was hidden and brought it back to them. Tembo got his wife and house back, and lived happily ever after.



4. THE BOYS AND THE FROGS

A number of boys used to play cricket near a pond. Once, one of the boys hit the ball so hard that it went inside the pond. When a boy went to pick up the ball, he saw some frogs and told his friends: 'Let's play with the frogs today.' His friends agreed. They rushed after the frogs, which felt scared and jumped into the water. One boy threw a big stone at a frog. It died. The other boys cheered loudly. They also aimed stones at the frogs. Some frogs got injured; some were killed. Suddenly, they heard a hoarse voice. It was so strange that they stopped to look around. An old frog spoke to them in a human voice: 'Why are you throwing stones at us, dear boys? Does the life of another creature have no value for you? What is a game for you, is death for us.' The

boys felt ashamed. Putting their stones down, they went away.



5. THE SICK CAMEL

A camel who lived near the edge of an oasis fell sick. When his relatives and friends learnt that he was alone and sick, they went to visit him. After journeying for long, they rested for awhile, staying back with the sick camel, and took to eating the grass growing around.

The camel felt very happy to meet his relatives and friends. But, when he had recovered and looked around for something to eat, he found that everything had been eaten up by his visitors! So, the camel had no choice but to trudge on through the desert, to search for another oasis.



6. JAMES THE SIMPLETON

James was a good-natured simpleton. Once, he was having lunch at a friend's house, when his parents and two brothers ate poisonous mushrooms by mistake and fell very sick. His father was unable to move, so he told James to go quickly to the pharmacy and get a strong medicine for stomach upsets, a dose for four people. He made James repeat his instructions, and then hurry.

His parents and brothers kept waiting, but James did not turn up. His father

was worried for James was quite silly. Feeling a bit better, he went to the pharmacy. On the way, he found James, doubling up in great pain and cradling his stomach. When he asked what had happened, James said that as told, he had got the four doses, and eaten them all!



7. THE TWELVE HUNTERS

The king ruling over the Kingdom of the East was dying and asked his son to promise to marry the Northern queen. The prince was in love with the Southern princess, but promised to do what his dying father desired. When he

did not meet her for some time, the Southern princess grew desperate. She selected many handmaidens, and disguising themselves as hunters, they went to the East. They were taken into the prince's service, who did not recognise his beloved. When his wedding was announced, the Southern princess fainted. The prince went to her aid, and found his ring on her finger! He now realised he loved her more than anything else in the world. The Northern queen, seeing how happy the two lovers were, returned alone to her home.



8. FIGEATER'S MONEY BAG

Once, a young fellow loved to eat figs. Nobody knew where he had come from, so he was called Fig eater. Fig eater discovered an old money bag one day, on which a phrase had been embroidered: 'Ask and you shall receive.' It

granted each wish he made! At first, he wished for a small sum of money, and then, for gold coins. Having few needs, he gave away everything to the villagers. But, the villagers suspected him of being a thief, and chased him away. Roaming about, Figeater met an old beggar, who seemed familiar. On speaking to each other, they realised they were looking for each other! The old beggar was the king in disguise, looking for his son who had been kidnapped by robbers in his childhood, and then abandoned. And, that child was none other than the Figeater! The king happily returned to his kingdom with his son.



9. THE ARAB MERCHANT AND THE CAMEL

It was a winter morning when an Arab merchant set off on a long journey. He had to stop at night in the middle of the desert. There was no oasis or inn near him. Pitching up a small tent, he tied his camel outside, fed him and gave him water to drink. Then, he had his meal and went to sleep.

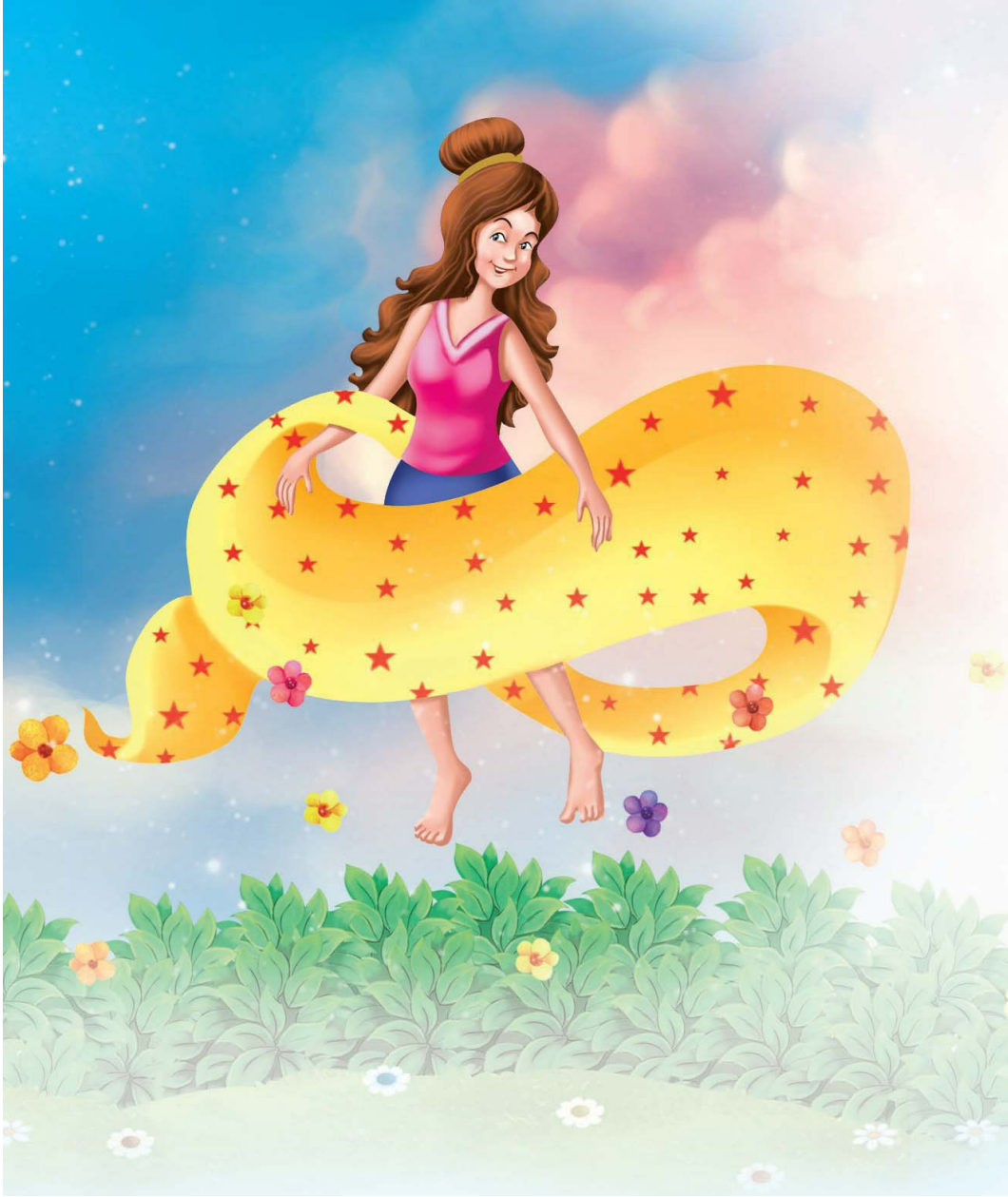
After some time, the camel began to shiver. Unable to bear the cold any

longer, he called out: 'Master, can I put my head inside your tent? It's too cold outside.' The merchant, being a kind man, agreed. A little later, the camel asked his master if he could put his feet inside also. Again, the merchant agreed. Then, he pushed his whole body inside the tent and said: 'Master, I think this tent is too small for both of us. Why don't you sleep outside?'



10. THE MAGIC VEIL

A poor, young farmer lived in a tiny hut but was happy to be in the midst of nature's beauty. One day, he sniffed a sweet fragrance in the woods, and traced it to a pine tree. Caught in its branches was a veil of unmatched beauty, woven out of the sun's rays and moonbeams, and studded with stars! He had gingerly removed the veil, when a charming young maiden came and asked for it. He refused. She began to cry, saying: 'I am a nymph and this is my veil. Please return it as without it I will be unable to return to my sisters.' The youth said: 'If you really are a nymph, then why don't you dance as only nymphs can?' At this, the maiden spun about in mid-air while her veil flew round and round him, scattering thousands of sweet-scented blossoms! He was not sure whether he had actually seen this or it was his imagination. But he began to cherish nature's beauty even more.



11. THE STORY OF KING PRUDENCE

King Prudence was a very cautious king. Not trusting horses, he travelled everywhere on foot. His tired escorts told a magician to invent something with a seat, which would move on its own. The magician brought his new invention, a bicycle, to them two days later. The king ordered a minister to show how it worked. But the minister fell and broke his arm! On recovering, the minister told the magician they needed something better, with an entire carriage. A week later, the new invention, an automobile, was ready. This

time, the minister dashed against a tree! King Prudence continued to walk everywhere, until the day he fell down and broke a leg! Then, he realised he had wrongly blamed the bicycle and automobile for causing accidents. At once, he commanded the magician to make horseless carriages for him and the others at his court.



12. THE THREE WISHES

A poor woodcutter earned just enough money for two square meals for his wife and himself. One day, he was about to cut down a peepal tree, when a woman's voice called out to him. He spun around, but saw nobody! She spoke again, saying that she was a fairy. She beseeched him to spare the peepal tree as she lived in it, and instead promised him three wishes. Feeling sorry for her, the woodcutter cut another tree. When he returned, he told his wife about the fairy and the three wishes. As she set out a dish of porridge for him, the disappointed farmer said: 'I wish fresh hot loaves of bread would pour down from the chimney.' Immediately, fresh hot loaves floated out of the chimney! His wife was angry to see that one wish had been wasted and said: 'I wish these would hang from the tip of your nose.' And that's exactly what happened! The woodcutter cursed his wife. She said they still had one wish left and could ask for all the world's riches. In pain, the farmer cried out: 'I wish these bread loaves would leave my nose and go where they came from.' At that, the loaves floated up out of the chimney!



13. THE DANCING TEAPOT

A poor ragman once found a badger held in a trap. Taking pity on it, he set it free. This badger could do magic and wanted to repay the ragman. Turning itself into a pretty teapot, it placed itself in the ragman's sack. The ragman was very puzzled on seeing the teapot. He gifted it to the temple priests, so that they would remember him in their prayers. One of the priests filled water in it and placed it for boiling. And, the teapot cried out. The poor priest screamed.

When the other priests came, the teapot seemed to be boiling water normally. But the first priest called the ragman back and returned the teapot. In the night, a small voice awakened the ragman. To his amazement, he saw that the teapot had developed the head, tail, and paws of a badger! It told him to take it to the market, where it would make him rich by dancing for him. Indeed, people were thrilled to watch this strange object dancing about, and paid a good amount for this. In a short time, the ragman earned enough to last him a lifetime. He was grateful to the teapot and decided to let it rest. He took it to the temple, where the priests promised to take care of it. A thousand years have gone by since then, but the teapot is still in that temple, where it rests on a window ledge with the sun shining on it.



14. THE TWO BROTHERS AND THE KING'S TURNIP

There once lived two brothers; one being rich and powerful, while the other one was very poor and raised turnips. One of his turnips grew very huge. He would have needed scores of guests to finish eating it. If he sold it, the price it would fetch would not cover the cost of taking it to the market. After thinking hard, he decided to gift it to the king. The king was delighted and was sure this rare turnip must be priceless. In return, the king gave him plenty of gold! When the rich brother heard of this, he wondered what the king would give in exchange of a truly precious gift. So, he presented a casket full of valuable jewels to the king. To reward the rich brother, the king parted with his most prized possession: the turnip given to him by the other brother!



15. THE GREAT KOTEI AND THE GOLDEN EAGLE

In ancient Japan, lived one of its greatest emperors, Kotei. According to legends, Kotei invented the compass and sailing boats, which helped him to win every battle. But, he was also wise and just, so the people he ruled were the richest and happiest of all the Japanese. As he was walking in a park one day, a bright, golden eagle suddenly flew towards him, to land at his feet. Kotei was very wise and asked: ‘Oh, Messenger of the Skies, do you wish to tell me that my life is over?’

The huge eagle nodded its head. The emperor bid farewell to his weeping

family. He mounted the eagle's back, which spread its wings and flew higher and higher, till it became a tiny speck in the brilliant sunshine.



16. THE OAK TREE AND THE SUGAR CANE

One day, a proud oak tree pretended to sympathise with the sugar cane. It told the cane: 'It's so sad that a gust of wind can make you bend your head, while I can stand tall and straight even in the most powerful gale!'

The cane shot back: 'It's true that the wind can make me bow, but it cannot break me.'

That night, a terrible storm occurred. When it was over, the oak tree was seen lying on the ground, its' roots up in the air. But the sugar cane slowly straightened itself up, to stand as firmly as before.



17. REYNARD THE FOX AND THE ROOSTER

The famed red fox, Reynard, got lucky once. Finding a hole in a farm fence, he went into the hen coop, and caught a rooster, but the hens began clucking in fear. Hearing the noise, the farmer gave chase to the fox with his helpers and dogs. They roundly abused the fox. The rooster cleverly taunted the fox: ‘They are insulting you. Don’t you have any pride to give them a fitting

reply?’

With his self-respect at stake, Reynard turned to say: ‘You blockheads will never catch me!’ Barely had he said the first few words, that the rooster escaped from his jaws, to fly up to a tall tree branch. There it crowed, raising its crest: ‘You are the blockhead! You will not be able to catch me now!’ Reynard realised his foolishness but had to keep running to save himself.



18. TREMBLE AND THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER

A miller used to boast that his daughter could weave straw into gold! Hearing of this, the king told the miller to send his daughter to him. 'If she can do what you say, I'll marry her' said the king, 'or she will die.' The unfortunate maiden was thrown into a room full of straw and told to spin it into gold before dawn! A gnome came to her rescue. In exchange for her necklace, he turned the straw into gold. Next, the delighted king sent a bigger quantity of straw! The gnome again helped her in exchange for her ring. But, on the third and last night, the maiden had nothing left, so he made her promise that she would give her first-born child to him! The king married the miller's daughter, but when their first baby arrived, the gnome came. The queen offered him all her valuables, but the gnome only wanted the baby! Finally, he said she could keep her baby if she discovered his name in three days. The despairing queen followed the gnome to his home, where he sang: 'Today it's wine; tomorrow it will be bread; on the third day Tremble, it'll be a prince instead!' On the fourth day, when he met the queen, she said: 'Tremble the gnome, leave us alone!' Tremble rushed out and never returned.



19. THE ICE CREAM CART

There lived a little girl with her poor mother, who had no money to buy bread even. The little girl looked with great longing at the other children eating ice cream. The ice cream seller felt sorry for her. One day, he gifted the ice cream cart to her! He said it was a magic cart, and the ice cream would never finish, but once the containers were full, she would have to say: 'Stop.'

The girl and her mother began eating ice cream every day. One day, when the girl was away, her mother ordered the cart to produce chocolate ice cream but forgot to stop it. The ice cream poured out of the cart, on to the streets, and buried the whole town! When the girl returned, she found that her townspeople were licking a path for themselves through the town!



20. THE MAGICIANS' WAR

The Wizard of Ah had declared war on the Wizard of Oh. Oh changed himself into a wild horse and galloped away. Ah saw him escape and changed into a hare, and ran off in pursuit. Just as Ah was about to catch up, Oh changed again into a wolf and threw himself on the hare. Ah would have been torn to pieces had he not changed into a bear, then Oh transformed himself into a lion. To escape the wild fury of the lion, Ah became a swan and flew away. He realised that Oh was chasing him in the form of a falcon, and threw himself into the sea, taking the form of a fish. Oh, who had now become a shark, was about to eat him in a single mouthful, when Ah succeeded in reaching shore just at the spot where the princess was doing her washing. Ah changed into a bar of soap which the princess was about to pick up, when Oh appeared beside her in the form of a gold ring. She had just placed the ring on her finger, when a merchant, who was really Ah, arrived and bought the ring from the princess. The ring shattered into grains of wheat which fell to the ground. The merchant became a hen which gobbled up the grains, but one grain remained hidden and it now changed into a handsome prince, who, of course, married the princess.



21. THE COSSACK AND THE WITCH

A brave peasant, called a cossack, was attracted to the red, juicy apples on a tree. These were magical apples, kept there by a witch so that she could capture men. Just when the cossack touched an apple, the witch came. She told him that he had one chance to save himself: ‘If you remain hidden for ten hours and I can’t find you, then I will marry you; if you fail, you will be my slave.’

Luckily, the cossack had a fairy for a friend. The fairy flew with him, high

into the sky. But, the witch used a magic book to tell her where the cossack was, and yelled at him to come down! Then, the fairy changed the peasant into a needle, using it to stitch together the pages of the magic book. Thus, the witch lost and married the peasant. She also became nicer, and the two lived happily.

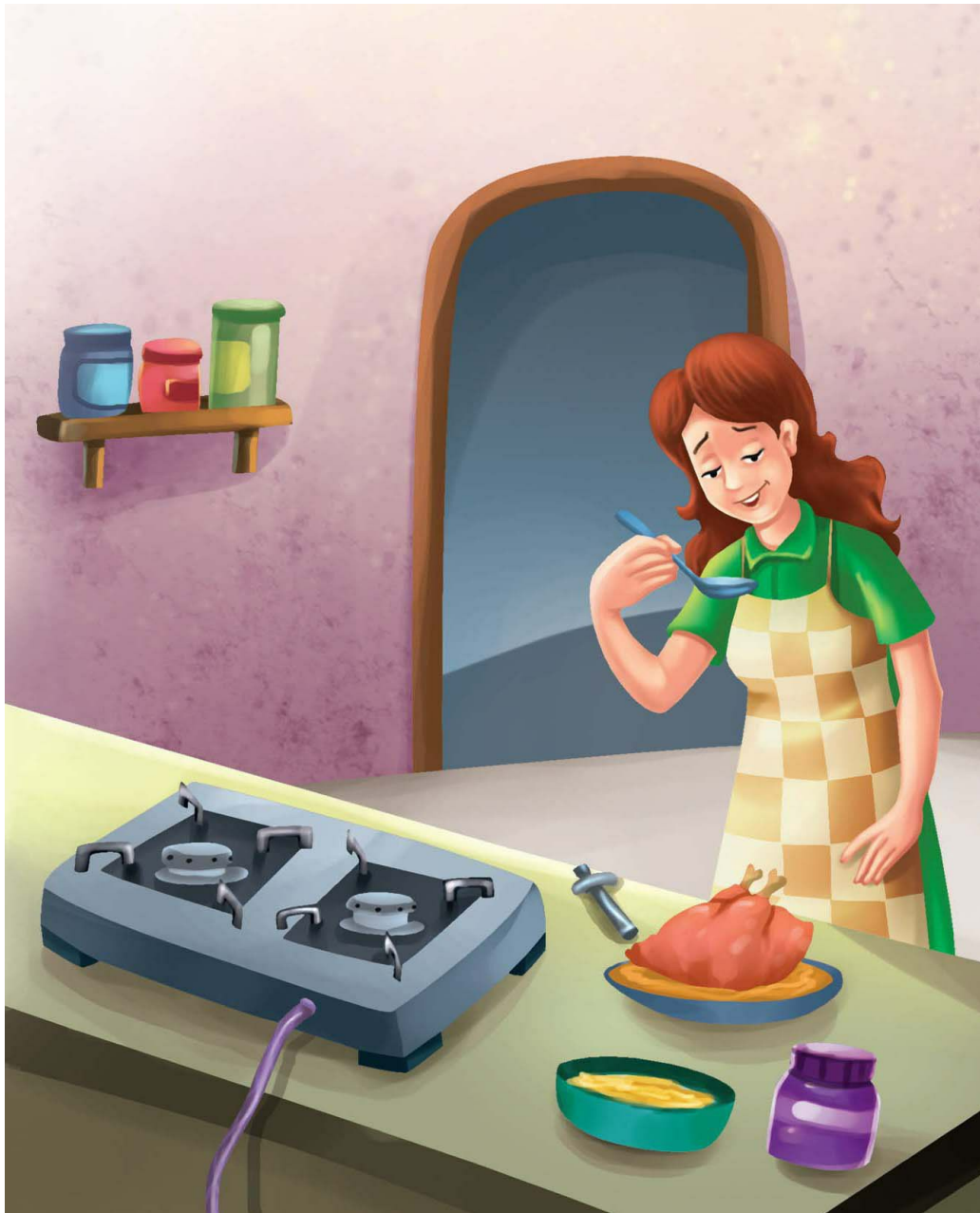


22. RITA'S CHICKEN

Rita was an excellent cook. One day her master told her to roast a chicken for dinner as he had invited a guest. Deciding to taste it, she ate a wing. Thinking that her master would notice one wing was missing, she also ate the other one. But, she kept eating, till the entire chicken was over! When her master came, she told him to sharpen his carving knife for his dinner.

The guest soon came. 'My master plans to kill you,' she whispered. 'Can't you hear him sharpening the knife?' The guest fled. She went to complain to

her master: ‘What a strange guest you invited! He came, grabbed the roasted chicken, and ran away!’



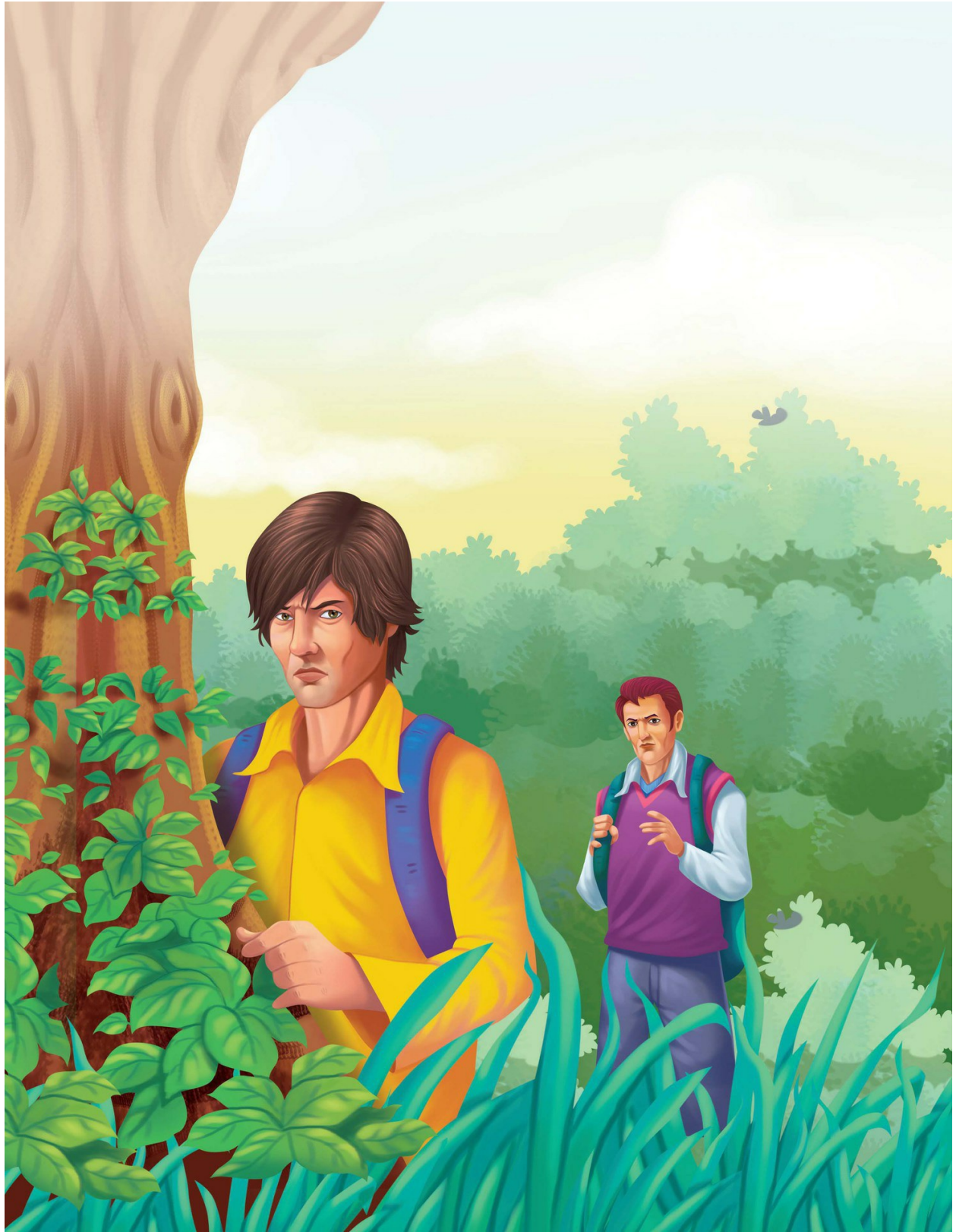
23. THE TWO FRIENDS AND THE PLANE TREE

Jack and John, two friends, were going somewhere and had been trudging along on a hot summer day. At noon, they reached a huge meadow. Coming across a large tree, they sat down beneath it, feeling hot, tired, and thirsty. As

they still had to travel a few hours more, they removed their backpacks, deciding to rest. Feeling the pangs of hunger and thirst, they took out their water bottles and began eating their lunch. While eating his food, Jack asked his friend: 'Do you know what this tree is called?' John answered: 'It's a plain tree.'

'Is it so?' said Jack. 'It's got huge leaves and a strong trunk. But no edible fruits. It's quite useless!'

As the tree heard the two friends talking, it felt deeply offended. It fretted: 'How ungrateful can one be? They are sitting in my shade. I'm sheltering them from the sun, but they don't want to thank me, and don't appreciate my worth!'



24. BOILED EGGS AND BOILED POTATOES

A young man, John, left his city to make his fortune, and returned after many years as a rich person. Taking undue advantage, a cunning shopkeeper sent a dozen boiled eggs to John's home and, later, charged him a thousand ducats for these! John refused to pay such a high price, and the shopkeeper took him to court. The trial had begun when John reached the court. The shopkeeper pleaded that he'd asked John to pay a thousand ducats for a dozen eggs, because a dozen chicks would have been hatched from these, to become hens later. These would have multiplied year after year, and he'd have got a big hen house. When the judge asked John why he had reached late, John said that he had boiled some potatoes and sowed them in a field, to get a rich harvest of potatoes the next year. The astonished judge asked: 'How can boiled potatoes yield a good harvest?' John shot back: 'Just as boiled eggs can bear chicks!'



25. THE FATHER AND HIS DAUGHTERS

Once, a man had two daughters. His elder daughter married a poor farmer, while the younger one married a potter. He visited them both after their marriage, to find out how they were faring.

The first girl said that they needed more water to irrigate their fields and prayed to God to send them rain. The second girl told him that she and her husband prayed for dry weather so that their pots could harden. The distraught father wondered whom he should pray for, as both his daughters wanted opposite things!



26. THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

An old woodsman, Yoshida, and his wife, Fumi, were happy to have lived for long together, but were saddened to think that one day death would separate them.

Yoshida once went to the forest but lost his way. Reaching a spring, he drank some water. At once, he found himself to be healthy and young as a twenty-three year old! Realising the spring had a magical quality, he returned and told the astonished Fumi about it. She also went to the stream. Hours ticked by. Fumi did not return. Yoshida went to the stream, and found a baby girl lying there! Fumi had drunk a huge amount of the magical water! Yoshida looked after her, and they lived happily for a long, long time.



27. THE FAITHFUL MONGOOSE

A young husband and wife, Indi and Lavea, took turns to look after their dear baby boy. They had a pet mongoose. One day, Lavea went down to the river, leaving the baby with his father. Shortly after, a royal messenger came to summon Indi to the palace. Indi left the baby boy in the care of their mongoose, a creature that is unafraid of snakes. The mongoose sat beside the

infant's cot. A huge python suddenly came in through the window. The alert mongoose killed it!

On his return, Indi first saw the mongoose, whose mouth and paws were soaked in blood. Fearing the worst, he began beating the mongoose! When he had given up on the mongoose and entered the house, he saw that his child was peacefully asleep, while a dead python lay beside its cot. Indi was filled with remorse for having doubted the faithful animal. The young parents began to treat the loyal mongoose with more love and care.



28. THE BAGS FULL OF FAULTS

A Greek legend has it that when mankind was created, Zeus, the great Greek god, gifted two bags to each person. These were placed at opposite ends on a pole. One bag contained men's own faults, while the other contained the faults of others. But, by mistake, Zeus placed the bag containing everybody else's faults at the front. The bag containing each person's own mistakes was placed behind.

Perhaps, this is why we find it difficult to see our own faults, but easily see the faults of others!



29. THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN

The beautiful and rich town of Hamelin was once over-ridden by rats, which ate everything. The townspeople tried everything from cats to traps and poison to get rid of the rats, but failed. A wandering minstrel came and said that he could get rid of the rats but demanded one thousand gold coins. The mayor promised to pay one hundred thousand gold coins instead!

As soon as the piper began playing his pipe, all the rats ran towards him. He led them to the sea, where they drowned. The piper now sought his reward. The mayor refused to give him more than a hundred gold coins! Then, the piper went to the town centre, and began playing a melodious tune on his pipe. This time, all the children began to follow him. The parents looked on in alarm. He took the children far away from Hamelin, where they all lived happily.



30. JACK AND THE COMET

Jack fared poorly at studies but he was well-intentioned, and keenly interested in everything. When his school teacher told them about comets, Jack asked when would a comet appear. The teacher said: ‘It’s come already. Haven’t you seen it?’

Jack replied that he hadn’t and asked how he could see it. His teacher told

him that he could see it that very night by going into his vegetable garden. The next morning, when his teacher asked Jack if he had seen the comet, Jack replied that though he'd gone out at night to his vegetable garden, he could not see the comet. The teacher thought perhaps Jack had not looked properly, but he insisted that he'd searched hard and for long. The astonished teacher asked where he had looked for it. Jack replied that he had looked everywhere, in the cabbage patch, between rows of beans, and even under the trees! But then, he reasoned that he could not see it, probably as he had forgotten to light his lantern!



31. HE TOLD NO LIES

A farmer's younger brother, fell in love with a duke's daughter! The elder brother realised he had to somehow help his younger brother. He made his brother wear his oldest suit which was mended with many pieces of cloth. Then, he made him sit near the hearth that was built under a sound roof. He handed his brother a bowl containing two gold coins, and told him to keep on passing these from one hand to the other.

When the farmer met the duke, he asked how much money his brother had. The farmer honestly replied that money passed through his brother's hands all the while! When the duke asked what kind of house he had, he replied: 'He has a sound roof above his head!' The duke next asked whether he had a good wardrobe. The farmer answered: 'He wears much more clothes than me!' Though he had not got a single direct reply, the duke was very impressed. And, without any lie, the farmer got his brother married.



32. THE UNLUCKY ADVENTURES OF MR BOGEYMAN

A rooster and a hen went to meet Mr Bogeyman, the person whom mothers threaten to call if their children misbehave. Their friends, who were a cat, a goose, an egg, a vase of flowers, a hatpin, and a needle, went along. Mr Bogeyman was not at home. When Mr Bogeyman returned and went to light the fireplace, the cat who was in the hearth leapt out! He went to wash his face and got bitten by the goose, sitting on the water pump! As he dried his face with his towel, he got covered by the egg that had settled on it! When he sat on his chair to which the hatpin had attached itself, he got a jab! When he went to lie down, the needle that was lying inside his pillow, pricked him! He ran out of the house and the vase fell on his head! Waking up, the rooster

said: ‘Mr Bogeyman must have done some great wrong to be punished this way!’



33. SNOW-WHITE AND ROSE-RED

A widow lived in the woods with her two daughters, Snow-White and Rose-Red, who were kind and lovely. A huge, black bear knocked at their door one day. They were frightened but the bear said he only wanted to warm himself

by their fireside. The kind girls led him inside and they became good friends. One day, the bear told them that he had to return to save his treasure from the gnome. Months later, while gathering wood, the girls chanced upon a dark cave. Inside it was an amazing pile of treasure! Suddenly, a gnome came and said: 'I'll punish you for spying on me!' He was about to hit them, when a huge, black bear came and killed the gnome. As the girls trembled, the bear spoke: 'Snow-White and Rose-Red, it's me, your friend!' He shed his furry, black skin and turned into a dashing prince. The gnome had turned him into a bear and stolen his father's treasure. The dashing prince married Snow-White, while his equally dashing brother married Rose-Red!



34. HOW SIMPLE SIMON BECAME KING

Hearing from the king's messenger that the princess would marry the most amusing man, Simple Simon went to the palace on a goat! On his way, he gathered a dead crow, a worn-out wooden shoe, and a lump of mud. All the suitors became dumbstruck inside the grand palace, and the lovely princess rejected them. But on entering the court, Simon complained: 'It's too hot!' The princess said: 'All the ovens are burning, to prepare for my wedding feast.' Simon happily took out the dead crow, and said: 'I can cook this also.' 'But all the pots and pans have been put to use,' the princess said. 'I have this,' said Simon, showing her the wooden shoe. 'But what will you do for the sauce?' the princess said with a laugh. He then showed her the lump of mud. The princess had never been so amused, and decided to marry Simple Simon.



35. HOW HANS THE GIANT WAS CAUGHT IN THE WELL

A young giant, Hans, worked for a greedy farmer, who made him work hard but did not want to pay him for his services. The farmer and his wife told Hans to go to the bottom of their well. They planned to kill him by dropping a huge grindstone on him! The innocent and trusting Hans went to the bottom of the well. But, they had to get the help of more than a dozen servants to get the millstone near the well's opening. All pushed hard till it fell down. Soon there was a loud crash! Just as the miserly couple smiled happily at each other, Hans came up with the millstone draped around his neck as a collar!

The farmer rushed to pay Hans the money that he had promised him.



36. THE MILLER AND THE ENCHANTED DONKEY

A young miller was seeking to earn money and found a donkey that could do magic! He simply had to say, ‘Abracadabra’, for the donkey to start spitting silver coins! The youth was overjoyed! Whenever he needed money, he would lock himself in his stable with his donkey, and get as much silver as he wanted! He stopped at an inn once and spent lavishly. The owner was greatly

impressed and gave his best service, and a huge bill! The miller went to the inn's stable to get silver from his donkey. Out of curiosity, the owner followed him and found out his guest's secret! So, he stole the miller's donkey and kept his own donkey in its place. Both looked the same. The miller left the next morning with the new donkey. When he next needed money, he whispered 'Abracadabra'. This time, the donkey spat out gold coins! The inn's owner never knew what he had lost!



37. THE FLYING TRUNK

A handsome, young lad had a unique treasure: an old, flying trunk! He would lock himself in it and go anywhere. One day, he reached a far-off city and heard that the czar's daughter was locked-up in a tall tower, as her father

didn't want her to meet any man who may break her heart. Curiosity drove him to fly to the top of the tower. The princess and he fell in love! The king and queen felt that the youth had landed from the heavens, and agreed to let their daughter marry him. The entire kingdom rejoiced. The youth used his flying trunk to let off a splendid display of fireworks, and then mingled with the crowd. But when he returned to the trunk, it had been completely burnt by the falling sparks! He could not fly any more. They say the princess still looks at the sky, waiting for him to return!



38. THE WISE SHEPHERD

Long, long ago, a shepherd was renowned for being very wise. The king put him to the test, by asking him three questions. His first question was how many drops of water the sea has! The shepherd replied: 'Your majesty, once you dam up all the world's rivers so that they can't enter the sea, I'll be able to tell you exactly how many drops of water exist in the sea.' The king's next question was how many stars can be found in the sky! At this, the shepherd took a pen and covered a huge roll of paper fully with dots. Then, he said: 'Your majesty, if you count all the dots in this sheet, you'll know how many stars there are in the sky.'

The king's last question was how many seconds exist in eternity! The shepherd answered: 'There is a mountain as broad as the sea, reaching the stars in the sky. An eagle goes to this mountain once in a hundred years, pecking it with his beak. One second of eternity will pass when the entire mountain has been worn off by the eagle.' The king praised the shepherd and appointed him as his counsellor.



39. THE SNAKE AND THE EAGLE

On a clear summer day, an eagle was flying high, scanning the ground below for its prey. It spotted a snake, dove down and swooped on it. But the snake had seen the eagle and gripped it hard. As the eagle struggled to free itself, a farmer who was working nearby, saw this. He hit the snake hard with his axe, missing its neck, but forcing the snake to release the eagle. The snake slinked into the grass, and the eagle settled on a tree. When the farmer returned home, the snake followed him. So did the eagle. On entering his kitchen, the farmer poured out water in a glass, but went to wash his hands. The snake quickly spat its poison into the water and slithered away. Just as the farmer lifted the glass, the eagle knocked it out of his hands, making all the water fall down. Little did the farmer know that the eagle had saved his life, just as he had saved its life!



40. THE GODMOTHER OF THE GNOMES

A young lass working as a chambermaid, found a very unusual letter fixed to her broom. It was an invitation from the gnomes, which she couldn't refuse. Three gnomes came to fetch her and took her to a cave high in a mountain. Everything inside was stunningly beautiful and valuable. The little baby gnome was christened with the young lass as its godmother. She was asked to stay for a few days and treated like a queen!

But, when she returned after three days, she found that everything had changed. Her broom was different, her master was not there, and she learnt that she had stayed away for three centuries!



41. THE MAGIC TABLE

A cheerful, hard-working youth worked for a magician. Instead of paying him money, the magician gave him a magic table. The youth would say: 'Set yourself,' and the table would serve him all he wished for! The young lad knew now that he would never go hungry, and decided to go home to his father. On his way, he stopped at a tavern for the night. The owner couldn't serve any food, as he had had too many guests during the day. So, the lad ordered his magic table to set itself. The tavern owner's eyes popped out at the rich feast on the table! At night, the greedy owner replaced the lad's magic table with an ordinary one that looked like it. The youth left with the new table, which also served him well. For the magic lay not in the table, but in the lad! In the meantime, when the tavern owner gave orders to the stolen table, out came a stick and thrashed him soundly!



42. CATHERINE AND THE CHEESES

A farm girl, Catherine, always got into trouble because of her stupidity. As she was carrying the cheeses in a basket one day, one fell out and rolled down the hill. Being lazy and not wanting to chase it, she rolled another cheese after it! When neither returned, she sent off another, then another, and another. Until her basket was empty! Growing impatient, she called out: 'I'm leaving now and you cheeses can follow me!' When she met her husband, he shouted at her: 'Why have you come empty-handed?' The stupid Catherine replied: 'Don't worry, the cheeses will be rolling along here in a few minutes!'



43. BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

A man once lost his way in a heavy snowstorm. After long, he reached a castle. The dining table had been set for a meal but nobody was around. He ate some food, and fell fast asleep. When he awakened, the storm had gone. On his way out, he saw a beautiful rose bush. As he was about to pluck a rose, the castle's owner appeared. He looked horrible. The Beast asked angrily: 'Hasn't the castle given you enough? You will die now for plucking my flowers!' The man pleaded that he was taking the rose for his daughter, Beauty. Beast relented but said that the man should send his daughter to him.

So, Beauty went to the castle. After some days, Beast appeared, and she was shocked! Slowly, she found that he was very kind and gentle. He fell in love with her, but knew that she would never love him. This hurt him so much that he became weaker, till the day came when he was going to die. Beauty started crying. One of her tears fell on Beast's face and like magic, Beast became a dashing young man! Soon, they got married and lived happily.



44. THE EMPEROR'S THRUSH

Once, in ancient China, all agreed that the thrush's song was their most

splendid treasure. The emperor had not seen nor heard it, and commanded his men to bring the thrush to him. He was disappointed to see an ordinary brown bird, but when it sang, tears of joy filled the emperor's eyes! This was the biggest reward that the thrush could have asked for. Sometime later, the emperor was gifted a mechanical thrush, with many bright feathers studded with precious gems. A hidden switch in it could be turned on to make it sing. It became everybody's favourite, and the real thrush was set free.

After sometime, the spring inside the mechanical thrush broke down. Nobody could repair it. The emperor could not sleep without hearing the thrush sing! He became so sick that one night, the doctors feared he would die before the morning. During that night, the real thrush came back, as it remembered the emperor's joyful tears when he had first heard it sing. As it sang, the emperor recovered! In the morning, everyone found that the emperor was alive, cheerful and energetic!



45. THE BOY BORN WITH HIS SHIRT ON

A king was inspecting his kingdom, when he learnt of a boy who had been born wearing a shirt! He was told that the lad was lucky in everything and a soothsayer had predicted that he would marry the princess of his land! The king was unsure of such predictions. He wanted a rich and handsome son-in-law. But deciding not to take any chances, he ordered the lad to take a letter to his queen at the palace.

The poor young boy ran hard, but when night fell, he had a long way to go. Spotting a small cottage, he took permission to spend the night there. The cottage belonged to a gang of robbers! While he slept, the gang leader searched his belongings, and found the letter the king had written. He had told the queen that the letter's carrier should be put to death at once! Feeling sorry for the lad, the gang leader imitated the king's writing and wrote another letter. This letter told the queen to let the letter's carrier marry the princess immediately! The boy awoke and took this letter to the queen. When the king returned, he discovered that the soothsayer's prediction had turned true!



46. THE WAR BETWEEN THE FLYING CREATURES AND THE ANIMALS

A serious quarrel between a bear and a woodpecker turned into a war. All the animals sided with the bear; while all the birds and insects were with the woodpecker. A mosquito flew to the rival camp. He heard the fox say that when they saw his tail was straight, they should advance, but when they saw his tail go down, they should retreat. Next day, the animals charged at the winged creatures. But a bee stung the fox so many times that he could not

hold his tail straight. The animals retreated, defeated by a tiny mosquito and a little bee!



47. THE CRICKET AND THE ANTS

It was summer. The cricket sat on a wheat stalk, singing away to glory and enjoying the warm sunshine. He pitied the ants, who always worked hard, carrying wheat and corn grains to their stores. It seemed to him that they did not know how they could enjoy life!

Then, along came winter, and the cricket could not find any food to eat! He had to turn to the kind ants for help, who gave him some grains of wheat to

help him to overcome his hunger.



48. THE DISTRACTED ASTRONOMER

An astronomer observed stars each night outside his home. Stepping out, he would become completely absorbed in the sky and the stars. One night, he did not see where he was stepping and fell into a hole!

A passer-by heard him calling for help and rushed to his rescue. But, he did ask that when the astronomer couldn't even see what was under his nose, how would he ever discover what was there up in the sky?



49. THE IGNORANT PRINCE

Once, in ancient India, a mighty ruler called the best of teachers to teach his not very bright son. After some years, the prince proved that he had learnt all that they had tried to teach him. But a wise old man said: 'The prince has learnt a lot about the past; a wise man should also know about the future.'

A fortune teller now came to teach the prince. Later, the wise old man tested the prince. Showing something to the king and his courtiers in his hand, he closed his fist and asked the prince to guess what was inside. Thinking hard, he replied: 'It is a round, hard, white object, with a hole. It's a grindstone.'

Everyone laughed aloud. The description was right, but it was a tiny pearl! The wise old man then told the prince that true wisdom does not mean knowing everything, but putting to best use whatever knowledge one has.



50. THE GROCER'S ELF

A young student went to a grocer's shop to purchase bread and a few candles. Having little money, he could only buy the candles, which the grocer wrapped in a page torn out from a book. Reading the poem on it, he wanted to read the book, and had to part with the candles! A small elf who lived in the grocer's shop, followed the boy. He saw a very bright light shining from beneath the door. Through the keyhole he found that the book was shedding that light! It spread out like a huge tree, with its branches spreading over the young boy. Each fruit on the tree shone like a star and each flower bore the

smiling face of a young girl! Enchanted, the elf decided to stay here, rather than be in the grocer's well-stocked shop!



51. THE THREE BROTHERS AND THE THREE SISTERS

A king's three daughters were kidnapped! Three young brothers began to search for them. The boys found a gnome's footprints, which led them to a chasm. On carefully reaching the bottom, they discovered an unbelievable kingdom!

Finding a castle made of copper, the youngest brother found the youngest princess had been imprisoned in it by a three-headed dragon. He killed it and

rescued her. The second brother entered a castle of silver to kill a six-headed dragon, and rescued the second princess. The eldest princess had been imprisoned in a castle of gold, guarded by a twelve-headed dragon, who was rescued by the eldest brother. The king let the brave brothers marry the three princesses and they all lived happily everafter.



52. THE YOUNG MAN AND THE GOLDEN MOUNTAIN

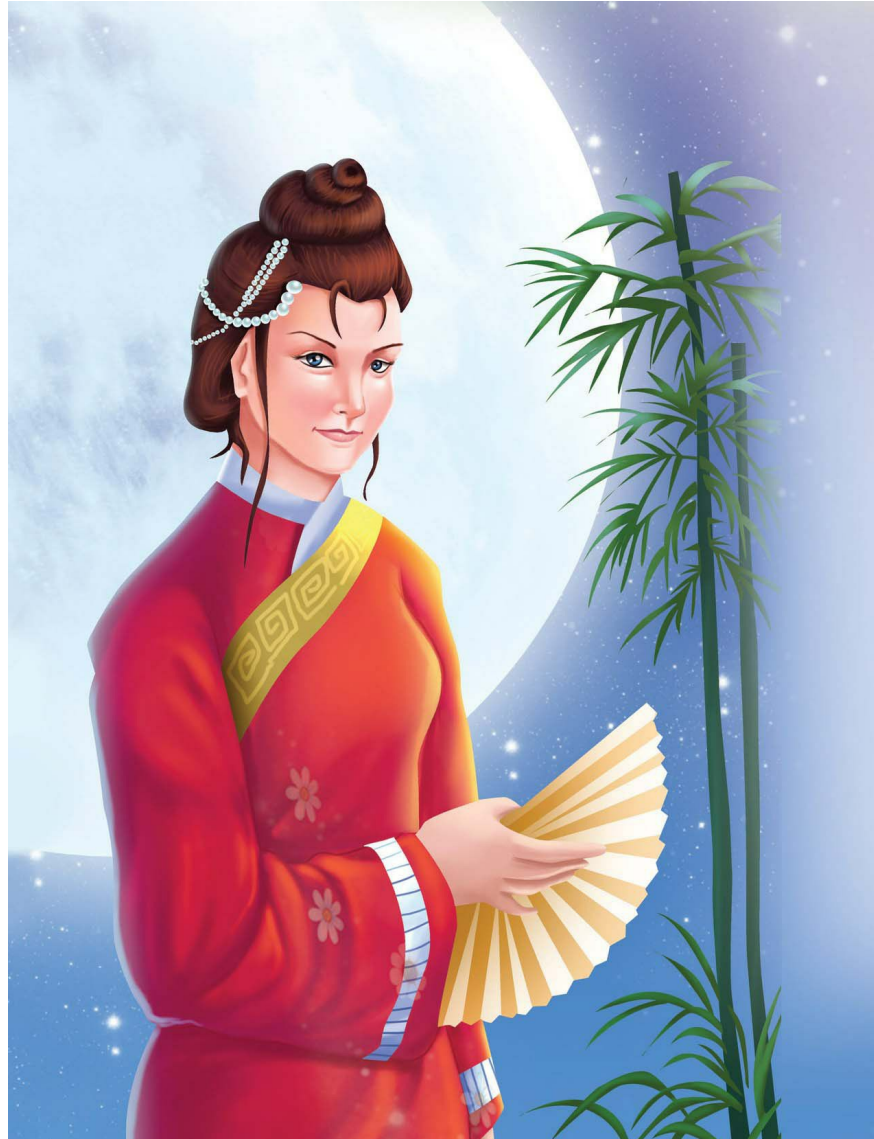
A young man was employed by a man, who took him to a distant isle having a mountain of gold. The employer told him to climb to the mountain top, dig out as much gold as he could, and throw it down to him. When the youth asked how he could climb up, his employer made him drink a 'magic potion', which was a sleeping potion! As the youth slept, his employer wrapped him in a cow skin, and left him on the beach. Some seagulls carried the cow skin to the mountain top. The youth awoke, climbed out of the cow skin, and began digging. He threw down a lot of gold. But when he asked how he would come down, his employer walked away. The golden mountain became so angry at being robbed, that it began heaving, and blew up! The youth was thrown into the air and landed in his home! While the lava poured over the cruel employer, turning him into a statue of gold!



53. THE STORY OF SUMIO

An old Japanese couple was sad for they had no children. Finding a bright, shining bamboo cane one evening, they slit it into two. Inside was a tiny infant girl! Overjoyed, they decided to bring her up as their own daughter. Naming her Sumio, they loved her dearly. She grew into the most beautiful girl. All the princes, and the emperor, wanted to marry her. Sumio refused them all. Though she whispered to the emperor that she was the Moon Princess, and her subjects would come to escort her back on the next full moon night. The emperor sent his army to surround her house.

But, when the unworldly, splendid creatures of the moon came down a pathway of moonbeams, the emperor's army simply gaped! Sumio was carried into the sky. And she took with her the old couple, who had loved her as their own daughter!



54. THE CRYSTAL PALACE

Once, a prince and a princess loved each other deeply and were engaged to be married. A jealous magician kidnapped the princess. The prince desperately searched for her. At long last, he learnt that the wicked magician had imprisoned her in a castle with tall crystal walls, which were so smooth that

not even a fly could climb them. He reached the castle and stood outside. Hearing some cries from nearby, he went and saw three old, hideous witches caught in a swamp. He turned to go, but their pitiful cries made him rescue them.

The grateful witches gifted him three things: a cloak that would make him invisible, a flying horse, and a stick that would open any door. The prince wore the cloak, flew on the horse to the highest tower, and opened the prison door with the magic stick! Returning to safety, the princess and prince soon got married, and eagerly welcomed the three witches to their wedding feast!



55. THE MISER AND THE THIEF

A miser's biggest fear was of being robbed. He felt that his money would not be safe, so he exchanged his entire wealth for a bar of gold. He selected a place in his garden, dug a deep hole at night and buried the bar there, covering it properly with soil.

He kept checking from time to time, to make sure that it was safe. But, one morning, he found that the hole was dug up and the bar was missing! And, he

cried and cried. A friend tried to give him solace, saying: ‘Of what use was that gold to you when it was lying deep inside the ground? If you bury a stone instead, it will be the same for you. For, what is the use of having something if you cannot enjoy it?’



56. THE GARDENER AND THE GOOD KING

A man greatly loved gardening. He cultivated his vegetable garden and lawns with great care. He lovingly watched his roses and cabbages, gently touched his tulips and artichokes, and, cuddled his hyacinths and tomatoes. His garden became a wonder to look at, and his fresh, delicious vegetables were famous throughout the land. One day, a hare attacked his vegetable garden, eating up many of his plants. He tried hard to get rid of it and, at last, asked

the king for help. The king was angry to hear his good subject was suffering. The next day, he took his army and courtiers to hunt the hare. But, the horses rampaged through the vegetable lawn and gardens, causing far more damage than a hundred hares could have caused in as many years.



57. THE CAT AND THE OLD MOUSE

Wandering about, a black cat reached a warehouse where lived many mice. The cat lay down on the ground, pretending to be dead. When the younger mice saw it, they shouted: 'A dead cat!' As they were running towards it, a wise old mouse stopped them, saying: 'Always remember, a cat has nine lives!'

The old mouse then climbed up a huge bin near the cat. A large sack of flour had been kept on this bin. The mouse chewed it open and the flour poured out all over the cat. It kept still for a moment, and, then, sneezed! The little mice saw that the cat was alive, only it had turned white!



58. THE WHITE SNAKE AND THE BLACK SNAKE

The legendary wise King Solomon had gone hunting one day, when he saw a black snake attacking a white snake. The white snake was larger, while the black snake was smaller but had big poisonous fangs. When the black snake was about to bite the white snake, King Solomon hurled a stone at it, killing it. The white snake slithered into the forest. A little later, King Solomon found himself facing a huge giant. The king was terrified, but the giant said: 'I'm the white snake. The black snake had been trying to kill me for long, and we changed into snakes.' The giant wanted to give a gift to the king, and offered him a choice between gold, or a gift that heals. The king said that he had many riches, and the gift of healing would be useful to a doctor. When the giant insisted that the king should take something, the King said he would like to have wisdom. The giant promised him abundant wisdom. That's how King Solomon became the world's wisest man.



59. THE OLD SHEEP AND THE YOUNG GOATS

As a shepherd was returning with his sheep, after they had finished grazing, he saw that a few wild goats had joined his herd. Feeling happy at this, he locked the goats along with the sheep. It rained the next day so the shepherd couldn't take his flock out. Feeding the sheep only small handfuls of food, he gave much bigger quantities to the goats to please them. But when he opened the gate, the goats ran away. Unable to catch them, he shouted after them: 'You ungrateful beasts! I treated you far better than the others!'

'That's the reason we're leaving,' the goats said. 'We're new while your

sheep are old, yet you treated us better. And you'll treat us like you treated the sheep when you have more new animals in your flock.'



60. THE REPENTANT SKUNK

In Narumi's woods lived a very old couple, who were helped by all the nearby animals who looked after them. The beavers brought them wood; the

squirrels gave them nuts; the hares gathered fruits; the bees left honey on their window ledge; the goats gave milk to them; while the birds brought pretty flowers for their house. In return, the old woman fed delicious cakes to all of them.

But the skunk was a true spoilsport. He demanded an entire cake for himself, which the old woman refused, as she wanted to give a slice to all of them. Before leaving, the skunk threatened the old lady. When the others learnt of this, they made a plan. Running about all over the woods, they cried and shouted that a robber had killed the old lady. Alarmed, the skunk rushed back and found the old lady lying motionless on her bed. He burst into tears, realising how much he was going to miss her. At this, the old woman arose and hugged the woebegone skunk, who promised to never trouble her again.



61. THE CRAFTY TRADER

Before leaving his farm for several days, a farmer told his son that a cattle trader would be visiting them. The father said: 'Offer our three cows to the trader for two hundred ducats and nothing less!' The very next morning, the trader came. After inspecting the cows, he agreed to pay the price asked of him. Then, he began untying the cows to lead them away, when the farmer's son insisted that he had to make the payment before he took the cows.

The trader held on to the three cows, saying that he was not carrying any money but would bring it later. The farmer's son still did not agree, so the crooked trader offered a guarantee. Releasing his hold on one cow, he offered to leave it behind!

The simple boy agreed to this. The trader took away two cows without paying a single ducat, and never showed his face again!



62. THE OLD WOMAN AND THE HEALER

When her eyes became inflamed, an old woman sought a healer's help. He said he could restore her eyesight but demanded a high price. She agreed. He then told her to keep her eyes closed tight while he performed the treatment, during which time, he stole her entire furniture.

On opening her eyes, the woman thought her vision had worsened. When she refused to pay the healer, he dragged her to a judge. The old woman told the

judge: ‘He said he would improve my eyesight but it’s become worse. Before I could see all the things that lay in my house, now I can’t see anything!’



63. THE TWELVE DAUGHTERS OF THE SEA-KING

Soaking in the sun on a beach, Ivan saw twelve seagulls who, upon landing, transformed into lovely young maidens. He hid himself. When they removed their feathery gowns and dived into the sea, Ivan hid one of the gowns. On emerging from the water, eleven girls wore their gowns, changed into seagulls, and flew off. One maiden stayed behind weeping. Remorseful over his behaviour, he returned her feathery gown.

The maiden insisted that Ivan should go with her to meet her father, the sea-king. Ivan followed her to the sea floor. The sea-king promised to give his daughter's hand in marriage to him. But before that, he said that Ivan must recognise the maiden thrice amongst her sisters. They all resembled each other, but the maiden gave Ivan a secret sign each time. Thus, Ivan married the right maiden and lived happily in their castle.

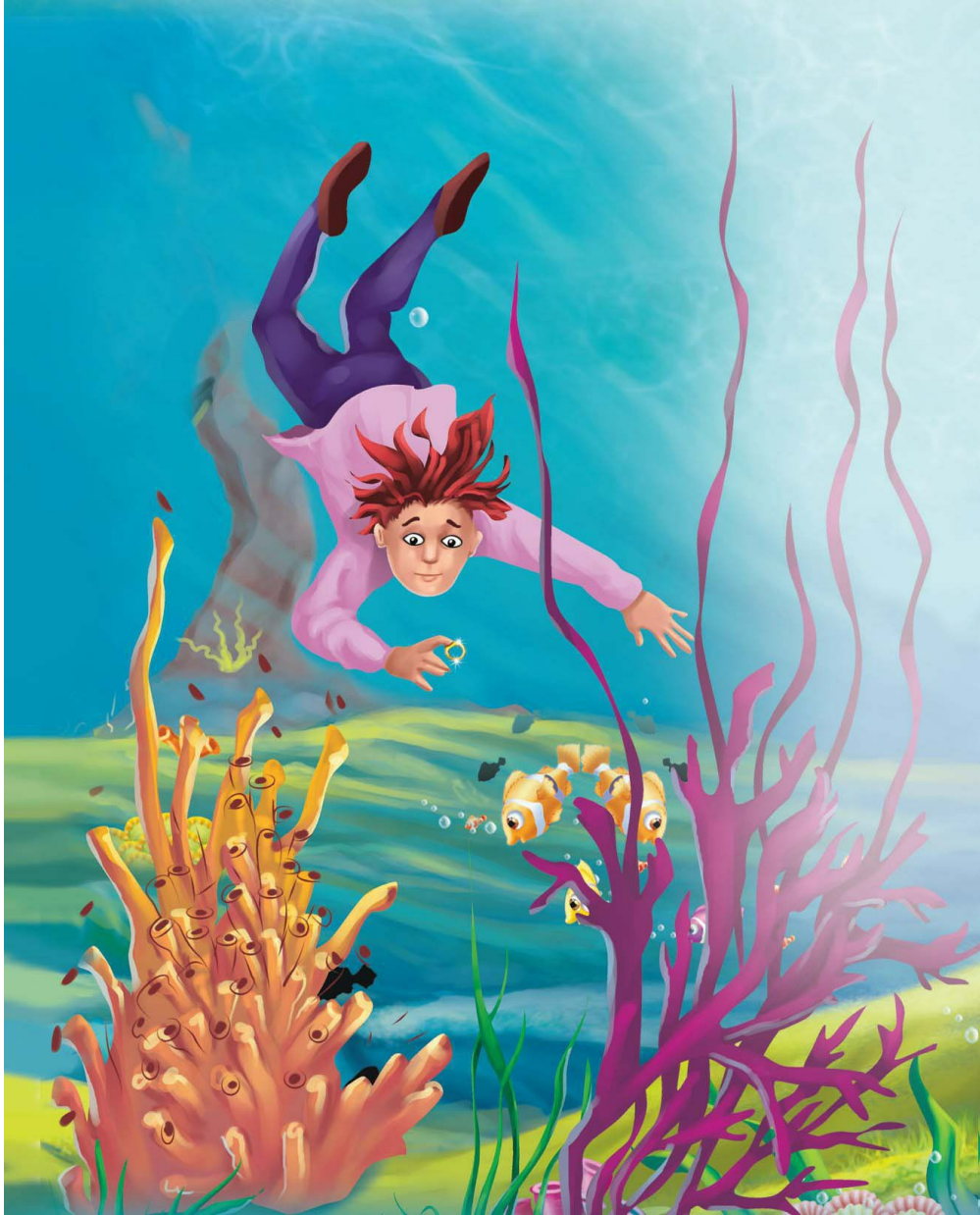


64. THE FOUR FRIENDS AND THE KING'S RING

Once, a king possessed a magic ring. He was told that so long as he wore it, he would remain king. One day, the king lost his ring! Greatly worried, he announced that he would let his daughter marry anyone who gave him his ring. Many tried to find it, but failed.

A youth with three exceptional mates, decided to try his luck. His first friend, called Lynx-eyes, could see through doors. Man Mountain, his second friend, appeared to be a small mountain on lying down. The third friend, Long John, could stretch for miles when he lay down.

Lynx-eyes saw the ring sticking to a rock on the sea floor. Man Mountain knelt down and drank the entire sea water, while Long John lay down to make a bridge. Man Mountain brought the ring and gave it to the youth, who now married the princess.



65. THE DRAGON AND THE GODDESS

A long time ago, the inhabitants of coastal Japan were mortally scared of a horrible dragon, which jumped out suddenly from the sea, especially attacking children. Beltana, who was the goddess of happiness, saw what was happening from the heavens. She felt sorry for the people, and the dragon. The gentle goddess reasoned: ‘Perhaps the dragon is so angry as he is forced to live alone in the deep ocean. If he has not been treated kindly, how can he be kind to others?’

Climbing aboard her swan-shaped cloud, she settled on the ocean's surface and called out to the dragon. The sea began to bubble and then opened to reveal the dragon's home, a lonely and barren island! The goddess gestured at it. At once, the island was covered with lovely blossoms, fruit trees, and brooks! The dragon was astonished to see the strange and pretty things. Beltana drew near it fearlessly, and smiled. Her warm smile had a calming effect on the savage dragon, changing it into a gentle giant! Thenceforth, the dragon never attacked children, but began to play with them.



66. THE SON OF THE TSAR AND THE WITCH'S NIECE

A prince saw a charming young girl, who had learnt how to do magic from her aunt, a witch. Both fell in love. He took her to his palace, but said he would go alone first to inform his father, the tsar. The girl warned the prince

not to kiss his sister or he would fall under a spell, and forget all about her. But the prince kissed his sister on meeting her, and forgot his sweetheart. Days flew by and the prince became engaged to a princess. There was great rejoicing. The witch's niece baked a huge cake. As soon as the prince cut it, two doves flew out. The she-dove flew off with a piece of cake. When the second dove asked her to share it with her, the she-dove said: 'I can't. If I do, you'll forget me just as the prince forgot his first love.' Like magic, the prince remembered everything! He called his true love and married her amidst gay revelry.



67. THE THREE GIFTS THAT THE EAGLE GAVE THE

TSAR

A tsar had gone hunting one day. He was about to shoot down an eagle, when it begged him to spare its life, saying: 'Let me live! Let me stay with you for three years, and you will be very happy if you did so.'

The tsar spared its life, and took it to his castle. The eagle began eating each and every lamb and calf that belonged to the tsar. Soon, the tsar had no livestock left, and sold most of what he had to feed the eagle. But he kept his promise and looked after the eagle for three years. After three years, the eagle told the tsar to sit on its back and flew up high over the sea. The tsar felt afraid that he might fall and drown, but the eagle brought him down safely. Then, it told the tsar: 'You have learnt from me how to keep your promise, to be generous, and to be afraid of death, and you don't need me anymore.'

The eagle left him then. The wise tsar remembered all that he had learnt from the eagle. He became a very wise ruler and soon became the world's mightiest king.



68. THE SEVEN LEAGUE BOOTS

Albert was a curious child. Once he was exploring the woods, when he came upon a big house. Unknown to him, it belonged to an ogre! Whenever the ogre smelt a child near him, he would cry out: ‘Fee, Fi, Fo, Foy, I smell the blood of a little boy!’ When Albert heard this, he fled at once. The ogre screamed to his wife: ‘Quick, give me my seven league boots!’

In those boots, the ogre could cross mountains or rivers with just one step,

but Albert managed to hide from him. When the ogre was tired and fell fast asleep, Albert gently removed the ogre's boots from his feet and stepped into them. Being magic boots, they fitted him exactly! Albert saved himself from the ogre, and became the chief royal messenger of his kingdom.



69. THE DOG WITH THE LITTLE BELL

Once, a dog was in the habit of biting anyone who was near it. Its master decided to hang a bell attached to its collar around the neck, so that people would know when the dog was nearing, and stay away from its powerful jaws and sharp teeth.

The dog boasted that the tinkle of its little bell scared people away! Then an old dog put him wise to it: ‘This warns people to stay away from you because of your bad habit. It doesn’t glorify you, but adds to your shame!’



70. THE HUNTER AND THE FISHERMAN

A Japanese emperor had two sons. The older one loved to hunt; the younger one loved fishing. They decided to exchange their roles one day. Unluckily, the fishing hook was misplaced by the older brother. This greatly angered the younger brother, so the hunting prince promised to search the depths of the

sea till he found the fish hook.

After many hours, a crocodile carried the hunting prince on his back to the helpful sea-king's palace, who ordered a search and gave the missing hook to him. He also gifted the prince two stones: a black stone that could make oceans rise over the earth, and a white stone that lowered the water level. The hunting prince returned to find that his father had died, and his younger brother had become the emperor! As the crown actually belonged to the older brother, the younger one ordered his guards to kill him! Holding the black stone in his hand, the hunting prince squeezed it hard. Immediately, the sea swept over the land, carrying away the soldiers and his younger brother. About to drown, the younger brother begged for mercy. The older brother plunged into the flood to rescue his brother. He squeezed the white stone, and the waters receded. The younger brother gave up his crown, and remained faithful to his brother.



71. THE MAD FISHERMAN

Once, on market day, the market was crowded with carts and all types of animals. Peddlers, merchants, breeders, farmers, noblemen, and clowns came. Even the king was expected. In between all this excitement, a foal was born in a stable. Terrified of the noise, as soon as it found its legs, it ran to hide between two oxen. When the foal's owner claimed the foal, the oxen's owner said that the foal was his for it had chosen to be with his oxen! The king also

agreed with the oxen owner. The next day, the king was travelling in his carriage, when he saw the real owner of the foal casting a fishing net in the middle of the road. People were very amused, but the king asked him: ‘What are you up to?’ The man said: ‘Your majesty, I’m fishing. When two oxen can become parents to a foal, can’t I fish in the middle of the road?’



72. THE MAD KING AND HIS FAITHFUL WIFE

A king once turned his wife out after living happily with her for long. The queen could not understand his behaviour: Was it jealousy? Did someone poison his ears against her? Had he become slightly unsound? Whatever the

reason, the queen loved him and did not wish to leave. The king granted one concession and told his wife: 'You can take to your parents' house, what you hold most valuable and dear, from the palace.'

The next day, the king woke up in a bed and room that were not his! He called out to his servants. Instead, his queen came running in. Surprised to see her, he asked: 'Where am I?'

The queen tearfully reminded him that as he had promised she could take what she valued most to her parents' house, she had made the servants carry him while he slept! Remorseful of his behaviour, the king apologised and embraced his queen. Happily they went back to their palace.



73. LITTLE BROTHER, LITTLE SISTER

A small boy and girl, who had a cruel witch for a stepmother, ran away from her into the forest. After running for long, the brother felt thirsty. The boy was about to quench his thirst from a spring, when the witch whispered in the girl's ears: 'Whoever drinks from here will become a fawn!' The sister turned to stop her brother. But it was too late! He had turned into a fawn! Weeping,

the girl led the fawn into the forest. Finding an empty cottage, they began to live there.

One day, the fawn wandered far. The king, who had gone hunting, saw the fawn and chased it. Frightened, the fawn ran inside its cottage. The king entered the cottage and saw a beautiful girl tenderly stroking the fawn. Struck by her beauty, the king sought her hand in marriage. The girl was so overjoyed that she started crying. One tear fell on the fawn beside her, breaking the evil spell on him. He turned into her brother again! The king took them to his palace. He soon married the girl. And they all lived happily thereafter.



74. THE KNIGHT AND THE BEAUTIFUL WITCH

A young knight rescued a charming princess from a wicked magician, and rode away, but the magician followed them. The princess also knew some magic. She changed herself into a jug, the young knight into an old man, and his horse into a well. When the magician asked about her, the old man sent him on the wrong path. Realising that he had been tricked, the magician returned.

This time, the princess changed into a duck, the knight became a poppy, and the horse was a chocolate river flowing between two banks of marzipan! Greedily, the magician ate so much that he burst! At last, the princess and the knight were safe and swore to never part.



75. THE KING'S FIELD AND THE GOLD MORTAR BOWL

A king took pity on a very poor peasant and gifted him a tiny piece of land, to grow food for his family. While ploughing his field, the peasant dug out a heavy mortar bowl made of gold. He decided to give it to the king, who was the true owner. His daughter told him not to do so, saying: 'The king will demand for the pestle also, and we will have a hard time then.' The farmer replied: 'How can he ask for something that we don't have?' Against her wishes, he went to the king. But his daughter's fears came true! When the peasant said that he did not have the pestle, the king accused him of lying and threw him into prison, where he starved for many days. The poor man bitterly regretted not having listened to his daughter! When the king heard him say this, he wanted to know what else she had said, so the farmer told him. The amazed king sent for her. He freed the girl's father and put her in command of his treasury.



76. YVETTE'S DAYDREAMS

Young Yvette was a poor but pretty girl. She carried a jug of fresh milk on her head one day to sell it in the market. As she walked, she began to daydream what she would do with the money that she earned. First she planned to buy a hen, then to sell its eggs, and buy a goose. The goose would lay bigger eggs, making more money for her, with which she would buy a sheep.

Then, Yvette began making grand plans to make a beautiful dress for herself from the sheep's wool, sell its milk, and make lots of cheese. Then, she

would sell the cheese to buy a stylish hat and a pair of dancing shoes. She felt she would look so elegant that the king would invite her to a ball at his palace, where the prince would fall in love with her, and propose to her. Just then, the jug of milk fell from her head! The milk spilled onto the ground, and her dreams crashed around her!



77. THE FISHERMAN AND HIS FLUTE

A fisherman also played the flute very well. Carrying his flute and fish-basket, he climbed onto a rock one day and began playing his flute. He felt sure that the fish would jump into his basket after listening to his melodious music. But he could not catch any fish, so he returned home, brought his net,

and cast it in the water. Soon, his basket was overflowing with fish.

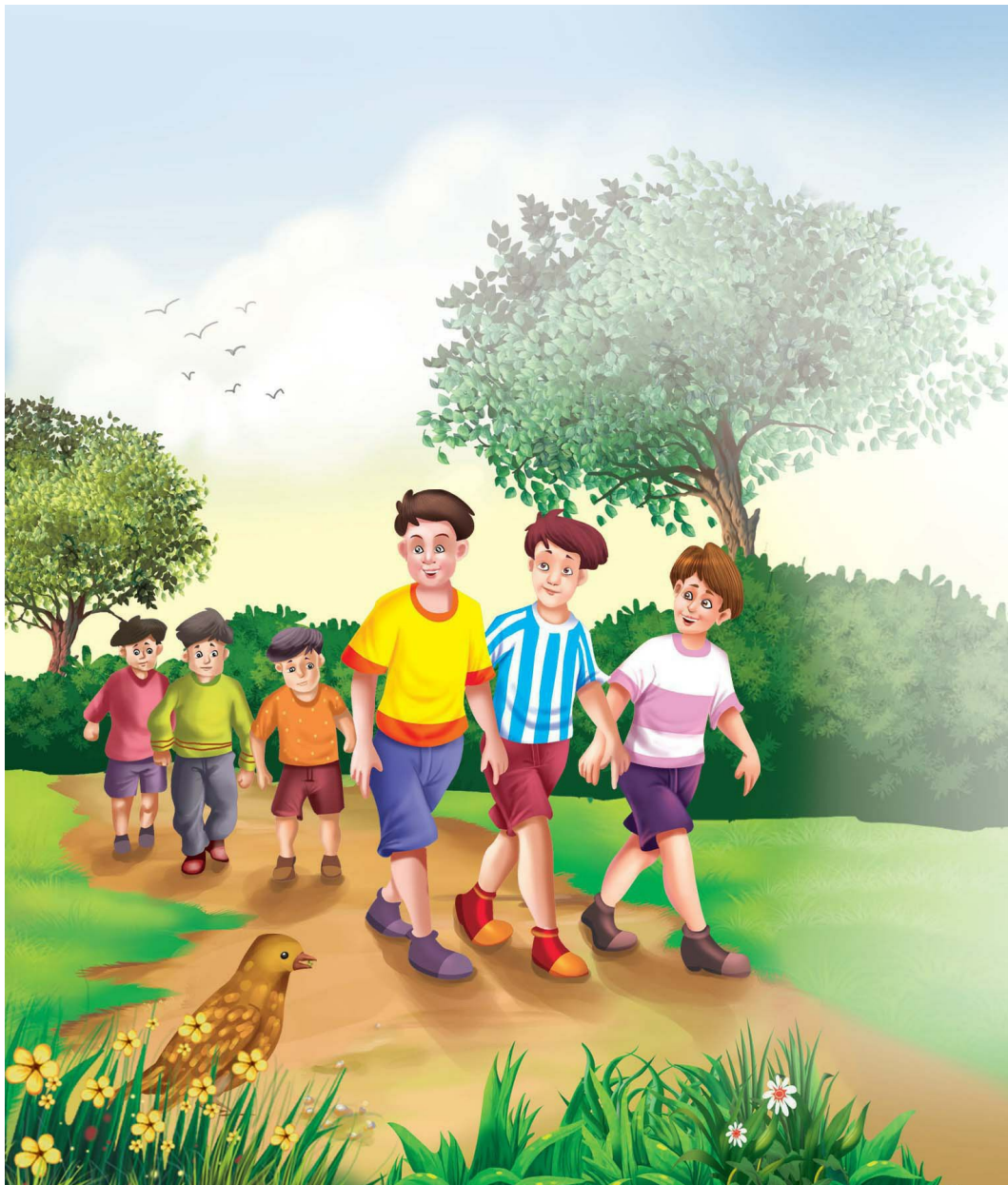
As the fish twisted and turned in the net, he shouted: ‘You’re silly creatures. You didn’t dance when I was playing my flute; I’m not playing now but you’re still dancing!’



78. TOM’S CRUMBS

A poor, hard-working woodcutter had a wife and seven children. He could never provide a decent meal to his family. Tearfully, he and his wife decided to leave their children in the forest. He felt that the children would survive on fruits there, but would definitely die of starvation with their parents. Tom, their youngest child, overheard them. Before they left, he stuffed his pockets with little white stones. From time to time, he dropped a stone on the path behind. Once the parents had gone after bidding farewell to their children, the children followed the white stones and returned home!

After two days, the parents again went to leave the children. It was early dawn and Tom could not gather the stones. He dropped bread crumbs instead, which the birds ate up! This time, the children were truly lost. Scared of the wild beasts, they began to cry. Just then, they heard their parents crying out for them. Luckily, a woodsman had repaid an old debt to their father, and the parents had come to fetch their children back. They hugged their children, and vowed never to leave them again. That day, the rejoicing in their family surpassed a royal celebration.



79. THE BROTHER, THE SISTER, AND THE WITCH

Once, a brother and sister were playing on the riverside, when a witch took them away to her home. But, they escaped one day. The witch found out and soon rushed after them. A good fairy was passing by when she saw the children's plight and helped them. She built a huge ring of fire around them for their safety, but the witch blew out the flames! Then, the fairy made a tall glass wall; it was so smooth that nobody could climb it. Seeing this, the witch went to her house to get a hammer to break the walls. In the meantime, the fairy spirited away the children to the safety of their home!



80. THE WOODEN CALF

In a certain village, everybody was rich except one man who owned nothing. He wanted to possess at least a calf, so he carved a wooden one. The calf's head moved and its tail swung, making it look real! The simple man hoped that his calf would become a cow one day! The next day, he gave his calf to the shepherd to take him to pasture, saying: 'You will have to carry him as he is young and hasn't learnt to walk.' The good shepherd carried the calf to a meadow, where he left it to nibble at the grass.

When it was time to return, the shepherd called out to the calf but it did not budge. The tired shepherd exclaimed: 'Well, if you can eat by yourself, you can also return on your own,' and left. When the poor man found that the shepherd had left his calf in the meadow, he was angry. Together they went back but the calf was not there! The poor man complained to a judge that the shepherd had not looked after his calf. The judge agreed and told the shepherd to give a cow to the poor man to make good his loss. So, the wooden calf did turn into a cow!



81. THE LANGUAGE STUDENT

A very wealthy man sent his son abroad to get the best education. The youth returned after learning the language of dogs! The furious father drove his son out from his home. The young man wandered about, till he reached a village where a pack of ferocious dogs had scared the locals to death. The youth met the dogs, despite warnings from the villagers. He returned and told the locals

that the dogs were bound by a spell to guard a valuable treasure chest buried in the woods. With the dogs' consent, he dug up the chest. The dogs never troubled the locals again.

The youth returned to his father's home in a luxurious carriage, with many carts full of riches. And the astonished father never insulted his son again!



82. THE OLD HOUSE ON THE STREET

In a street full of modern buildings, there was one old house. A very rich, old man lived there alone. Opposite him, lived a small boy. After exchanging smiles for long, the old man invited the little fellow over, treating him to a drink of hot chocolate and delicious snacks. They became good friends. The child returned again and again, to drink the hot chocolate and eat the snacks

that the old man made for him. Returning the affection, the boy parted with one of his dear tin soldiers and gifted it to his old friend! Soon after, the old man died. In the place of the old house, an elegant villa came up. And the small boy went to live there after his marriage!

He and his wife were once digging in their garden, when his finger got stabbed. He found his little tin soldier with its sharp bayonet! Lovingly, he cleaned it and placed it on his hearth, as a happy reminder of his childhood and dear old friend!



83. THE GNOME AND THE FARMER

One day, a farmer saw a gnome resting in his field. Immediately, he sensed that a treasure must be buried there. When he asked, the gnome said: 'Indeed! There's more silver and gold buried beneath than you could have ever seen!'

The farmer claimed it, as the field was his. But this gnome was not nice. He told the farmer: 'The treasure will be yours, only if you give me half of what you harvest during the coming two years.' The farmer agreed but told the gnome that he should take what lay on the top, while he would take whatever lay on the bottom. The gnome happily agreed. During the next two years, the farmer cunningly planted potatoes. All that appeared on the top soil was useless to the gnome. Realising he had been tricked, the gnome left for good. And the farmer dug out the treasure from below!



84. THE STONE-BREAKER AND THE MOUNTAIN

A Japanese stone-breaker was exhausted once and wished he could lead the luxurious life led by rich, fat merchants. His wish came true! He then saw a mandarin being carried by his servants. He wished to be a mandarin. Even that came true! But the mandarin was under the emperor's command, so he wanted to be the emperor. This wish, also, was granted! He was given the emperor's title: the Son of the Sun. But, scorched by the sun, he longed to be in the sun's place! At once, he became the sun; but when a cloud covered him, he longed to be, and became, a cloud! Thinking the wind was more powerful, he became the wind! When the wind blew against a mountain, he wanted to and became a mountain. Then, hearing the stone-breakers hammer powerful blows as they dug out rocks from the mountain, he chose to be a stone-breaker all over again.



85. THE STALLION AND ITS MASTER

Long ago, there was a very valiant and strong prince, Dimitri. He wanted a fiery horse of his own, and sought the advice of his cavalry captain. The captain told him: 'My lord, if you uproot this oak tree, I'll be able to judge which horse will suit you most.' Dimitri pulled out the tree as if it were a blade of grass! Under its roots, was a richly decorated battle axe, a set of ornate reins, and a carved saddle. Choosing the strongest stallion, he tied it to a strong rope, and made it circle the pasture countless times. The animal became exhausted. Then, Dimitri tightly tied the saddle on its back, slung the reins, jumped on to it, and rode off. The horse set off furiously, but couldn't throw Dimitri off. Finally, it accepted its master, but asked for three days of

freedom. The stallion returned, and after that the two were inseparable.



86. THE KEY IN THE FLAX

A very wealthy young man wanted to marry. He wanted a wife who was not just good and lovely, but also industrious. He visited the house of some friends, who had a daughter of marriageable age, without telling them about his intentions. He was surprised to find a large flax bundle, a spinning-wheel and the spinner stuck into the flax. He asked the mother if her daughter alone spun and wove the flax, saying it must be taking her a long time. The mother

wanted him to think well of her daughter, and said: 'She can do this very fast!' The rich youth pretended to believe her, but stole the key of their storeroom and hid it under the flax bundle. He left then, to return a month later. His friend's mother said that their storeroom's key was nowhere to be found. At once, the rich youth went to the flax bundle. Picking up the key lying there, he said: 'Maybe your daughter spins and weaves very fast, but she doesn't seem to work often!'



87. LITTLE TUK

A little Spanish boy, Tuk, was studying geography one afternoon, but also had to look after Wenche, his little sister, who wanted to play. After juggling for long between play and study, he found Denmark's geography very

complicated! He put his geography book beneath his pillow before he slept, for he'd heard that this was the best way of learning lessons! Climbing into his bed, he fell asleep. But his book seemed to move about under his pillow, scratching him. Tuk was not in bed now, but on a splendid white horse, as a magnificently dressed knight wearing a helmet with plumes, held him in front. They galloped on and on. Fascinatingly, he saw every city of Denmark appear before him, and the knight told him the history of each.

At dawn, Tuk scrambled out of bed, and began to read his book again, when he suddenly felt he knew everything! Remembering the knight, he said: 'Thanks, my friend,' with a smile on his lips and a song in his heart.



88. THE MISADVENTURES OF TOM THUMB

When Tom Thumb was escaping from the circus, he hid inside some hay in a stable. The farmer's wife picked up the hay to feed the cows, and Tom Thumb awoke to find himself in a cow's stomach! As the cow took in more hay, Tom Thumb cried out: 'Stop crushing me!' The farmer's wife couldn't believe her ears! When her husband heard the strange voice, he thought it was an evil spirit and killed the cow. The cow was gobbled up by a wolf,

with Tom Thumb inside! He persuaded the wolf to go to his home, saying that it would find plenty of meat there! When they had reached, he began yelling at the top of his voice. His father heard him. Killing the wolf, he brought his son out. The repentant father told Tom Thumb: 'For not all the world's gold, will I ever sell you again.' And he kept his word.



89. THE TSAR AND THE MUGIK

A Russian peasant, a mugik, was hoeing the earth, when the great tsar came and asked him how much he earned. The mugik replied: 'Eighty roubles, Sire.' The tsar asked: 'What do you do with this money?' The peasant replied: 'I spend a quarter on paying my taxes; I pay off my debts with another quarter; the third quarter I lend; and, throw the last quarter out of my window.' The tsar only understood about the taxes. The mugik explained: 'By looking after my father, I'm paying the debt I owe him for bringing me up. I'm loaning money to my son by looking after him, so that he will look after me when I'm old. The money that I'm throwing out is what I'm saving for my daughter's marriage, who will leave me once she's married!'



90. TOM THUMB

A poor woodcutter's wife wanted a child very badly and wished to have a son, even if he was as tall as her thumb. Her wish came true! The parents named him Tom Thumb. He was very clever. Once, his mother could not go to fetch his father, so Tom Thumb took the cart. He climbed right up to the horse's ear, telling it where to go. People could not see him, and thought that the horse was very intelligent! Hearing of this, a circus owner wanted to buy the horse but found that it was Tom Thumb who had been guiding it. Now, he wanted to buy the little boy. His father couldn't think of selling his son, but Tom Thumb said: 'Father, we need the money; so sell me, and I'll set matters right.' His father did that. And soon, the tiny Tom Thumb ran back to his home, unseen by anyone!



91. A POOR MAN IN PARADISE

A poor man and a rich man reached the gates of paradise together. After peering through the peephole, Saint Peter came outside with a big bunch of keys tied around his waist. Opening the gate, he straightaway led the wealthy man in, leaving the poor man outside! The gate shut again and heavenly music and songs poured out. The poor man felt sorry at being left out of the

heavenly party!

He waited patiently, till Saint Peter came again to open the gate for him. There was utter silence. No heavenly singing and dancing did the poor man hear! As the friendly angels led him in gently, the poor man lamented that, even in paradise, rich people were more privileged than others. The angels hastened to tell him: 'That's not true! You will receive the same eternal happiness as the rich man. But while we get scores of poor people each day, a rich man makes it to paradise just about once in a hundred years!'



92. THE MADONNA'S CUP

Hundreds of years ago, a heavy wagon got stuck in a muddy path. The wagon driver struggled to free it but failed. Just then, the Madonna came by. She told the driver to give her a drink of water; in exchange, she would set his wagon free.

The driver didn't know that she was Mother Mary, but willingly offered her his water bottle, saying that he didn't have a cup. The Madonna told him not to worry.

Breaking off a white, trumpet-shaped flower bearing red stripes, she used it as a cup! Ever since then that flower, the convolvulus, is known as The Madonna's Cup.



93. PRINCE IVAN AND THE FIRE-BIRD

The tsar was seething with anger. Many nights he'd seen a fiery, red bird stealing his golden apples. He told his son, Ivan, to catch the bird. When the bird came that night, Ivan managed to chase it away. Following it, he met a magical wolf, which carried Ivan to a castle. It told Ivan that the fire-bird was inside. But no sooner had Ivan touched its golden cage that he was caught. Ivan confessed everything to the king. The king said that he would give Ivan the fire-bird, but first he would have to bring to him the lovely princess, Helen the Fair.

The wolf took Ivan to the castle where Helen was imprisoned. Ivan succeeded in freeing her but they both fell in love. So, the wolf hid the princess in the woods, while it took on the shape of the princess, and led Ivan to the king, who readily gave Ivan the fire-bird. Ivan left. The wolf took on his original form and escaped. It then carried Ivan and the princess to his home, where they got married. And the tsar was very happy to get the fire-bird in its cage.



94. GOLDBLOCKS AND THE THREE BEARS

A family of three bears lived in a cottage in the forest; Father Bear, Mother Bear, and Little Bear. After preparing porridge one day, the bear family went for a stroll. Meanwhile, a little girl, Goldilocks, saw their cottage and entered it!

Seeing the porridge, she tried it. Father Bear's porridge was very hot, Mother Bear's porridge was very cold, but Little Bear's porridge was just right, so

she ate all of it. Looking around she saw three chairs. She sat in all of them but the little chair suited her. However, she sat down so suddenly that it broke. Goldilocks then went upstairs to the bedroom. She found the little bed was the best, so she lay there and fell fast asleep. On returning, the three bears saw the mess. Little Bear cried that his porridge had been eaten and his chair was broken! They went upstairs to find a little girl sleeping in his bed! As Little Bear began to cry, Goldilocks woke up. Seeing the bear family, she jumped out of the window and ran to her house!



95. THE TWO FRIENDS AND THE BEAR

Two friends, John and James, were crossing a wood, when suddenly they came across a big bear. At once, they tried to run away, while the bear gave chase. John climbed up a tree and hid in it. The bear was almost upon James, when he fell down and pretended to be dead, holding his breath. He knew that bears only attack living creatures. After thoroughly sniffing at James all over, the bear went away. Once the bear had disappeared from sight, John came down from the tree. Trying to make light of their scary experience, he asked James: 'What did the bear whisper in your ear?' But, James was angry with his friend. Looking straight at John, he said: 'The bear warned me to never again go with a friend who ditches me in times of trouble!'



96. THE COW AND THE PRINCESS

Long ago, a queen had given birth to a lovely girl, but soon died. The king married again, hoping the new queen would look after his princess. But the new queen had three ugly daughters and was very jealous of her lovely stepdaughter. Out of spite, she made the princess wear rags and work as a farmhand, taking Brindle, her cow, out to pasture by herself! Each day, when she was far away, the princess would climb into one of Brindle's ears, and come out of the other ear, clothed and well fed! Before returning, she would

again climb into one of the cow's ears and appear from the other one in rags!
As the princess seemed healthy, the stepmother sensed something was wrong. She sent her eldest daughter with the princess, but the princess sang a sweet lullaby, and put her off to sleep. The same thing happened to the middle daughter. The youngest did not fall asleep and saw everything. But she didn't tell her mother. The next day she, too, went inside Brindle's ear, but took a wrong turn so that when she came out, she had become a calf!



97. THE RIGHT BRIDE

As a young shepherd knew three beautiful girls, he couldn't decide whom he

should marry. When he sought his mother's advice, she told him to invite them for dinner and observe how they cut the cheese. The youth did as his mother had said.

One girl ate the rind along with the cheese, while another cut the rind but with it she also removed a lot of edible cheese.

The third girl removed the correct amount of rind leaving the edible cheese intact, and the mother knew for sure. 'She's the right one,' she whispered into her son's ear.



98. THE LANTERN ON THE OAK

When time had just begun on earth, the nights were totally dark. Four men travelling together, reached a village bathed in a silvery light, and were greatly surprised! In the village square, a large round globe hung from an oak tree's branches. A villager told them: 'This is the moon. Our mayor purchased it. It has to be regularly cleaned and filled with oil, for which we pay him a ducat every week.'

The four friends thought that for such a small sum of money, the moon was a good bargain. They stole it. Taking it to their town, they hung it high up on another big oak tree. By this time, the real owners knew who'd stolen their moon and came to that town. The noise they made reached the Lord way up in the sky! Angry at being disturbed, the Lord sent an angel to bring the moon, and stuck it to the sky, for it to shine freely on everything!



99. THE POPPY'S RIDDLE

A wicked witch cast an evil spell on a charming woman, changing her into a poppy. Each evening she became her normal self and spent the night in her home. One dawn, as she was about to return to the field, she told her husband: 'The witch's spell can be broken if you can select me in the field.'

The man wondered how he would recognise his wife from among thousands of other poppies. Then, he realised that since she'd been home at night, she

would be the only poppy not covered by dew in the morning!



100. INDECISIVE ELSA

Once, Elsa went to help her husband in harvesting the grain. She pondered: ‘Should I first harvest the grain or have my lunch?’ She ate lunch first, after which she had a catnap. When her husband came, he found her asleep and decided to teach his wife a lesson by covering her with a net used for catching birds.

On waking up, Elsa found herself in a net and began worrying: ‘Am I me or am I not?’ She decided to go home and ask her family! Finding the front door

closed, she called out: 'Is Elsa in?' Her husband answered: 'She's here!' Elsa thought: 'If Elsa is inside, then I can't be Elsa.' Then, the confused woman went to all the houses asking if Elsa was there, only to be told: 'No, she's not here.' Some people say that even today she wanders about, looking for herself!



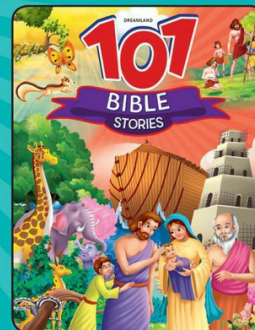
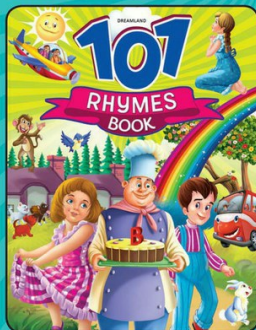
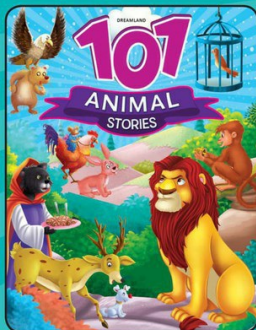
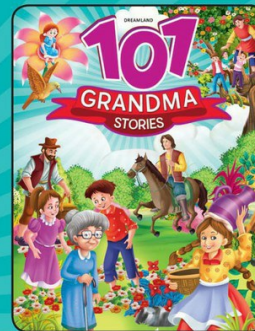
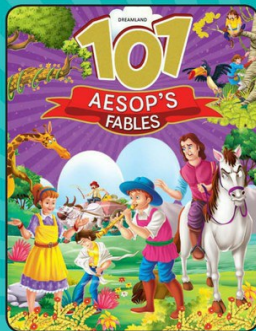
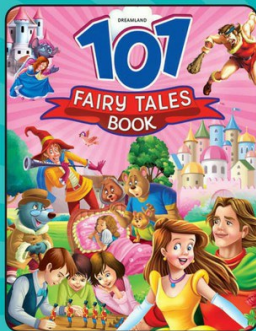
101. THE THREE PAINTERS

A town had three famous painters who were very good friends. People used to come from far and wide to see their exhibitions. The townsfolk thought it fit to honour the best painter. They decided to hold a competition for only these three painters. The friends agreed. They were given ten days to create a new painting. An exhibition was held and many people came. Everyone admired the beautiful paintings. Some considered that these were the best that the artists had painted. One artist had painted a lovely garden and the flowers seemed to be real! The second artist painted an orchard full of shiny red apples. The apples looked so real that a cow tried to eat them. The judge congratulated both the painters. Then, he turned to the third painting. It had a curtain hanging over it. But, when the judge tried to push away the curtain, he realised that the curtain was not real! He reasoned: 'I am an intelligent man, not a dumb cow! Yet, I was deceived by the curtain. So, the artist who made this painting deserves the prize.' And even the artist's friends agreed.



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