

My  
Dear  
Son

BOOK  
Two

*Short Stories*



N Natarajan

## Particulars of the book

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## Introduction

Dear son,

This is the second book I am writing for you and the generation next, to benefit from. While some of the stories I write in this series were handed down to us by our ancestors I will be adding a few of my own experiences so that the stories and messages reflect the current life scenario.

During travelling, we made it a point to have some discussion or the other on life and events.

During these discussions, we realized that each one of us held divergent views on most topics. That is, we realized the existence of several realities and all of them were valid in one's own situation. There we learnt to accept the other person's view without seeing through our own narrow views.

I am sharing with you, , the essence of those discussions along with some stories in this book. Why stories?

We might forget the theme with the passage of time. But stories stick around in the mind for a longer time.

You will do well to share these themes and stories with friends and colleagues whenever you find an occasion.

When you are on a family trip or a holiday with your grand children, make it a point to tell as many themes and stories as they can listen to and internalize.

N Natarajan

Bangalore

My, unforgettable, Hyderabad days!

You may remember the days, while I was working in Hyderabad and you grew up from a primary school student to a science graduate.

Out of those twenty plus years, for close to six years, I and my colleagues commuted between home and office in a chartered van. It took 45 minutes to an hour one way. During those 45 Minutes, we discussed a variety of issues starting from domestic violence to world wars, Office politics to national politics, stock markets to World Bank transactions. Other common topics of discussion were Literary discussions, Religion, Spirituality, Poetry, quiz, pun and stories. The list is quite long.

The narration and short stories you find are a few important ones among what we discussed.

Every day would be a special day. Some times people who did not travel in our route regularly opted to travel with us for the fun that could be found nowhere else.

Some one travelling in the van asked one day, "who is Van Hussain?" Several people in

the van answered in one voice. "It is simple. It is a brand name of trousers! It could be the promoter of the brand".

The man who asked the question, said, "You are all wrong". He continued, "It is our new driver of this van, called Hussein".

Some times we had some problems too.

While we returned home in the evening, I would be among the last couple of commuters.

As the people alighted on the way, we used to remove our footwear / shoes, fold our legs and have a chit chat.

One evening, as the van arrived at my stop, it was already dark. I slipped my feet into a pair of footwear and reached home.

Hardly ten minutes went by. The phone at home rang. There was an angry voice at the other end. For some time I did not understand what his problem was.

He directed me to see if I have a complete pair of my chappals. I said, yes I wore and walked home. Then I discovered that one of my chappals had been exchanged with his.

I told him coolly, don't worry, we will rectify the mistake on the following day.



I had no problem walking with different footwear in each foot. May be, it invited the attention of some on the way. It did not matter to me at all. Some might have laughed. A few others might remember that incident for a few more days.

But my friend, I understand, cannot take any of these.

On the following day, he wore a fresh pair of footwear and packed one of my footwear in a news paper. That packet was brought in a plastic cover.

The following morning and evening, this incident was discussed and the van was filled with laughter.

There was a different perspective to that incident. It was found that only two out of 14 persons had no problem in walking with such a pair of chappals.

The rest of them felt too awkward to walk using such a pair of footwear as it made them appear as a joker.

We discussed various ways of diverting others' attention from our feet (with different designs of foot wear).

It was one of the most hilarious discussions we have had in the van.

## 1. Theme: Never say a lie:

During my professional life I had the occasion to understand what people felt about living a virtuous life. Very few believed in it. Many believed that there should not be a rigid frame work for leading the life.

Typical opinion expressed by many people whom I asked, can be summarized as follows.

- (1) Speaking lies is inevitable in life.
- (2) It is perfectly all right to say a lie to avoid punishment or to tide over a difficult situation.
- (3) It is profitable to tell lies.
- (4) One can entertain others with lies.
- (5) For some, lies are breath. They need no motives.

Unfortunately, many are unaware of the truth that:

- (1) Lies bring about losses and some times even a disaster.
- (2) There are an insignificantly small number of people who live only by Truth. Such people may have no great skills. Yet they are in demand.
- (3) Consciously, practice speaking only the

truth in every situation. You will discover the benefits and you will never tell a lie again.

Advice:

(1) Decide today that you will not tell a lie, in any situation. Well, there are some situations when if you speak the truth it could affect some one seriously. Do not speak the truth but do not lie.

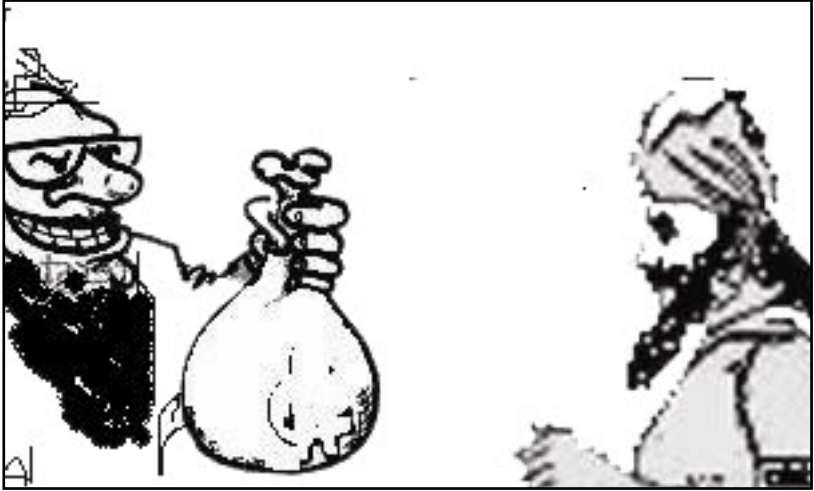
You need to be conscious of this for some days and perhaps a few months. Then you will find that not saying a lie would have become your nature. There is no need to announce it to any one. The moment you do, many would be tempted to test you. You will have time only to go through the tests and nothing else.

There after, you will never look back.

There are not many stories that highlight the ill-effects of living by lies. The following story will do that. The story originates from Persia. To my surprise, similar stories of Romanian origin are no different in content. This convinces that good judges and rich people who lie are common in every age and place.

**Theme: Never Say a lie.**

## STORY 1

**The poor man and the rich merchant.**

It was a busy noon in the largest market place in the capital. People had come from far away places for both buying and selling. The merchandise was brought on camel backs as well as donkey backs.

A poor man, called Ahmed, earned his living as a porter for merchants in the market. Ahmed was a simple person who worked hard and was a believer in God.

While wading through the crowd, he stumbled on an object on a narrow passage in the market. He bent down to pick the obstacle

and leave it on the side of the walk. He found it was a leather money bag. Only very rich merchants own such a big purse. He opened it and found a large number of Gold coins in it.

While he was wondering who might have lost it, an announcer was making the following announcement:

A merchant, Sheik..... has lost his purse in market. Any one who found it and returned it would be rewarded ten Gold coins. For poor people like Ahmed, ten Gold coins was huge money.

Ahmed approached the announcer and told him that he had found the purse. He requested the announcer to lead him to the merchant who lost the purse.

On seeing Ahmed carrying his lost purse, the sheik's face lit up. He took the purse and counted the coins. Ahmed was waiting for the reward that was announced. Sheik turned his face and pretended to be busy with his work. Ahmed after waiting for some time reminded the sheik that he was waiting for the reward.

Now the sheik kept a cold face. He bluntly told Ahmed that he would not give any reward. He said, "Before the Chief of the

soldiers comes to market, vanish from here. Otherwise I will complain to him that you have stolen 100 gold coins from my purse”.

“You will be jailed for ever”, threatened the Sheik. Poor Ahmed took the case to the Sultan.

The subjects of the country revered their ruler, known as Sultan for being both just and extremely intelligent.

Sheik and Ahmed were summoned to present their case. Ahmed recounted whatever happened in the market place. He pleaded that the Sheik had not only not kept his promise but also threatened him to get him arrested and jailed.

It was the turn of the Sheik. Sheik agreed that the purse was lost in the market and that Ahmed located it and brought it to him. But, Sheik said, “When I counted the coins in it, instead of 200 Gold Coins, there were only 100 in it”. “He should have taken those 100 gold coins”. I did him a favor by not handing him over to Chief of Soldiers, because he was poor.

It did not take even a minute for the Sultan to understand the problem. He delivered his judgment, as follows. The judgment, you will find, is logical and indisputable.

My subjects do not lie. I accept the versions given by Ahmed as well as Sheik.

If Ahmed was a dishonest person, he would have kept all the coins with himself. He did not do it.

The Sheik found only 100 gold coins instead of 200. This establishes the fact that the purse found by Ahmed is not the one that Sheik lost. So, he ordered Sheik to hand over the purse with 100 Gold coins to Ahmed and instructed his Chief of Security to investigate the missing purse of Sheik.

Ahmed received a reward more than he was promised. The greedy Sheik lost all that came back to him. That was the punishment he received for his lies.

## **2. Theme: Love and Friendship are illusions.**

(1) Illusion can be defined as a state of mind when an apparently non-existent object or phenomenon appears to exist or an existent Phenomenon appears non-existent.

(2) Love and friendship take birth and die in one's mind.

(3) It is part of the trick-pack played by nature / God / a Superior force which easterners understand as Maya, to keep all forms of life in a cycle of Birth- Growth - Reproduction -Death.

(4) While love disappears at some stage in youth, friendship accompanies man till his end.

(5) A friend is defined as some one who helps you in a difficult situation , without seeking a reward or return.

(6) It is the weak among us who look at friendship as a Divine intervention to bail themselves out when in trouble. This is the important reason for people to glorify friendship.

(7) Take any definition of a good friendship, and ask yourself to whom you would be such a good friend. You will not find an answer.



Ask as many as you know. None will have.

The problem is that every one is looking for such an ideal friend, who would be a man Friday for him.

(8) Very rarely people get along well for a long time. The team of two . There could be more reasons for the relationship to last than going strictly by the definition of friendship.

(9) More often, friendship between two expands to a team. Typically the members will have divergent socio-economic backgrounds. Every one looks for some specific aspect of life from others. Examples are:

Money, a shoulder to cry, muscle power, official position, to run errands, sing their praise and so on. When these are met even national , the ties last long.

(10) Most friendships break up some day leaving a bitter feeling among the members of the team.

When I explained this to my co-travelers in the van, for the first time, many protested violently. A couple of days latter they congratulated me silently. This is a very good story to illustrate the typical scenario.

## **Theme: Friendship & love are illusions**

Story 2:

### **Three friends**

When there are more than two identifying themselves as friends, it is referred to as friend's circle. We may have different friends' circles at different stages of life and also in different spheres of life .



If only you give due thought, you will discover that the members of each circle will vary in terms of their individual strengths and seek others to compliment their weakness.

We will proceed to the story.

There lived a fox in the forest, which

befriended a donkey in a village adjoining the forest.

A lion in the forest was also a good friend of the fox. Let us analyze how there can be friendship between the three different species.

Lion is agile, fast and powerful. It hunts its food. The lion needs no other animal for its own survival. But yet, it leaves a little for the lesser animal to feast on. Life of lion is not threatened by a fox, this is an important aspect.

Animals like fox have speed but no power to hunt their food. Fox depends on lion for its survival. In return animals like fox sing the praise of the lion and the lion is happy with it. You may call it ego satisfaction.

Fox has its ego hurt because it has to praise the lion for its survival. So it turns to the donkey in the village to get its hurt ego healed.

Donkey needs no one for its survival. It is slow, dull and hard working. But the donkey has its unique situation in that it does all work with no compensation. So it found a shoulder to cry on when the fox offered its friendship. In return the donkey praised the fox for its goodness. Fox sees no threat from

the donkey, and only the need to listen to the donkey's tale of woe, whenever they met. Otherwise the fox has no real benefit in associating itself with the donkey. It is also true that Lion has no purpose served by its association with Fox.

Friendship between the three continued for long. A situation arose when the friends needed each other for survival.

The lion was injured during a hunting expedition. A few bones broke and a few other bones were dislocated. The lion could not hunt any more. Now both the lion and the fox starved without food.

The hungry lion asked the fox, if it could somehow organize some food. Fox was equally hungry. Suddenly, the fox remembered the donkey in the village. It explained to the lion, "The donkey is a useless animal. Its friendship got us nowhere. Now it is time when donkey's friendship will come of use."

The lion was surprised. It asked, "How come a lazy donkey can help us?" The Fox said, "I will bring it here. You knock it down in one blow. We both will eat it."

Lion agreed to that idea but demanded to know how to bring the donkey to the forest.

Fox replied, "It is quite simple. Any animal which lives in the cities and villages has inherited the weaknesses from humans".

"Humans attach great importance to friendship, which can be exploited", reasoned the fox.

"Most importantly they will fall victims to flattery". "These two are enough to bring them to forest."

The lion asked the fox, if it meant that animals living along side humans have no brain at all.

"You said it", replied the fox and set itself on a journey to the village to meet the donkey.

In the village, when every one had slept off, the donkey was trying to find its food in the streets. The Fox met the donkey and greeted it.

As usual, the donkey started listing the listless woes of donkeys as species. The fox, this time, was not a mute listener.

The fox assured the donkey that there was always a way to come out of misery. The fox continued, "The humans always exploit the animals for their selfish ends. So, it is better to live only among animals. You have such soft grass abundant in the forest. You can

enjoy it for free. There are no people in the forest to enslave animals.”

The donkey was not that dumb, as the fox thought it to be. “I know that in forests there are several wild animals that would devour us”, observed the donkey. The fox said, “It is merely the rumor created by wicked men to ensure animals do not disappear into the forest. Am I not meeting you often? Am I not living in the forest? Which wild animal devoured me?”

The donkey was not fully convinced, as such.

The fox, realizing that its plan A did not work with the donkey, pulled out its plan B: “There is an acute shortage of male donkeys in the forest”. The fox continued. “A handsome donkey like you will be entitled for at least three beautiful and healthy female donkeys in the forest. As a package deal, you get free food and no hard labor. You are one of the good souls. You deserve this and much more. Make a visit once and you will know all by yourself. If you don’t like”, the fox assured that, “I will drop you back to this village.”

The fox set out on a long journey lasting several hours. It was hungry, weak and tired. The fox explained to the donkey about the

beautiful life in the forest all the way.

Finally, the donkey arrived into the dark den. It could not see anything inside. It would take some time before it could see around.

The hungry lion took a giant leap on the donkey only to miss it by a few inches. The donkey realized that everything was not all right. It ran towards the entry to the den and started walking slowly.

The lion was apologetic.

The fox assured the lion thus: "After all, the donkey has no other place to go. It has no brain like humans. It will come along with me even if I cheat hundred times. Okay, let us make a second attempt."

The lion said, "You know, I have become weak without food. That is how, I missed the target. But now, I need a little while before I make another attempt on it. I know, you are clever and you would bring the brainless beast again for a feast".

"In the intervening time, I will go to the nearby lake, drink some water and make myself fresh and strong before I come back. Wait for me till then". Saying so, the lion vanished into the dense trees near its den towards the lake.

The fox followed the footprints of the donkey and located it. The donkey was in a very bad mental and physical state due to the long journey to the jungle followed by a shocking incident inside the den.

The fox with a surprised look, demanded to know from the donkey, as to what made it run from the den. The donkey said, "A huge object fell close to a place where I stood. I came running to save myself."

The fox replied, "It is merely your fear and there was no danger to your life. One of the three donkeys was waiting to meet you. On seeing you, she fell in love instantly. In her anxiety she came rushing towards you. When I looked around for you, you were gone".

The donkey looked at the fox in disbelief. Now the fox decided to play with the sentiments. The fox knew that sentiments work with humans. So it believed that sentiments should affect donkeys too.

"I have bad news for you", said the fox. Soon after you left, all the three female donkeys felt that you do not like them at all. So they have decided to commit suicide."

The fox said, "In the forest, we animals fear that the ghosts of such beings will haunt you and trouble you throughout your life."



“Better, you come back and get married to the three donkeys and lead a royal life”, the fox concluded.

The weak and worn out donkey found no other better solution than to follow the fox.

In the den, the fox waited for a while. He saw the donkey trembling in fear. Donkeys might have strong legs and could give a mighty kick when in normal health. But it won't need a lion to kill and eat this beast.

Slowly, the fox bit the ears of the donkey. This was enough for the donkey to fall unconscious. The fox ate up the donkey's brain before the lion reached.

The lion which arrived in the den a little later was shocked and angry to find the donkey's brain was not there.

The clever fox reminded the lion the fact that not only humans but every other species living in the vicinity of humans also did not have brains!

The lion found the fox was always right.

The lion gave the lion's share to its trusted friend and adviser, the fox and enjoyed a nice feast.

Epilogue:

Now, it is time you evaluate your friends in the circle of your friends. The most cunning and powerful will always feast on the weaker in their circle. Figure out the lions, foxes and donkeys in your friends' circle.

## **Theme: Do not befriend those stronger than you!**

Know these:

(1) A few among us proudly declare our friendship with rich persons. Some feel proud to be associated with a thug. Some others seek to have friendship with a person holding an official position, a sportsman or some one popular.

(2) If you have a hero in your life, that means you have not realized your strength and reduced yourself in some way.

(3) Every powerful person whom you seek to make friendship with, could have grown in his/ her stature by stepping over people who seek to make friendship with them.

(4) Remember that there were no heroes existing in the past. There are no heroes now and there will be none in future. If they exist, the reason is that you feel yourself a weak person.

(5) Keep away from people who are known for their power, possessions and positions.

(6) If many people think that a particular person is evil, there should be a reason behind it. Never become friendly with such persons.

(7) Keep away or run away from people who praise you. There are many who make good their life only through flattery.

(8) World History has proven time and again that any country with a friendly relationship with a stronger country could neither preserve its sovereign existence nor ever prosper.

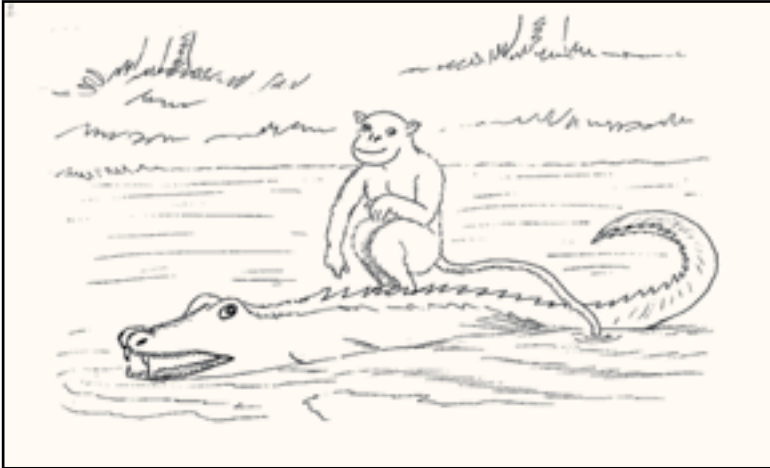
(9) Small plants do not grow under a big tree.

When you were young, a simple story was told to you. Some of you might remember the story. But none of you would have understood the message in the story.

Theme: Do not befriend those who are stronger than you!

## Story: 03

### Monkey's friend, the Crocodile.



"People who praise you today, will one day bring harm to your life, possessions, and position", said the mother monkey called Shylaa.

Shylaa continued. "Not everyone who talks sweet, agrees with your views and pleases you is a friend. Moreover, true friendship and love are illusions. They are creation of our minds. They do not exist in real life. In reality, this is not possible. Those who have realized this will suffer a bit".

"It is quite possible that compared to an enemy, a friend is likely to do you more

harm”.

“An intelligent person prayed to God - “God, I can presume what harm enemies can do to me. Therefore, I will not be harmed by them and can protect myself. But I do not know what or when my friends will bring harm to me. Therefore, God please protect me from friends.”

The husband of monkey Shylaa who was listening to the speech of his wife realized that this knowledge delivered by his wife was meant for him.

Even then, he did not bother. Still worse, he was mocking at his wife’s advice.

You may wonder, what made the mother monkey lecture this to her husband. There was an important development in their lives.

The place where the monkeys lived can be called monkey’s bastion. But, occasionally crocodiles surfaced there.

They ate and enjoyed the blackberry fruits that lay on the river banks. The husband monkey on the tree noticed this. He said to the crocodile, “Oh King of the River, do you want more of these fruits?” he asked. The crocodile was delighted to hear this and said,

"Yes, I would love some more". From that day onwards, every day the crocodile came to the bank of the river and the monkey plucked the fruits and threw them down for him.

This marked the beginning of friendship between the monkey and the crocodile. The monkey took great pride in this friendship. The monkey's wife felt that this new friendship would be harmful for her husband, but he did not bother to listen to her.

Many times the monkey's wife tried to counsel her husband against this friendship through good advice, but in vain. She gave him one final warning - "I hope that all my repeated good advice has not gone in vain. A good wife is like a good minister, to save or warn her husband before an evil befalls him is her duty. I have done that. I assure you that this new friendship with the crocodile will not bring any good to you. Only time will tell what I said is right. May God help you."

The crocodile and the monkey continued their friendship for a long time. The monkey continued to give the crocodile the fruits and in turn, the crocodile would heap praises on the monkey. Other animals envied this. The crocodile used to take the fruits for his wife

and children too.

There will be a turning point in the life of man and his friends. Similarly, it happened to the friendship between the crocodile and the monkey.

After eating the same fruits for some time, the crocodile's wife started getting bored. She wanted variety. Her evil mind started thinking, "If the fruits given by the monkey were this tasty, how tasty would the monkey be since it had grown up eating these fruits?" She informed her husband about her desire and suggested to her husband that he invite the monkey and the entire family to their place on a full moon night for dinner and then set up a plan to eat them. Though her husband was shocked at this unusual request, he felt that this was a good idea and even praised her, as he wanted to satisfy his wife's wish.

"But how will the monkey trust our invitation and come boldly to our house?" asked the crocodile.

What is the difference between a human and a monkey? It's the tail!

Man gives more importance to his friends. Friendship cards are more in circulation than parents' day cards.



Friends have become more important than parents, brothers and sisters.

“If you call him “my friend” three times, the monkey would surely fall in your net”, said the crocodile’s wife. Immediately, they set about putting their plan into action.

The crocodile informed the monkey about the party and the invitation from his family to the monkey and his family. He explained that it was a thanksgiving party. As the monkey’s wife refused to come, the monkey came down immediately from the tree to accept his friend’s invitation. The monkey disregarded his wife’s warning and jumped on the back of the crocodile and started crossing the river.

The crocodile and monkey had crossed halfway. The crocodile was thrilled that his clever wife’s plan had worked. Now that they were in water, he felt that the monkey was trapped with no chance of escape. The crocodile slowly told the monkey about his wife’s desire to eat him and his family.

After the initial shock on listening to this, the monkey recovered. He thought how foolish he had been by neglecting his wife’s warning! He thought of a way to escape.

He said to the crocodile, “Hey, crocodile!

You are about to commit a grave mistake. You are aware that the heart is the sweetest part of the monkey, but don't you know that the monkeys usually remove them and hang them on the tree in the morning till they retire for the day?

If you had informed me earlier, I would have placed my heart back and come. Wouldn't I do this for my friend?"

The crocodile was reflecting on this.

The monkey was persistent. He said, "O' king of the river, don't you know that the river queen will be angry if you brought me without my heart?"

The crocodile had no other choice but to trust his friend. He brought the monkey back to its tree. The monkey, relieved of the trauma, promised to bring his heart back with him. That was the last time he ever spoke to the crocodile.

The poor crocodile waited for a long time and left home tired and frightened, wondering how his wife would react for missing the meal.

Theme: Feeling Inferior is foolishness.

Know this:

(1) Day in and day out, we are being exploited by several people around us by making us feel inferior.

(2) How much fairness cream would turn a crow into a dove?

(3) Without exception, some times you and even I exploit, without being conscious of it.

(4) If someone deceives you, you are more to be blamed than the one who deceives you.

(5) It is important to know that no one is superior to others all the time and in every situation.

(6) Equally so, every one is inferior to some one, somewhere, on some occasions.

(7) We can safely conclude no one is superior or inferior to any one else, all the time. So no one needs to feel inferior.

A simple story was told for ages to drive home this simple phenomenon. But most of us did not absorb the message. The consequences are many: hurt feelings, lost money and so on.

**Theme: Feeling Inferior is foolish.**

Short story: 04.

**FOOLISH CROW AND THE GREEDY FOX**

This story has two versions - one an old story and the second its new form.

First, let me give a small description about our old times because children of today may not appreciate the story without it.

In the villages, those days, there was no electricity in use. Roads were not concrete or tar-topped. There were no cars or buses. A simple situation to imagine is that, in Chennai, in Tamil Nadu, people used to come in tourist buses to see the 14 storied LIC building on

Mount road and admired it. The building, in those days was a great engineering accomplishment being- the tallest structure in some 1000 Kilometer area around it!

Some 40 years ago, you may spot one or two cars in the district headquarters.

Now let us turn to the older version of the story.

STORY OF THE CROW (Old version).

This is in that period of civilization when humans used to walk many miles along with their cattle.

One thing that has not changed over the years is the fast-food joints!

Under a large tree, an old lady ran a "fast food" joint selling 'vadai '. She did the job of cooking, distributing, cleaning, collection and security with great enthusiasm.

Customers would be waiting for their turn to have food while the aroma of food would waft over a large area. The crow and the fox would wait for the right opportunity at a distance to grab their pick.

The crow waited for the old lady to doze off and took this opportunity to grab a 'vadai'. The lady woke and threw the long stick she kept near her. But the crow flew to the trees,

unhurt.

It settled down on the branch. When it was about to enjoy the meal; it realized that a fox was looking at it, sitting right below, on the ground.

The fox addressed the crow saying, "Brother Crow, do you remember me? I am your diehard fan". Now the crow was in a dilemma whether to eat or speak to the fox. "No", said the crow. "Why don't you open your mouth and say so," said the fox. Somehow, the fox wanted the crow to open its mouth so that the 'vadai' would fall down and he could pick it.

The cunning fox was just waiting to eat the 'vadai'. The crow looked around and hooked the vadai on one of the branches of the tree. Then looking down, he asked the fox what it wanted. He asked, "Shall I sing a song which you can listen to and go?" Realizing that his plan did not work, the fox took to his heels and disappeared.

A baby crow watched this scenario and was confused. The father crow explained it as below.

"I have heard stories of our ancestors. They, like the present day humans, due to their low esteem, often became a prey, resulting in

loss of possessions and their rights. Except for humans, no other creatures on earth have the feeling of "high and low" among themselves.

Not everyone considers one high or low in status every time and on all occasions. Occasionally, at some point of time, a person might become rich. Everybody, during his lifetime may become low in status at times. Therefore, it would be wrong to demean or praise the person for his status. We need not become a slave if we understand this basic concept.

There are people who will create low self-esteem in us and enslave us. There are also those who create low-self esteem among themselves without outsiders' help. They are enslaved and exploited by others. Not only humans, even crows have suffered from the low self-esteem syndrome!

The crows of the present generation have become intelligent! The fox did not realize that it was difficult to outsmart those who are intelligent.

We have to learn many useful lessons from our ancestors.

If we understand these lessons when young, we can overcome defeat right from the early

stages of life.

Long ago, the crows had low self esteem and inferiority complex in that they were not as beautiful as a peacock, white as a dove and did not have a sweet voice like a Koel.

But they did not realize that they had many virtues which other birds didn't have. The crows do not have enemies. They are considered as ancestors of humans and are given a feast during a death ceremony and anniversaries of their loved ones!

On festivals and often on normal days humans offer food only to crows and to no one else.

"When we have so many virtues to be happy about, why should we (crows) suffer from inferiority complex"?

"The "modern" crows have realized the truth. They do not suffer from inferiority complex any more. Therefore crows do not fall prey to others.

We decided not to complain that others are bad and they cheat us. We admitted openly that we were stupid and so vulnerable. We have changed our attitudes. But the humans have not", concluded the father crow.



**Theme: Strategies are important.**

(1) When things go wrong in our society, very few have the knowledge to understand them.

(2) It is our duty to blow the whistle in time.

(3) The perpetrators of crime against society invariably have money power with which they can escape punishment.

(4) There are incidences when RTI activists and other whistle blowers are done to death as we read in news papers and magazines.

(5) One should plan his move such that while he makes the right move, it should not have a backlash on him.

(6) Do not clash head on with evil forces.

The following story is very useful to drive home this point.

**Themes: Strategies are important.**

Short story 05.

**An Intelligent Crow.**

The author has chosen Crows as heroes in this story, after they themselves realized this.

Those were the days when kings ruled the country.

At the edge of the capital of the city, there stood a large banyan tree. The crows and their young ones lived peacefully for several generations. Under the tree, there were many nests and sediments. A family of snakes also lived there peacefully. Even in those days humans were destroying the forest and its habitat. The snakes and the young ones realized that it was going to be difficult living there now.

Like humans who migrated from villages and towns to cities, the snakes and the young ones too moved to the city to the same Banyan tree where the crows had made their home. They occupied an anthill below the tree.

The crows woke up in the morning and flew to collect their food. Likewise did the snake and its family. The young ones of the crow and the snakes who were too young to hunt stayed behind. A bored young snake climbed the tree from its dwelling place. "Will I be able to see my nest from above", thought the young one. When it climbed up the tree, it was happy to see the nests of the birds, the young ones, and the eggs.

A villager visiting a metro for the first time, would be excited to see the fast food shops,

pizza joints and multiplexes, wouldn't he be?

Similar emotions crossed the mind of this young snake.



The young birds in their nest were frightened when they saw the young snake and were alarmed when they saw the snake eat the egg from one of the nests.

In the evening, there was commotion in the homes of both the birds and the snakes. The frightened young birds informed their parents

about the snake and how he had stolen the egg. This infuriated them and they planned to take revenge on the snakes.

An elderly and knowledgeable crow spoke to the birds, listened to their opinion and in the end, decided about their plan.

As per the plan, the selected crows would sit on different trees to identify the thief in the morning and then, after obtaining necessary proof, they would take further action in the afternoon. Till such time, the crows were told to be patient to which they agreed.

Below the tree, there was a meeting among the snakes. A young snake made an announcement. It revealed a discovery, which would help the snakes in getting their food without going out to hunt, as food was available on the tree itself! On hearing this, the snakes were immensely overjoyed.

The eldest snake informed that a final decision would be taken after observing the birds leave the nest and that a bigger snake would stay put in the tree and subsequently follow the young snake to the nest.

The next morning, the crows observed the two snakes climbing up the tree. It noticed the snakes climbing up from the same tree where they resided. The crows found out

the exact place where the snakes resided and informed the elderly crow. It evolved a plan and informed the other crows about it. They got ready to implement it.

“It is not possible to drive away or kill so many snakes from the tree nor is it possible for us to move away from the tree. Therefore, we need to get the help of a third person who is more powerful than us and snakes. Humans will be of great help” said the crow.

The crows got an opportunity immediately on the same day. The princess of the kingdom was taking her bath. She had removed her precious jewels and kept them on the banks of the river. As per the crow’s plan, one of the crows picked up one jewel piece and flew to the tree. The crows immediately started making noise, which attracted the attention of the princess’s guards. They saw what was happening. They started chasing the crow with swords drawn. A group of crows followed the crow with the jewel piece, which reached their tree. The smartness of the crow made the guards reach the tree. It dropped the jewel into the snake pit in such a manner, that it attracted the guards’ attention. The guards broke open the pit to retrieve the jewel. In the process they killed the snakes and left for the palace.

In the evening, when the crows and snakes returned to their nests, the snakes noticed their dead young ones and the snake pits destroyed. They left the place at night never to return. The birds were very happy.

## **Theme: Better ways to treat the God.**

(1) We face failures of every kind in our life time. Sometimes we are desperate, unable to find solutions to our problems. We need a method to overcome this.

(2) A significant population of the planet lives by faith. The other way is, living by knowledge.

(3) It takes a long time to acquire knowledge. Not many have an ideal environment to learn.

(4) Life is too short, to learn all that is there to learn.

(5) For the above reason, living by faith is the only way to most people.

(6) Messiahs of God described God as a superior being.

(7) Over a period of time, we started treating god as an equal. Now you read instances where you treat God as a power broker and so on.

(8) If you believe in God, treat God as a superior entity. Look for Spiritual elevation and wellbeing.

(9) Do not involve God in material

prosperity.

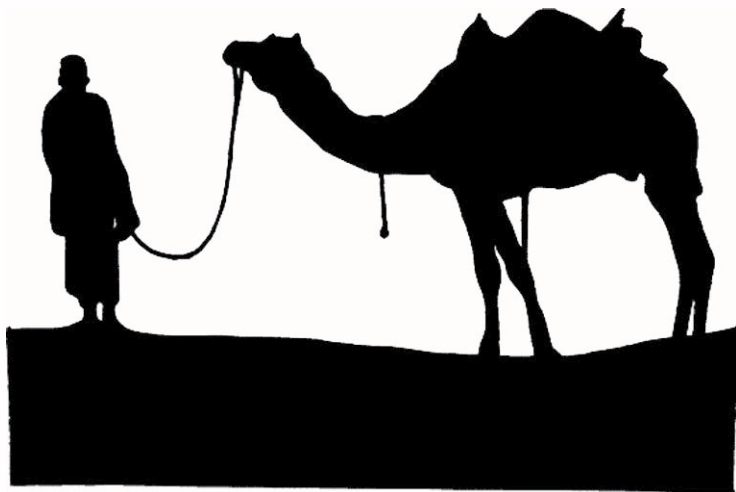
Now read a short story to describe a typical scenario, in the place of worship.

Short story: 06.

### **The merchant and the God**

Khalid Sheik was an international trader of his times.

He travelled from country to country for several months and earned a great fortune.



This god-fearing merchant wasi coming home, with all the wealth he earned, riding his camel.

On the way, he noticed a place of worship and decided to go in and worship the Lord who he felt had given these riches.



He spent some time praying and some more time in thanking Him for all the fortune he had.

On reaching the entrance of the mosque, he noticed that his camel had run away. Now he was angry with God. He exclaimed in anger and sorrow "I came to worship you leaving the camel behind, hoping that you would take care. But now, the camel has run away and I have lost all my riches. You are responsible for this."

He cursed Him using very foul language and epithets he knew.

A Sufi saint passing by instantly knew what happened and exclaimed loudly for the merchant to hear, "God fearing is fine, but you could have tied the camel".

**Theme: Delegation of responsibility.**

(1) In a large and complex environment, it is impossible to handle the entire task by one person alone. So management gurus advocate delegation of responsibility and authority.

(2) Be aware that, a delegated task could miserably fail, if you do not take into account a possibility of failure. Provide for check-points and inspect them periodically. Delegation frame work should signal failures and a plan B should be in place, to recover from the slippage, if any.

**Theme: Delegation of responsibility.**

Short story: 07.

**The merchants' nightmare**

This is an old Arab story. So, a donkey will invariably find its place in the list of characters.

A merchant went on a long business trip with his donkey. There were days, when transport vehicles such as cars, planes and trains did not exist. So donkeys, camels, horses and bulls played an important role in the transport

of people and material. So cattle were reared with lots of love and care.

Just as we take care of our expensive vehicles these days like cleaning and washing, servicing and tying sacred cloth on it, in the olden days, these animals were taken care of.

When night fell, the merchant went to a popular hotel. He met a youngster manning the reception and enquired about the facilities provided. Then he asked him, "Young man, I have a few questions. My donkey is my life and I take great care of it.

Each man has certain needs, which change with seasons. So, will you take proper care of my donkey?"

The youngster replied, "Sir, you have not understood well about our hotel. Our guests, like you, are rich people. For them, their donkeys are more important than humans and are therefore taken good care of by us".

The merchant was still worried about his donkey. So he continued. "Ok, you should know that my donkey is very old and needs a good bed prepared with hay to sleep on at night,"

The youngster patted the donkey and replied

that it will be taken care of. "Not only that," replied the man, "Since the donkey is old, its teeth are not strong and therefore it is important that the grass given is soft and chewable."

"Don't I know your worries," asked the receptionist. "You need not even inform us about these little things. If we don't realize these issues, then we consider ourselves not good" he replied.

The visitor felt greatly relieved hearing this. He ate his food and went to his room to sleep. He did not even realize how long he slept and woke up suddenly. A dream he dreamt startled him. He dreamt that his donkey was without water and food and lay suffering on the cold floor.

He hesitated and then stepped out from his room. He went to the lodging where his donkey was kept. The scene he saw made his blood freeze. There wasn't much difference between what he dreamt and what he saw in front of him.

**Note:**

Every one has his own set priorities. The care we take to handle or safeguard some of our belongings, which are very important to us, need not be so important to another

person.

If you lend your vehicle, a camera or a laptop to a friend, more often, it would require expert attention when you receive it back. If you find that it has not been cared for properly, it is not the friend's ill-intention but it reflects the fact that it is not so much dear to him, as it is to you.

When I heard the story from my friend, the following thought crossed my mind. "These marketing guys have not changed their ways, over several centuries now. May be they will never change."

**Theme: Don't chase unachievable targets.**

(1) There are people who believe that, only when you target the moon, you will touch the sky. It is okay as long as successes, however small, encourage you and failed goals do not trouble you.

(2) A uniform and step by step growth may be sustainable and easier to accomplish than to achieve in one giant leap.

(3) Our goals shall not be guided by desires alone. They should be supported by our strength. We should know both our strengths and weaknesses. While you leverage on your strength, work on your weakness to match the efforts needed to reach your targets.

**Theme: Don't chase unachievable targets.**

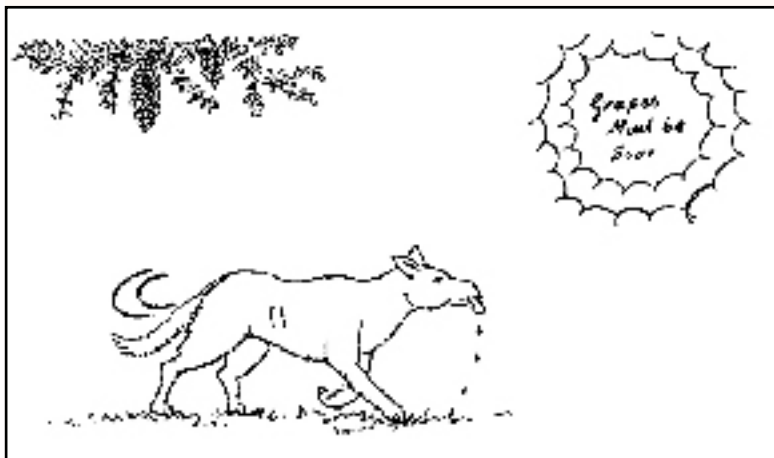
Short Story 8:

### **The Sour Grapes**

There is a loud and clear message in this story. When I was young, I was not sure why this story was told. But, in our present times, this story is extremely helpful as a medicine to treat several ills in the society.

A fox was very hungry. It was walking along a grape farm. 'To quench my hunger, no

harm in entering the farm,' the fox thought. On seeing a big bunch of luscious grapes hanging, its hunger increased.



It jumped trying to pluck the grapes. But, since it could not reach them, it abandoned its efforts and went along its way. Just to satisfy its mind, which was reeling with hunger and thirst, it said that the grapes must be sour.

Without tasting the grapes, why did the fox decide the grapes would not be tasty?

1. What it could not achieve, it had spoken insultingly or 2. it is useless to follow something that cannot be achieved by many. How to correct it is to be understood.

There are many who compete for a position in a small space which is highly rewarding.

The youngsters spend time in becoming a cricketer, a film actor, a political leader etc. They should understand their strength & weakness in time to change to alternate profession.

Perhaps this story should have been told for such people listed above.



**Theme: Leading an impeccable life.**

(1) Very few among those who hold an official position, a public office or are wealthy are honest.

(2) In most societies, dishonesty is accepted as a natural trait; the law of the land is lenient towards the dishonest;

(3) The honest among the people in a society, sometimes feel uncomfortable towards evil persons in the society.

(4) It requires a strong conviction and understanding of life fully to remain honest. Alternately, fear for god or law, in committing sins may also be a reason for some one to be honest.

(5) Those who lead a spotless life do not gang up with like minded. That makes them vulnerable to attacks by evil doers in that society.

(6) Those special people among us, whom we refer to as men of knowledge, gyanis, sadhus, sages and saints are honest, good and kind. They never become a victim of evil. Because, goodness teamed with knowledge is stronger than anything else.

(7) We understand that here is a "rule of the jungle". This principle is also known as

“the Survival of the fittest”. While we live no differently from animals, we pretend that we are different.

**Theme: Leading an impeccable life.**

Short Story 09

**Snake in the town:**

This story tells you that anyone can lead an impeccable life, yet be safe at the hands of their detractors.

The story is based on a parable of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Now, read the story.

Deep into a forest, under a Banyan tree, a saint was teaching his disciples the benefits of leading an impeccable life.



The saint further said, practice at least one good principle in life For instance, practice non-violence. .

Essentially this means,“ do not bring grief to others”.

To reach the abode of God, you only need to practice this. There is no need for prayers. Thapas, (the penance) or any yoga asanas are redundant, the saint taught. We are unsure to what extent his disciples appreciated his advice or practiced what he taught. A deadly poisonous cobra living in a pit close by decided to follow the teachings of the saint.

It decided to give up the evil habits of a snake and live the life of the saint and took the saint’s blessings. The saint was happy that the snake was looking for salvation.

The cobra thought that since the saint came from a city, living a life of good thoughts and deeds should be possible only in cities. It therefore, decided to migrate to the city.

The Cobra found, that unlike forests, the city’s environment was polluted. It took a few more days to find that even the minds of people were equally polluted.

During the initial few days, when the cobra went hunting for its prey, the people around

were frightened and ran away. It took no time to realize that the snake was harmless. There after, the children watched the cobra hunting its food without fear.

Some of the school children stopped by and threw stones at the cobra for fun. The snake did not react since it was following the saint's teachings in words and spirit.

The children became bolder day by day and one day caught the cobra by its tail and swung it around. This broke its bones and the cobra fell unconscious. The children went away thinking the cobra had died. The cobra somehow managed to get back to its pit. It took many days for its health to recover. Finally some day, it slowly wriggled its way and reached the forest.

Cobra narrated the hardships it had faced in the city to the saint. He appreciated the cobra for its determination against all odds.

But, the saint continued, "You need not hurt some one". "Just to keep away those who trouble you, you could have merely hissed at them".

"That would have frightened them and they would not have come near you", said the saint.

**Note:**

\* Every spiritual master known to mankind is a kind hearted person. Such people lead an impeccable life. They were never troubled by any one, anywhere. This is possible through appropriate posture in public.

\* Both, Agori Baba in Himalayas (Reference : Swamy Rama, Living with Himalayan Masters), Seshadri swamigal of Tiruvannamalai, behaved as though they were insane people. Often, their behavior used to be unpredictable. That kept away people whom they did not want around.

\* The unwritten law for people in the Spiritual path is that they should never come under spot light. Their yogic powers should not be displayed for public attention. They should maintain a low profile.

\* While remaining a soft person internally, one can give an appearance of being tough externally.

**Theme: Lies with good intentions.**

(1) Ideally, one should desist from telling lies in a situation.

(2) Some times a lie told with good intentions is seen as better than the truth said with ill intentions.

How is that? Let us read a nice story that originated from the Arab world.

**Theme: Lies with good intentions.**

Short story 10.

**The Lie told with good intentions**

This story is about a lie told with good intentions.

The scene is in the king's court.

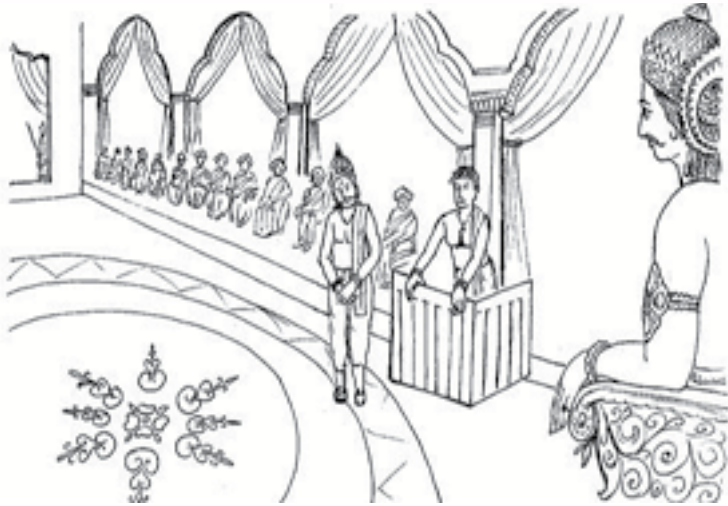
A spy caught by the guards was brought before the king. Typically, spies were handed down death penalty.

Only two ministers in the king's court knew the language spoken by the spy. But they were competitors to win the heart of the king.

During questioning, for a long time the spy was silent. Finally, as per the law of the land,

the king sentenced him to death.

When the spy realized that death sentence was pronounced by the king, he became upset and scolded the king in his mother tongue.



The two ministers looked at each other. The first minister addressed the king and stated that the prisoner had quoted from the Koran.

The King looked at his ministers inquiringly. The minister replied that the spy quoted the following verse from the Holy Koran... that 'the person who controls his anger and forgives will find a place in heaven because God loves good people'. Immediately, the king looked at the prisoner and exclaimed,

"Friend, at the right moment you have reminded me about God's desire. You have saved me from committing a wrong". The King ordered the prisoner to be freed.

The second minister became nervous. He felt this would be the right time to take revenge on the other minister by informing the king the truth that, the spy had indeed abused the king. He felt this would anger the king against the first minister. He addressed the king, "Lord, what the minister translated for you is nothing but lies. The spy had, in fact, abused you. He used foul language against you."

The king thought for a while and replied to the second minister that the first minister's lie was better than his truth.

The king said, "Your truth reflects your ill-intention of taking revenge on the other minister with whom you do not get along well". Whereas, the king continued, "the other minister lied but the lie had a good intention that I should not drift from the path shown by the Holy Koran". (This is the quote from the holy Koran which the minister pointed out to him to show mercy to the enemy).



**Theme: Live life. Do not prepare for a living...**

- (1) Life is like a journey, enjoy the journey.
- (2) We gather material, money and other things as though we are preparing for a journey.
- (3) We fail to realize that we are already in the journey and the journey would come to an end any time soon. All that was gathered for the journey will be left behind when the journey comes to an end.
- (4) So, stop preparing for the journey and start enjoying it.

**Theme: Live your life,**  
rather than preparing for a living.

**Short Story 11**



How much do you need for a decent living?  
Living in Poverty is like hell on earth. We need resources to live our lives. The issue is, "how

much is good enough". There are numerous stories that convey the same message, "Stop preparation for a journey called life. Instead enjoy the journey."

It is possible you have read the Russian Short story by Leo Tolstoy with the same theme. There are several other stories that were told in various parts of the world, carrying the same message.

Now lets move on to two very short stories here.

Story A: A farmer felt that the land that he owned was not enough for a happy living.

He undertook a penance for several years.

One day, the Gods were moved by the devotion of their disciple and descended on to the earth. God offered the farmer, three boons. The farmer said he would be happy with just one.

He wanted to lead a happy life and so wanted more land than what he possessed.

God said, "Your wish is granted".

The offer was that the farmer would start running or walking at sunrise and come back to the starting point before sunset. The area covered in the intervening time will be his.

Should he fail to reach the starting point, he would not get any land.

Next day, at sunrise, the devotee started running. This greedy person ran without having food or rest. He ran over hills, stones and thorns. His feet were injured. Blood was oozing out of his injured feet. That did not deter him. He ran under scorching sun, hungry and thirsty.

The sunset was fast approaching. His body was tired but not his spirit.

There were only few tens of steps to reach the finishing point (the starting place), when the sun had set. Driven by despair and fatigue he dropped down dead.

His friends and relatives came running to see him crashing to the ground and were shocked. He was dead. They conducted his last rites and dug a six feet by four feet pit and buried him.

In the sky, an angel stopped over to see what was happening down below. God explained to the angel, the following:

“Man requires only this much piece of land. But, he becomes greedy, ruins his life and returns to me in a hurry!”

Man in his greed, spends his entire life

accumulating wealth. In this process he deprives the people around of their dues, becomes responsible for poverty and distress of several people in his society.

He should never introspect on how much wealth he needs, but on whether he would live so long, to enjoy the wealth he amasses.

**Theme: Don't cheat and don't be cheated.**

- (1) In society, a few people cheat many other people, all the time.
- (2) People cheat others to deprive others of their possession or position.
- (3) Ignorance or lack of knowledge makes one vulnerable to be cheated.
- (4) Ignorance in conjunction with greed makes one more vulnerable to be cheated.
- (5) Poorest among the society are the people who were cheated by many people, all the time.
- (6) Cheating can be defined as a method of systematic exploitation of one's ignorance, need or greed.

Superstitions are untested or unverifiable knowledge, reaching us through our culture. No one knows their origin or the situation in which they emerged. Some of the superstitions may be based on wrong application of statistics. Even well lettered people do not want to take chances when confronted with a situation involving superstition.

Inauspicious time: Hindu calendars have slots of good or auspicious time and inauspicious times every day. People do not step out of

their home for activities considered important at inauspicious times. No important actions are initiated at the inauspicious hours of the day.

There is no proof that every activity initiated at auspicious time was successful from start to end or viceversa.

Let us halt the discussion here to read a story.

### **Theme:**

**Don't cheat and don't be cheated.**

Short Story 12

### **Inauspicious tree (Superstitions)**

A teacher was lecturing his students about rational thinking and he told a story to drive home his point.

The hero in this story was a quite, pious person called Ganesh . He had a neighbour called Amar. Amar was talkative, outgoing and street smart.

There was a tree in front of Ganesh's house. It was too old. The leaves withered away and branches were dying gradually.

Amar approached Ganesh with a suggestion to uproot the dying plant. He reasoned that



the shadow of a dying plant would bring ill luck on which it falls. He listed several instances in his family's and friends' circle upon whom such disasters had fallen.

It requires the knowledge of a scientist or the conviction of saints to pay no heed to such lunatic suggestions. We, the ordinary mortals, successfully establish a strong connection between the small problems in our lives and superstitions. Thereafter, we live through nightmares.

So did Ganesh. He was happy to hear

the reasons for his problems through his neighbor who traced his problem to a dying tree. Ganesh was confident that his problems would cease to exist after the tree was razed to the ground.

His neighbor came along with a woodcutter and cut the tree into small pieces. Ganesh paid the fees and Amar took the cut wood to his home.

Amar's wife was too proud of her husband who with a few words had managed to get fire wood that would meet their need for several months to come.

It took Ganesh a few months and a few friends to understand that his neighbor had exploited his foolishness.

Years rolled by. Ganesh planted a sapling in the place where they had uprooted the tree.

A NEW version of this story.

40 years had passed, quickly. In both the houses, their sons lived happily with their children and grand children. Ganesh and Amar passed into the past.

The tree planted by Ganesh grew. That mango tree gave fruits for two generations of Ganesh's and Amar's family.



The Tree became old and was wilting and stood with all its leaves fallen.

Amar must have explained his son the way he fooled his neighbor and met his fire wood needs from his neighbor's tree.

History repeats. Like his father Amar, the son now asked the neighbor, Ganesh's son to cut down the tree. He explained in detail the problems his friends and relatives had undergone due to the shadow of a dying tree falling on humans.

On hearing this from his neighbor, a thought flashed through his mind. (He recalled some instances from his life when he lost out to others due to ignorance). It must have been his father who cheated my father. The smart son became alert instantly.

He replied to his neighbor that he was very well aware of the problem but he did not have sufficient money for doing that.

The neighbor was disappointed. He quickly calculated the cost of cutting and cost of the firewood the tree could fetch. The cost of cutting is an insignificant portion of the firewood he would get.

He informed his neighbor that he would finance the cutting of the tree. He reasoned that

they were good neighbors for generations. The price he would pay for the wellbeing of his neighbor, he observed is too little.

Next day, the woodcutters came and cut down the tree, the neighbor waited for the tree to be cut into small pieces.

When the wood cutters completed the job, the son Ganesh, the owner of the tree profusely thanked his neighbor for both arranging to cut the tree and bearing the expense. He observed that it is rare to find such neighbors.

The evil neighbor attempted to shift the cut wood to his house. The owner stopped him. He reasoned that, even the firewood from an inauspicious tree could cause insurmountable problems to one who comes under its influence. He, as a good neighbor would not allow that to happen.

The evil neighbor had no other rhyme or reason to take away the cut wood. Ganesh's family enjoyed the fire wood for the next several months.

Good parents share the success and failures they experienced with the generation next, This guards the younger generation against exploitations that their parents went through.

**Theme: Don't cheat others  
and don't get cheated.**

Short Story 13

**High returns (Greed & ignorance).**

Greed alone is sufficient for a person to embrace poverty. If greed accompanies ignorance, poverty never leaves a person.

Mrs. Anthony was jubilant today. She shared her joy with her children who returned from school by presenting them sweets. She was awaiting Mr. Anthony to return so that she could share her achievement with him.

Why was Mrs. Anthony very happy today?

She used to save some money from the budgeted amount for monthly expenses for quite some time now.

Her neighbor, Mrs. Suma Reddy took her to a shop started within their colony. It consisted mostly of State government employees, teachers who owned a small house in that middle class colony. Invariably, every one in that colony, the house wives included, was a graduate. They owned Color TVs, read newspapers, discussed politics and happenings all over the country.

The shop was started in one of the houses in

the colony. The owners, strangers to the city, wore expensive gold ornaments, displaying their affluence.

"They have an interesting scheme", Mrs. Suma Reddy observed, "You pay a third of the show room price of any electronic or electrical gadget used at home. Wait for three months. Take home the piece without paying a Rupee more".

Mrs. Anthoni was curious, how was it possible? Mrs. Suma Reddy replied, "Well, I also got the same thought and asked the owners". Their answer was convincing.

They don't incur any establishment expense of such large show rooms in busy business centers. The show rooms have flashy interiors, heavy lighting and uniformed graduate shop assistants. All cost a lot of money. Who pays all the expense? Mrs. Anthoni said, "It is we".

Together, they invested some Rs 3000 for a refrigerator each. Both had an old, noisy refrigerator in their homes.

They did not inform their respective husbands till they got the piece delivered.

Today Mrs. Suma Reddy and Mrs. Anthoni got their brand new refrigerator.

It is now, six months since the new shop was opened. Both Mrs. Suma Reddy and Mrs. Anthoni bought quite a few things, this time with their husband's knowledge.

Now several relatives in distant districts were informed. Some had kept their money for their ward's education and some others for their daughter's marriage.

The promoters offered a new deal. In the event that they do not want to buy a gadget, he would return three times the amount by the turn of the fourth month.

It is now nine months since the shop was opened. Now there is a queue to pay the deposits. In month eleven, the shop was found closed.

The initial news was that the promoters have gone home due to some emergency situation at home. That was what the watchman cum helper in the shop was told to inform who so ever enquiries.

Now it is the start of the thirteenth month. Nearly four hundred people stand before the police station and demand action to bring the promoters to task.

News papers and TV channel crews are busy interviewing those who lost their money.

Top brass of police assures immediate action. The sketches of the promoters are made by the artist from the police department.

An estimated Rupees 10 Crore were made good by the twosome in less than a year.

(1) No one ever thought what kind of investment would fetch such a huge profit to give 300% returns to the investors!

(2) This is not the first such incidence. It happened before and it would happen again.

(3) Private finance companies, chit fund companies, employment agencies take huge money from people round the year. Print and visual media flashes this news day in and day out.

Still year after year people get deceived. I don't know if such events take place in any other part of the globe.

If some one offer returns much more than Government banks, stop and think. Do not rush to throw your life's savings into such impossible schemes. Talk to a bank manager, a chartered accountant or finance professional.

Ultimately do not become a victim of cheating by succumbing to silly tricks of the crooks.

**Theme: Clinging.**

(1) We cling to Material, people, faith, belief. But we feel insecure without even any one of them.

(2) Religions advise giving a substantial portion of your property in Charity. (We don't do it).

(3) The people who take to spiritual path succeed in unclinging. Said in the other way, they give up whatever they cling to, consciously and happily.

(4) In the eastern religions, when one undertakes a pilgrimage to a holy place, he should invariably leave something. Unfortunately, it is reduced to a symbolic gesture instead of implementing it both in letter and spirit.

(5) What you should forsake should not be what you do not like, rather it should be what you hold on to.

**Theme: Clinging.****Short Story 14****African Monkeys**

Darwin considered we are the descendants of Monkeys. Going by the following story, we

will strongly believe and accept that we are the true descendants of Monkeys.

I used to be feeling great about scientists who virtually live in forests under hostile living conditions researching various animal species.



When I read the following story, I realized that the motive behind these scientists need not be the love of the species. To study them was to enslave them.

Here is a true story involving monkeys.

There are different types of monkeys living happily and enjoying their freedom in the jungles of Africa. These are in great demand in the countries world over.



They are caught and transported to various Zoo-parks, kept in cages for life.

Like other animals, they lose their freedom, are deprived of good food and are put to hostile weather alien to these animals.

In early times, mechanical devices called traps were deployed to capture monkeys. The spring loaded mechanical gadget invariably caused injuries of varying degrees to the trapped animals. Often these injuries are not properly treated.

They were transported over long distances involving several days.

Significant number of injured animals die before reaching their destination.

Scientists researching on animals, worldwide conduct various experiments to study their behavior.

One important finding is that a monkey Clings to whatever it gets hold of.

The experiments consisted of specially designed bottles filled with peanuts. The bottle was designed with a narrow neck sufficient for a monkey's hand to freely enter. But, when it closes its fist, the hand cannot come out.

These bottles were placed in the forest where

monkeys frequented. Peanuts, which are the favorite food of the monkeys, were placed inside the narrow neck of the bottles.

The monkeys would not let go of the bottle after taking the peanuts in its hand. For hours on end, the monkeys would be stationary with the large bottle. They were caught, without any injury and exported.

We understand that all that the monkeys needed for their freedom was just to give up the peanuts they like so much.

Even among the educated ones, affluent people refuse to climb down a small public office which they climb.

The evil traders around the globe made full use of this quality of monkeys in humans and exploited it to their advantage.

Most of us are enslaved to Coffee, Tea and Cigarettes which were given to our ancestors for free. They caught it and were enslaved.

In a way, I consider monkeys are better species than us. The reason being, unlike a single monkey being enslaved by its clinging, we human beings are enslaved generation after generation.

What ever is a peanut for monkeys, freebie is for us humans.

We will discuss the Freebie in a later page.

**Theme: Freebie enslaves.**

(1) What is Peanuts to monkeys, freebies are to humans.

(2)Freebie is a trap that enslaves us.

(3)Those who seek freebies are people who lack in basic knowledge / awareness that a human should possess. If they do not, they are no better than animals.

(4)Multinationals gave away Cigarettes and Tea for free. After people got addicted to their use, there was a price for it. With time, generations are getting addicted to these products. Now the manufacturers make a killing.

(5)Internet is becoming an indispensable part of our life. More and more people get sucked into it. It is because, the services are offered for free. There will soon be a day when a hefty monthly bill will trouble us.

(6) Many fall victim to the marketing gimmicks like, for each product you buy, one more is given free of cost. If you buy product X, product Y is given free of cost .

We never think how some thing can be given free of cost! Remember they are traps.

**Theme: Freebie enslaves us.**

Short story 15

**Receive Millions for free.**

The story is based on a real life incident. It took place a decade ago.

I knew someone in Delhi who was an engineer by profession, an engineering entrepreneur. He wanted to share some information and asked me if I could spare some time for him.

We met in a coffee shop.

The acquaintance looked here and there to ensure no one was watching him. Slowly he opened his briefcase and pulled out a letter which he had kept like a treasure.

He took a promise that I would not disclose his fortune to anyone else and handed a printout of a mail he received.

The mail is purported to have been sent by a millionaire from Africa. He wanted some one in India to convert his black money to white. He would part with one fourth of that money. The money offered as commission ran to several Crores.

The introduction said that he had retired from his country's Army. (Don't remember

which country, it was). The mail sought his bank particulars.

I enquired if this person who sent him the email was known through any prior business contact. He replied in the negative. He said that he found that email in his mail box.

I told him that I felt this mail fishy and that there was nothing to verify the genuineness of the offer.

I asked him what he would answer to IT department about the source of such huge transactions.

He thought for a while and said that those guys could always be managed.

I briefly gave my advice. Never give in to greed. Seeking wealth without effort will only bring misery. Perhaps, he expected me to give him a go ahead. He looked disappointed.

A week passed. A news paper report appeared that explained the plight of another person who received this mail.

The report said the victim, a businessman who received the email established contact with the sender. Soon after, some one, apparently an African called in. They exchanged greetings and talked about their life and family for a while. They decided to

meet in a star hotel in Mumbai.

The victim was ushered into a typical two bedroom accommodation. For the first time, the victim had a doubt, for he expected him to stay in a more expensive suite.

The things lying here and there did not show the gentleman staying there as a rich person as he described. His age and physical condition led the victim to estimate he could not have been a top ranking Army officer.

While thoughts ran through his mind, his guests were on their job. They demanded his Credit cards at gun point. They relieved him of every thing which was worth a price.

Finally, they threatened him with a dire consequence if he approached the police. "Since we have every detail of you and your family, our men will kidnap your children, kill your family members", the list was quite long.

When the saddened victim was about to leave, one other African joined in to give him punches that left him bruised and swollen.

The two men took the victim carefully through the rear passage and left him on to the street.

I sent my acquaintance the newspaper

clipping. He thanked me profusely.

Three emails received by many, which would eventually arrive at the SPAM folder, are reproduced here. The reader may examine and figure out, why these emails are fraudulent ones.

Be careful and remain warned about such communications...

Typical emails received from fraudsters, is given towards the end of this book.

**Theme: Punishments are necessary  
and also in time.**

(1) Youngsters get thrill in breaking the law of the land, breaking speed limits while driving and consuming banned substances.

(2) There are instances when quite a few escape punishment, that encourages others to commit crimes.

(3) If one doesn't receive punishments, he would commit more and more crimes when he will have no way to escape more severe punishments.

(4) It is the duty of the parents, teachers and government agencies to enforce rules without any leniency. More often than not, the rich and powerful among the society escape punishments.

We will see the stories of a Good father and a Bad father in the following pages.

**Theme: Punishments are necessary  
and also in time,**

Short story 16

**Good father.**

There was a man who lived by thieving. He had a son.

When the son attained the age of 18, the



father thought it time for his son to take up a profession and live independently. He inquired his son as to what kind of profession he would like to pursue. The son had no doubts in his mind. He said he would do whatever his father did.



The son reasoned, "only in your profession, we can get so much money to lead a happy life. There is no hard work involved. No other profession", the son observed, "fetches as much money quickly."

It is also a fact that he had no idea about any other trades to choose from.

The father demanded to know from the son, if he had considered all the pros and cons.

The boy said, "yes, I did."

They selected the most auspicious night, the darkest night of the month, the new moon day.

The father led him to a house which was locked. He demanded his son to break the door open without drawing the attention of the people around. The son accomplished it successfully

Then, the father instructed the boy to get in, collect all the valuables and come out quickly.

The son followed the father's instruction and disappeared into the dark rooms of the house they were burgling.

The father locked the door from outside and shouted, "Thief, thief". The people in the area woke from their sleep. They beat the boy black and blue and handed him over to the police.

After a brief jail term, the boy was released. The typical Zen story ends like this, abruptly.

The reader IS expected to figure out, all by himself, why the father did this to his son.

Was the father a cruel person? Or did he not want his son to pursue the profession he

did?

My deduction is that the father knew that his son knew only one side of the profession, namely the easy money. The father wanted the son to know the other side, the risk involved in living as a thief. His son could then decide if he could take thieving as his profession.

**Theme:****Punishments are indispensable in life.**

1. Many hardened criminals of today were petty thieves some day who did not receive punishment in time.

2. Punishments are coarse correction mechanisms, which set the people acting in acceptable ways in the society.

3. Punishments should be corrective deterrent for both the individuals and the society, as a whole.

(4) Our society's rich have no time for their children to bring them up as good citizens. You see them involved in drunken driving, drug abuse, white collar crimes, shoot-outs in public places - a few examples.

(5) Poor in the society, especially from the socially backward, do not know what is good and bad so that they can educate their children.

(6) The middle class, in general, has the environment and knowledge for bringing up its children as good citizens.

They achieve this through a combination of educating and punishing the children when they go astray.

**Theme:**  
**Delayed Punishments are dangerous.**

Short story 17

**Bad father**



Today is the judgment day of the month in the kingdom where Rasa lived. People await judgment the king's court would hand down to Rasa.

Typically, every offender goes through the grilling and confrontation with proof and witnesses in the normal course. On the judgment day, the king, his ministers and nobles in the king's court formally give a final hearing and accordingly the punishment is announced in the presence of general public.

So the palace will be surrounded by anxious public to hear the verdict.

The parents and close relatives of the accused are allowed to remain in the king's court, when the judgment is pronounced. Their views are also listened to.

Today, the public that gathered to hear the verdict was the largest in recent times. The people who were victims wanted to know what punishment Rasa had received.

Rasa, as people call him earned the name Rowdy Rasa in this area. In today's society, there is a lot of demand for rowdies over whom police have no control. The politicians favor them. When they break the law, the law breaks easily because it's basis is weak. The criminals hire lawyers to break laws to ensure their perpetual freedom.

Rasa began his career by stealing small things from fellow children. At that time, his

name was "Thief Rasa". His father was the Chief of security in the king's court.

When his son was on the verge of getting caught, he used his influence among the authorities and saved him. As Rasa grew, so did his crimes too .

Now he was a fully grown criminal. He did not need his father's help any more.

He found ways of escape from the long arms of law. He committed more serious crimes and got away with it.

Finally, his crime records reached the king. People thought he would get a big punishment for all the crimes he had committed.

The court suddenly became very active. The ministers and officials arrived one by one and occupied their seats. The king followed.

The criminals were bound by chains and seated in a corner of the court. The names of the criminals were read out and also the crimes they had committed. They were sentenced accordingly.

It was Rasa's term now. Rasa was brought to the middle of the king's court. His crimes were listed and he was given the death sentence.

Rasa showed no emotions. In the coming

days, he would be beheaded in front of the crowd in the large open area.

People will now never get frightened of Rasa. One last request of the convict in a death row was granted, if it was genuine. This is followed from ages till today.

The minister announced this to Rasa. Rasa wanted to talk to his father, which the minister readily obliged.

With hands tied, Rasa was allowed to talk to his father. When his father came near him, Rasa bit his father's ear and spat it out. Blood flowing from his face, his father was screaming in pain.

Those assembled were shocked and stunned at the act of Rasa.

Rasa looked at the assembly and justified his action. "When I was young and committed crimes, my father did not punish me. Instead he protected me from being punished.

Then, I grew up to a thief and even committed murders without fear. Today, I am facing death sentence.

My father misused his official position, influence and contacts in a wrong way. He did not correct me at the right time.

This act of his has brought me to the present



situation. He never taught me the right path.

Therefore, my father is responsible for the crimes I had committed. But there is no provision in the law to punish him. Therefore, I have punished him.

In future, this should be a lesson and a warning for fathers like him," spoke Rasa.

**Theme:****Taking credit for someone's effort.**

- (1) Very often people claim credit for some good work done by others.
- (2) Motive for such wrong doing is profit.
- (3) This takes place systematically in work places and research establishments.
- (4) Some times, circumstances might bring you the credit of some one else's effort. You should resist the temptation to take the credit.
- (5) Like the lies would, some time, this habit will bring upon a disaster.

**Theme:****Taking credit for someone's effort.**

Short Story 18

**The saint**

This story, like many others in this book is based on a real life incident.

It was a small village in the southern part of Tamilnadu, in India. This part of the country had seen several saints. Some of them had powers called SIDHDHI. With these powers the saints, it is believed, can perform supernatural feats.

Majority of these saints hail from the common people. But yet, no one understands as to how these few get such powers.

Many believe that they have not only supernatural and super human powers but also the science of converting one object to another.

A simple peasant had a quarrel with his wife. He left his home and village. He drifted from one place to another.

One day, in a distant village, people found this man lying in a semiconscious state near a small temple. Some took pity and fed him. Some other person put him in a shelter near the temple.

Some one gave him a bath and covered him with a better cloth.

People started enquiring who that person receiving a lot of public attention was. There was speculation about his origin, his nature and mission that sent him to their village.

Ultimately, the news which crossed the boundaries of the village described him as a saint who hardly spoke. He had spiritual powers. He cured any ill health.

The news reached his village. Some more villagers joined to take care of this saintly

person and his name and fame spread all over the region.

One day suddenly, the saint was found dead in a pool of blood.

The press people poured into that tiny village. Top cops visited the village. The police acted swiftly. Police dogs were pressed into service. After all, it involved the murder of a saint, in whom people had immense faith. Even in his murder, there was no dearth of speculation.

It took the cops hardly a day to capture the culprits.

The press briefing reads as follows:

Two men from a nearby village heard of this saint that he had supernatural and spiritual powers. Also that he knew alchemy by which iron can be turned into gold.

They brought some bananas, flowers and such objects used in worship. They kept a watch and identified the time when the saint was all alone.

The previous night they visited him with fruits & flowers and woke up the sleeping saint. They offered the fruits which he ate. Then they displayed the Crowbar they brought along and requested the saint to turn it into a Gold bar.

He looked at the crowbar for a long time and did nothing more. The twosome pleaded with the saint. They grew desperate with the passage of time. In another hour, the sun would rise.

One of the two became angry and knocked the saint with the crowbar. The saint collapsed on the floor in a pool of blood. Not knowing what to do, they left everything behind and ran away. The police dog located them in a nearby jungle.

Those arrested were taken into judicial custody.

On the following day, the body of the slain old peasant sent for post-mortem was received and buried by the villagers.

The story ends here.

The poor and mentally deranged peasant enjoyed his life for some time on the assumption that he was some saint but that was not true. The same wrong notion was responsible for his miserable end too.

The lesson is that, do not accept an honor or title that you do not deserve.

## **Theme**

### **Be a Roman in Rome**

(1) We leave of our birthplace, to a alien land such as other cities and countries, seeking to share the prosperity of that land.

(2) History has shown that the Jews in Germany, The North Indians in Mumbai, Indians in Australia were targeted and attacked by local population.

(3) We complain of racial discredination and attacks.

(4) When you live in an alien society, you should merge in that society unidentifiably. You should become one with the native society both culturally or economically.

(5) You should not be perceived as a threat to the very survival, or economic freedom and cultural identity of the society to which you want to be a part of.

(6) You might observe that, in every region in India, there are people who originally belonged to different regions talking different languges but yet living for centuries harmoniously.

Their success can be traced to their seamless connectivity with the rest of the society.

**Theme****There is no need to be scared about poverty.**

- (1) There are poorer in the world than those who have any reasonable means to live.
- (2) A rapid transition from affluence to poverty is painful.
- (3) A rapid transition from poverty to affluence ruins the entire family.
- (4) Money is power. Any power when not trained to handle it properly would destroy those who handle it.
- (5) Saints embrace poverty, by understanding the virtues in it.

**Theme:****There is no need to be scared about poverty.**

Short story 20

**Sports Reporter interviews God.**

This is one of the old interviews from the file. The Sports Magazine, Sports Unlimited, deputed its senior reporter on an assignment to Bangalore. The reporter from Chennai traveled by train to Bangalore.

He was going to interview Indian cricket players after they lost to Bangladesh in the

World Cup. Expecting brickbats, the players landed in Bangalore secretly.

After visiting a couple of venues to interview VIPs, in the hectic afternoon, he boarded the AC coach. Just after a couple of minutes he boarded, he slept off.

Suddenly, someone woke him up and pointed out to him that he was in the wrong seat. He could not believe his eyes, for the person who woke him was none else than GOD himself!

He immediately reached out to get his pad and pen and started the interview with HIM.

Reporter: I am a reporter from a popular Tamil sports magazine. There is no secret that publishing an interview with you will benefit my magazine, me and the people, I humbly request.....

God: You want to interview me... No problem. Proceed.

Reporter: Thank you, thank you, thank you God.

People say that, no one in the society cares for anyone who does not possess considerable wealth, God included. How far is this true?

God: This is the imagination of rich people who see their strength only in their wealth.



You will stand clarified at the end of this interview, next....

Reporter: Why have you created people as poor, rich, good and bad? You could have created only good people who will not sin against you or one another?

God: The differences are not my idea. None of my creations want the same old monotonous stuff. We oblige our creations with what they seek to get.

Some need position, most people seek possessions. Very few seek good health. Still a small number seeks knowledge. An insignificant number of people seek to come back to me and live with me for ever.

Many are confused as to what they want. Whatever they seek, I give. But yet, that doesn't satisfy any of them, anyway. I am helpless!

God continues, "Even every Indian TV & radio programs deliver their listeners their choice. The song what they want to listen... Why not me"?

"It is the duty of the Creator to provide what the living creatures want. I am also like the cinema directors and producers" explained God. "If a movie clicks and subsequent movies are made on the same theme, don't

the people reject them”?

“Life would turn monotonous if only good people live in a society. The life would be horrible to have every one, ill-minded. A mix of their numbers makes the life interesting”.

“Do you produce movies only with heroes? You have a hero, a villain, a heroine, a fighting scene, a few songs, and love scenes. It is just that. What I am doing, your film producers are also doing the same”.

It is important that the stories also change with time, to keep the tempo of life.

Reporter: God, your example of the cinema was excellent! I now clearly understand your descending on to the earth only to watch our movies!!

“But, dear God, people might be interested to know, what is your reaction when they call you a sadist. Majority of the people are poor. Only the poor are affected by nature’s fury. Rich people are getting richer with time and always lead a good life. Nature and its fury do not show their ugly face to them.”

(Reporter was sure, God is now trapped).

God: “Hey... Man, realize this”. “Whatever you perceive is false and what you conclude is totally wrong”.

"Those who imagine that money alone can enable one to lead a good life, get wealth".

"Those who did not seek wealth but sought to lead a sensible, caring, healthy and enjoyable life, got what they wanted but you ignorant guys call them poor".

"For all that I am a friend of the poor, myself. Don't you know the place I reside? You can see me when the poor smiles."

Reporter: "How is that, affluence is a painful situation and poverty a joyous situation"?

God: "Poor need to work hard. Those who do physical labor keep the best of health. So poverty is a container which holds sound health. No disease would ever care to come near the poor.

The rich, on the other hand, lead a life of luxury and are a moving storehouse of diseases. The pristine life guarantees them only diseases of every kind.

Rich in the society have no true friends. Accumulating wealth, they attract more enemies and detractors.

Now, tell me, my dear reporter, what you want to be in life, rich or poor.

Reporter: Mister God! I have not come across even a politician as smart as you .

It's ok. Let me ask you a pointed question. Are you personally rich or poor?

God: It depends on how any person perceives me.

Rich persons treat me as they would treat a poor person. They treat me like a commission agent, a power broker and what not. They deposit all their ill earned money in the temples. I use these to help the poor.

The poor look at me as a rich person and a benefactor who protects them.

Comparing a poor man's devotion to me without any offerings, a rich man's dole of illegally earned wealth has no value to me.

Reporter: One more question...

God: Nowadays, media guys show great interest in trying to "put too many words in the mouth of those interviewed".

If I don't move out, I'll be in trouble. Good-bye... Saying this, he disappeared.

(The reporter suddenly woke up when the sweeper came into the train to clean. The train pulled into Bangalore city junction.)

**Theme:****Beware of tricksters & Fraudsters.**

We read in news papers or listen to stories as how people get deceived by simple tricks or unbelievably false offers,

Often, it is difficult to decide if one loses out to tricksters or fraudsters out of greed or foolishness.

Following few stories will tell a couple of stories and one might decide as how to protect themselves from similar situations.

While some come with innovations in cheating, most people fall victims to some simple and old tricks.

Confidence tricking:: The tricksters gain victim's confidence with small doses of help or voluntary favour. Some day they walk off with a big loot, even before the victims notices it.

Solution: Always be on alert. Think and consult a few others of any new situations before you act. There are situations when one needs to react now or never. Even in such situations, pause, look all around think and act slowly.

Story 21

(A) James works as an accountant in a

construction firm. He would go to his bank to draw cash for salary disbursement of the work force in his company every week.

On one such occasion, he with drew cash and was about to leave the counter. Suddenly, some one nearby pointed out that a few ten rupee notes had slipped out of his pocket. James saw a few ten rupee notes near bum, on the floor.

He bent down to collect the notes and in that very moment some one snatched and ran away with the suitcase where he had kept a few lakhs in cash.

I am not sure if he could get the cash back or not. It was the days where there were no CCD cameras in the Banks.

It is important to remember that when our attention is distracted, it is easy for any one to relieve us of the possession. I have read such news stories several times in life. Probably it will be in news in future also.

(B) It was the days when email in India becoming popular. I had an acquaintance who called me on some urgent discussion. The matter was simple. He received an email suggestion some Defence official from an African nation wanted his help to do some bank transaction so that he could get the

huge sum stashed away from his country. If he offers his help in fund transfer then he wouldm part with a few hundred million US Dollars. I asked him some basic questions such as if he knw that person before receiving this email. He replied me in negative. Then I advised him to ignore that email. He was afraid to go alone and probably expected that I would support the idea of responding to that email.

A week latter, there ws a big news in national dailies of an incident where some one resonded to such an email. He was asked to give a lot of personal information, Then was invited to Mumbai. He was taken to a Star hotel by an African, He has a couple of more Africans and a couple of locals.

All of them beat him up black and blue. relieved of all his valuables. Drew as much cash that was possible to be removed from his credit cards.

To top it all, they warned him of revenge killing of his family members if yu choose to compain with Police or any other agency.

The victim, after suffering humiliations and loss gained currage after newarly a week and reported this incident to police and press. The acquaintance brought the press clipping to me and thanked for the right advise.

**EPILOG:**

It is my experience that even a simple story, read a few times over, you get a few additional dimensions, every time, compared to the first reading.

You may read these simple stories not just once but a few times, at different intervals.

Alternately, share these stories with a friend, a colleague or any other person closest to the heart. You might not only reveal several untold dimensions, but it also helps in internalizing these ideas.

Once internalized, it gets into the subconscious mind. From then on, every good thought and action becomes your nature.

I know several of my students practise what I practise and preach. They trace their happiness and success to positive thoughts, positive actions and integrity.

In the third book to be released six months later, I will be talking about Spirituality to guide your material life.

I recall several questions that arose in my mind when I was in my thirties. I know many like me seeking answers to the same and similar questions for which no one has a straight answer. My next book, My dear Son book 03 will have these questions answered



too.

These three books, if internalized will help in understanding life. This is essential for living a good life.

Natarajan

Bangalore

July 2013

**Books by the same author.**

**Self development series.**

**(1) Zen Stories - Tamil**

Self development Series

**(2) En arumail maganukku (Tamil).**

My Dear Son Book 1 - Tamil version.

Science of good living.

**(3) Connections - Inaippuga -Tamil.**

My Dear Son Book 2 - Tamil version.

Science of good living.

**(4) My Dear Son Book 01 - English.**

Science of good living.

**(5) My Dear son Book 02 - English**

Science of good living.

**knowledge & Spirituality Series.**

**(6) Middle Class - Tamil**

Problems of Middle class and solutions

**(7) Knowledge. Go, get it! - English.**

**&**

**(8) Knowledge. Go, get it! - Tamil.**

Becoming knowledgeable & Intelligent is simple and easy. But this is what education

failed to impart in education. -

**(9) Thedalgal -Seekers) - Tamil**

A brief account of seekers, the saints and the first book on Spirituality.

**(10) Ottangal (The Run) -Tamil. English.**

**&**

**(11) Shake Hands with your creator - English**

Spirituality is not Religion. One can meet the creator, Brahmma and shake hands with him.

People with Science and Engineering back ground might understand.

(being rewritten for the 27 th time).

