

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

Folk Tales of Kashmir

M.K.Raina



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[Content Source: kâshîr talmîh & kâshîr lûkû kathû ~ Publications of J&K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages. Transliteration & Re-written for Children by M.K.Raina]



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

True Friend póz yàr

Children were in. Vir had gone to his friend Azlan's house along with his parents. Vir's father Prithvi and Azlan's father Yousuf had been friends since their school days. Yousuf had invited them for a get-together and dinner at his home after Prithvi's return from Canada. Vir had yet to come and children insisted to wait for him.

Vir came and Grandma started her story. She said, "Today's story is *póz yàr* which means true friend. This story came to my mind after hearing that Yousuf had invited Prithvi and his family for a get-together. Let me tell you, Yousuf and Prithvi had been real friends since their childhood. Their story of friendship is worth emulating and I am going to tell you all about them some time at leisure when both of them are present. Let me tell you today's story now.

True Friend



Dapaan, one upon a time, there lived a prince. He had a friend named Dara. Dara was a goldsmith's son. Prince used to go to

Dara's shop everyday to chat with him. Since it was unusual for any prince to go to a friend's shop to chat with him, it became talk of the town. Tales of their friendship reached the King too. He was rash. He thought, his son would not stop going to his friend's shop, a menial goldsmith, so he must do something else. He ordered to hang Dara.

"Oh my God! Did they kill him?" Pinki was nervous.

"No. Something else happened", said Grandma.

King had a cunning Vazir. He did not want anyone to raise a finger against the palace for death of an ordinary boy. Vazir pleaded with the King. He said, "*Jahan Pannah*, it is not a good decision. People will come to know sooner or later. It will have serious consequences on your reputation. And it will earn a bad name for Prince too. Let me think of a different solution so that Dara is finished and nobody points a finger at you." King agreed but wanted to know Vazir's plan. Vazir did not elaborate. He said to King, "*Jahan Pannah*, I will tell you at appropriate time."

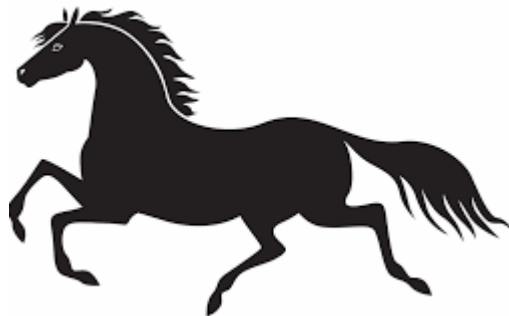
A couple of days later, an invitation was sent to Dara from the palace, inviting him to a sumptuous dinner with the Prince. Prince went personally to deliver the invitation letter. He and Dara both were happy. They embraced each other. They were thankful to the King that he had recognised their friendship and honoured it.



On the given date, Dara reached Palace. King welcomed him with open arms. Prince took him around the palace. Dara was overjoyed. He had never got a chance to see the palace from inside. He thanked King and the Prince.



After the royal feast, Prince and Dara retired to royal guest room. Late in the night, King sent a message to his prince that it was late and he should allow Dara to leave. Dara left. As a goodwill gesture, Vazir accompanied Dara to main gate of the Palace where he had kept a horse ready. Dara mounted the horse and set towards his home.



In some time, the horse, which was first running with a slower pace, started galloping. In a few more moments, it was out of control. Dara understood, he was trapped under a conspiracy and the horse was drugged to throw him and kill him. "So it was no goodwill gesture from the Vazir to accompany me to the Palace Gate and arrange a horse for me. It was all planned", Dara said to himself. He gathered his wits. Horse was almost flying. Dara freed his feet from the stirrups and concentrated on the approaching branch of tree. As soon as he reached the tree,

he jumped from the horse back and held the branch with his both hands. Horse galloped ahead and God knows what happened to it.



Dara was hanging from the tree. He somehow got on to the branch and then climbed down the tree. He was breathless, so took some rest there. Soon a thought came to him. It was night and all dark. Any wild animal could come and eat him. He climbed up the tree and lay there. He saw a pond full of crystal clear water at some distance from the tree. Dara wanted to get down to quench his thirst. He was about to do that when a fellow came out of the pond. The fellow had a broom in his hands. He reached near the tree and started sweeping the place. Soon another fellow came out of the same pond. He had a carpet in his hands. He rolled the carpet on the space already cleaned. Both of them dived back in to the pond.



In a while a giant came out of the pond and dropped himself on the carpet. The earth beneath shook for a while. Dara thought it was an earthquake. He held the branch tightly.

The giant pulled out a small container from his pocket and opened its cover. There was a small stone in the container. He blew at the stone. It turned into a beautiful fairy and she started dancing and singing. In some time, giant said something to the fairy. She sat near the giant and he put his head on Fairy's legs. In some time he was fast asleep.



At around the dawn when cock crowed, the giant woke up. He blew at the fairy. She turned back into a stone. Demon put the stone in the container and container in his pocket. He returned to the pond. Dara was amazed. For some time he did not move. He waited for the sunrise and then left for his home.

Dara reached his home in two days. His parents were happy to see him back. They kissed him. He did not tell them his part of the story.

Next day, he went to his shop as usual. In some time, Prince also came there. He did not know whatever had happened to Dara. He asked him about his welfare. Dara did not speak to him. Prince felt bad. Tears rolled down his eyes. He asked Dara why he was not talking to him? Dara realised that Prince was not aware of the treatment meted out to him by the Vazir. He told him his story.

Prince was sad after listening to what Dara had said. He started hating Vazir. He decided to tell it all to his father, the King.

On hearing the giant and the fairy part of Dara's story, he asked Dara to take him to the place and show him the fairy. He developed tremendous love for the fairy in his heart. He said to Dara, "We will go to the jungle again. I promise you, I will only see her face. Then we will return and I will kill the Vazir myself."

Dara was not ready to go to jungle again. But he agreed when Prince made repeated pleas. Ultimately they left for the jungle.

On reaching there, they hid themselves behind a bush in a way that giant could not see them but they could see him and the fairy clearly. At midnight, a fellow came with a broom and swept the place. Another came and rolled the carpet. Then came the giant and he created the fairy. Prince got mad after the fairy. He had never seen such a beauty. He asked Dara to do something so that he could talk to her. Dara said, "Are you mad? If you want to die, go and meet her." Prince started weeping. Dara could not see his tears. He said, "Wait, I will see what I can do."

When the giant fell asleep, Dara went there to meet the fairy. Fairy signalled him to leave the place lest demon wakes up and eats him. Dara did not listen. He signalled, "I have to tell you

something." She asked him to come closer. Dara went near her and said in a low tone, "Please do me a favour. I have a friend there. He wants to talk to you. He has fallen in love with you." Fairy said, "O' you *àdam zàd!* How can that happen?"

"What is this *àdam zàd?*" Asked Mahima.

"Giants and fairies always call us *àdam zàd*. It means progeny of Adam. Adam is the name given to first human being on earth." Said Grandma, "Now listen further."

Fairy said, "You see, giant's head is on my legs. If I move, he will wake up. He will spare neither you nor me."

Dara said, "If you wish, this can be done. You can move your legs slowly and at the same time, I will put my legs there. You can go and meet my friend and your lover, and come back quickly." Fairy agreed. She did what Dara told her to do, and went to meet the Prince.

Dara waited impatiently but the fairy did not return. He got panicky. It was about dawn but fairy did not come. With the cock's crow, giant woke up. He saw a human being near him and no fairy. He got furious. He asked Dara about the fairy. Dara said, "I was by chance passing this way. I saw this fairy groaning with pain. I asked her if I could help. She asked me to take her place and I did. She went near those bushes but did not return. I don't know where she is."

Giant was not convinced. He said to Dara, "You are lying." Saying this, the giant plucked a hair from his head, cut it into four pieces and threw a piece each on all the four sides. In no time did the fairy and the prince appear before him. Giant had a hearty laugh. He blew from his mouth upon all the three and they got tied with a rope.

Giant went into the pond. He came back with a dreadful beast. The beast had swords for teeth. The moment he saw humans, he started shouting and dancing. Giant told the fairy and Prince to be ready to die.

Dara said to the giant, "O' you Chief of the Hell. May you be sworn upon the holy ring of Hazrat-e-Sulaiman, please don't let this beast eat my friend. He is innocent. In fact I only brought him here. He is the lone son of our king. If you wish, you may get me killed instead." Dara repeated his appeal again and again.

Giant was moved. He said, "I know you are friends. I also know that he is not innocent but you are. I am glad to see you sacrificing yourself in the name of friendship. I also know how his Vazir did everything to get you killed. But you are a great soul. I free all of you. This fairy too is of no use to me as she has touched a human being. You can take her too." Saying this, the giant and the beast vanished.

Dapaan, Prince brought the fairy to the palace and got married to her. He told his father all about his Vazir and his plan to kill his friend Dara. King hanged his Vazir.



"But didn't Vazir do it all under instructions from the king? Why wasn't the king hanged?" Asked Vir.

"You are right. He should have been hanged first. But you know king is king. Nobody can ever raise a finger against a king." Said Grandma. She had no answer. She was as disturbed as the children.

Children left the room with a heavy heart.



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