

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

Wisdom *gâtûjâr*

Children were in jovial mood today. A next door neighbour Dr. Showkat had come to see Prithvi, Grandma's brother's son who had recently returned from Canada. His son Hilal and daughter Yuseira aged 13 and 9 were also with him. Dr. Showkat stayed back to allow his children to hear a story from Grandma. He too stayed with the children.

Dr Showkat, a medical doctor was a lovable person, also a poet with keen interest in the Kashmiri literature. He would in normal course visit Grandma's family to interact with her second son Anand on issues related to literature. Anand was an educationist.

Children took their seats. Hilal and Yuseira were excited. This was the first time they were there to hear Grandma. Grandma asked them their names.



"My name is Hilal-ul-Siyam. My parents lovingly call me Hilal. I read in 8th Standard. My sister is Yuseira. She reads in 4th Standard", said Hilal.

Grandma asked Dr Showkat to explain meaning of the names. He said, "Hilal-ul-Siyam means the 'Crescent of the month of

Ramadan'. He was born on 29th of the month of Shaban which is followed by the holy month, so this name. Yuseira means 'Ease'. Grandma thanked him and started her story.

Dapaan, there lived a person named Kantha. He once set forth for the neighbouring village for some work.



He had to cross a jungle. There was a cage lying on one side of the path he was going on. He went closer to cage. There was a lion inside. He was wailing. On seeing Kantha, the lion begged him to release the bolt of the cage from outside so that he could be free. Kantha was hesitant. He said to the lion, "I would love to free you but I am a bit scared. Once you are out, you will eat me."



Lion bowed his head and begged again, "No I won't do that. I promise you. How can I eat a person who sets me free? Please do me this favour, release the bolt."

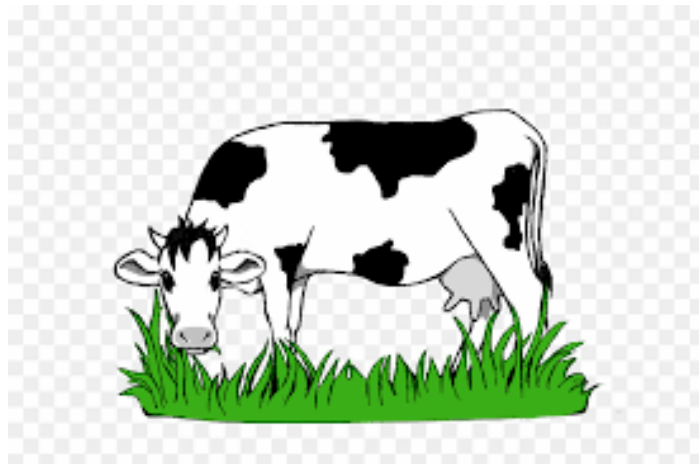
Kantha was kind hearted. He released the bolt and freed the lion.

Lion said to him, "I am thankful to you. But you know, I need to kill somebody and eat its flesh to live. I am in the cage since ten days. I am so hungry. God has given me this chance. I can't leave you."



Kantha was perplexed. He had never expected this kind of deceit from the one he had saved. But he kept his cool. He said to the lion, "Let us find somebody who will hear our story and give a just verdict." Lion agreed.

There was a cow grazing some distance away in a field. Kantha and the lion approached her. They told her their story and prayed her to give her verdict. Cow thought for a while and without answering, started running away from them. Lion chased and caught her. In the meantime, Kantha also reached. Cow said to lion, "I am scared. You will eat me." Lion promised her, "I won't harm you. You say what you want to say."



So cow gave her verdict. She said, "Lion is right. It is his right to eat Kantha because he lives that way only. If not Kantha, it could be any other person. As far as Kantha is concerned, he doesn't deserve any sympathy. Human by nature is cruel and ungrateful. I give them milk, yet they sell me to a butcher when I am old. He never cares a bit for anybody." Saying this, cow left. Lion was happy.

Kantha said to lion, "Don't celebrate. I will not accept any verdict unless three people say it. We must look for the second judge." Lion agreed.

They could not find a human being or an animal or a bird there. There was a big deodar tree. So they decided to make it the second judge.



They narrated their story to deodar tree. Deodar said, "Lion can eat the man without any fear. I know and can say this on oath that the human being is selfish. I know how he takes shelter in my shadow in hot sun, yet cuts my leaves and branches at his will." Lion was happy again. He said to Kantha, "What now? I have won." Kantha said, he will wait for a third judge's verdict.

Some distance away, they saw a jackal. They went to him. As soon as the jackal saw the lion, he started running. Lion stopped him, assured him that he would not do any harm to him. He agreed to hear their story.



On hearing the story, jackal went into deep thoughts. After some time, he said to Lion, "I must see the cage first. Otherwise, I don't believe you and your story. I think you have conceived this to play some game with me. How can anybody cage the king of the jungle?" Lion said, "No, we can show you the cage. Please come with us." Jackal went with them

On seeing the cage, Jackal said, "I can't believe this lion fitting into this cage. I think cage is very small and the lion so big." Lion said, "I swear, I was there for ten days."

Jackal said, "Can you show me how you were placed inside, so that if proved to my satisfaction, I can give my verdict." "No problem, I can get in and show you", said the lion, and in he went.

Jackal asked him, "When you were there, how is it you could not go out like you got in?"

"Cage was bolted from outside, that is why?" Said the lion.

"Show me how was the cage bolted?" Jackal said to Kantha. Kantha bolted the cage again and showed it to jackal.

"I am convinced. So let us move now." Said jackal to Kantha.

"Should I unbolt the cage to let the lion come out? Then you can tell us your verdict", said Kantha to jackal.

"Are you a fool. Let him die there. Haven't you learnt any lessons in spite of all this? Jackal left. Kantha also left.

Dapaan, lion remained there in the cage till he starved and died. Nobody came forward to free him.



Children were all happy to see Jackal saving Kantha's life. They all left and so did Hilal and Yuseira and their Dad.



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