

The Sacred Jungle



THE SACRED JUNGLE

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1

The Fall

“Stop that Arun! Now if you trouble anyone you will get the same punishment in the way you have troubled”, screamed the class teacher. I wondered why did Mam say ‘Now if you trouble anyone you will get the same punishment’ to Arun, as I was new to the school. My friend whispered “I will tell you about Arun while we are going home”.



After few periods we had a free playing period in which we could do anything as we like. I chose to complete the mini-book on which I have

been working for the past five weeks. Just towards the end of the school my friend started narrating about Arun but I only understood that he was the naughtiest boy in the school and he will trouble one person each day. I was not worried getting troubled by Arun but I was more concerned about when will I see my grandfather as I never saw him before in my life. I know how he looks as my mother showed me his picture.

I forgot about Arun in the next three weeks as he took five- days holidays together. When Arun returned Ma'am started spying on me because Arun had troubled everyone in class except me. Next day, I was standing next to a hump on a slippery floor which was next to a deep hole. Suddenly, Arun scared me from behind. I skid on the slipper floor, dashed the hump and dived deep into the hole with five flips! The hole was ten feet

deep but because of the soft soil, I fell 15 feet deep.



I felt so scared! I usually feel scared when I am alone in the dark. It was not only dark but also creepy in the hole. My tears started dropping down the soil. I started crying for help but my

voice was low that I doubt if anyone could hear me.

I cried for some time, then sat down and gave it a thought. I remembered that once I won a tough badminton game with my father and my mother had told me, 'never run away from your problem but face it'.

I started thinking on what I could do. I first checked the things I had. Luckily, I had few things like the mini-book which I wrote, a pencil, a lollipop and banana in my hand.

Then, I made up my mind to build a shelter by digging up a space before night. I was just hoping that nothing will stop me from making the shelter.

I just finished and was about to sit in my shelter when a thud sound came. It was Arun!!! I helped him to get up and sit in my shelter. I asked him, “how did you get down here?” He replied, “at the end of school, teacher told me that she has a surprise for me. She took me near the hole and boomed me in the same way as I did for you. I flipped and fell inside.” He then continued, “I want to apologise because I scared you on purpose because of which you fell into the

hole.” I said, “It’s okay as you realised your mistake.”

Then I asked him if he had any supplies. He replied, “Yes, I have a small bag full of biscuits, marbles, long stick whistle and a smart watch.” I was very happy and told him, “This is good enough supplies for both of us till we get a solution to get help or someone finds us.”

I suggested to Arun that the shelter is too small for both of us. So, I asked him to dig up some more so that there will be enough space for both of us. Then I sat with my mini book and tried to find a way out or get some help.

I came up with a plan. The plan was to throw a marble with a chit to let teacher know that me and Arun are safe down and have made a shelter for us. We also let the teacher know

that if they could throw sacks with mud so that we can build stairs and climb up. However, I didn't know if the teacher was near the hole to get our marble and chit. But we still thought of trying it few times.

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A Discovery

In the meantime, Arun started digging for the shelter to become big. I was busy making small chits by tearing a small bit from my mini-book.

Suddenly Arun called out and said that he found a small hole when he dug up more space for shelter. The small hole stopped after some distance and he went to the end. I called out to Arun to be careful.

But he disappeared!! I went quickly to the same place and I was dragged inside the hole. I kept falling, falling... I thought I am going to the core of the Earth. But suddenly it stopped in an area lit up with fire flies. I

also saw Arun there. I asked Arun, “how did this happen??”. Arun asked me, “What should we do?”. I said, “let’s run and scream!”



We started running and screaming...until I went down and up in the pot hole. I asked Arun, “may I borrow your smart watch?” He immediately asked me why? I

thoughtfully said, “you wait and watch!” He reluctantly gave it. I immediately switched on the watch and it gave a bright light. When I saw around with the help of the light, I spotted foot prints. I walked on the foot

print holding Arun and the smart watch facing down. It went straight for a while until it took a turn. Arun stopped first and suddenly a door appeared in front of him. When I stopped a door also appeared in front of me!

We decided something... I said, “we should open the doors.” Arun said, “let’s give a look through the key hole.” When we peeped through Arun’s door, it was filled with obstacles but in my door, there were only two buttons. So, we decided to take the door in front of me. Thinking that would be the easier way to get past these traps.

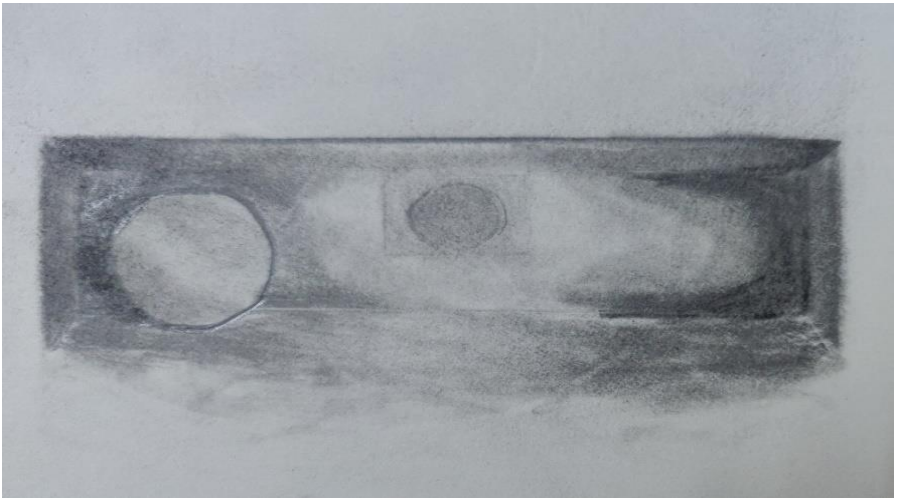
3

Tomato Soup Chutney

We opened the door and went inside further. Suddenly the walls started closing on us, a big boulder fell from above and was about to block our way. On the boulder there was a message *'LOOK UNDERNEATH YOU WILL SEE BRIGHT RED BUTTON. PRESS THAT RED BUTTON TO GO TO THE NEXT PUZZLE. KEEP FINDING THE RED BUTTONS TO MOVE FURTHER'*. I looked underneath and saw a red button but it was far from us. We couldn't reach it with our hands. Arun told think of a plan fast before that closes up and makes a tomato soup chutney of us. I immediately got an idea!

We needed something like Tomato Soup Chutney which can go anywhere, and remembered the marble as it can also go in gaps easily. I asked Arun, “how many marbles do you have?” He replied “one”. I said, “Give me the marble fast!”. I told him the plan that we aim the marble at the red button, if it comes back, we have to hit it back. Arun agreed to the plan.

I rolled the marble towards the button, but it was a miss.



Then, the marble came to Arun's side and he hit it back without aiming. Guess what! It hits the button. The boulder went up and walls stopped closing in. Arun excitedly said, "Let's move forward!!" I asked him, "why are you so excited?". He said that, "I saved us from becoming Tomato Soup Chutney!!"

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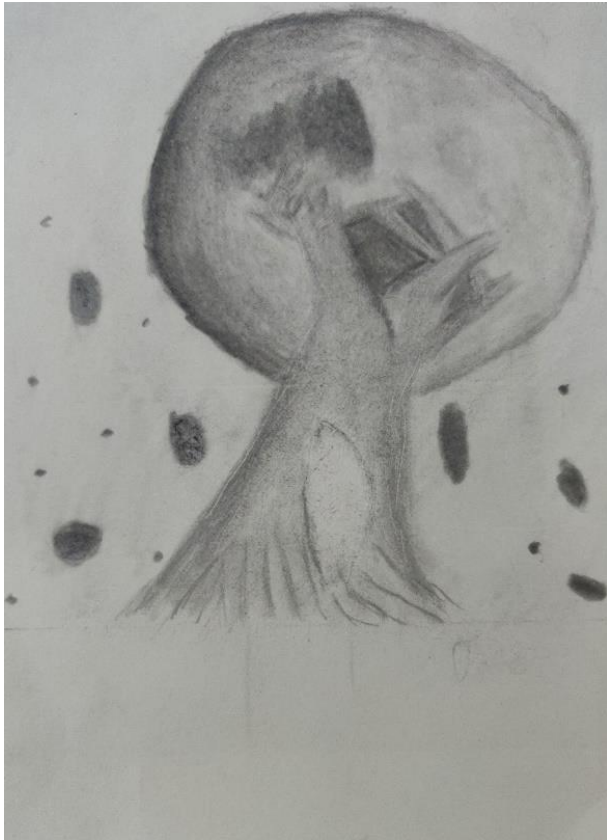
Chase

When we crossed the red button, and walked a little distance when another boulder fell behind trapping us again. We walked for some time and we heard a growling noise. We looked around and Arun spotted a Cheetah. We started running and running as fast as we could. Arun suddenly shouted, “we are going to be doomed, Cheetah is much faster than us.” We just kept running until a humongous tree stopped us. I turned back to see where is the Cheetah. The Cheetah was way back. I told Arun, “we can’t go back as Cheetah will eat us.” Then Arun asked, “what are we

supposed to do then?” . I said, “Let’s sit down and look up.”

When we sat down and looked up, I spotted a red button in one of the branches. I remembered the clue on the boulder that we have to press the red button to get out of the problem. I called out to Arun, “Look at the red button.” Arun saw the red button and asked me, “so what?”. I banged my head and said, “don’t you remember the clue on the boulder that we have to press the red button to escape from the problem.” Arun said, “I don’t remember but if the clue said that, it may work.” Then I asked, “but how to reach it?” He replied, “if we can’t reach it, we will sit down until we become a prey”. Just then I told, “why don’t we use a stick to reach it?”. Arun asked, “but, where will we find a stick now?” I asked, “what about the long stick whistle that you have?” He said,

“yaa, that may work.”. He took it out of his bag but we still couldn’t reach the red button. The Cheetah was getting closer. I suggested to Arun that I can sit on his shoulder and try reaching the red button



with the stick. He agreed as he was scared of becoming a prey. Arun stood steadily and I climbed on him slowly. He said, "Do it fast Advait, as the Cheetah is getting closer to us." I pressed the red button the ground shuck started rocks falling down. The cheetah held tight with his paws but we were jumping up and down and Arun told "this was not your plan but the cheetah is not coming to get us." Suddenly everything stopped, a small hole was been shown in tree which we could crawl through but Cheetah could not fit in.

We crawled through the hole as fast as we could. The Cheetah also tried to crawl in but it got stuck. We crawled out safely. Then, we found a glowing green button. I knew green is opposite to red and the red button opened the door. So, I thought the green button might close the door. I went ahead and

pressed it. It closed the door and made the Cheetah into chutney. A bit of chutney splashed on me and Arun. I told Arun, “let’s rest over here and wipe off the chutney.” Arun added, “Why don’t we have something to eat?” I told Arun that, we should have only few biscuits and save the rest, as we don’t know how long we need to be here.

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Sacred Jungle

After we removed the chutney and relaxed, we proceeded further. Again, we found the same footprints that we found at the start. So, we followed it again. It led us to two tunnels and the foot print stopped. Arun told, “We should take the left tunnel”, but I felt that we should take the right tunnel. After sometime, we decided that we will tear Arun’s bag and make it into a long rope. Both of us will hold on to one end of the rope and walk into the



two tunnels. As I walked into the right tunnel, I slipped and started sliding down. I pulled Arun along with me.

We landed flat butted and screamed. We just lay there and couldn't move a muscle after falling down once again. We just lay for an hour. Finally, we decided to move further. We walked very cautiously. Almost took only one step per minute.

After about, 50 steps, we entered a bright area which had lot of trees. Then a deer wearing some weird clothes came and they started speaking in English to us! We were astonished, that not only was there a jungle inside Earth, but deer were also speaking to us!!

The deer said, "Hello, are you'll humans living on Earth?" We just kept staring at

them with our mouth open. Then the deer came close to us and started examining us. They nudged us and asked again, “Are you going to talk?”

We finally came out of a shock and I asked, “Is this a dream?” The deer replied, “No you are in the Scared Jungle.”



They said, “Why don’t you come with us? We

will take you to someone, who can clear all questions and doubts you have in your mind.” We were very doubtful whether to go with them. We further asked them, “where are we going to?” They replied that they were going to take us to meet the Mayor of the jungle.

We asked them lot of questions and then decided to go with them. On the way, I asked the deer, “How are the trees growing in this jungle?” They replied that the trees get energy from the core of the Earth. Next, Arun asked them, “why are you wearing such dresses?” They replied that, “we are living in a sacred jungle, and so we wear clothes.”

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Lion Mayor

We finally reached a den, when we went in what did we see??? We said “What small office?” “I have something to do” I said. “But why don’t you tell



Mayor.” By the deer. “The Into the creepy den” by Arun. After steps there was light. We took few more steps and there was a lion sitting on a desk with lot of papers! He was so majestic that me and Arun were scared to enter the den.

The deer told us, that we have nothing to worry and he is the Mayor of the jungle! So, we agreed to enter the den and meet the lion. When we entered the den there was magnificent lion who was busy signing some bills.

Arun got scared and told to me that this lion is not signing off bills but the name of the animals whom he is going to eat next. He doubted that it might be us. At that moment the lion looked up and saw us. He welcomed us to the jungle. Arun trembled and told, "hi."

Though I was scared, I said, "hi" boldly, as I felt the lion could help us go back. Lion looked concerned and asked, "are you both fine, as it would have been very tiring if you reached all the way here? Do you'll need anything?"

I said, “we are fine and will just sit down over here.”. The lion then asked, “how you two young boys get over here?” Then we narrated our story. The lion and deer were amazed at how many hurdles we had crossed successfully and reached there.

The lion then offered, “why don’t you’ll go and take rest in a shelter?” Me and Arun were confused that, where will we find a shelter? At that time the lion saw our expression and said, “This jungle is your shelter. These deer will take you to a place where you will be amazed.”

The deer asked the lion on where they should take us. The lion gives them the address.

Reunite

We walked close to an hour with the dear to reach the shelter. It was a big house. When we entered the house, suddenly a small man popped out. We were taken aback and happily surprised to see a human in this sacred jungle.

Somehow, the man looked very familiar to me. I asked, “who are you?”. The man replied, “I am an old man who has been living here for past 12 years.” He immediately asked, “how did you two small boys end up so deep down in this sacred jungle?”

I replied that, “We ended up in a hole 15 feet deep by accident and when we tried to find a way out, we ended up in the sacred jungle.” I then followed it up with a question, “by the way why is this jungle called sacred jungle?” The old man replied, “this jungle is blessed with many precious things and is safely away from humans, that is why it is called the sacred jungle.”

He then asked us if we were hungry. Arun shook his head and said, “Yup, I am feeling very hungry.” The old man brought a basket of delicious looking fruits. Me and Arun immediately dug into it and started eating. We asked the old man, “How he has such delicious fruits, we have never tasted like this before?”. The old man replied, “It all

grows in my backyard. You two can feel free to take it, whenever you'll feel hungry."

As I was eating the fruits and looking at the old man, he resembled my grandfather's photo that my mother had shown. That time the old man started asking Arun, "who is your mother and father?" and Arun replied "My mom is Gayatri K and father is Kaman G." The old man then asked me, "the same goes to you?". I replied that "my mother and father is Marti and father is Srinivas."

He immediately brightened and said, 'My daughter's name is also Marti and son-in-law's name is Srinivas.'" I immediately asked him, "Is your name Krishna?". He was surprised and asked me, "how did you guess it?" I replied, "I have seen your picture that my mother showed. You are my GRANDFATHER!"

He jumped up with joy and hugged me. He enquired about everyone and I told him that I also have a baby sister. I was thrilled and asked him, “don’t you miss us?” He said, “I missed you all a lot but I have a greater purpose to live in this jungle.”

Now you’ll rest here and let me go and ask the Mayor Lion to help in your way back.

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Way back

I immediately stopped him and asked, “What is the great purpose and why can’t you come with us?” He said, “these animals do not have place to live on Earth. I live here to help them out. We as humans should not destroy forests and their home. We have to take effort and find a jungle for the animals to live in.” I said “Why don’t you come back with us. We will discuss with our family members and we can all find a way to help these animals from there.” Suddenly Arun spoke up “When and how can we get back home?” My grandfather replied, “Just wait up boy.”

He went to meet the Mayor Lion and requested for the fastest tunnel digger in the jungle. The Mayor Lion replied, “Yes, I will call the construction team but it will take a while for them to come.” My grandfather came back and said, “why don’t you’ll eat something special in this jungle, while we wait?” We got excited and replied, “We would love to eat it.”

My grandfather got up and went a nearby



tree. He came back with the natural chocolate bar that he plucked from the tree. He said, “This

is the tastiest chocolate and won't melt." Arun jumped up and grabbed the chocolate bar from my grandfather. He broke the bar into two pieces and offered me one of the pieces to eat. It was actually the tastiest chocolate we had ever eaten. Arun then quickly ran to my grandfather's garden and plucked a big Banana leaf. He made it into a bag, and plucked as many chocolate bars he could and started packing it up.

By then the construction team arrived. I saw that all of them were beavers except a bunny. The Mayor Lion told them to help my grandfather. My grandfather instructed them to dig up a tunnel straight up from the spot he showed. The bunny started digging very fast and in a beautiful way.

My grandfather quickly packed up few things for him, bid bye to his jungle friends. And we

all started climbing up behind the construction team. We took an hour to climb up but the bunny reached up way before us.

Home Sweet Home

After a steep climb, we finally came up to Earth's surface and found ourselves in our house garden. Arun thanked my grandfather for the chocolate and went back to his house. We entered our house and everybody was surprised and super happy seeing us both. My sister came and hugged me. My mother came crying to my grandfather and asked him, "where were you for these many years?" Then I narrated the story of how I found my grandfather to my family. My grandfather then narrated on how he found the jungle below and wanted to find out more about the plants and animals living there. He has now come up to

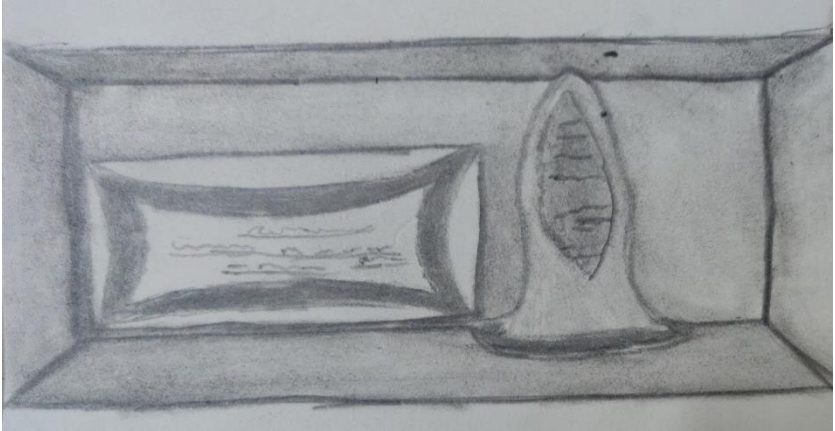
find a new home for them. My mother said, “Okay, but how did you come up over here?” He replied, that we came back through a hole. My mother requested him to stay with us and visit the jungle whenever he wanted, as he has a way to go and come. In the meantime, she suggested that we will try to save this planet by spreading this message to take care of plants and animals. My grandfather agreed and we were all happy. I shared the tastiest chocolates with them.

My father immediately called the school and informed them that I have come back home. They were all interested to know how we got back. We decided to wait before we told the school the story. Next day, we called few human labourers and made them put a secret gate to the hole so that no one could enter from the hole.

When we went to school the next day. We narrated our adventure to the teachers and principal. They were so happy with the way we fought all difficult situations, that they decided to give us trophies in the assembly. Our principal Ma'am asked us to narrate the adventure along with few things we learnt in this adventure.

I told the assembly, "I learnt two lessons from this adventure, one is facing your difficulty and do not quit it. The second lesson is if you take care of plants and animals, you may see the miracle of nature like they can give us a tree giving chocolate bar." And both got two awards. As I went, I screamed with pleasure. My mother said "Be quiet but what was the fun to scream". I screamed "awards!" "fine, fine but don't shout. Okay?" I ran to my room and read certificate award was all about bravery and

trophy award was about plants saving persons. I placed shelf and I came down to normal.



About the Author

Advaith is a Grade 4 student from NPS, Bangalore. A creative person, he thinks out of the box and comes up with wonderful creative renditions from poem to artistic drawing. Having tried his creativity into composing a poem, he is venturing into the unknown territory of writing a fantasy story. An engaging thriller with many twists and turns should help the reader hooked up till the end of the story.

The Sacred Jungle

Advaith and Arun set out on a path to discover a way out but went deeper inside the Earth to discover a hidden secret that no one knows about.

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