

Little Boy's Sandcastle

Every morning a little boy would walk on a sandy sea beach along with his grandfather. Soon the little boy took a liking to making sand castles.

His grandfather would also encourage him to make large sandcastles. Every day the boy would make as large a sandcastle as he could with all passion and love. All he wanted that throughout the day all the visitors to the beach would appreciate his work. However, next morning once he would reach the beach, to his utter disappointment, he discovered that the sand castle he had made the previous morning was seen nowhere. Either water of high tide dissolved it or someone might have broken it. But yet the boy did not lose hope. He was sure that one day his sand castle would be so beautiful that no one could even think of demolishing it. Though his belief made him build more beautiful sandcastles every morning, it would cease to exist next morning.

Disheartened and dismayed one morning the little boy asked his grandfather, 'When will no one destroy my sandcastle and it will remain on the beach for ever?'

The grandfather looked at the innocent little boy for a while, and then ruffled his curly hair. 'My child, look around the beach,' began the old man slowly, 'can you find any sandcastle those were built yesterday. Just imagine, for many years children like you have been making sandcastle on the beach. Had they all remain intact, count you find an empty space on the beach to build your own sandcastle? So my child, all beautiful things in this world are temporal. Your achievement lies in putting your total heart and soul in creating anything. But never attach all your love with your creation for it comes with its own destiny.'

The little boy meditated on what his grandfather said to him and then hugged him lovingly.

Her Little Doll

A busy and well-to-do executive barely had any time for his family. His wife and daughter were quite accommodating and never held any grudge for his giving so less time to his family. Though he could hardly find any time to talk to his old ailing father, like a responsible son he had arranged three

caretakers who would look after all the needs of his father throughout the day, including administering him medicine on time. Secretly, the executive was proud of the way his father had been looked after. The old man, however, was the best of friends with his granddaughter.

And then one morning the old man died. The busy executive snatched some time to perform the final rites of his father with pomp and grandeur so that everyone found it remarkable in all possible ways.

A few days passed by after the death of his father and the executive's schedule became as hectic as it had been.

He would reach home late every night, exhausted and drained, and soon drop off to sleep. Yet something dismayed him every night as he reached home. He would find his little daughter avidly looking at a doll of her, holding it close to her, as though she was communicating with it.

One night he asked his daughter curiously, 'What do you do holding the doll close to yourself every night?'

'I talk to it, papa,' replied the little daughter candidly.

'What do you talk to it?' asked the father to his daughter.

'Papa, I feel very sad after the death of grandpa. I don't want to lose my loved ones anymore. It is my most favourite doll. So I always ask it if it will die one day, leaving me alone,' answered the daughter.

'Does your doll offer you a reply?' asked the father indulgently as the innocence of his daughter touched him.

The daughter replied with the fullest conviction, 'Yes papa, it replied my questions, but only after I ask her the same many a time. It confirmed me that it would not die so long as I keep talking to it lovingly every day. The day I stop communicating with it, it would be dead for me,' paused the little girl to think for a while and then asked her father, 'Papa, if what the doll confided in me is true, grandpa must be dead for you for a long time, much before his death, for months I didn't see you talking to him.' Listening to his daughter's words the famous executive wished the earth to swallow him so that he didn't need to see his daughter eye to eye again.

In silence, he slunk away from there.

On a Moonlit Night

One moonlit night a drunkard stared at his shadow for a long moment and asked it in a challenging tone of voice, 'Don't you feel ashamed of imitating my body movement every moment. If you have an iota of originality some time move by your own will and wish, without copying me. Tell me, can you?'

In reply his shadow spoke teasingly, 'I also thought of asking you something for a long time. Do you have the intelligence to move your body in such way that I cannot imitate?'

In silence the drunkard thought, when I am drunk, so, too, is my shadow. Since then the drunkard and his shadow became the best of friends. And thus ended their story happily.

She and Her Grandfather

Every afternoon an eight-year-old girl came to a park, holding her grandfather's finger. On the way to the park, the little girl would throw a volley of questions to his grandfather. It ranged from 'why some flowers are fragrant and others are not' to 'whether she will look like his father or her mother once she grows up'. Some of her questions reflected her pure innocence whereas few questions were profound. But, her grandfather was always evasive once it came to answering her granddaughter's questions. Though his words were encouraging and he always egged the little girl on to ask more original questions, never did he offer the girl any direct answer. One day it got into the little girl's nerve. 'Unlike the grandfathers of all my friends, you know nothing. Even Baba, Ma and my teachers in school can answer all my queries. Never again will I ask you anything,' said the little girl to her grandfather in a tone of accusation.

In reply the face of the old man wrinkled with a smile, 'My answers to all your queries will be readymade answers to you. You will start believing that you know many things without knowing anything in actual. For knowing anything in actual, you have to have firsthand experience. And once you really know something, you will not hang on anyone's words. Even if you know about lesser things in life than others, it is perfectly okay provided everything you know is your own understanding and experience', stopped the old man. The little girl gazed at the old man for a long moment and then embraced him affectionately.

The Sleeping Princess

A pretty princess was in a deep slumber for a long time. An ardent Prince was desirous of marrying her but did not know how to awake her. He also knew that before him many other princes had exerted considerable effort to awake her up with a hope to marry her. They all, however, failed in their effort.

A valiant Prince was sure that his effort alone wouldn't be enough to break her deep sleep. So he sought the guidance of a holy man. The holy man listened to his entreaty and then passed a small smile.

'It is very easy to wake her up,' He began in a calm tone of a voice. 'You will find two sticks lying near her. One is close to her head and the other one is near her feet. All you have to do is swap the position of both the sticks. It will be enough to wake her up. And be rest assured, whoever wakes her up she will be all ready to marry him.'

The Prince thanked the holy man and left with a dubious mind for he couldn't fully trust in his words.

However, on reaching the princess, to his utter surprise, he found two sticks near the princess as explained by the holy man. Curiously, he picked up the stick lying near her head. Something words were inscribed in the stick. The Prince peered hard to read it. Those words were 'Arrogance & Foolhardiness.' Surprised, the Prince read the words inscribed in the stick near her feet. Those were 'Compassion & Love'. Wasting no time the Prince swapped the position of the sticks and at once the princess opened her eyelids. And it was not long before she expressed her wish to marry the Prince. However, after reading the words inscribed in the sticks the Prince had already changed his mind. He said to the princess, 'I have heard that many more people are in a deep slumber like you. I will return only after waking them all up.' And having said so the Prince embarked upon a journey of bringing the stick of compassion and love close to the head of all those who were deeply asleep.

The Burning Pyre

Standing by a pyre, a soul watches a lifeless body, where it lived a little while ago, being consumed by the flames. Feeling sad for its corpse, it asked the fire, 'Why are your flames so greedy, devouring this beautiful body so quickly?'

And replied the fire, 'My flames are not greedy; rather they are very kind with you. They want this lifeless body to turn to ashes soon so that you can leave your attachment to it and start a new journey.'

A Child's Play

You enjoy swimming on the surface of a river for so many people can see you, appreciate your ability to entertain them. Their praise puff you up with pride and you fling your hands around, sometimes mindlessly, only to earn another round of applause. But I have started to derive peace & bliss from swimming in the fathomless depth of a silent sea. No one is around there to appreciate my adventure but this solitary journey itself is so rewarding. If one day you get bored of your childish play, please come and join me in my never-ending carnival.

When the birds from distant land come near our locality, we call them migratory birds; consider them as guests to our country. But those majestic things laugh in silence at our ideas. 'How can we be a guest in a country when the conception of boundaries between countries does not exist amongst us,' say the birds to each other. Lost in our maze of thoughts never can we listen to them.

