

Grandma's Stories ~ दादी माँ की कहानियाँ ~ नानि हंजु कथु ~ M.K.Raina

Folk Tales of Kashmir

M.K.Raina



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Note : Main aim of this work is to bring old Classic Kashmiri literature closer to our younger generations. Stories reproduced in Kashmiri language in this series are written in Devanagari-Kashmiri Script to reach those Kashmiris who are not well versed with the Nastaliq Script. And those written in English and Hindi are meant to reach those people who can't read Kashmiri. This will be a way to reach our rich Kashmiri literature to people outside Kashmir. It may be noted here that J&K Academy's works are already published in Nastaliq Script and need not be reproduced in that script again.

- M.K.Raina



Folk Tales of Kashmir

Clever Like A Crow

Immediately after their dinner, children came running to the Grandma's room. As usual, Kakni Jigri, their grandma was also eagerly waiting for them. Pinki had brought another girl child with her. Grandma asked about her. Pinki said, "She is my friend Zitni. She wanted to see you and hear your story. She will stay with us for the night."

Grandma was pleased to see her. She said, "Oh 'Zitni', pure Kashmiri name. Do you know meaning of Zitni?" Zitni replied, "Yes grandma. Zitni means a spark which can illuminate."

"Who told you this?" asked grandma.

"My parents. They have given me this name."

"That is great. I must compliment your parents for that", said grandma.

"So let us come to the story. Today's story is 'Clever Like A Crow' - kàvû gâtúl in Kashmiri. 'kàvû gâtúl' is a Kashmiri phrase which means 'Clever like a crow'. When a person speaks rot and thinks that he or she is the most clever, we call him or her 'kàvû gâtúl'. This is explained in the story which I will tell you in English. Are you all ready?" Said grandma Kakani Jigri.

Grandma started thus:

Once upon a time there were three bird friends, a flamingo, an owl and a crow living in a beautiful garden. They used to play and spend their time together. They were all happy. One day, the flamingo got trapped in a hunter's net. When for a long, he did not return to his friends in the garden, the owl asked the crow

to look for him because none of them could afford to spend time without one of them. Crow flew here and there, circling over meadows and streams and after a long search found the flamingo trapped in a net somewhere near the bushes. Crow tried to get him free from the net but could not.



“Oh, my God, what did he do then?” asked Zitini.

“I am telling you that, listen carefully”, said grandma.

So when crow could not succeed in freeing his friend, the flamingo told him to go and ask the owl how to get him released.



Crow came flying fast, reached the place where owl was waiting for him. Crow informed the owl about the situation the flamingo

was in. Owl knew the way with which he could get his friend flamingo freed. But did not reveal it to the crow. He thought, if he tells the crow about it, the crow will go repeating all the way what he told him and make the hunter conscious. So he hit a plan. He dropped himself from the branch of the tree they were standing upon and pretended to be dead. Crow got scared. He touched and pushed the owl with his beak but to no avail. He cawed a lot but there was no effect on the owl. Assuming that the owl was dead, he flew towards flamingo and told him about the sad story of the owl. Crow said, "As soon as I asked him how to get you freed, he fell from the branch and lay dead beneath."



"This is a tragedy. Now how can the crow free his friend?" Said Kishmish.

"No, it was no tragedy. The owl tried to convey something to the flamingo and he succeeded in that. Listen to next part of the story carefully" said grandma.

Flamingo was witty. He got what owl had to tell him. He said to crow, "May be this was his fate. We can't help it. Now you also

go and hide yourself somewhere so that the hunter does not see you."

Crow did what flamingo told him. He hid himself in the bushes near by. Flamingo did exactly what the owl had done before the crow. He pretended to be dead. In some time, the hunter came and took flamingo in his hands but lo and behold, the bird was dead, without any life. He cursed his luck and threw the flamingo some feet away on the ground. Flamingo flew away to the utter surprise of the hunter.

Crow watched all this from the distance and saw flamingo flying towards the owl. Crow followed him. Owl was alive, waiting for his friends. Crow understood that the owl had pretended to be dead under a plan which flamingo imitated and got freed. He grudged both his friends but owl pacified him. Owl said, "Had I told you what to tell our friend, you would have gone repeating that all the way to his place. This would have made the hunter aware of what we planned. And we couldn't have rescued our friend." Crow was convinced and cursed his 'kàvû gâtûjàr'.



"And what is 'kàvû gâtûjàr' grandma?" Babloo asked.

'kàvû gâtûjàr' means wisdom of a crow or immature wisdom.

So that was today's story. Go and sleep you all now and come tomorrow evening for another story.

Children left saying good night to their grandma.



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