

A little friend

That was a bad day for our Mr. Lion King. During his chase to catch a rabbit he sprang into a small bush from where he came out not with the rabbit but with a large thorn in his palm.

He cried for help. He tried his best to pull out the thorn. He shook his hand, tried to pull out the thorn with his mouth etc. but all his efforts was in vain. The thorn began to smile at Mr. Lion.

Then he asked other animals for help. But they all feared the lion. So no animals came to help him.

At last the lion approached the clever fox. The king asked, "Can you pull out the thorn please. I am suffering very much with pain."

The fox said, "I am not very expert in this task. But I have a little friend who is very expert in this work. I will surely ask him to help you. But I have some demands."

"What are your demands?" asked the king.

"It is not just food or money Your Majesty! You should allow me to give you five kicks on your back!" the fox said.

The lion king asked with surprise and anger "Do you want to kick me? Don't you know who I am?"

"I know! I know! But it is not my need to remove thorn from your palm. If you don't want I am going. Good Bye" said the fox.

"Hey! Wait! Wait!" said the lion and he began to think for a moment "I am suffering with the pain of the thorn. It has to be pulled out. Let him kick me five times. I just want to remove the thorn. After taking the thorn I will eat up his little friend."

The fox then began to kick the Lion King with his permission. One, two, three... like that. The fox called his little friend.

There comes a little porcupine. He pulled out the thorn with great ease. The pain in the palm of the lion was reduced. But his mind became filled with anger, grief and disappointment.

What to say! He was very much disappointed in thinking how he can take revenge for the five kicks he got from the fox. How can he eat the porcupine with thousands of quills? At last he had to bow down before the great intelligence of the clever fox.

Christopher's encounter with the aliens

It was a dark and stormy night. The whole of Greentown was covered by dark clouds. Christopher was returning home. It started raining cats and dogs.

Suddenly he saw a U.F.O. appearing from the clouds above. In no time it landed on the road. Three aliens came out. Chris was astonished as he could understand their language. Their plan was to take all the trees away from earth. Not wasting a moment, Chris called his friends. Those aliens pointed out to a tree. An eerie blue light shot out from their hands making a tree vanish. Soon, Chris's friends arrived. They tried to scare those aliens by throwing stones, but in vain.

Luckily, Mr. Goon, the fat inspector of the area arrived. With a frightened look on his face, he shot at those aliens. One of them pointed his finger at Mr. Goon. To everyone's amazement, Mr. Goon became as thin as a stick. Everybody laughed. Suddenly, Anna, Chris's friend, ran towards them, shouting at the top of her shrill voice. Those aliens got the fright of their lives and vanished along with their spaceship. The kids were delighted. They had saved their planet. Mr. Goon was left fiddling with his pants.

Home alone

It was a dark and stormy night.

I was alone at home and about to go to bed, when I saw a scary shadow figure at my window.

"Who's there" I shouted.

Suddenly there was a flash of lightning followed by thunder-shower.

I saw a lion's face followed by a scary thunderous roar at the window. It looked like the lion from the local circus that had been announced missing on the television news channel. I felt very scared. I ran to my bed and pulled my blanket over my head. I started to shout for my parents but there was no reply. Then I remembered they were at a late night party.

I peeped out of my blanket but it was too dark to see anything. Then I heard footsteps.

They were getting louder and louder. Soon the footsteps died off.

The grand father clock struck 12. I went back to bed and tried to sleep, but couldn't. I felt too frightened. I sat up my mind full of scary thoughts. After some time passed, finally I fell asleep.

I woke up only after eight in the morning and switched on the TV news. I was excited to see the lion was already trapped in the wee hours of the morning by the ring master of the circus. I felt very much relieved after the news.

Later I narrated the whole incident to my parents.

They were dumb shocked and decided in future not to leave me alone at home during night.

Sleepovers

Daisy is the new girl at the school. Most of her classmates are friendly, except for bossy, stuck-up Chloe. Having Chloe as a friend is hard work, but having her as an enemy would be far worse.

So when Chloe issues the great sleepover challenge, Daisy is desperate to take part.

"Guess what!" said Amy. "It's my birthday next week and my mum says I can invite all my special friends for a sleepover party."

"Great," said Bella.

"Fantastic," said Chloe.

"Wonderful," said Emily.

I didn't say anything. I just smiled hopefully.

I wasn't sure if I was one of Amy's special friends. Amy and Bella were best friends. Chloe and Emily were best friends. I didn't have a best friend yet at this new school.

Well, it wasn't quite a new school. It was quite old, with winding stairs and long polished corridors and lots and lots of classrooms, some of them in Portakabins in the playground. I still got a bit lost sometimes. The very first day I couldn't find the girls' toilets and went hopping round all playtime, getting desperate. But then Emily found me and took me to the toilets herself. I liked Emily so much. I wish she could be my best friend. But she already had Chloe for her best friend.

I didn't think much of Chloe.

I liked Amy and Bella though. We'd started to go round in a little bunch of five, Amy and Bella and Emily and Chloe and me. We formed this special secret club. We called ourselves the Alphabet Girls. It's because of our names. I'm Daisy. So our first names start with A B C D and E. I was the one who spotted this. The secret club was all my idea too.

I always wanted to be part of a special secret club. It was almost as good as having a best friend.

The kindhearted villager

Once a gentle man was traveling in a train. He felt thirsty and got down at a station in search of water. No sooner had he reached the water tap then the engine whistled and started. He ran back but missed the train.

It was getting darker and he decided to spend the night at the station.

The next morning he enquired about the next train. He came to know that the next train was on the other day.

So he decided to find a place for a day's stay. He went to the nearby lodges to ask for a room but found none. It was getting darker and he could not find a room.

At last he reached a small hut. He asked the owner of the hut whether he could stay in his house for a day. The owner readily agreed. That day the owner served him food and gave him a room to stay. But did not ask nor expected anything in return.

At night when it did strike seven in the clock, the gentleman heard a knock at the door. The villager opened the door. The gentleman saw that a man dressed in gaudy and rich clothes entered the hut and demanded the owner to pay his debts. The gentleman came to know that the villager was in need of money. The next morning he slipped a pocket in the drover of the room and left.

When the villager came to know about the pocket, he saw that there was a note addressed to him, it read "You helped me but did not expect anything from me. Yesterday I heard the conversation between you and the stranger and came to know that you were in need of money. This is what you need".

Moral: When you help others, you are helped too.

The lost ball

One day Kavya and I were playing with the racket and ball and the ball went into a Takku's house.

Though we were scared, we went to his house and asked him if he could give us our ball.

He said "No". We felt helpless.

Suddenly, I had an idea. There was a water tank behind the Takku's house.

I looked at it and told Kavya "Kavya, look at this. We can climb the water tank and jump over the gate."

Kavya agreed, but we were both wearing skirts. We couldn't climb with that.

"It doesn't matter, we can see tomorrow. Don't forget to wear pants." said Kavya.

"Bye", I said and went back home.

The next day I went to Kavya's house early. We were both wearing pants.

"Best of luck" said Kavya's brother Vijay. He knew everything.

He said, "Shout loudly if you need me."

We went to the water tank. "Who will climb first?" asked Kavya.

"You" I said. She agreed.

She climbed down into the Takku's house. I followed her and then we were looking under a bed for the ball when we heard a noise.

It was Vijay. "Mother is calling you" he whispered.

We hurried and took out the lost ball. But along with the ball was a ... gold bar! We quickly took both the ball and the gold bar and climbed up the water tank again. When we reached Kavya's house the T.V was on. It was News time.

I couldn't believe my ears when it said that 20 gold bars were stolen from a gold shop. They showed a picture of the gold bars and it was exactly like the one we had found. We all knew it because there was a look of surprise on every one's face.

We quickly told the story to Kavya's mother and she called the police. The police came at once and caught the Takku. They found the rest of the gold bars in the Takku's house.

After some time the Police Inspector came and told us "Thank You Children for catching the thief. Here is a reward for all of you."

When we opened the gifts, we were surprised. There were investigative books for Kavya and me.

The magic hole

Penny was a little girl who lived in Alaska. It was ice-cold there. She kept praying that she wish she could play in the lush, green and warm gardens like we do but of course, she couldn't.

Her father, like all the men there, didn't have a job. He hunted seals and caught fishes as was the custom. So her father hadn't even heard of money and even if he had money, there weren't any aero planes to take them abroad.

Now somewhere near Penny's house was a deep, dark forest. Everyone was afraid to enter it. They said that whoever entered it would be sucked in by a great hole.

One day, Penny was playing with her Eskimo friends when one of the boys shouted "Hey, I dare one of you to enter the magic forest."

No one dared. Penny picked up a twig and threw it at the edge of the forest. Nothing happened. Penny was astonished. It's all a legend! We can play hide and seek in the woods if we want, she thought. She walked slowly towards the woods. It was getting colder and colder she took each step. She walked right into the middle of the forest.

There was a small hill with a great big hole right in the middle of it. She wanted to jump into it. She took a big, deep breath and jumped.

There was a sinking feeling in her stomach. She realized that she falling down deep some where. But she did not land. She went spinning and suddenly all here fur clothes vanished and there was a skirt and blouse instead of it .She was at the beach.

She found that she had a bag with her. Inside the bag there was a swim suit, a mattress, a book, a bottle of lotion and a towel. She took all these out. And lo and behold!

Her parents and her elder brother were standing there. They helped Penny to spread out the mattress and they had a basket full of fruits which they put on the mattress. Penny and her brother ran joyously to the warm sea. Oh! What fun! She wished it would never end.

But after exactly one hour, it all vanished and she was back in the forest. She hurried home. Her parents didn't ask her anything. She looked at the watch. Only five minutes had passed since she had left. Now that was strange! 1 hour had passed! She was sure.

She had looked at her watch at the beach.

She was confused. 'Huh! Mama! Papa! Didn't you miss me?' she asked her parents. They were surprised to hear her story. They went to the magic hole together. They jumped into the magic hole one by one. At once they were at the mall. They wore the same clothes as anyone else. When they came back, they didn't tell anyone. Now they go there often.

It is their favorite picnic spot.

The missing sweetmeat

One fine day Divya woke her mother up and said, "Mummy it is so long since you made my favorite coconut barfi – please make it today!"

Mummy was in a good mood and so she smiled and said, "All right dear, I will keep it ready for you by the time you are back from school."

Divya went to school with a big smile on her face and spent the entire day dreaming about the delicious coconut barfis.

Meanwhile that afternoon, her elder brother, Dhruv came home with his friends. Mummy had gone to the market and he found a plate full of freshly made barfis on the kitchen platform. He decided to give his friends a treat and within minutes the plate was empty!

Just then mummy rang up and told Dhruv to give Divya a barfi when she came back from school. Poor Dhruv how was he to know that the barfis were made especially for Divya? A naughty idea struck him and he left his pet frog on the plate and placed a lid over it. He left the house chuckling.

Divya got home in the evening, eagerly went into the kitchen and opened the plate. A pair of eyes glistened at her. Four-year-old Divya was shocked. She went to her mother and asked "Mummy, do barfis have eyes?"

"Certainly not", said mummy "Go on and eat the barfis!" This time when she went and removed the lid, a frog jumped right at her! The poor little girl jumped back in fright and went crying to her mother. She told her mother about the frog who consoled her and waited for Dhruv to get back that night. When he came she took him to task and made him apologize to Divya. The next day mummy made some more coconut barfis and this time little Divya more than got her fill!!

The wishing tree

A lone traveler was passing through a desert on a hot day. He was tired, feeling thirsty and hungry too.

At least, he needed a shady spot to rest for a while. A big leafy tree came into view at some distance away. He felt glad and said to himself, "Had I water to drink, now." Yes, he found a tumbler full of cold water on the ground right in front of him. He sat down there and started sipping the water. Then, he wished "Had I something to eat, right here." Immediately, a variety of dishes appeared before him. He was under the shade of Kalpa – Vriksha – a magical tree. That was the wishing tree.

Whoever was under it would have whatever he wished for! The traveler enjoyed the delicious food. He felt drowsy. He wished for a nice bedstead. It was granted. He stretched himself comfortably on the soft mattress. His legs ached, as he had walked a long distance. He hoped that someone would massage his feet. Yes, a young lady appeared near his feet. She started massaging his feet and legs. He soon fell asleep. After a long time he woke up.

The lady was still sitting beside him. He now started thinking differently. "How can things happen like this? Can I have things, I wished for, by merely asking for them?" Is it some kind of a trick played by a magical demon" he doubted. Oh, a true demon appeared in place of the nice lady! The demon was laughing mischievously at him. The traveler said to himself, "Is he going to eat me up?" Within no time the demon started leaping at him, with his mouth wide open. The frightened traveler took to his heels and ran away.

He ran and ran for long. When he looked back there was no demon. "What is all this? Did things really happen? Or was it all mere a dream?" the traveler started wondering. "Perhaps, almighty grants what one has in mind." He resumed his journey.