

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

täzⁱ batún kàn Täzⁱ Butt's Kàn

Today children got a bit late. Some guests had come and everybody was busy with them. They told Grandma all about the happenings in the home, about the gifts guests had brought for them and about the cuisine guests were served in dinner. Grandma hugged them all and started her routine job, narrating a new story.

Grandma said:

Dapaan, long long time ago, there was a king. He had bought a beautiful and priceless diamond necklace for her queen. Necklace was so dear to the queen and she used to wear it only on special occasions.

One day she had gone to attend a fair along with the King. When back, she went into her wash room. She kept her necklace on the shelf and had a bath. She put on her clothes but forgot to wear the necklace. It was afternoon.



"Oh! Did it remain there or somebody stole it?" Pinki almost shouted.

"No it did not remain there. Listen, what happened," said Grandma.

In the evening, when King returned from his Durbar, he marked that the Queen was not wearing the necklace. He asked her about it. She touched her neck and abruptly remembered that she had put the necklace in the washroom. She ran towards the washroom but found the necklace missing. She almost fainted on ground. King was informed. He came, lifted the Queen in his arms and laid her on bed. When Queen gained senses, she related the story to King.



King ordered that all servants and attendants of the palace be summoned and each every corner of the palace be searched to find the necklace. But the necklace could not be found. Servants and attendants were questioned, some of them thrashed, but it did not yield anything. Drill was repeated for the second day without any results. Queen stopped eating and her condition became worst day by day. King's wazirs and other learned men could not provide any solace. King almost got mad.

Dapaan, the King got it proclaimed in his kingdom, that anybody who gives a clue about the lost necklace and helps in tracing it, he would be paid a big amount. Nobody came forward. King's police, detectives and all those who could help did everything possible within their means but necklace could not be found.

"Oh, it means the priceless necklace was lost for ever", said Raju.

"Wait a moment. I am telling you that", said Grandma.

Dapaan, a very poor and physically weak fellow, lived in the kingdom.



His name was Täzi Butt. He was so poor that he could not afford two square meals a day for himself and his family in spite of his hard work. He only wanted to kill himself but could not do so because of his family. By chance, he also heard the proclamation. Without saying anything to his wife, he went to see the King. At the entrance of the palace, gatekeepers stopped him and asked him why he had come there. He said, "I can get the Queen's necklace. I want to meet the king and tell him."

Kind was informed. He asked his Wazir to get the man in to Durbar. In some moments, Täzi Butt was before the King.

Täzi Butt said to the King, "Rajan, I have come here after hearing your proclamation. I can promise you to get the necklace back in seven days flat." King was happy and so were his Wazirs. King said to Täzi Butt, "Listen, I give you seven days to locate the necklace. If you get it, I promise you a bagful of jewels. But if you don't get it, what should I do with you?"

Täzi Butt was fed up of his life. He thought, "There is no way to get the necklace, let the King kill me. At least I will get free from this wretched life. And may be, he gives some compensation to my family as a gesture of goodwill." He said to King, "Rajan, in that case, you can hang me." King agreed.

On reaching his home, Täzi Butt related the whole story to his wife. She lost her head. She asked Täzi Butt if he knew anything about the necklace. Täzi Butt said, "No". "Then how the hell did you promise the King to get his necklace?" Said his wife, almost weeping. Täzi Butt stood like a stone. He had no answer. He had really done a big mistake.

Four days passed. Täzi Butt got frustrated. He had only three days left now. He went inside a mosque and wept there bitterly. He said to himself, " O my Zevi! Had you not provoked me, I would not have chosen death." He was complaining to his tongue. Zevi is the Kashmiri name for tongue.

He repeated these lines loudly from morning to evening 'O Zevi'. People walking outside the mosque would also hear him. Täzi Butt was also weeping.



It was the sixth day of his time. He had to meet the King a day after. A strange thing happened. While he was reciting the same

words 'O, my Zevi' a woman came rushing inside the mosque. She had heard him from outside the mosque, once, twice, thrice. She could not believe her ears. She fell at the feet of Täzi Butt and said to him, "O you pious man! You got me by your wisdom. But now, don't tell anybody about me. I am getting the necklace back and handing it to you." Täzi Butt was taken aback. He did not know this lady. He wanted to know precisely who she was and why did she come to meet him. In order to know more, he said to the lady, "What now?" The lady said, "I am that Zevi you have been calling since many days. I don't know how you got my name but I promise you, I will get your necklace back right now. But you promise me that you will not reveal my name to the King."

Now the things were becoming clear to Täzi Butt. It was this lady who had stolen Queen's necklace from her washroom. Her name was Zevi and she came to meet Täzi Butt because she thought he knew her and was calling her only.

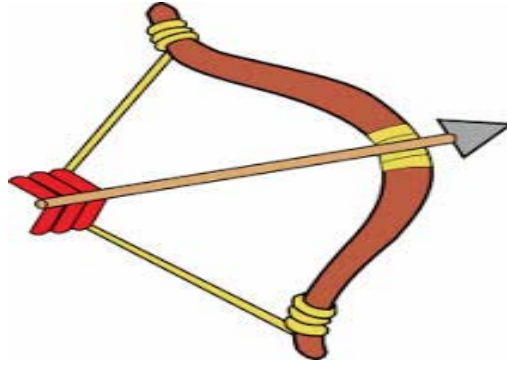
"But tell me, how did you steal the necklace?" Asked Täzi Butt.

"I am the sweeper of the Palace. I went to clean Queen's washroom and found this necklace there. I could not stop myself from doing this unholy act. I took the necklace and concealed it in my inner pocket."

"Okay, go and get the necklace. I promise, I will not name you."

Zevi returned with the necklace in some time. Täzi Butt was on 7th sky. He felt, he had got new energy in his legs. On reaching his home, he related the whole story to his wife. He said to her, "Today, for the first time in my life, has my Kàn gone right and helped me. I am so thankful to it." She was excited.

"What is this Kàn?" Children asked Grandma.



"Kàn means the arrow which one throws in darkness without knowing where it would go. If it strikes the right target, we say Kàn has gone right." Said Grandma.

Next morning, Täzi Butt went to the Palace and handed the necklace to the King. King asked him to reveal the name of the thief.

Täzi Butt said, "Rajan, the necklace was not stolen by any body but was picked by a crow who had come inside the washroom through a ventilator. Kindly don't ask me as to how I got hold of that crow. That is a secret."

Dapaan, King was pleased with Täzi Butt. He did not press him to reveal his secret and rewarded him abundantly. Täzi Butt became a rich man now. His wife became a Ràzû Bày.



"What is Ràzû Bày?" Asked Kishmish.

"In Kashmiri, Ràzû Bày means a rich lady, as rich as a queen".
Said Grandma.

So the story ended on a good note. Children were happy. They left the room smiling.



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