# Interesting Stories to learn PROVERBS

R.K.MURTHI

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*Interesting Stories to Learn*

# Proverbs

R.K. Murthi

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## *preface*

Knowledge is power. We, at Pustak Mahal, have always been keen to empower you. We started this with the *Rapidex English Speaking Course.* We have not looked back since then. F^om time to time, we have been publishing books to enhance your knowledge.

We have also tried to keep the prices well within the reach of the common man. We understand that books must be affordable, so that more and more people can benefit from them. Keeping the prices pegged down is not that easy a task. But we have resolved to tackle this task. We find this challenge worth taking.

This book is yet another effort, on our part, to increase your knowledge. The book, written by one of India's leading writers, explains, in very simple language, the meanings of proverbs. Alternatives in the English language are given. Further, the proverbs are brought out clearly through illustrative stories culled from a variety of sources.

This book, therefore, is a treasure trove. Delve into it to improve your knowledge and thus gain more confidence and success.

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## *A friend in need is a friend indeed*

*Meaning:* **Many of our friends are fair weather friends. They desert us when we are in trouble.**

**Only a few friends stand by us in our hour of need. They are friends, indeed!**

*Alternative:* **A friend is best judged in adversity.**

**In times of prosperity friends will be plenty.**

**In times of adversity not one among twenty.**

*Hindi Equivalents:*
1. वक्त पड़े पर जानिए को बैरी को मीत!
2. अपना वही जो आवे काम.

### *Illustrative Story:*

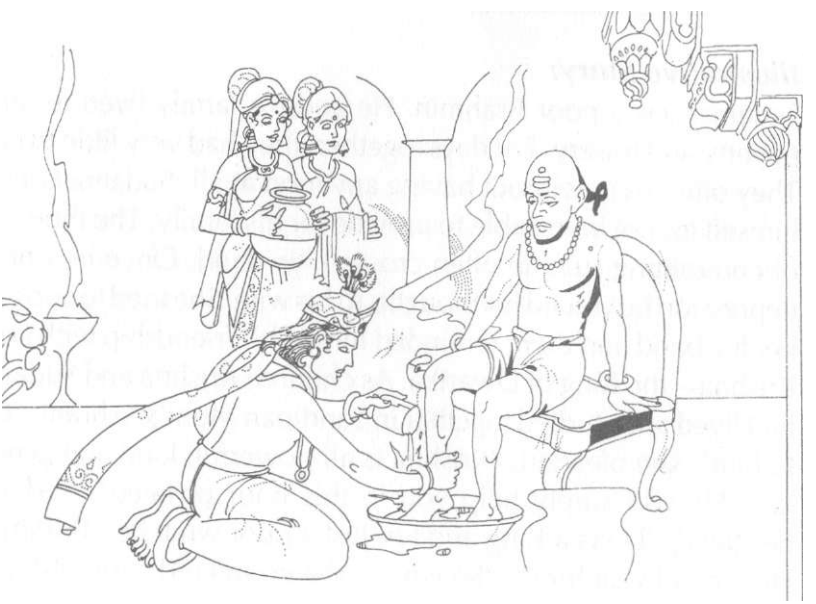
Sudama was a poor Brahmin. He and his family lived in utter poverty and misery. For days together, they had very little to eat. They often slept without having any food at all. Sudama cursed himself for not being able to provide for his family. The thoughts of committing suicide often crossed his mind. Once in a fit of depression he voiced histhoughtsto his wife. Shetried toconsole her husband and then, reminded him of his friendship with Lord Krishna—the King of Dwarika. As children Krishna and Sudama had lived and studied together in Sandipan Muni's Ashram. "Go to him", she pleaded, "Krishna is all powerful, kind and generous. He will surely help you in this hour of need". Sudama hesitated, "He is a King and I'm just a poor wretched Brahmin. How can I visit him?" "So what!" she countered, "friendship is

above class differences. You must seek his help. I can't see our children dying of hunger."

Finally Sudama agreed to visit Krishna. His wife borrowed some rice from neighbourhood and gave it to Sudama as a gift for his friend. Sudama started on his journey.

At the Palace gate, the guard refused Sudama an entry inside. Sudama argued that he was an old childhood friend of the King and wouldn't leave without seeing him.

The word of commotion reached Lord Krishna. As soon as he heard Sudama's name, barefooted Krishna ran out to meet his friend. Both the friends embraced each other and shed tears of joy. Then with great honour and ceremony Krishna led Sudama inside the Palace. There, he himself washed and dried the dirty and bruised feet of his friend and made him sit on the throne. Krishna's wives themselves attended on them, as the two friends ate and talked of the old days at their teacher's ashram.



During the course of meal Krishna asked Sudama, "What gift have you brought for me?" Sudama was too embarrassed to bring out the little poor quality rice tied up in an old rag. But Krishna snatched the bundle from him and ate the rice flakes with great relish leaving his own grand royal feast.

After the meal Krishna made Sudama lie in his Kingly bed. He himself sat there massaging his tired feet, until Sudama fell asleep.

Next day, Sudama took leave of his great friend. Krishna along with his family bade him a loving farewell at the Palace gate.

All this while, Sudama could not bring himself to reveal the real purpose of his visit. He left without doing so. His heart was heavy as he walked towards home. He didn't know what to tell his wife and children, who must be eagerly awaiting his return. The hungry faces of his family haunted him, on his way back.

But a pleasant surprise a waited him at home. A beautiful palace stood in place of his poor broken hut. His wife and children dressed in silken clothes and jewellery greeted him at the gate. Krishna had blessed their lives with prosperity. He had also saved Sudama from the humiliation of asking for anything. Krishna was a great friend indeed, who came to his friend's rescue in his hour of need.

o o o

# 2

## *A greased mouth cannot say 'no'*

*Meaning:* **One who has taken bribes cannot refuse any request of his patron.**

*Alternative:* **A man who sells himself is a slave for ever.**

*Hindi equivalent:* रिश्वतखोर हमेशा के लिए बिक जाता है।

### *Illustrative Story:*

The commander led his men. They laid siege to the fort. They kept watch, round the clock. None could get away from the fort.

"The defenders need food and water. They may have some food and water in stock. But that won't last long. The fort will fall soon," said the commander to his close associates.

The siege continued. Even after a month, there was no sign of panic on the part of the defenders. The commander however remained cool. "Victory will be ours," he said confidently.

That night, he rode away, to the neighbouring town. He reached a house, set on the outskirts of the town. He knocked. Someone asked, "Who is there?" The Commander introduced himself. The door opened. "Come in," said the host, not showing much enthusiasm on seeing the guest.

"You don't seem to be happy to see me," the commander stared at the host.

"You know the reason. I was once an official at the fort. I have retired. I have settled down here, far from the fort. If the news that

I have met you, reaches the defenders, will be a dead man," he sounded scared.

"Well, I won't stay even a minute more than is necessary. I have helped you with funds several times when you were working at the fort. I never asked you for any favour. Now I want it. Tel I me, is there a secret tunnel to the fort?" the commander waited for an answer.

"I ... Well ..." the host stammered.

"Tell me. Or I will send to your master the documents to prove that you have taken bribe from me. That will be the end of you."

The host reluctantly gave the information. The commander rode away, telling himself, "A greased mouth can never say NO." Next day, after dusk, he led a few soldiers to the mouth of the tunnel. He directed them to sneak in and take the men who were at the main gate. The men at the gate were taken by surprise. The drawbridge came down. The attacking army swarmed in. Soon the fort fell.

o o Q

# 3

## *A little knowledge is a dangerous thing*

*Meaning:* **Good knowledge of an art or profession is essential to be successful in life. A man with insufficient knowledge will always cause harm to himself and others.**

*Alternative:* **An empty vessel makes much noise.**

*Hindi Equivalent:* नीम हकीम खतरे जान

### *Illustrative Story*

It was a fine Sunday afternoon. Nine-year-old Rohit helped his mother clear the table, after lunch. "Ah, that's a job, well done, my boy!" his mother patted him. Then she said, "grow up quickly, my boy. Then you too can do many other things like carrying out minor repairs as your Papa does. How I wish your Papa were here! But, no, he is on tour most of the time. I now have a leaking tap. The plumber never turns up for odd jobs, even if I tell him a dozen times.

"I can do it, Ma/' Rohit offered.

"Oh, no," she yawned and moved to the bedroom for a nap. Soon she was fast asleep.

Rohit told himself, "Setting the tap right should be easy. I have watched Papa doing it a number of times." He remembered the steps, "Pick up a spanner. Tighten it round the neck of the tap. Unscrew the tap. Replace the washer. Put the head back in place and screw it tight."

It looked quite simple. Rohit tip-toed to the shelf at the rear veranda, picked up the tool box and ran to the bathroom. The tap was leaking.

Rohit pulled out the wrench, set it round the neck of the tap and tightened its jaws. Then he tugged, with all his strength. The head refused to budge."What would Papa have done?" Rohit thought. Then he remembered, "He would hit the free end of the spanner with a heavy stone."

He did that. The stone landed on his thumb. He winced with pain. Tears welled up in his eyes. Then he controlled himself, "I must do this job. Mamma expects it of me." He hit again. This time he was successful.

The tap turned. Water gushed out. Rohit got drenched. But he did not mind that. Then he got a real shock when the head of the tap, pushed by the gushing water flew in to space. It hit the wall and bounced back into Rohit hitting him on the tip of his nose. "Ouch!" he sobbed. Meanwhile the head of the tap dropped down, rolled along with the water and got stuck into the outlet.

Rohit groped around, as the water began to rise in the bathroom. He tried to prise the head out. But he could not. Water gathered in the bathroom. Soon his feet were under water. "What shall I do now?" he wondered.

He decided to use the screw driver to prise the head out. That was when he heard his mother bellow, "Hey, Rohit. What are you up to?" She caught hold of him firmly and dragged him out, saying, "What do you know of this job?"

"But, Ma, I have seen Papa doing it, several times," Rohit mumbled.

"So what. Your knowledge is incomplete. You should have done this first," she cut off the supply of water by closing the main valve. Then she managed to clear-the blockage. Water drained out.

"See the mess you have created...." She stopped on noticing the swollen thumb and the red nose and growled, "The bathroom is now a pool. And your thumb and nose are a bloody mess." She led him to the medicine chest and dressed up the wound telling him, "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing. Remember that. Always."

o o o

# 4

## *Haste makes waste*

*Meaning:* **Act patiently. Plan every action in advance. Analyse the plan thoroughly. Alter and amend it wherever necessary. Never act rashly. That's how one increases the chances of success.**

*Alternatives:* **Act in haste, repent at leisure.**
**Look before you leap.**

*Hindi Equivalents:* 1. पहले सोचो फिर करो।
2. जल्दी का काम शैतान का।

### *Illustrative Story:*

Shivaji, the Maratha chief, was on the run. He had suffered a set-back in a battle with the Mughals. He and a few of his close associates got away in time. The party moved through the jungle. After a long trek, they reached a junction. Shivaji turned to his men and said, "If we move in a group, we will be easily identified. Let each of us follow a different route. We shall meet three days hence, in the old rest house near Rajgarh Fort."

The men protested. Shivaji overruled their objection. He moved on, all by himself. By dusk he was tired. He needed food and shelter for the night? The flicker of an oil lamp, at a distance, roused his hopes. He moved faster till he reached a hut.

An old woman was watching a pot, boiling on the fire. She raised her head on hearing footsteps. She saw a stranger at the door. She asked, "Who are you?" Shivaji did not introduce himself. For danger stalked him, all around. So he said, "A poortraveller. Ma,

I seek help from you. I am terribly hungry. I had been on my feet all day long and had nothing but some nuts and fruits I took from the trees."

"Come, sit down. I will get you a plate of hot, fresh boiled Kodi (grain eaten by poor people). Nothing more. I am poor. I can't serve a grand feast," she made place for Shivaji to sit close to the fire.

Shivaji thanked her. Hewashed hisfaceand handsandsatdown. The woman placed a plate before him and served the- hot steaming food. Shivaji picked up a handful of food from the centre. He wrung his hand in pain. Quickly he dropped the food and waited.

The old woman, who watched him, said, "You are like Shivaji."

"Shivaji! Why?" he asked.

"Shivaji leaves aside small -forts and hurries to capture big ones. He is terribly hasty. He doesn't knqw that he must move step by step, gain control over the small forts and then attack the big

ones. Haste makes waste. It gets one into trouble. You were hasty too. Food, when served hot, cools faster at the edges. Instead of taking food from the edges, where it is cold, you picked up a handful from the centre. And hence, got your fingers burnt."

Shivaji got the message. He thanked the old woman. He cleaned up the kodi. He washed the plate and waited till the old woman had eaten. He helped her clean up the pots. Then she spread a mat on the floor for him to sleep.

Next day, at dawn, he took leave of the old woman. He told her, as he left, "I assure you, I won't be hasty. I know haste gets one into trouble. Thank you for teaching me that lesson."

"Good. I wish Shivaji also learns that lesson. I wish I live to see Shivaji holding absolute power," the old woman said.

"He has got the message, Mataji," Shivaji fell at her feet.

"What!" the old woman was confused.

"I am Shivaji. Bless me, Mataji. You have shown me the way to succeed," Shivaji reached for the old woman's right hand and placed it on his head. She smiled and said, "*Vijayi Bhava*" (May you be victorious).

o o o

# 5

## *All are equal in the eyes of the law*

*Meaning:* **The law is supreme. It treats all as equals. It applies to the rich and the poor, the ruler and the ruled alike. Nobody is outside the law.**

*Alternatives:* **The law takes its own course.**

**Nobody is beyond the law.**

*Hindi Equivalents:* 1. कानून की नज़र में सब बराबर हैं।
2. कानून अंधा होता है।

### *Illustrative Story:*

Emperor Jahangir hung a bell at the entrance of his palace. Drummers went round, telling the people, "Have you any complaint? Come and ring the bell at the entrance of the palace. The emperor shall hear you and do justice."

The news went round. The people hailed the emperor.

One day. Nur Jahan was practising archery. She shot arrows at chosen targets. Before closing the day's session, she sent an arrow, whizzing through space, towards the river bed, which lay close by. Then she walked back to the harem.

A little later, someone rang the bell. The sentry found a washer-woman, sobbing with grief. In her hand she held an arrow. "I want justice." She wailed. The sentry led her to the emperor.

The woman bowed. She placed the arrow down on the carpet and said between sobs, "Someone killed my husband with this arrow. Who will now look after me and my children?"

The emperor picked up the arrow. It had the royal stamp. Someone from the palace had caused the tragedy. The emperor sent the sentry to find out who had practised archery, on that day. The sentry came back, soon enough. He hesitated. The emperor pressed. Almost in a whisper, the sentry named Nur Jahan, the queen, as the guilty.

The emperor sentfor Nur Jahan. She appeared, soon enough. The emperor pulled out a dagger from his belt and held it out to the woman. "The empress made you a widow. Kill me with the dagger. That will meet the demand of justice."

The woman shied away, "Oh, no, Badhshah. I can never do that."

The emperor granted her a pension. She thanked him and left. He turned to Nur Jahan who sulked, "You took a grave risk. What if the woman had carried out your command!"

The emperor replied, "I would havedied. Butjustice would have been done. For all are equal in the eyes of the law. Be careful in future," said the emperor. O O O

# 6

## *All is fair in love and war*

*Meaning:* **This proverb gives the lover or the fighter the right to use all means, even tricks, lies and deceptions, to make his hopes come true.**

*Alternative:* **Where drums beat the Laws are silent.**

*Hindi Equivalent:* प्रेम और युद्ध में सब जायज़ है।

### *Illustrative Story:*

The Mahabharat War was on. The Kaurav forces were led by Bhishmapitamaha. With him were Acharya Drona, Daanveer Karn and many others.

"How do we beat such a strong force?" asked Yudhishter.

"Don't you have faith in your fighting skill? How can you underestimate great warriors like Bhim and Arjun?" Lord Krishna asked.

"Oh Krishna! You are our greatest strength," said Yudhishter.

Lord Krishna reminded Pandavas about the valour of Bhishmapitamaha and then suggested a plan. "Shikhandi is a eunuch. LetShikandi lead our men against the old warrior, in the battle tomorrow. Bhishmapitamaha will not fight Shikhandi. He will hold back all his weapons, even if he is in peril. Thus he can be overpowered easily". Lord Krishna said.

That plan worked. Bhishmapitamaha fell. Dronacharya took over as the Supreme Commander. He organised the Kaurava

forces with great skill. The Pandavs found it impossible to penetrate the enemy lines. They suffered heavy casualities.

"We will never win," groaned Yudhishter.

"That is a defeatist attitude. We can always find a way out," said Lord Krishna.

"What do you suggest?" Yudhishter turned to Lord Krishna.

"You are Dharmaputra. The whole world knows you never lie. If you agree to piay a trick, we can beat Dronacharya," said Lord Krishna.

"How'^Yudhishter enquired.

"Get hold of an elephant. Name the elephant Ashwathama after the son of Dronacharya. Kill the elephant. Then announce,

Ashwthama Hatah, (Ashwathama has been killed)" said Lord Krishna.

"That would be a lie," Yudhishter showed his disapproval.

"No. You will add, Kunjara, (the elephant). But when you add those words, the drums will be beaten so loudly that Dronacharya shall only hear the first two words, Ashwathama Hatah, not the word Kunjara. The news of the loss of his only son will make Dronacharya lose interest in the battle," Lord Krishna waited, while Yudhishter turned the suggestion over in his mind.

"No. That won't be fair," Yudhishter protested weakly.

"All is fair in love and war," Lord Krishna argued.

Reluctantly, Yudhishter agreed. The plan was carried out. Dronacharya was killed in the battlefield. Thus the Pandavasgot rid of a major obstacle in their path of victory.

o o o

# 7

## *An enemy's enemy is a friend*

*Meaning:* **it has been so all through the ages. A and B dislike C. So the two get together and become friends. Together they try to make life miserable for C. Nations too have come together to fight the common enemy.**

*Alternative:* **Love, friendship and respect do not unite as much as a common hatred.**

*Hindi Equivalent:* दुश्मन का दुश्मन दोस्त।

### *Illustrative Story:*

World War II broke out in 1939. Hitler overran many nations of Europe, including Czechoslovakia, Poland, and France. Britain was under grave threat. Winston Churchill assumed office as Prime Minister. He organised the defence of the nation.

To strengthen the defence, hewanted helpfrom India.The Indian nationalists saw their chance to gain more rights for the people. They requested the government to give Indians a role in the conduct of India's defence. "Make an Indian member of the") Viceroy's Executive Council responsible for war affairs," they said. Britain ignored this appeal.

By then, Subhash Chandra Bose had escaped from house arrest at Calcutta. He disguised himself as a Pathan, went through China and Russia to Europe. There he met Hitler. Later, he heard from Rash Behari Bose, another nationalist who had settled

down in Japan, "Come over. Organise the Indian prisoners of War. Japan will provide all help," informed Rash Behari Bose.

Subhash ,sdid not ask why Japan would provide help. Japan was the member of the Axis powers. Germany and Italy were fighting the Allies in Europe and Africa. Japan took on the task in Asia. Thus Japan, an enemy of Britain, became a friend of Indians fighting against the British rule in India.

Subhash accepted the invitation. He organised the INA. The members of the INA fought shoulder to shoulder with the Japanese forces. Subhash Chandra Bose became immortal as Netaji Bose.

o o o

# 8

## *Beauty is only skin deep*

*Meaning:* **Don't be led by the exterior. Give more attention to what lies beneath the skin.**

*Alternative:* **Appearances are deceptive.**

*Hindi Equivalent:* सूरत से सीरत का अंदाज़ा नहीं होता।

### *Illustrative Story:*

Ranadil was the begum of Dara, the eldest son of Emperor Shah Jahan, and hence the rightful heir to the throne. But his hopes were dashed when his brother Aurangzeb rose in revolt. Dara went out to quell the revolt. Both the princes knew that it was a fight to the finish.

Aurangzeb emerged the winner. Dara was killed. The news reached Ranadil. She wept inconsolably. She too had lost all.

On his return to Agra, Aurangzeb detained Emperor Shah Jahan at the Agra Fort and seized power. He remembered that victor took all. Why should not he claim Ranadil as his own?

He sent a message to Ranadi I through a courtier. The courtier told her, "Accept the offer. Enjoy life. You are young. You are beautifu l." Ranadi I rejected the proposal. The courtier went back to Aurangzeb and reported the result of his mission.

"Go again. Tell her I can't live without her. She has bewitching charms. What bright eyes! What rosy skin! Her face is indeed her fortune," Aurangzeb sang in praise of Ranadil.

The courtier met Ranadil again and appealed to her to accept his

master's offer. She smiled, wanly. "Your master says that my face is my fortune. Is it really so? Let me check," she signalled to the courtier to wait and ran to the full-length mirror in her bed room. She surveyed her face. "The face is indeed my fortune. But I don't need this fortune any more," she mumbled, picked up a dagger and ran it several times across her cheeks.

Bleeding from every pore, she walked back to the presence of the courtier. She wiped the blood with her dupatta and handed it to the courtier and said, "Give this to your master. Tell him that my face is no longer my fortune. That fortune was only for my Lord, my dear Dara. So I have destroyed it. Now, I have a face bleeding from cuts. Soon these cuts will turn into scars."

The courtier turned his face away, unable to stand the gory sight. It took him time to regain his voice. Then he told her, "You are great, Oh daring Begumsahiba. Prince Dara would be proud of you and your loyalty."

She watched him till she could see him no more. Then she ran back and collapsed into the bed and cried her heart out. Thus Rana held Aurangzeb at bay by sending him the message that beauty was only skin deep. He did not bother her again. O O O

# 9

## *Charity begins at home*

*Meaning:* **Show kindness to your near and dear ones, first. Help them. Ensure their happiness. Only then set out to wipe the tears from the eyes of others.**

*Alternative:* **Whom will he help that does not help his family.**

*Hindi Equivalents:*
1. घर में दिया जला के फिर मस्ज़िद में दिया जलाते हैं।
2. पहले अपने फिर पराए।

### *Illustrative Story.*

In an old town lived a merchant. He earned huge profits by fair means and foul. With more profits flowing in, he became more and more greedy. He grumbled when his wife wanted money to run the home. He criticised her when she prepared sweet dishes; or bought a costly sari on Diwali.

"Money doesn't grow on trees," he snapped at his children when they asked for money to buy books and new dresses. When his sisters, brothers and cousins came to ask for help, he shooed them away.

As he grew richer, he became more miserly. He dismissed the cook, the maid and the gardener. "No, who will pay them? All of us must share the work and thus avoid wastage," he told his wife and children.

"What will you do with all this money?" they asked. But he drove them away, screaming," I will do what I like with my money. I

earn it. I will hoard it. I will become the richest man in the town. Wait and see."

It took him many years to become the richest man in town. But none had a good word to say about him. The people sneered at him, "Money Bag." They dubbed him, "King Miser."

How could he redeem his name? He went to an elder in the family and sought advice. "Shall I open a charitable hospital? Establish a school for the children of the poor? Open a chain of poor homes?" he asked.

"Not a bad idea. In fact, I would normally have commended it. But it will cost a lot of money," the elder pointed out.

"I am ready to spend some money to win name and fame," the merchant replied.

"How can you even think of helping strangers? Should you not attend to the needs of your near and dear ones, first? Can't you see your wife and children going around in rags? How famished they look? Do they get even one square meal every day? Listen. Do your duty to your family, first. Help your brothers and sisters and other members of the family who are poor. Opening hospitals for the poor or schools for the children of the poor must come later. Charity begins at home," saying this, the wiseman sent the merchant away.

o o o

# 10

## *Don't bite more than you can chew*

*Meaning:* **Know your strengths and weaknesses. Don't exceed your limits.**

*Alternatives:* **Cut your coat according to your cloth.**

**Big mouthfuls often choke.**

*Hindi Equivalents:*
1. बिसात से बाहर काम करना।
2. तेते पांव पसारिए जेती चादर होय।

### *Illustrative Story:*

The clouds were drifting in the sky. A frog sat close to a wet patch and started croaking loudly. It thought highly of itself. "I sing well. I look smart. I have lovely big eyes. I can leap around and catch flies by the dozen," the frog felt right on top of the world.

At that time, it saw an elephant walking along. The frog tried to tell the elephant, "Stop. Listen to my music. Look into my green eyes. Then tell me, can you sing as well as me? Can your eyes be green?"

The elephant swung its head, from side to side, and drove away a fly which nettled it. It did not hear the croaks of the frog. It moved on, chewing its cud. That annoyed the frog. "What does the elephant think of itself? Doesn't even give me a nod, what to talk of a smile," the frog told itself.

Then it croaked, still more loudly, "Oh elephant! I am the greatest musician. I was crowned the king of music by the frogs, only a

few hours back. I am ready to sing for you. Right now. What do you say?"

The elephant did not get the message, this time either. The frog lost its head. It became terribly angry. "I think the elephant is proud of its size. It doesn't know I can grow as big, if not bigger, if I so desire."

Then it started drawing in breath. It puffed and huffed. It held the breath. He checked. It was still very small when compared to the elephant. "I must try a little harder," sighed the frog. Its eyes bulged out. Its body now looked like a bloated balloon. It could puff itself no more.

Vet the frog did not stop. "I must not give up. I must show the elephant its place. What does it think of itself?" the frog made yet another bid to take in more air. Then the air within pressed all over. And the frog burst like a pricked balloon. That was the end of the frog.

The frog had tried to do something beyond its limits. It had bitten more than it could chew.

o o o

## *Don't cry wolf once too often*

*Meaning:* **Don't repeat a lie again and again. Others will get the impression that you are a liar and will not believe you even if you tell the truth.**

*Alternatives:* **Once a liar always a liar.**

**Nobody trusts a liar.**

*Hindi Equivalents:* झूठे का मुंह काला
झूठे का अंत बुरा

### *Illustrative Story:*

In a village which lay at the foothills of a mountain lived a little boy. He was naughty and mischievous. He played pranks on his friends and laughed at their follies. He told them impossible tales with a straight face. When they believed him, he sneered at them, "That was a tall story, you fools!"

This became a habit with him. He lied to everyone, even to his parents. They tried to correct him, but failed. His teachers advised him. But he did not change.

Holidays came. His parents asked the boy to take the sheep out to graze in the hills. He agreed. His mother packed lunch for him and put it in his shoulder bag. Into the bag went a flute, a sling and a few round pebbles. "Be careful. In the hills, there are wolves. They are clever. Often wolves come in packs, grab kids and sheep and run away. You have to be alert," said his mother, as the boy opened the gates to let the sheep out. He told her not to worry.

He waved a long stick, herded the sheep, often made odd sounds to direct the sheep towards the hills. Soon he reached a slope covered with lush green grass. "Here my sheep will get their fill," he told himself and sat down under a tree.

At noon he took his lunch. For some time he played on the flute. Then he felt bored. He yawned. He wished he could pull a fast one on someone. He scanned the scene. His eyes set on a team of woodcutters from the village moving alongthe footpath which lay a little distance away. He ran down the slope, toward the woodcutters, screaming, "Wolf! Wolf!"

The woodcutters raised their axes and ran to the boy. They asked him, "Where is the wolf?" The boy burst into laughter. "There is no wolf around here. I just tried a lie. And you fell for it." The woodcutters scolded him and walked away.

A few days later, once again, the boy noticed a batch of potters digging out mud near where the cattle were grazing. He cried, "Wolf! Wolf!"

The potters dropped everything, ran to him waving their sticks and spades. "Where is the wolf?" the potter, who reached the boy first, asked. "Wolf! You thoughtthere was a wolf around! I called out Wolf to fool you," the boy clapped his hands and laughed loudly. The potters abused him, called him names and went away.

The tale spread all through the village. The villagers told each other, "That boy Fs a liar. He calls wolf once too often."

As ill luck would have it, three days later, the boy noticed a wolf stalking his sheep. He got the fright of his life. He had a stout stick in hand, but he did not have the courage to go after the wolf. He cried, loudly, "Wolf! Wolf!" A group of villagers, who worked as guards in the forest, heard the call. They thought of rushing to the boy's help. Then they remembered that the boy was a liar. "He is trying the same old trick. We are not fools to fall for his trick,"

said the leader of the group. The party moved off to another part of the forest.

The wolf charged at the boy, when it found him in its way. The boy ducked and ran for his life. The sheep ran helter skelter. The wolf grabbed a kid and ran off. A few more wolves, waiting for their turn, too managed to grab a sheep each.

In the evening, the boy returned home. He looked sad and beaten. His mother counted the flock. Four sheep were missing. "Where are the sheep?" she asked. He told her, "Wolves came and took them away. I called for help. The guards heard my call. But they did not come to my help."

"You know why? Twice you sent out false alarms. And you laughed at those who came to help you. This time, though you told the truth, the forest guards thought you were up to your dirty trick. You stupid boy. Your father won't be pleased when he learns that you lost four sheep," she shouted at him in anger.

The boy fell into her arms and sobbed. "I know now, I cried wolf once too often. I promise you, I won't lie in future. Never again."

o o o

# 12

## *Don't kill the goose that lays golden eggs*

*Meaning:* **Don't be foolhardy. Don't mortgage the future for immediate benefits.**

*Alternatives:* **Do not run too fast after gain.**

**He that grasps all loses all.**

**Covet all lose all.**

*Hindi Equivalents:* आधी छोड़ पूरी को धावे पूरी रहे न आधी पावे।
सोने का अंडा देने वाली मुर्गी को मत मारो।

### *Illustrative Story:*

"Take this goosling. This is all that I can offer you for helping me raise a fence round my house," the farmer told his assistant.

"Just a goosling. Not even a fully grown goose? And I worked for six days?" the young man complained.

"This bird will make you rich. Very rich. Just wait till it starts laying eggs," saying this, the farmer sent the young man away.

The young man walked home, carrying the goosling along. He wondered, "How can this bird make me rich? The farmer has fooled me." That made him angry. So he did not take much care ofthe goosling. Hegave ittohiswife and said,"When it becomes big, we will make a meal of it." His wife nodded her head, took the bird away and left it in the backyard. There the goosling foraged for itself. It lived on worms and insects and grains. Soon iLgrew big and fat.

One morning the woman heard the goose cackling loudly and came round to find out the reason. Her eyes came to rest on an egg/ c r o s e t0 'Dirc'- There was something odd about the egg. Its colour was golden. The woman picked up the egg. It was unusually heavy.

She turned it around. It looked to be made of gold. Could it indeed be so! She ran to her husband and showed him the egg. He took it to the goldsmith who checked the quality of the gold. "It is 24 carat gold. Where did you find it? Want to sell it?"

The man nodded his head. He came back home, carrying a wad of notes. He remembered the farmer's words, "The goose will make you rich."

Every day the goose laid a golden egg. The young man built a palatial house. He began to live in style. Then an idea came to his mind. "Why should I wait for the goose to deliver one egg every day? The goose must be holding several eggs inside its belly. If I kill the goose, I will get all the eggs at once."

He consulted his wife. She found it very sensible. "What a wonderful idea!" She smiled and hurried to get hold of the carving knife.

The couple went to the backyard. The man seized the goose. It struggled to free itself. But the man held it firmly. His wife gave him the knife. He ran the knife through the goose. The bird died.

The man removed the feathers and cut open the goose's belly. He thought he would find many golden eggs. Not even one egg was there. He buried his face in his hands and sobbed. His wife wailed very loudly, "We killed the goose that laid a golden egg every day. We were greedy. Now we have lost everything. We acted foolishly."

o o o

# 13

## *Obey the law or be damned.*

*Meaning:* **It stands for acts and deeds which are banned or prohibited. One who breaks the ban usually gets into trouble.**

*Alternatives:* **Freedom has its limits.**

**Everything has a price.**

*Hindi Equivalents:*
1. कानून तोड़ने वाला दुःख उठाता है।
2. हर सुख की एक कीमत होती है।

### *Illustrative Story:*

Adam was the first man. God presented him the garden of Eden and told him, "This is all yours. Here you live happily. All your needs will be readily met." "Thank you, Oh God!" Adam expressed his gratitude.

"Come along..." God led Adam all around the Garden. A spring gushed with clear water and fed the stream which ran round the Garden. The water cascaded down slopes and produced musical notes. Giant trees lined the stream. The trees were laden with delicious fruits. "This is the best place to live. But.*. . " God stopped near a tree, pointed out the tree and its solitary fruit, "I forbid you from tasting that fruit."

Adam sighed, in relief. This was small price, indeed. For there was a rich variety of fruits in the Garden. He could have them. So why bother about the forbidden fruit? He assured God,

"Never, Oh God! Never shall I go anywhere near the forbidden fruit."

"Good," said God.

Too much of comfort made I ife boring for Adam. He appealed to God, "Give me a companion." God agreed and created Eve. The two, Adam and Eve, lived together happily.

One day, Eve was out on a stroll when she heard someone calling her. She looked all around and saw a snake, which hung from the branch of a tree. It pointed to the forbidden fruit and said, "can't understand why you have not tasted the fruit on yonder tree."

"God told Adam not to go near the fruit," Eve replied.

"It is the tastiest of all fruits. But alas, it is not for Adam and you. It is unfair on the part of God to lay such a condition," the snake sowed the seed of discontent in Eve's mind.

"I will go to Adam and ask him to taste the fruit," Eve ran back to her man.

Adam protested, "How can we do that? We owe everything to God's kindness, if we disobey Him, He will become angry. He will drive us out of the Garden of Eden. And we will never know peace."

"I thought you were bold," Eve sneered.

Adam went into a sulk. Eve distanced herself from him. Adam thought she would relent. But she did not. Every time he tried to buypeace, she taunted, "You lack guts." That was an insult. How could he clear himself of the insult? He decided, finally, to taste the forbidden fruit and prove to Eve that he was bold and could be defiant.

He did that. God got the news. He turned Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden. And thus began the troubles and the pains which afflict the mankind till today.

o o o

# 14

## *Give a dog a bad name and hang it*

*Meaning:* **One can always find a reason for what one wants to do.**

*Alternative:* **He who has a mind to beat his dog will easily find a stick.**

*Hindi Equivalent.* किसी को खत्म करना है तो पहले बदनाम करो।

### *Illustrative Story:*

The stream ran down the hills. Its water was cool, clear and clean. So animals and birds came to the stream to quench their thirst. Some of them splashed around in the water too.

A wolf came out of its lair. It was feeling terribly hungry. It moved through the jungle which lay around the stream. It walked round and round. "If only I could get a rabbit or a baby boar! Anything will do." But it could not find any prey. Finally it decided to go to the stream and fi 11 up it's stomach with water. "That wi 11 at least make me feel better."

It came to its favourite spot. There the water ran down a slope. The wolf bent down to drink. Then its eyes fell on a little lamb. The lamb stood a little distance away. It was also drinking water from the stream.

"That lamb would do," the wolf told itself. It howled, angrily, "You silly lamb. How dare you dirty the water?"

The lamb shivered with fright. It looked all around. Then it saw the big fat wolf, its mouth wide open, its tongue hanging out.

The lamb wished it could get away. Buttherewas noway itcould escape. It stopped drinking. **In** a pleasing tone, it told the wolf, "Oh Great Wolf! I can't do that. I am standing downstream. Water flows from you to me."

The wolf scowled. What the lamb said was true. It was logical. But the wolf was not after logic. What it wanted was food. So it scoffed atthe lamb and said, "then it must have been your mother who dirtied the water, last time I came here to drink." The lamb protested, "Go and find my mother then and ask her."

"I have no time for that. You have to pay for your mother's crime." Saying this the wolf pounced on the lamb, killed it and made a meal of it.

O O O

# 15

## *Good Samaritan: nearest to god.*

*Meaning:* **Anyone who serves others selflessly is loved by God.**

*Alternatives:* **God's Own Man. Kindly Light.**

**God loves those who serve the mankind.**

*Hindi Equivalent:* दीनबन्धु ही ईश्वर का सच्चा सेवक है।

### *Illustrative Story:*

Abu Ben Adham was a noble man. He was kind to everyone. So people rushed to him for help or solace. He never turned them away. And he did not call it a day till he had done his bit for all who needed his help.

So he never went to bed before midnight. And he woke up an hour before dawn. He had no time to call his own. He did not have even time to pray.

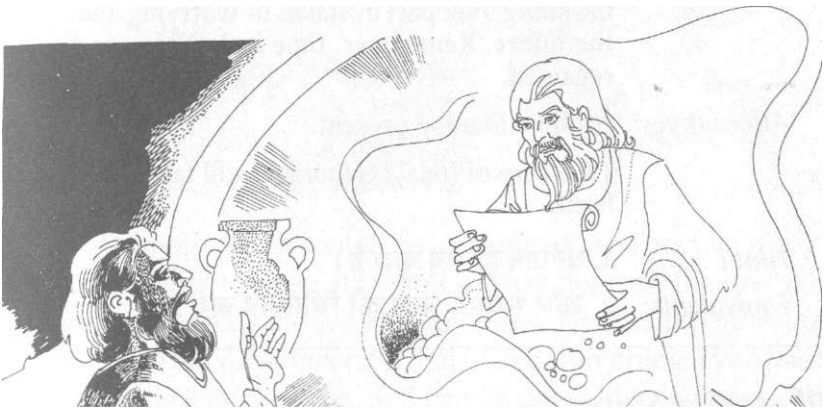
One night when he was about to go to bed, he found an angel flying around in his room. Abu Ben Adham noticed that the angel had a scroll in his hand and asked, "what is on it?" The angel replied with a smile, "The names of those who love God."

Abu asked, hesitantly, "Is my name there?"

The angel ran through the list. "Sorry, your name is not in this list," replied the angel. That made Abu Ben Adham sad. He was serving mankind so selflessly. He saw God in every man in pain or in distress. He loved God very much. Yet God had omitted his

name from the list. The angel asked, "Feeling hurt?" Abu Ben Adham smiled, "Yes I felt a bit bad. But I can't complain. I have work to do. In my work only I find my God. I have no time to pray." The angel smiled kindly and vanished.

Abu passed a restless night. So when he got up, he was a little tired. But he forgot all his tiredness when he set out to serve the people. He spentthe whole day, helping the poor and the needy. At dusk, he still had a number of people around him who sought his guidance and advice to solve their personal problems.



It was about midnight when he entered his bedroom. He sat on the bed. The angel was there again, this time with yet another sheet. Abu asked "What is that list all about?"

"It carries the names of people whom God loves," the angel replied.

"Is my name there?* Abu just managed to make himself audible. The angel scanned the scroll and then exclaimed, "Congratulations!" Abu raised his eyebrows, "What for?" The angel replied, with a smile, "You top the list. Do you know why? Because you are the most outstanding Good Samaritan alive today. You are God's Own Man.

o o o

# 16

## *Now is the time to live*

*Meaning:* **Make the best use of time. Don't spend time brooding over past mistakes or worrying about the future. Remember, time lost can never be regained.**

*Alternatives:* **No time like the present.**

**Take care of today, tomorrow will take care of itself.**

*Hindi Equivalents:* 1. वर्तमान ही सब कुछ है।
2. आज सुधारो, कल की चिंता मत करो।

### *Illustrative Story:*

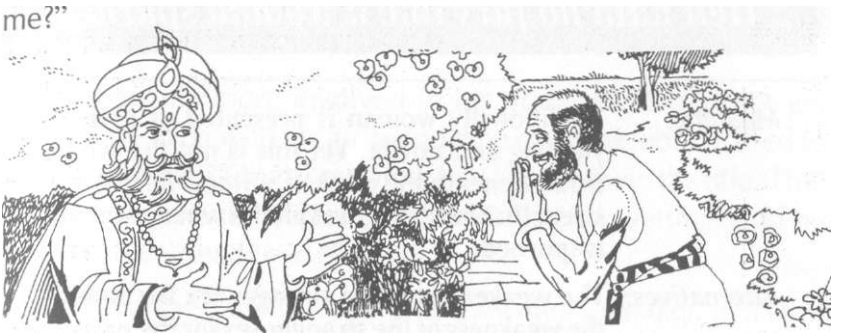
Close to the king's palace stood a humble hut. In it lived a gardener who worked at the palace grounds. He worked from dawn to dusk. It was hard work. Yet the gardener never grumbled nor groaned. He was always cheerful and happy. He seemed to be at peace with himself.

The king noticed the gardener, at work, on several occasions and noticed his happy mien. "Where does this man find happiness? He has very little to call his own. He lives in a thatched house. The roof is low. The floor is hard and uneven. He dines on just rotis and dhal. Yet he looks trim. His eyes have a rare sparkle. I wish I could be as happy as him," the king told himself.

One evening the king was taking a walk in the garden. He found the gardener, packing up his tools after finishing the day's work. He was covered with dust and mud. He was singing a song in

praise of God. He completed the song. The king then approached him.

The gardener bowed. The king called him closer and said,. "I envy you man. You are always happy. I wish I could be as happy as you. What isthe secret of your happiness? Won'tyou shareiit with me?"



"Your Highness, why should I be unhappy when I get two meals and have a place to sleep at n ight? God has given me the strength to earn my bread by the sweat of my brow. I work from morning tillevening. Iamsohungrynowthatlcaneatanything. Even hard dry rotis. And I am tired too. So I can lie down, this moment, but for hunger, on the hardest of floors, and drop off to sleep instantly. When I wake up, in the morning, I feel fresh and full of energy to work and earn my day's wages. I take everyday as it comes. This moment... the present is what matters to me the most," the gardener replied respectfully.

"But what if tomorrow you fall sick! Should you not think of the future too?" the king asked.

"And start worrying? I will lose my appetite. I will not get good sleep. My health will deteriorate. I will fall sick. Then I can't earn my daily wage. I will starve and die. No, Your Highness, I can't afford to worry about the future. Only this moment counts. Nothing else," the gardener explained.

"You said it. Thank you," saying this the king turned back, determined to change his attitude and to make the best use of the present.

o o Q

# 17

## *Hell hath no fury like a woman spurned*

*Meaning:* **Traditionally woman is presented as patient, yielding and docile. Yet this is not the whole truth. Beneath the mask of softness lie grit and strength. This strength explodes when a woman is spurned.**

*Alternatives:* **The weaker sex is the stronger sex because of the weakness of the stronger sex for the weaker sex.**

**Never get on the wrong side of a woman.**

Hindi औरत का गुस्सा खुदा का कहर

*Alternatives:* चोट खाई औरत नागिन समान होती है।

### *Illustrative Story:*

Alexei Petrov is a Russian weightlifter. He felt right on top of the world when he was chosen to participate at the World Championships at Guangzhou in 1995. He ran to his girlfriend, a medical student and an aerobic expert. She let him take her in his arms and whirl around. While they circled the room, he cooed in her ears, "Congratulate me, darling. I have been selected to compete at the World Championships."

"That is the best news which has come my way for a long time," the fiance let him hold her tight. "I will become famous," Petrov mumbled. "And I will be by your side to share your name," she spoke, her eyes brimming with passion.

He got the cue. She was suggesting to him to propose to her, to

take him as his wife. He deliberately ignored the suggestion. He thought it was too early to get into wedlock. But he held her gently, and asked her, "won't you toast me on my success?" She freed herself from his arms, fetched a bottle of vodka and set it on the dining table. The two sat and dreamt of their future. He spoke of winning titles and honours; she dreamt of the future with him as his wife.

Petrov became more involved in his practice. He did not get much time to be with his girlfriend. She complained. He tried to reason with her, "Don'tyou know that I havetowinthetitle.That is hard work. Real hard work from morning till evening. And by evening I am dead tired."

They had an argument, every time they met. One day, in a fit of anger, Petrov told his girl friend, "That is the end of our affair." She felt like clawing him with her sharp nails. But she checked her anger. She managed to say in a choked voice, "I hope we wil I remain friends." "That's the spirit," he said.

After he left, his girlfriend muttered angrily, "Alexei, I won't let you get away so easily. Wait and see."

She met him, often. Not once did she hint that she was angry at him. She teased him, cut jokes, sat and sipped vodka in his company. A day or two before he left for China, she gifted him a bottle of pills. "You know, Alexei, I am a medical student. Here is a bottle of pills. Take a few of them before you enter the competition. It will give you extra strength."

Petrov won the triple championship in the mid-heavy weight class. That was the moment of his glory. But this did not last long. Medical reports showed steroid in his system. He had taken drugs, said the officials. He pleaded innocence. But the tests were positive. So he was banned from further competitions.

Petrov broke down in anguish. His dreams of an Olympic Crown at Atlanta shattered in a trice. Then came a silver lining. Petrov's former girl friend let the secret out. She admitted that the pill she recommended to Petrov were steroids. "He spurned me and I gave him the poison fruit of bitter love," she said.

Petrovthanked hisstarsand admitted,"! know now that hell hath no fury like a woman spurned."

o o o

# 1Z

## *If the heard were all, a goat might preach*

*Meaning:* **Beard is a sure sign of manhood. But it is no indicator of wisdom.**

*Alternatives:* **If you think that to grow a beard is to acquire wisdom, a goat is at once a complete Plato.**

**A prudent youth is superior to a stupid oldman.**

*Hindi Equivalents:* दाढ़ी आ जाने से अक्ल नहीं आती।
आदमी के गुणों का अंदाज़ा उसे देखकर नहीं लगाया जा सकता।

### *Illustrative Story:*

Peter the Great was the Tsar of Russia. He was a fan of the beard. He sported a thick beard. So did all his courtiers. Even the diplomats posted at Peter's court grew beards. That was one sure way of being in Peter's good books.

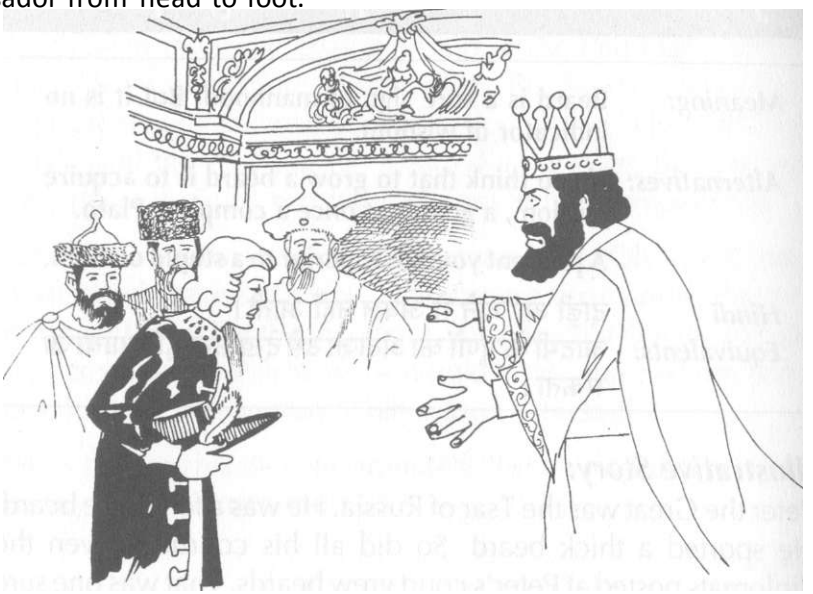
England's ambassador at Peter's court retired. The search for a successor began in London. Many names were proposed. Each name was critically examined. The final choice fell on Ponsonby.

"Is this the right choice?" many Englishmen wondered. For Ponsonby, though bright and intelligent, was rather young. And he did not sport a beard.

Some friends told him, "Grow a beard." Ponsonby turned down the advice. "Why sould I cover up my cheeks and chin with hairy growth? Only Jupiter needs the beard to look his part. I think I am quite handsome without the beard," he replied.

Ponsonby sailed for Russia, travelled by road and finally reached

Moscow. At the appointed hour, he reported at Peter's Court. He was received by the protocol officer and led to the presence of Peter. Ponsonby bowed politely to the Tsar, stood up, moved closer and presented his papers. Peter received the papers, politely thanked Ponsonby and then examined the new ambassador from head to foot.



His eyes gained a hard glint. He stomped the pedestal with his foot and sneered, "So England has sent a boy to our court?"

Hushed silence greeted the comment. What lay behind the comment? Some courtiers got the meaning. Peter was annoyed because Ponsonby did not sport a beard.

"Oh great King! My Monarch sends his greetings to you," Ponsonby spoke without the slightest touch of annoyance. "I am here at my monarch's command. I do not know if my King would have sent me if he had known your preference. . ." Ponsonby paused and smiled at Peter. Peter scowled. Furrows lined his forehead. Ponsonby quietly continued," If my King had known your preference, he would have sent a goat to your Majesty's court.

o o c )

# 19

## *Impossible is often the untried*

*Meaning:* **Nothing is impossible. Not for one who is ready to work hard and continuously against all odds.**

*Alternatives:* **Nothing is impossible.**

**Impossible is a word to be found in the dictionary of fools.**

*Hindi Alternatives:* 1. असंभव शब्द केवल मूर्खों के शब्दकोष में पाया जाता है। 2. असंभव कुछ भी नहीं है।

### *Illustrative Story:*

"Nobody has run a mile within four minutes? If only I can do that?" Roger Bannister, a young medical student, who had won many titles on the track while at school, wondered.

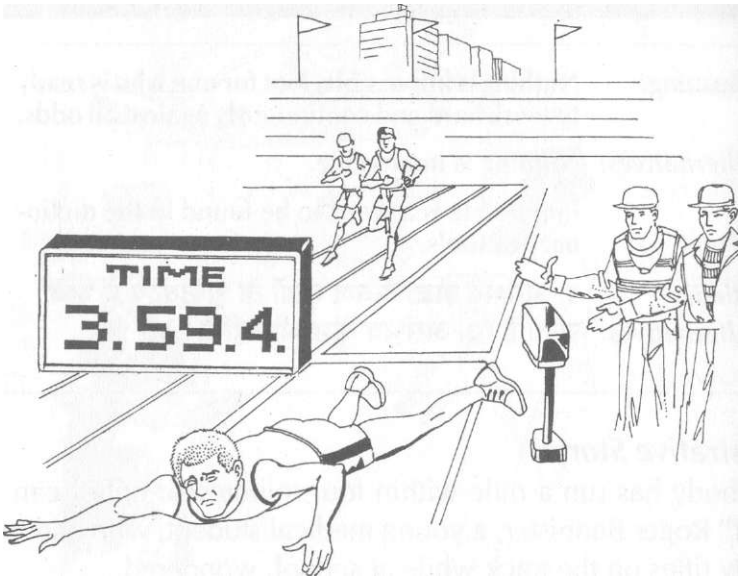
He had run the mile in 4 minutes 30.8 seconds, in 1947. That was nowhere near the record set by Pavo Nurmi of Finland in 1922. He had set a record by covering the mile in 4 minutes 10.4 seconds. In 1945, Gunder Haegg of Germany had run the distance in 4 minutes 2.6 seconds.

"It is impossible to knock off another 3 seconds off the record of Haegg," said a friend when Bannister consulted him. Was it impossible? Bannister could not find the ansyver. He told his friend, "I shall try, try my best to break the four minute barrier. Only then will I know for certain whether it is possible to run a mile under 4 minutes or not."

He examined the options. His medical knowledge came in handy. He studied how the body tired when he ran fast and how

he could reduce the strain on the body.

Then he worked out a plan. He decided he would not worry about his speed during the entire stretch. He would break up the entire distance into four laps, each lap a quarter mile. He would work out the time for each lap. If he could cover each lap in 60 seconds or less, he could finish the mile in less than four minutes.




He practised this plan. Histiming improved. Thatgave him hope. Finally came his big day. He entered the one mile race organised by the British Amateur Athletic Association on May 6,1954. He covered the first lap in 57.5 seconds. The second lap took him a little longer, 60.5 seconds. The third lap was run slower. He took 62.5 seconds.

He just had 59.5 seconds to run the last lap. Could he do it? He ran like one possessed. The last 300 yards seemed unending. About that moment, he wrote later, "My mind took over... I felt the moment of my lifetime had come." He crossed the tape and collapsed. He had covered the distance in 3 minutes 59.4 seconds. He had broken the 4 minute barrier. He had proved that nothing was impossible. O O O

# 20

## *Kindness pays*

*Meaning:* **Be kind. Show mercy to the weak and the poor. They may help you in times of need.**

*Alternative:* **One good deed begets another.**

*Hindi*
*Alternative:* अंत भले का भला।

### *Illustrative Story:*

One day, a rat ran through the network of tunnels in a forest. Right behind it was another rat. The two were chasing each other, just for fun. Suddenly, the rat which was leading found the other rat getting closer. It decided to jump off one of the exits. It did not think twice. It ducked, bounced out of the tunnel at high speed and bumped into a lion who was taking a nap.

The lion, disturbed at his sleep, snatched the rat in its paw. It held the rat by the tai I and watched while the rat wriggled. "That is the end of you, you rat," the lion growled.

"Have mercy, Oh Lord of the Jungle. I am sorry, really sorry," the rat squeaked. "Mercy! How dare you disturbed my sleep! You deserve to die", the lion roared.

"Spare my life. I will ever be grateful to you. And when the time comes I will repay your kindness," the rat pleaded pitifully. "How silly! You, tiny rat! How can you ever help me?" the lion laughed. Then said, "Go away, but don't ever disturb me again." And he

dropped the rat, on the green grass. The rat picked itself up, thanked the lion and ran back to safety in the maze of tunnels.

A few days later, the lion was caught in a net, laid by a hunter. The lion roared angrily. He snarled, tried to raise his paws. But the net did not give room for any movement. The lion tried his best. All to no avail.

Luckily for the lion, his loud roars reached the rat. It ran all the way to where the lion was trapped. The lion did not even see the rat. The rat went round the net. Then told the lion, "Wait. I will free you." It began to cut the guts of the net. Other rats which passed by, also came and helped. Soon the net was cut and the lion came out.

The I ion turned to the rat and said, "Thank you. Today you saved my life." The rat replied, "I only did my duty. Once you had spared my life and today I have repaid your good deed." The lion roared, happi ly, "I know now that one good deed begets another. Kindness pays really!"

o o o

# 21

## *Necessity is the mother of invention*

*Meaning:* **When does one get new ideas? Only when one faces a problem which has no known solution. Then one begins to look out for new methods. And if one is determined, one finds an original solution.**

*Alternatives:* **Where there is a will, there is a way.**

**Every problem has an answer.**

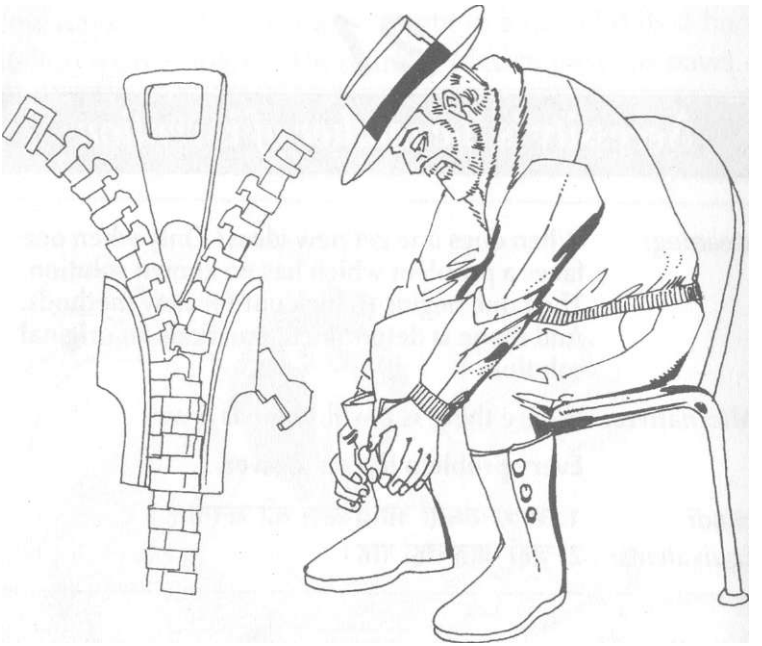
*Hindi Equivalents:*
1. आवश्यकता आविष्कार की जननी है।
2. जहां चाह वहां राह।

### *Illustrative Story:*

The year was 1891. Whitcomb L. Judson of Chicago, got up early. He took a bath and moved over to the closet. He pulled out the clothes he chose to wear. He carried them along, stood before the dressing table mirror and hummed a folk song while he got into a pair of pants. Then he wore the shirt. He tucked the shirt into the pants and buttoned up the pants and the shirt. He combed his hair, wound a scarf round the neck, pushed his feet into a pair of socks and surveyed his reflection in the mirror. He was pleased with his image, "I look smart," he told himself.

Off he moved to the shoe rack. He chose, from among the shoes, one pair which seemed to go well with his clothes. He carried it with him, sat down on a chair, slipped his feet easily into the shoes and started fixing the button which would hold the shoes tight. "Ugh!" he scowled when he found one of the buttons

missing. Where had it vanished?"! will trace it and fix it," he told himself.



The search began. Judson looked under the carpet. He peeped below the cupboards. He ran the broom through the corners. The missing button eluded him. It was nowhere to be found.

Judson fretted and fumed. He cursed the button, chose another pair of shoes to wear and went out on his usual rounds. He told himself, "Buttons let me down badly. I shall not forgive them.,. I shall get rid of them. For that I must find a better means of making the shoes hold to the feet."

On return he began the search for an alternative to buttons. Several ideas came to him. One of them appealed to Judson. He thought of strips which would lock in easily. One pull and the strips would get together. A reverse pull would separate them. After many trials, he found out how he could do it. He named his innovation "Clasp Locker And Unlocker For Shoes." Today we know it as the ZIP. O O O

# 22

## *Never a Quisling be*

*Meaning:* **Be true to your group clan or nation.**

**Don't be a traitor. Don't sell yourself and your people for money or power, to the enemy.**

*Alternatives:* **Don't be a snake in the grass.**

**Don't be a double cross.**

**Beware of the enemy within.**

*Hindi equivalents:*
1. घर का भेदी लंका ढाये।
2. जिस हांडी में खाया उसी में छेद किया।

### *Illustrative Story:*

Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany in the thirties. He claimed racial supremacy of the Germans. He claimed the right of the Germans to be the masters of the world. Other nations protested. Butthey could notstand uptothe mightof the German forces. Many European nations . . . Poland, Czechoslovakia, France. . . fell easily when Germany attacked.

Thus began the Second World War. Soon most nations of the world were drawn into the war. The world was divided into two camps. One camp was led by Hitler and the Axis powers. Set against this camp were the Allies, led by the United States and Britain.

Norway was threatened. The people resisted. They held on with determination and courage. The Germans sensed that it would be better to get inside support.

The search began. German agents made discreet enquiries. Finally they identified the man for the job. He was Vidkin Quisling, an ambitious politician.

A German agent met Quisling, at a secret venue. The two discussed the course of the war. The German agent pointed out, "There is no power on the earth that can stand up to German attack. Can't you see it? How easily did Germany overrun most nations of Europe. Norway has no chance, if it comes to a fight to the very end. Listen to me. Throw in your lot with Germany. Extend all help to the Nazi cause."

Quisling did not respond immediately. He thought over the proposal. "What is in it for me?" he asked finally.

"Power, my friend. You will enjoy Hitler's confidence. He will appoint you as the Prime Minister of Norway. Is that not reward enough?" the agent responded immediately.

"Will you guarantee that?" Quisling spoke with a slight tremor.

"Of course," the agent beamed a pleased smile.

Quisling played into the hands of Hitler. He gave timely tips to the Germans on the plans of the resistance movement. Hence the Norwegian defence suffered heavy losses. Soon the resistance collapsed. The Germans moved into Norway. Quisling had sold himself and his nation. He got his price. He became the puppet Prime Minister of Norway.

By helping enemies Quisling realised his lifetime ambition. But it was his nation's misfortune to have a politician like him. He died dishonoured and discredited. Today his name Quisling stands for a traitor.

o o o

# 23

## *No army can fight on an empty stomach*

*Meaning:* **No job can be done well unless the worker is well looked after.**

**An army marches on its stomach.**

*Alternatives:* **A happy worker is an efficient worker.**

**Men do their best in congenial settings.**

*Hindi equivalent:* भूखे भजन न होय गोपाला।
भूखे पेट देशभक्ति नहीं होती।

### *Illustrative Story:*

Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery was one of the heroes of World War II. He led the British Army with skill and confidence. He got the men good wages and facilities and rewards. Thus he earned their personal loyalty.

The landing of the Allies at Normandy was his finest hour. His men fought boldly, dared all odds because they had trust in his leadership. For them he was a hero who could do no wrong. His hero, in turn, was the Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill.

The two had very cordial relations. Yet they had their differences too. Some times they had heated arguments. But this did not diminish the love between the two.

On one occasion the Prime Minister noticed a reference to two dentist's chairs, among the many items which had been transported to Normandy. "Why were they sent? They are not weapons," Churchill wondered. He turned to his secretary,

"remind me. I must point this out to the Field Marshal when he calls on us next." The Secretary made a note.

Montgomery called on the Prime Minister early one morning. In his hand was a fat file relating to an important strategic plan. He was received by the secretary and led to the Prime Minister. Churchill welcomed the Field Marshal with a warm handshake. Then he picked up the cheroot and started puffing at it. Montgomery pushed the file across the table to Churchill. The Prime Minister studied it. he asked questions, sought clarifications, suggested changes. Finally the issue was settled.

The secretary walked in and reminded Churchill, "Sir. you wanted to discuss the issue of the dentist's chairs."

"Thank you," he replied. The secretary moved out. The Prime Minister raised his voice slightly, I was going through the list of items sent to Normandy after the landing. Among the items

transported were two dentist's chairs. Where was the need? We don't have money to burn. We are waging a war. We have to account for every penny."

"You think we have wasted funds on dentist's chairs? There you go wrong," Montgomery glared at Churchill.

Churchill did not say a word. But his chin was firm and set. Montgomery continued, "Mr Prime Minister, a soldier with a toothache is of no use to me. He can't fight." He saw the smile on Churchill's face and felt happy.

"I should have known. No army can fight on an empty stomach. And no soldier can fight unless he is fit," Churchill agreed.

o o o

# 24

## *It is never too late to learn*

*Meaning:* **Knowledge is vast. Nobody, however studious he be, ever learns everything. The wise man knows more today than yesterday. Every day he increases his knowledge.**

*Alternative:* **One is never too old to learn**

*Hindi Equivalent:* सीखने के लिए उम्र की सीमा नहीं होती।

### *Illustrative Story:*

Socrates was one of the wisest men of the City State of Athens. Often he stood at the street corners, gathered young men around him, asked them questions and helped them find answers on their own.

The members of the City Council felt that Socrates was turning the young against them. They ordered his arrest on charges of sedition. He was tried and sentenced to death. The date for his execution was fixed and Socrates was detained in prison. It was decided that on the appointed day, he would be, made to drink a glass of Hemlock, a deadly poison.

Socrates had a large circle of friends and followers. They came every day to the prison and spent hours talking to him. They found him calm and composed. He did not show the slightest sign of fear. His attitude seemed to say, "Death! Do thy worst. I, for one, am not scared."

A few days before his execution, a musical tune wafted into the

cell through the window which opened out to the road beyond the prison wall. Socrates walked to the window and looked out. He saw an old man sitting with his back to the trunk of a tree, strumming on his harp.

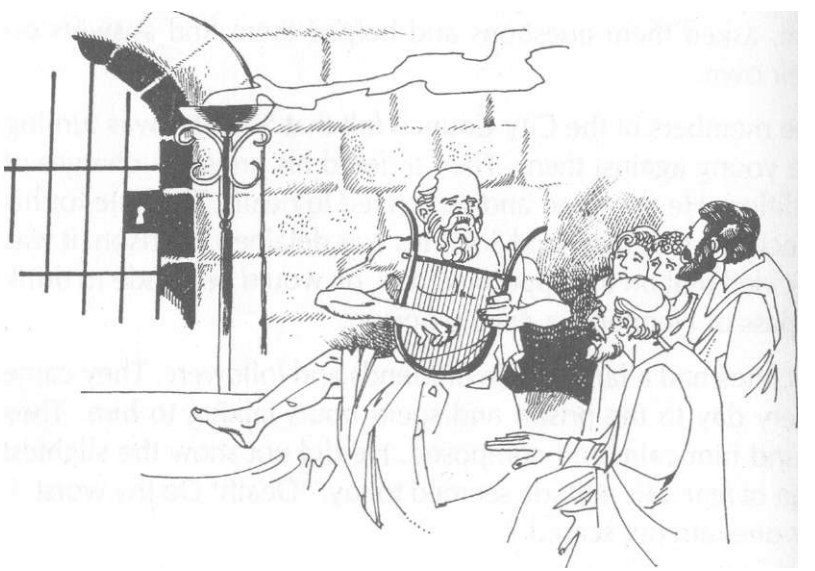
Socrates turned to his friends and said, "That music is truly divine. I wish I could learn to sing that song. Can you get hold of the singer and bring him to me?"

His friends were taken aback. They asked, "Why do you want to meet him?"

"I want to learn that tune. It is truly divine," Socrates replied.

"Why waste effort? You know you are going to die in less than a week," a friend pointed out.

"That is all the more the reason why I must learn thattune. I won't get a chance, again. Please hurry up. Get hold of the singer. Otherwise, we may not be able to trace him. And I will never learn that tune," Socrates appealed to his friends.



Oneofthem wenttothe prison official and presented the request of Socrates. The official, who held Socrates in great esteem, sent a guard to fetch the singer. A little later, the guard returned, leading the singer to Socrates. After polite exchanges, Socrates requested the singer, "Will you please teach me that tune. It is truly soulful music."

The singer sat down and went over and over the musical notes. Socrates repeated them. For nearly two hours, he practised. Then the singer said, "You know it well, Oh Revered Sire. You can sing it as well as me."

"Thank you. Today I am better informed than I was yesterday. Everyday, till death, I wantto learn something new. It is nevertoo late to learn. Thank you for teaching me the tune," Socrates sent the man away, respectfully.

o o o

# 25

## *He who has an art has everywhere a part*

*Meaning:* **A true artist has the ability to create something beautiful out of ordinary things.**

*Alternatives:* **A thinking man is always striking out s&mething new.**

**A truly great man has the courage to be different.**

*Hindi Equivalent:* सच्चा कलाकार हर वस्तु में सौंदर्य देखता है।

### *Illustrative Story:*

Nekchand is one of India's modern garden designers. He was not born great. He achievd greatness. How did he find fame? By turning junks into works of art.

Years ago, in the sixties he was working in the horticulture department at Chandigarh. His pay was low. He just managed to make both ends meet. Yet he never grumbled about his lot. Work, for him, was worship.

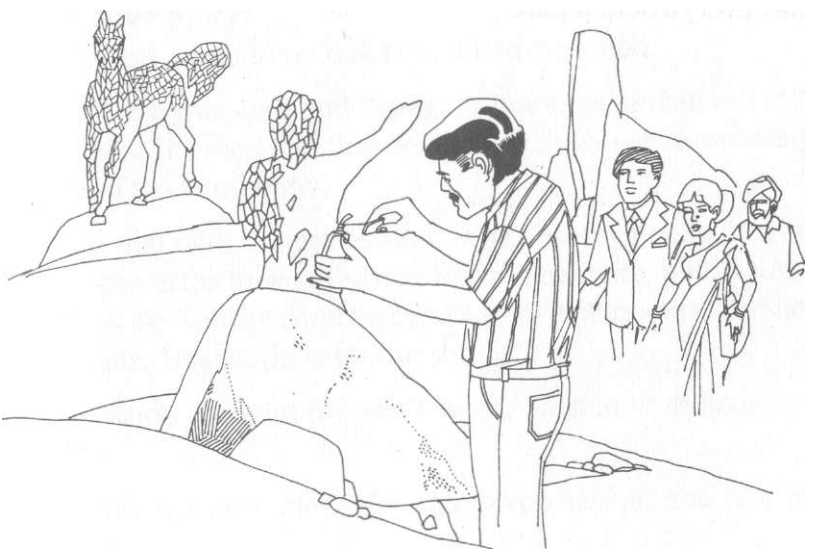
Luckily the work he did was much after his heart. For he was a lover of nature and art. He found delight in planting saplings and helping them grow. It was fun laying seeds and waiting for them to grow, dress themselves up in lovely colourful flowers and dance with the wind.

One morning, in spring, he came out of his house. He had a bag in his hard. He walked, slowly along the footpath. He often

stopped on sighting a bed of roses or large dah l ias or Chrysanthemums. He walked slowly, taking in the feast of colours.

Hardly had he covered a hundred yards when his eyes fell on a pileof broken chinaware. Itwas lying on oneside. The rays ofthe sun fell upon the pile and lighted up the junk. Nekchand was captivated by the beauty of the broken bits. He could nottakehis eyes away. The bits and pieces took in the sun and gained myriad shades. Before his vefy eyes, Nekchand saw the broken bits recreating a rainbow of colours.

Could he find the pieces a place where their power to refract sunlight could be increased? Would the pieces then become truly great work of art? Nekchand stood and watched for quite some time. A smile lit up his face. "This is it," he said and started gathering the pieces in his bag.



The broken bits jingled and jangled as Nekchand moved to a deserted location. He fixed the broken bits on the slopes of the mount which stood in bold relief against the rays ofthesun. Itwas hard work. Nekchand shifted a few pieces. He rearranged them,

shuffled them around. This went on for quite some time. Finally he felt pleased with the effect. He grinned happily and turned homewards, with light steps.

From then on, discards became a passion with him. He saw art in every junk—rusted steel plates; twisted barbed wires; bits and pieces of glassware. He visited every junkyard in the town and had his pick. To kabadiwallahs he turned for further junk. He blended the discards. Gradually a garden emerged where there once was barren rocky land.

Soon, people came to know about Nekchand's efforts. They came, went round the garden and hailed Nekchand for his work. Government too recognised his merit. Today, Nekchand's Garden at Chandigarh is a unique site. It is art created out of junk. One fan, after going round the garden, said, "He who has an art has everywhere a part."

o o o

# 26

## *Pride hath its fall*

*Meaning:* **Pride makes one think too high of himself, blinds one to the dangers.**

*Alternatives:* **Ego is a man's worst enemy.**

**The weak shall inherit the earth.**

*Hindi Equivalents:* अधिक घमंड लंका नाशे।
घमंडी का सिर नीचा।

### *Illustrative Story:*

There stood, close to an oak tree, a bamboo reed.

The oak tree was stout and strong. Its branches spread out in all directions. The reed was thin and supple. It swayed in whatever direction the wind blew.

The oak tree said, in a gruff voice, "You are very docile. Why do you dance to the tune of the wind? Stand up, reed, hold youfcelf erect, as I do. Tell the wind that you are not at its command. Show some guts. This world is for the strong."

The bamboo reed did not say a word. Silence, it thought, was golden. ^

"Did you not hear me? Why don't you reply?" the oak tree growled.

"What can I say? You are strong and sturdy. I am weak. But listen to me. The wind, if it gets really violent, can be very dangerous. When the wind blows with fury, show it respect. Otherwise..."

the reed did not complete the sentence.

The oak tree thundered, "No wind can do anything to me."

The gentle breeze which made the reed swing, overheard the tree's comment. It brushed over the bark of the tree and wafted away.

A little later, after gathering strength, the breeze turned itself into a wild wind. It came back at a terrific speed turning into a storm. The bamboo reed bent almost double. The wind rushed over it. Then it bumped into the oak tree. The tree won't budge. The wind hit it again. This time the shock ran down and weakened its roots. The branches tried to reduce the speed of the wind. The wind pushed them aside with vicious force. In the process, the tree lost its hold. It got uprooted and crashed to the ground.

"There goes the strong oak tree. Wish it had listened to me and showed some respect to the wind. But the oak tree was proud. It hadn't learnt one lesson: Pride hath its fall," the reed murmured to itself sadly.

o o o

# 27

## *Silence is golden*

*Meaning:* **Be a man of few words. Speak only if you must. Think before you speak. For a word and a stone, once launched, cannot be called back.**

*Alternatives:* **Nothing is opened more by mistake than the mouth.**

**Let not your tongue cut your throat.**

**Much wisdom often goes with fewest words.**

*Hindi Equivalents:* चुप रहने में ही भलाई है।
एकं चुप सौ सुख

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### *Illustrative Story:*

Satyamurti was a leading nationalist. He was known for his oratory. His words carried logic and reason, wit and wisdom. So he usually got the better of others in arguments.

Once he went to England to present India's case for freedom. He met leading politicians in Britain. He pleaded with them to restore self-government to India.

He addressed several public meetings. They were well attended.

At one meeting, while he was presenting India's case for freedom, a heckler asked, "Do you know that the sun never sets on the British Empire?" That was true. For Britain had colonies all around the globe. And always itwas day in some or the other part of the Empire.

Satyamurti looked in the general direction of the crowd from

where the question had come and smiled. The heckler felt he had nettled Satyamurti. He thought Satyamurti would not have a convincing reply.

Here he went wrong. For Satyamurti replied, "Do you know why? Even the sun doesn't trust the British in the dark."

The laughter of the crowd pitched high. The heckler quickly ran out. He had learnt one lesson. He had met more than his match. He should have remained silent. He should not have heckled Satyamurti.

o o o

# 28

## *The future is not ours to see*

*Meaning:* **None knows what is in store for him in the days to come.**

*Alternatives:* **The future is unknown.**

**The future lies in the womb of time.**

*Hindi Equivalents:* *% 3 WJJ t, ^ ^m I*

*M f t ^ ^ r l ?*

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*Illustrative Story:*

The people of United States were heady with excitement on Nov. 2, 1948. The Presidential elections were going to be held that day.

Who would win? Harry Truman or Thomas Dewey? The odds were clearly in favour of Dewey and the Republican Party. "Truman can count himself out. The Democrats have had a long innings. Now it isthe turn ofthe Republicans," said many people.

The leading members of the Press analysed the situation. Most journalists felt that Dewey would win. But they did not make any firm prediction. They shied away, saying, "Public opinion can swing suddenly. Who can say, for sure, about election results?"

But one man was absolutely certain of Dewey's victory. He was the editor of *The Chicago Times.* So he wrote, in advance, an editorial hailing the victory of Dewey. He prepared the headline for the front page: Dewey Defeats Truman.

"Should we not wait till the results are out? Should we not have an alternate editorial and head line? Truman may well spring a surprise," said one of tfie editorial assistants.

The editor pinned him down with a stern stare. Then he said, rather loudly, "I know man, Dewey will win and win by a huge margin. Have no doubts on that. I can read the future, at least as far as the end result of this election is concerned."

The proofs were read and the first editions were printed with the headline and the editorial. The results of the elections began to trickle in. The people had voted massively in favour of Truman. Dewey was left far behind.

The editor of *The Chicago Times* had egg all over his face. He had tried to gauge the future. The future, in turn, had pulled a fast one on him. The future was not his to see.

o o o

# 29

## *The grass looks greener on the other side*

*Meaning:* **Almost everyone thinks others are better off than them. Rarely does one find a truly contented man.**

*Alternative:* **Object of envy: the Jones next door.**

*Hindi Equivalents:* दूर के ढोल सुहावने लगते हैं।
दूसरे की रोटी हमेशा बड़ी।

### *Illustrative Story:*

Ranjan and Sumer were friends. They went to the same school and were in the same class.

Ranjan was not robust. He was frail and weak. Not for him the rumble and tumble of street brawls, the fun of running wild, playing football or hockey or other strenuous games with boys of his age. All that he did was watch Sumer and other boys play. Often he would go with them to the wide open grounds. They would run off to play. He would sit in the shade of a tree, lean back on a bole and read a story book or enjoy a magazine for children. Books became his best friends. He acquired knowledge. That stood him in good stead. He always stood first in the class.

Sumer was tall and athletic. He spent most of his time running or swimming or riding bicycles or playing. He excelled in every game. The headmaster selected him as a member of the school's football team and cricket team. He served his school with distinction. Later he became the captain of the cricket team. The

State selectors watched his performance. They felt he would one day make it big in the game.

One day, the two friends went for a walk. Rajan got tired soon. He said', "I have no strength. What is the use of all this knowledge, if I am not healthy. I would give away all my knowledge if only I could be half as healthy and strong as you."

Sumer was taken aback. He replied, "So you are not happy with your lot. Here I am, wishing I could do as well as you in studies. I too had often thought I could forgo my sporting skill if only I could get a first division, in the board examination."

The friends peered at each other. Then they fell into each other's arms, while Ranjan said, "the grass looks greener on the other side." Sumer enquired, "What does that mean?" Ranjan explained, "Nobody is happy with his skills and talents. Each one finds his betters in others and feels unhappy. Look at yonder lawn. Does it not look greener than the one right under our feet?" Ranjan agreed.

o o o

# 30

## *The poor are truly free when their needs are a few*

*Meaning:* **Money doesn't come for the asking. Often one has to adjust to the whims of one's superiors, to flatter them and to please them. In the process one ceases to be free.**

*Alternatives:* **No man is free unless he limits his wants.**

**Freedom does not co-exist with material pursuits.**

**Happy is he who is content.**

*Hindi Equivalents:* *^mft c&t ^Tft $ cfft TJ^ I*

*3TT^7^TT3Tf ^MT "Slf^RT #*

वास्तव में w ^ r t i

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*Illustrative Story:*

Diogenes was a leading Greek philosopher. He was a man of few needs. Power, status and riches did not appeal to him. He spent most of his time in acquiring knowledge or seeking the meaning of life. His life style was akin to that of the poor. He cooked his own food, kept his home set in the midst of trees and flowering shrubs, neat and clean.

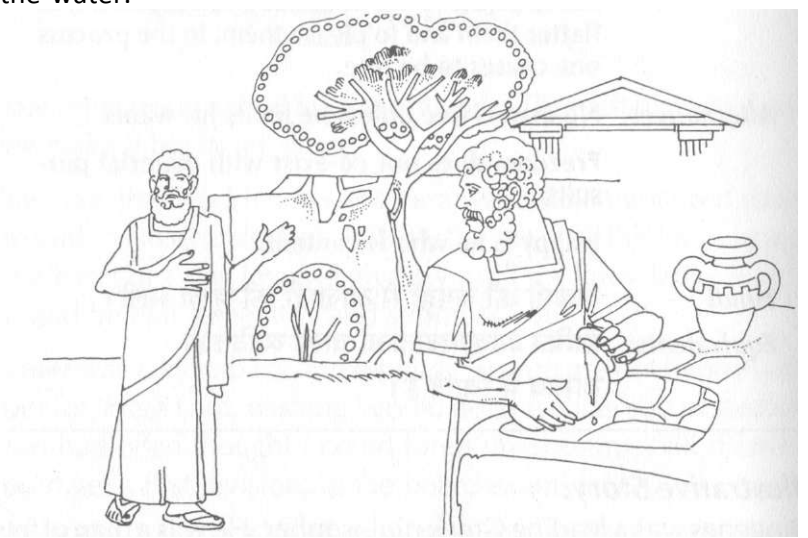
One day, he walked to the kitchen to cook dinner. He opened the pots and checked. There was nothing in all but one pot. He peered into the pot and found some lentils. "Ah!" his face brightened. "I will make lentil soup and dine in style," he told himself.

He emptied the lentils on to a plate and moved to the backyard.

The setting sun formed patterns of light and shade on the ground. Diogenes drew water from a well and started washing the lentils.

"Where are you, my friend?" came a call. Diogenes looked up and saw his friend, Aristippus, a scholar who served at the court and lived in luxuries, walking in.

"Welcome, my friend. How are you? Have not seen you for long. Why don't you join me for dinner? Then we will have time to discuss philosophy," Diogenes said, while rinsing the lentils in the water.



"What will you serve me?" The guest enquired. "Delicious lentil soup," Diogenes picked up a stone and threw it away. "Oh, no, thank you. I can't enjoy such a measly fare," Aristippus replied. Then he asked, "Tell me, why do you live in poverty? You are more intelligent, more well-informed and more scholarly than me. If you would only learn to flatter the king, you would not have to live on such poor food as lentils."

Diogenes straightened himself up, gave the guest a look of contempt and commented, "If only you had learned to live on such food as lentils, you would not have to flatter the king." Aristippus had no reply to that. O O O

# 31

## *Practice makes one perfect*

*Meaning:* **To master a lesson or any art there is no short cut. One has to work hard, practise for hours, keep on doing it till one gets it right.**

*Alternatives:* **Try, try till you succeed. Perseverance prevails.**

*Hindi Equivalents:* *^TcT ^TrT 3T«HTT % ^nfd ^TrT TpTH 3TWH ^ TrfrWT fWTcft 11*

*Illustrative Story:*

Ekalavya was born in a low caste family. He lived in the forest, with his parents. Often he accompanied his father to forage for food. His father hunted with the help of a knife. Ekalavya too learned to use the knife. But for using the knife, he had to get close to the quarry .That was not always easy. He searched for alternatives. He found it easy to hit small animals with stones. He used the sling and sent the stones flying into space, to bring down birds.

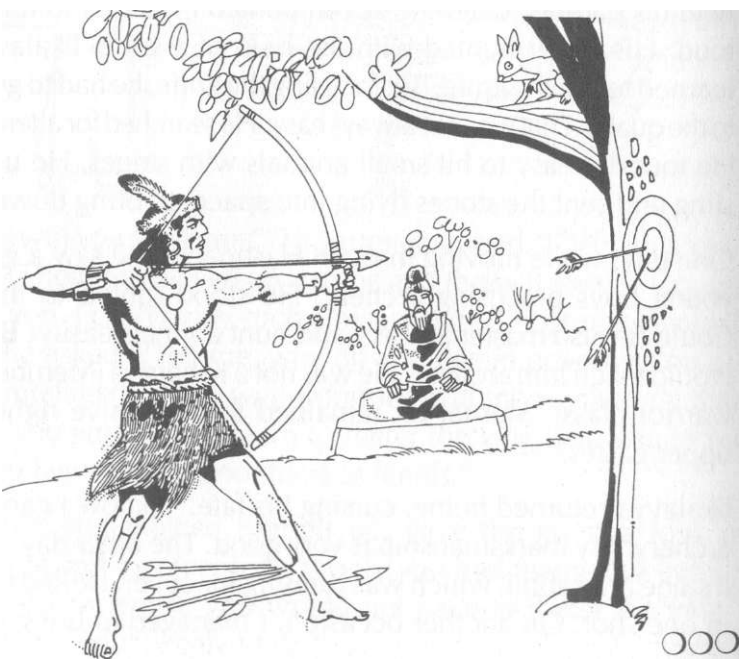
One day, while moving through Hastinapur, he saw a group of young boys practising archery. He stood rooted to the spot. Could he also master archery and hunt animals easily? But who would teach him archery? He was not a Kshatriya (Member of the warrior class). Martial art remained the exclusive right of the upper castes.

Ekalavya returned home, cursing his fate. "I know I can master archery. My marksmanship is very good. The other day, I aimed a stone at a rabbit, which was running for cover. I killed the rabit in one shot. On another occasion, I managed to bring down a

couple of pigeons with the help of my sling. If I master archery, I can stalk deer and wild boars too. But I will never learn the art. My caste stands in my way," he rued.

On several visits to Hastinapur, Ekalavya watched the young boys practise archery. He observed them keenly. Soon he knew how to make a bow. He collected a few arrows. He had heard that Dronacharya was the best teacher of archery. "I am his disciple," Ekalavya told himself. He put a stone image of Dronacharya on a mount at the foot of a tree. He bowed to the idol. Then began the lessons. All day long, he practised shooting arrows. It was hard work. But he did not give up. Slowly but steadily his marksmanship improved.

Soon he gained further mastery. He could strike the target, while watching only at the target's reflection. He could hit the beast, whose bleats or bellows reached him, even though the beast remained invisible. He became a great archer like Veer Arjun. His success tells us, "Practice makes one perfect."



## *Self help is the best help*

*Meaning:* **Do yourself what you can. Don't depend on others for everything.**

*Alternatives:* **God helps those who help themselves.**

**Stand on your own feet.**

*Hindi Equivalents:* *1. 3TCHT ^TSJ* जगन्नाथ

*2. M^MltrMl aHcfcl fl^iidl eMdlf^^ml* सहायता आप करते हैं।

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*Illustrative Story:*

In a nest, set in a rice field, lived a mother bird and her two little chicks. Every morning, the mother bird flew away to forage for food. Before going, she always tbld the chicks, "Don't go out. Danger stalks everywhere. Stay inside. Then no harm will come to you. Listen to every little sound, including any conversation you overhear. For it is time for harvest. We must leave this place before the men come to harvest the crop."

That day, a little after the bird had flown off came the farmer and his son. They walked close to where the nest lay. The farmer looked atthe crop. Then he told his son, "It is time for harvest. We must get help from the village. We will request our neighbours to help us." The son nodded his head. The two walked away.

The chicks reported the conversation to their mother. She replied coolly, "No need to worry. Not as yet." The chicks left it at that. They were hungry. They opened their beaks. Mother bird started feeding them.

Next day, as usual, she warned the chicks and left. The farmer and the son turned up a little later. The chicks peeped out of the nest. They heard the farmer say, "The villagers are busy. They have no time to help us. We must get outside help."

When the mother bird returned, the chicks told her, what they had heard. But she said, "Don't worry. We still have time to shift."

A few days later, the farmer and the son visited the field again. The farmer looked worried and said to his son, "If we don't harvest the crop quickly, we will suffer losses. Since we can't get help, tomorrow we must harvest the crop ourselves." "Okay," said the boy.

That evening, when the bird returned, the chicks told her what they had heard. Mother bird fed the chicks, and said, "This time the farmer is serious. He will cut the crops tomorrow. I think you are strong enough to fly. Follow me. We will go to our new home on the fork of the gulmohar tree over there."

"How can you be so certain?" The chicks asked.

"Because this time, the farmer and his son have decided to cut the crop themselves. They have realised that self help is the best help," said the mother bird, leading the chicks to their new home.

# 33

## *Slow and steady wins the race*

*Meaning:* **No body should take success for granted.**

*Alternatives:* **One should not rest until one has reached one's goal.**

**Ambition knows no rest, success demands perseverance.**

*Hindi Equivalents:* I T c ^ T O 3 TTOc^TT fa^Tčft 11

सहज पके सो मीठा होय।

*Illustrative Story:*

A hare stood at the edge of a pool and admired its reflection in the water, saying, "I am fit and trim. I have lovely eyes and strong limbs. I can run faster than most animals,"

Then it saw a tortoise clumsily moving up the bank of the pool. The tortoise was struggling to get firm hold over the slippery slope. The hare laughed atthe tortoise and said, "It is a hard climb for you. For me, it is but a quick bounce."

The tortoise felt hurt. After reaching the ground, it turned to the hare and said, "Don't be so proud. I challenge you to a race. A race from one end of the forest to the other."

"You think you will win? No way," the hare snapped.

"Let us see," the tortoise replied.

The two decided to hold the race next day, an hour after dawn. The news of the proposed race spread by word of mouth. Many

animals and birds cameto witness the race. They told each other, "Poor tortoise. It will lose, for sure."

The race began. The hare took off at top speed. The tortoise managed a fast crawl. The hare came close to the winning post. Thepost was hardly 100 metres away. The hare looked back. The tortoise was nowhere in sight. Then the hare noticed a Peepul tree. Its shade was cool. "Let me rest for some time. I know the tortoise will never make it," the hare rolled up into a fluffy ball, closed its eyes and slept off.

It woke up on hearing thunderous cheers. Sleepily, it looked all around. Then it noticed the tortoise, holding its neck out and accepting the cheers of the spectators. The tortoise had moved slowly but steadily, and reached the goal first. It had won the race.

o o o

# 34

## *Tact wins where might fails*

*Meaning:* **Might wins victory in battles and bouts.**

**But it fails in coping with difficult situations during social interaction. Then tact comes into play and triumphs.**

*Alternatives:* **Tact cuts painlessly.**

**Diplomacy, without tact, is like an egg without salt.**

*Hindi* **cbfcH MRF^ofrT^f cJ|cMlrt4 ^ T ^ W 3TRfTt I**

*Equivalent:* *3T^T cfft &TTC dcWK efft fTrft % I*

*Illustrative Story:*

Franklin Roosevelt, President of the Unites States, appointed J.F.T. O'Connor of Los Angeles as the Comptroller of Currency. It marked a proud moment for the people of Los Angeles. A few influential people of the town organised a luncheon in the honourof O'Connor. Theeliteofthe town were invited. Business tycoons rubbed shoulders with rich landlords. Professors and professionals had a gala time. A large number of women too attended the function.

O'Connor thanked the organisers for the honour. He went round, greeting friends and acquaintances. He stopped on seeing one of the leading film stars. She was young, extremely beautiful and charming. He greeted her warmly. "Glad that you could come. You give Colour to the settings," O'Connor complimented her.

"Thank you. All of us, here, are happy at your success in politics." She paused, held him by the arm and enquired, "Is it true, my dearSir, that you plan to issue a new set of currency notes with a different design?"

"You seem to be well-informed," O'Connor dodged. But she did not drop the topic. "Why can't you, my dear Mr O'Connor, put my profile on the new currency notes?" She asked.

That took O'Connor by surprise. He had least expected such a suggestion. The very idea was preposterous. How could he make her understand without sounding rude? He realised the need to be tactful. "Wonderfu l," he pressed her hand, gently, and showed his joy. Her eyes sparkled with delight. Then he added, rather sadly, "However I'm afraid I can't comply with your request. I certainly regret not being able to do so. But you know the President is opposed to hoarding and I know that if the young men get their hands on the money, with your picture on it, they would never turn it loose."

She got the message. He had turned her request down. Yet she did not feel the slightest hurt. In fact she felt happy because he had paid a tribute to her beauty. Tact saved the day for O'Connor.

o o o

# 35

## *None but the brave deserve the crown*

*Meaning:* **Only a person who has courage achieves name, fame and success in life.**

*Alternative:* **Nothing ventured nothing gained.**

*Hindi Equivalent:* जिन खोजा तिन पाइया गहरे पानी पैठ।
साहसी व्यति ही पुरस्कार का पात्र होता है।

### *Illustrative Story:*

It was September 14, 1994. Children trudged their way to the Rajiv Gandhi Vidyalaya, in East Delhi, daring heavy rains. 11 year-old Deepak walked, holding the satchel, which was water-proof, above the head. That was the only protection he had. He skirted the puddles. When speeding cars or buses ran over potholes and forced muddy water to take to the air in arcs, he ducked to avoid a direct hit.

"This must be the last rain of the season. Belated rains. No one expected such a down pour in mid September!" Deepak mumbled, as he turned in, at the gate of the school.

He entered the class. Hewaswetall over. So were his classmates. There was nothing they could do about it. Deepak turned to a friend and repeated a proverb he had heard, a few days back, "What cannot be cured must be endured."

The children took their seats. The teacher came and started the lesson.

A drop of water hit Deepak on the head. He raised his head. His eyes fell on the ceiling. The ceiling was dotted with little drops of water. Where had the bubbles of water come from? Then he saw light. He told the friend who sat by his side, "Water is gathering on the roof. That is dangerous. The roof will collapse." The friend hissed, "Who will run out to the terrace and get drenched?"

Deepak decided to act. He stood up and, when the teacher turned to him, "Can I go out for a minute?" he asked. The teacher frowned. She gave him a stern stare and thundered, "Why do you want to go?"

"Look atthe ceiling, Ma'am..." Deepak ran out, without waiting for formal permission. He ran like one possessed. He dared the heavy downpour. His boots sank into the sodden grass. His eyes ran all alongthe parapet wall of the roof and stopped on sighting the outlet which normally drained out the water from the roof. He found that it was choked. A flap of the tarpaulin tent was firmly stuck into the outlet.

"That must be removed quickly. Otherwise water will gather on the roof. And the roof will come down. And then . . . ." fear gripped Deepak.

The answer came to him, instantly. Anything sharp could pierce the tarpaulin. Where could he get it? Why not borrow an ice pick or a screw driver or a long rod from the shop outside? He dashed to the shop. The shop keeper was drumming on the table, keeping beats with the pitter patter of the rain. Deepak said, "Quick. Give me something sharp?"

"What for?" The man asked.

"There is no time to explain," Deepak turned his eyes around, saw what he wanted, grabbed it and sped to the school compound. His feet pounded away on the staircase. There was knee-deep water on the roof. Waves formed on the surface as he

pushed his way through water and reached the outlet. Then, with a quick move, he pushed the sharp rod through the outlet, on to the tarpaulin. He repeated the move, till the tarpaulin had a gaping hole. It no longer blocked the water. The water found an outlet.

Deepak stood there, unaware that the teachers and the students had gathered on the lawn, watching his every move with admiration. He heaved a sigh of relief when the water level came down. "We are saved. All of us... the teachers, the students, the clerks and the staff. We would have been crushed to death if the roof had come down," he said loudly, as he ran down the stairs, into a sea of admiring crowd. His teacher pushed her way to him. She held him in a warm hug and said, in a voice, choking with emotion, "You rose to the occasion, Deepak. You acted in time and saved our lives. You are our hero. And you will remain a hero to us, always."

Deepak was honoured, on August 15, 1996, by the Chief Minister of Delhi with the Jeevan Raksha Padak. And everybody said, "None but the brave deserve the crown."

o o o

# 36

## *To kill two birds with one stone*

*Meaning:* **To get double benefits.**

**To make the best of a situation and gain extra advantage.**

*Alternative:* **To have a cake and eat it too**

*Hindi Equivalent:* tylchk I / TJ^ xtSI ^t I

*Illustrative Story:*

Tenaliraman was a great wit. He was a superstar at the court of Krishnadevaraya, the ruler of Vijayanagaram. One day, he was held up at the Royal court til I late in the evening. Night had fallen when he neared his house. He stopped on hearing some whispers. He kept himself in the dark and listened. "Tenaliraman is very rich and we have nothing. By tomorrow morning we will be rich and he will have nothing," said the whispering voice. "You said it," someone else replied.

Tenaliraman guessed that the thieves were after his wealth. He hurried to his house, while working out a plan to keep the thieves at bay. He knocked the door. His wife checked his identity and held the door open. Tenaliraman moved in and sat on the swing. His wife closed the door behind him and hurried to fetch a glass of milk for him.

Then she complained, "The rice plants in our fields... behind our house... are wilting. If you don't water them quickly, they will die."Tenaliraman replied,"! know. Butfirstthingsfirst.Come...."

He led her to the backyard. He dragged a big box and packed it with bricks and stones. His wife wondered what he was up to.

"Let us move this and drop it into the well," Tenaliraman said. "But why?" She asked. Tenaliraman called her closer and explained. Her face turned pale. But he said happily, "This is a chance to get water to our fields." His wife could not make head or tail of his words.

The two dragged the box to the well. "Give me a hand", Tenaliraman said. He lifted one end of the box. His wife held the other end. They held it over the rim of the wall that ran round the well and then let go. The box dropped down, hit the water with a big splash and went down.

"Now, dear, no thief can walk away with our wealth. The box holds everything. . . gold and silver, ornaments and jewels," Tenaliraman spoke loudly.

The thieves, hiding in the branches of the tree, heard the comment. They could not believe their luck. They waited till the couple went inside and bolted the door. A little later, the thieves came down from the tree. They approached the well. They saw a large bucket and the rope tied to it. The free end of the rope was tied to a stout tree.

The thieves took turns to draw water from the wel I. They emptied the water into the drain which ran all the way to the fields behind Tenaliraman's house. It was nearly dawn when the thieves could seethe rim of the box. "I will go down and tie the rope to the box. Then we will pull it out," one of the thieves got down. A little later, the two managed to haul the box up. Eagerly they broke open the lock and raised the lid. Then they got a real shock. The box contained no jewels, no gold or silver coins or ornaments. Bricks and stones greeted the thieves. They cursed their fate and wanted to run away, when they heard footsteps drawing near. As they turned around, they saw Tenal iraman coming towards them with guards. The thieves were arrested there and then.

Later in the morning, Tenaliraman led his wife to the well and then to the fields and said, "What do you think of my trick! The thieves fetched water to our fields. And they worked free."

"You are really a genius. You killed two birds with one stone," his wife smiled.

o o o

# 37

## *Titfor tat*

*Meaning:* **To take revenge / To treat a person in the same way as he treats others.**

*Alternatives:* **A tooth for a tooth.**

**An eye for an eye.**

**To give back in one's own coin.**

*Hindi equivalents:*

1. अदले का बदला
2. HFT ^T s^cll I^T
3. जैसे को तैसा

*Illustrative Story:*

The fox, it is said, is always up to some mischief or the other. Many are the stories which tell us of the exploits of the fox. Here is one about a fox and a stork.

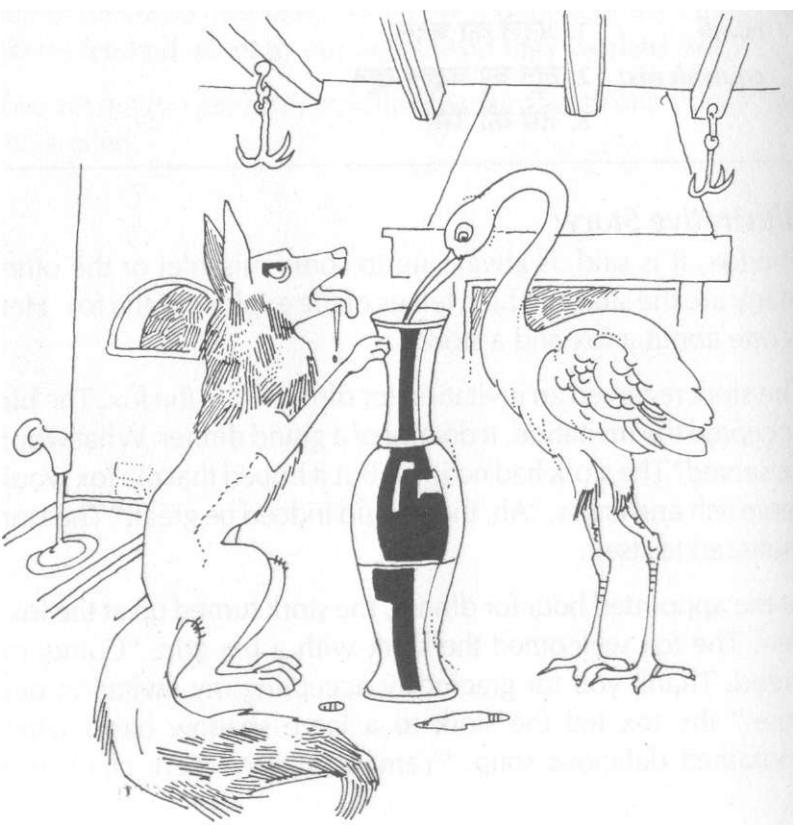
The stork received an invitation for dinner from the fox. The bird accepted the invitation. It dreamt of a grand dinner. What would be served? The stork had no idea. But it hoped that the fox would serve fish and crabs. "Ah, that would indeed be great!" The stork muttered to itself.

At the appointed hour for dinner, the stork turned up at the fox's den. The fox welcomed the stork with a big grin. "Come, my friend. Thank you for graciously accepting my invitation over here," the fox led the stork to a large shallow basin which contained delicious soup. "Yam, Yam," the stork clanked its

beak and got ready. It put its beak in, but got hardly an ounce of soup in. It raised its beak, up in the air, to get the soup drip down to its throat. The fox, in the meanwhile, started lapping up the soup. The fox drank up almost all of the soup. The poor stork got merely a few drops.

"I hope you enjoyed the dinner," the fox pulled out a napkin and handed it to the stork to clean its beak. The stork stomped out, angry and hungry. And, as it moved away, the fox burst into laughter.

The stork felt cheated. It muttered to itself, "I won't let him get away. I will invite him for dinner and see that he gets nowhere near the food."



The stork did not show its anger. It came to the fox, a few days later, and said, "Thank you for the delicious dinner. It is now my turn to offer you dinner. Come next Saturday, at 8 pm." The fox agreed.

On the appointed day, the fox ran through the bush, cut through the open and reached the stork's place. "Come, my friend. Let us dine in style," the stork welcomed the fox. The fox sniffed the air and said, "I smell delicious fish and crabs." The stork clanked its beak, while leading the fox to a narrow necked tall jar. The stork invited the fox to have its fill. The stork put its beak in, picked up a crab and made a meal of it. Then it stood aside. The fox tried to push its head in, but the neck ofthe jar was too narrow. All that the fox could get was the smell ofthe dish in the jar. The stork had its fill. The fox got nothing.

Angrily the fox stomped out, while the stork shouted from the back, "That was a tit for tat".

o o o

# 38

## *Truth always triumphs*

*Meaning:* **Be honest. Be truthful. Success will be yours in the end.**

*Alternatives:* **Honesty is the best policy.**

**Truth is God.**

*Hindi Equivalents:* सत्यमेव जयते।

*W T f t f ^ t l*

### *Illustrative Story:*

Maharaj Harishchandra was a noble ruler. He was kind and generous. Honesty was dearer to him than life. Even the gods respected him. So did the sages.

One day the gods and the sages got together. During the talks, someone said, "When it comes to honesty, Maharaja Harishchandra is the greatest."

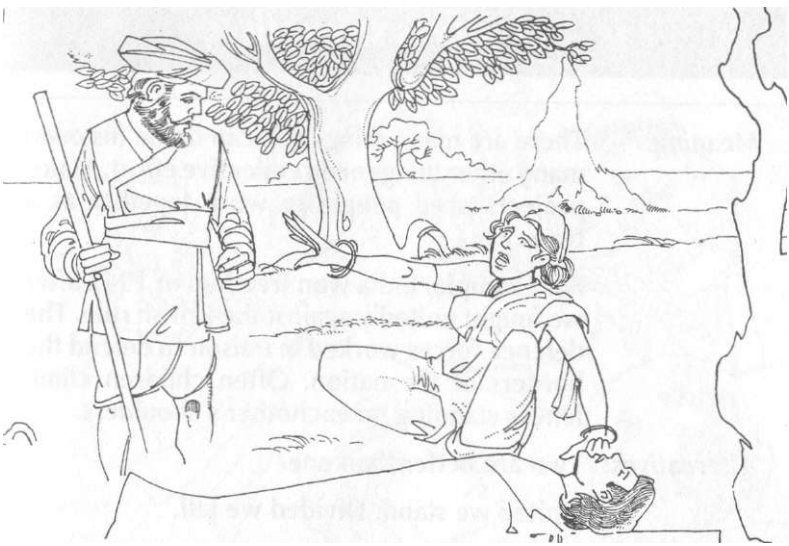
"He is honest, I agree. He can afford to be'honest. He has everything . . . wealth, power and a loving family. Adversity makes men dishonest. Will Maharaj Harishchandra remain honest if he runs into trouble?" asked Sage Vishwamitra.

"Why don't you find out?" The gods teased the sage.

The sage set out on that task. He met Harishchandra and sought, in alms, his kingdom, his wealth and possessions. Harishchandra gave them away happily. He walked out ofthe palace, with his wife and son in tow. He had nothing to call his own... no place to live; no job; no income. He sold his wife and child to clear

some dues. To pay off the debt, he sold himself to a man who ran the burial ground.

The sage came to him and said, "Tell one lie. Just one lie. And you will get back everything." Maharaj Harishchandra politely replied, "Satyameva Jayate."



One day, he was at work on the burial ground when his wife came there carrying the dead body of their son. The boy was bitten by a snake and had died. She had no money to arrange for firewood. Maharaj Harishchandra too wept bitterly. But he refused to allow the body to be cremated unless she paid for the firewood.

Once again, the sage appeared before the Maharaj. He asked, "How can you be so heartless? Cremate the body of your son. Your master will never come to know of your act."

"My master trusts me. I shall never be unworthy of his trust," Maharaja Harishchandra said in a voice choked with pain.

The sage was immensely pleased. He restored to Maharaj Harishchandra his kingdom and his wife. With his mystic powers, he brought his son to life. He hailed Maharaja Harishchandra and added, "You have proved that truth always triumphs."

o o o

# 39

## *Unity is strength*

*Meaning:* **There are many things one can do on his own; many other things need collective effort. Major projects need people to work together as a team.**

**For example, India won freedom in 1947 after we fought unitedly against the British rule. The defence forces worked in unison to defend the borders of the nation. Often children climb fences standing on eachother's shoulders.**

*Alternatives:* **Two are better than one.**

**United we stand. Divided we fall.**

*Hindi Equivalents:* **2.** *W* **cfft TJTET 'ETT ^t ^ I** *I*

### *Illustrative Story:*

The old villager was on his deathbed. His three sons stood around the bed. They looked worried.

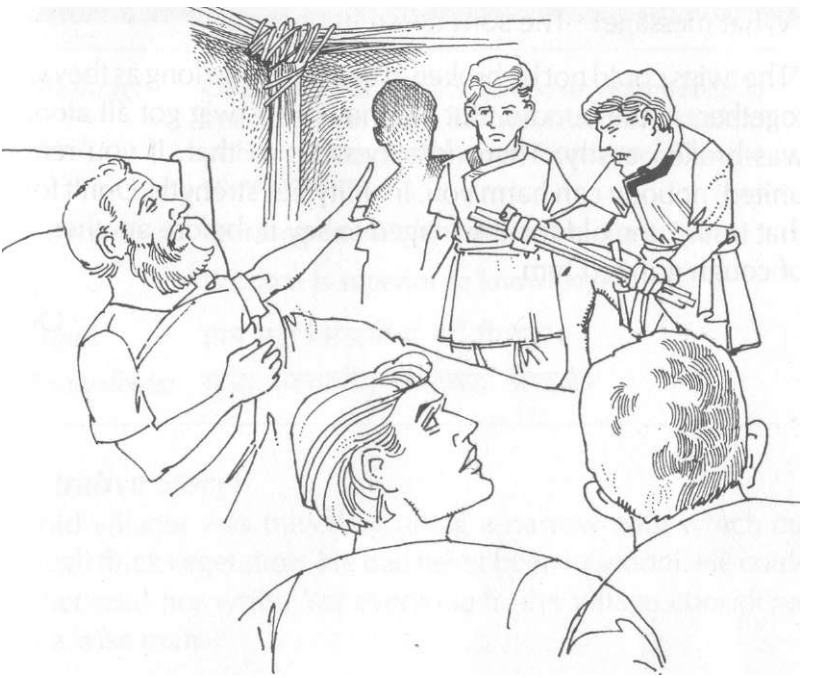
"I shall fetch the *vaid,"* the eldest son started moving out, when his father broke out into a cough. The old man raised his hand and signalled to his eldest son to come back. Once the cough subsided, he whispered, "Go to the backyard. You will find a bundle of twigs. Bring it over here."

"Why do you need them, now? Relax. You need rest," the eldest son spoke softly yet firmly.

"Do what I tell you," the old man looked at his youngest son. The

son ran outto fetch the bundle. Theothertwo rubbed hisfeetand chest to relieve him of pain.

The son brought the bundle of twigs and placed it a little distance away from the cot. The old man smiled, wanly, and told his eldest son, "Try to break the bundle, at the middle."



The sons looked at each other. They thought the old man had turned mad. Yet none of them dared disobey him. The eldest son held the bundle of twigs, at both ends. He pressed down at the ends with all the strength at his command. Beads of sweat formed on his forehead. His muscles rippled. He tried, many times. Then he gave up. "No, Papa. I can't do that."

The old man directed his second son and then his last son to try to break the bundle at the middle. Both of them gave up, after trying their best.

The old man chuckled to himself. He turned to his eldest son, "Now, pull out one twig and break it in the middle."

The eldest son did that easily. The second and the third son too could do that without any difficulty.

"Got the message", the old man asked.

"What message?" The sons asked in one voice.

"The twigs could not be broken at the middle so long as they were together, in the bundle. But the moment a twig got all alone, it was broken easily. There is a message in that. If you remain united, nobody can harm you. In unity lies strength. Don't forget that truth," the old man managed to say it, before another bout of cough gripped him.

o o o

# 40

## *Wisdom is nothing but earthly commonsense*

*Meaning:* **One need not go to schools; or read books to become wise. Life is the best teacher. A student of life gathers earthly commonsense. Thus he gains wisdom.**

*Alternatives:* **Learning doesn't by itself make one wise.**

**Wisdom is superior to knowledge.**

*Hindi Equivalents:* *W Pchdl^' 3 Hsft ftrRTT I*

**Feb H Ml £ ēJT^ % I**

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*Illustrative Story:*

An old villager was travelling along a narrow path which cut through thick vegetation. He had never been to school. He could neither read nor write. Yet everyone in the village considered him a wise man.

He was indeed wise. He knew a lot about human nature. But he always had time to gather more wisdom. He did that by keeping his eyes and ears open.

The music of birds caught his ears as he walked along the path. A folk tune came to his mind. He hummed it, swung the cane in his hand to provide the beats for the music.

Then his eyes fell on the leaves of edible plants which stood on either side. Some animal had eaten up the leaves of plants on the right side, but not of plants to the left. "Ah, he told himself. Its right eye must be blind."

He walked a few more steps when he found footprints of the animal. Not all footprints were equally firm and clear. The villager searched for the reason. Then the truth struck him.The animal was lame in one leg. Which leg? the villager sought. He studied the imprints. Then he told himself, "It's the hind leg, the left one, that is short."

A further study proved that the animal was a horse. The footprints were not deep. The old villager mumbled, "nobody was riding the horse. It must have strayed."

Hardly had he put all the facts together when a scholarly looking man ran in. He asked the villager, "Did you see my horse?" The villager asked, "Your horse? Is it blind in the right eye?" The new comer exclaimed, "You are right! How did you know?"

The villager enquired, "Does it limp on its hind leg . . . the left leg?"

"Of course. That is my horse. Where is it?" The man asked.

"How do I know? I never set eyes on your horse," the villager replied. That made the man angry. He shouted, "You have stolen my horse. Give it back to me. Or I will complain to the village chief."

"Do it. I am not afraid. I am no thief," the villager growled.

"Come with me. We wili go to the chief," the man dragged the old man along. The chief heard the complaint. Then he asked the old villager, "What do you have to say?" The villager explained how he had found out details about the horse. The chief growled at the complainant, "Go and find out your horse yourself. Don't waste time making false complaints." Then he smiled at the villager and said, "Society needs people like you."

The wise man commented, "wisdom is nothing but earthly commonsense. One needs to only look around carefully to find out facts."

o o o

# 41

## *Count not your chickens before they are hatched*

*Meaning:* **No man should take the future for granted. One can make plans for the future and work on them. At the same time he should know that even the best of the plans can go wrong. So one should be ready for unexpected reverses.**

*Alternatives:* **Don't build castles in the air.**

*Hindi Equivalents:*
1. हवाई किले बनाने से कोई फायदा नहीं।
2. ख्याली पुलाव पकाने से भूख नहीं मिटती।

### *Illustrative Story.*

Amrita was a poor milk maid. She lived in a hamlet close to a town.

Often she wished she were rich. But how! She did not know. Then she got a bright idea. She went to one of the rich cattle owners and said, "Will you give me milk on credit? I will take the milk to the town, sell it and make some profit."

The villager agreed.

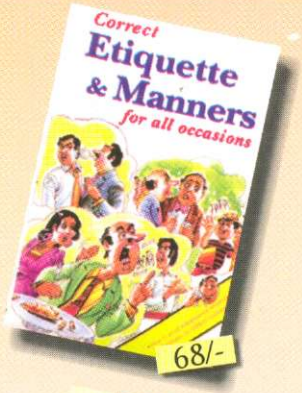
Next morning, she collected the milk from the villager. She held them in two pots. She added some water to increase the quantity of milk. "Nobody will notice it. This way I will make more profit. I will become rich", she thought.

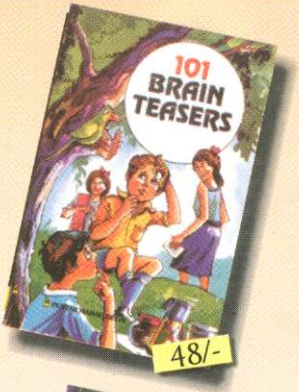
Her fancy wandered, "I will become rich. I will buy a few hens. They will lay eggs. I will sell most of the eggs. Some of the eggs will hatch. When the chicks grow, they will give me more eggs.

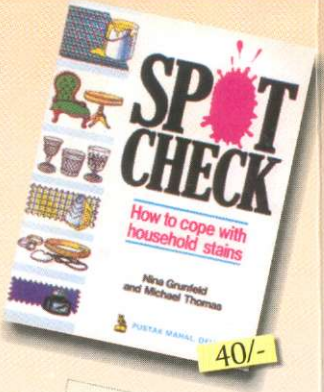
When I have put by enough money, I will buy a cow. The cow will give me milk. I will sell the milk. I will buy more cows. Soon I will have enough money to settle down with a man. We will have children. If my son or daughter misbehaves, I will hit the brat thus," she raised the stick and waved it wildly.

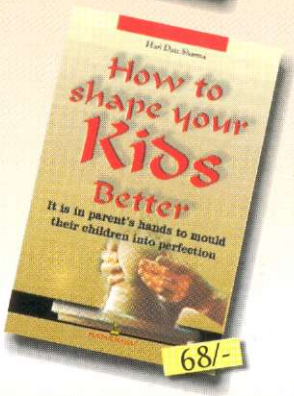
The blow fell on the pots on her head. The pots broke. She was totally drenched in milk as it flowed down to the ground. With that ended all her dreams of making a rich profit by selling milk. She had counted the chickens before they were hatched.

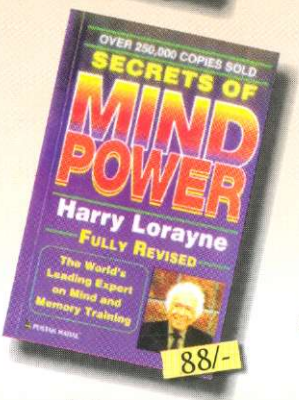
o o o

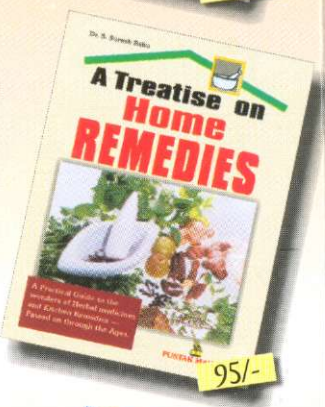


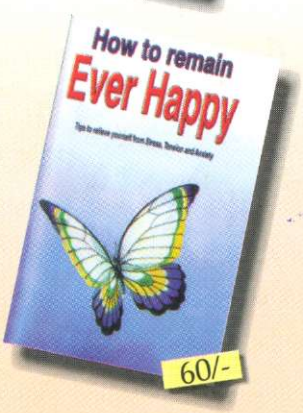



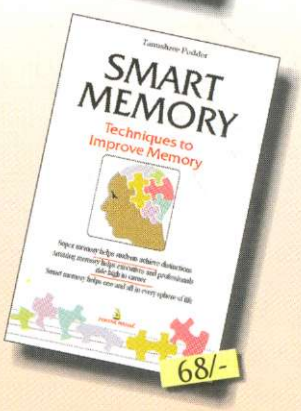



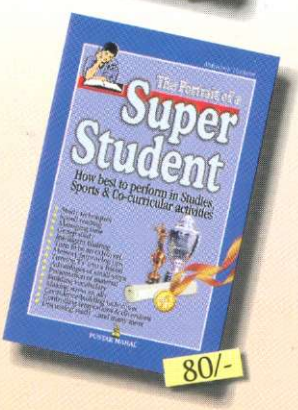

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