

The Ashes that Made trees bloom - B

Not long after that, the good old man dreamed again, and the **spirit** of the dog spoke to him, telling him how the **wicked** people had burned the **mill** made from the pine tree. “Take the **ashes** of the mill, **sprinkle** them on the **withered** trees, and they will **bloom** again,” said the dog-spirit.

The old man **awoke** and went at once to his wicked neighbour’s house, where he found the **miserable** old **pair** sitting at the **edge** of their square **fireplace**, in the middle of the floor, **smoking** and **spinning**. From time to time they warmed their hands and feet with the **blaze** from some **bits** of the mill, while behind them **lay** a **pile** of the broken pieces.

The good old man **humbly** asked for the ashes. Though the **covetous** couple **turned up their noses** at him and **scolded** him as if he were a **thief**, they let him fill his basket with the ashes.

On coming home, the old man took his wife into the garden. It being winter, their favourite cherry tree was **bare**. He sprinkled a **pinch** of ashes on it, and, **lo!** it **sprouted blossoms** until it became a cloud of pink blooms which **perfumed** the air. The news of this filled the village, and everyone ran out to see the **wonder**.



The covetous couple also heard the story, and, **gathering up** the remaining ashes of the mill, kept them to make withered trees blossom.

The kind old man, hearing that his lord, the **daimio**, was to pass along the high road near the village, **set out** to see him, taking his basket of ashes. As the **train approached**, he climbed up into an old withered cherry tree that stood by the **wayside**.

Now, in the days of the daimios, it was the **custom**, when their lord **passed by**, for all the loyal people to **shut up** their high windows. They even pasted them fast with a slip of paper, so as not to **commit** the **impertinence** of looking down on his lordship. All the people along the road would fall upon their hands and knees and remain **prostrate** until the **procession** passed by.

Suddenly the leader of the van **caught sight of** the aged man up in the tree. He was about to **call out** to him in an angry tone, but, seeing he was such an old fellow, he **pretended** not to

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notice him and passed him by. So, when the daimio's **palanquin drew near**, the old man, taking a pinch of ashes from his basket, scattered it over the tree. In a moment it **burst into** blossom.

The **delighted** daimio ordered the train to be stopped and got out to see the wonder. Calling the old man to him, he thanked him and ordered presents of silk robes, sponge-cake, fans and other **rewards** to be given him. He even invited him to his **castle**.

So the old man went **gleefully** home to share his joy with his dear old wife.

But when the **greedy** neighbour heard of it, he took some of the magic ashes and went out on the highway. There he waited until a daimio's train came along and, instead of **kneeling down** like the crowd, he climbed a withered cherry tree.

When the daimio himself was almost directly under him, he threw a **handful** of ashes over the tree, which did not change a **particle**. The wind blew the fine dust in the noses and eyes of the daimio and his wife. Such **sneezing** and **choking**! It **spoiled** all the **pomp** and **dignity** of the procession. The man whose **business** it was to cry, "Get down on your knees," **seized** the old fool by the collar, **dragged** him from the tree, and **tumbled** him and his ash-basket into the **ditch** by the road. Then, beating him soundly, he **left him for dead**.

Thus the wicked old man died in the **mud**, but the kind friend of the dog **dwelt** in peace and **plenty**, and both he and his wife lived to a **green** old age.

Vocabulary

1. **Spirit** (noun) – energy, soul, feeling, आत्मा
2. **Wicked** (adjective) – evil, sinful, immoral, vicious, corrupt दुष्ट
3. **Mill** (noun) – a small machine for grinding a solid substance into powder चक्की
4. **Ash** (noun) – The residue that remains when something is burned राख
5. **Sprinkle** (verb) – scatter, spray, splash, spatter, छिड़कना
6. **Withered** (adjective) – bare and dry मुरझाया हुआ
7. **Bloom** (verb) – to produce flowers फूल का खिलना
8. **Awake** (verb) – wake up, awaken, arouse, जागना
9. **Miserable** (adjective) – unhappy, wretched, depressed, gloomy, dejected दुखी
10. **Pair** (noun) – couple जोड़ा
11. **Edge** (noun) – border किनारा
12. **Fireplace** (noun) – chimney, fireside चूल्हा
13. **Smoke** (verb) – to produce smoke
14. **Spin** (verb) – to turn or to make something turn round quickly तेज़ी से किसी चीज़ को घुमाना
15. **Blaze** (noun) – flame, burn, fire, flash, flare ज्वाला
16. **Bit** (noun) – A small piece or quantity of something
17. **Lay** (verb) – Place, put, set, put down रखना
18. **Pile** (noun) – A collection of objects laid on top of each other ढेर
19. **Humbly** (adverb) – In a humble manner नम्रतापूर्वक
20. **Covetous** (adjective) – greedy, grasping, avaricious, desirous, jealous लोभी
21. **Turn up one's nose** (phrase) – treated him with contempt अपनी नाक फेर लेना
22. **Scold** (verb) – berate, rebuke, reprimand, chide, upbraid डांटना, भला-बुरा कहना
23. **Thief** (noun) – burglar, robber, crook, bandit चोर
24. **Bare** (adjective) – barren, plain बंजर
25. **Pinch** (noun) – the amount of something that you can hold between your finger and thumb एक चुटकी

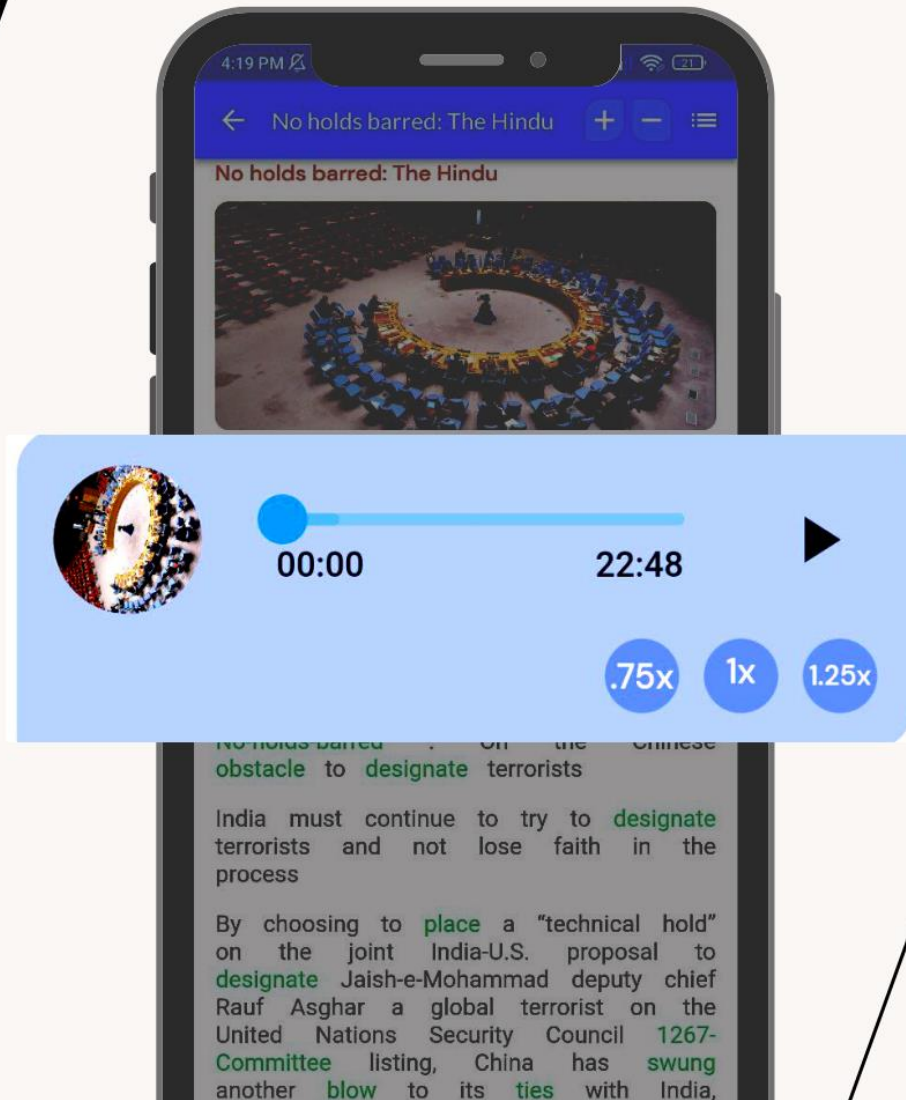
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26. **Lo!** (exclamation) – used to tell people to pay attention and look at something interesting आरे देखो
27. **Sprout** (verb) – germinate, shoot, grow, burgeon, spring up निकलना, अंकुरित होना, जमना
28. **Blossom** (noun) – a flower or a mass of flowers, especially on a fruit tree or bush फूल
29. **Perfume** (verb) – to make the air in a place smell pleasant सुगंधित करना
30. **Wonder** (noun) – miracle, amazement चमत्कार
31. **Gather up** (phrasal verb) – pick up, collect इकट्ठा करना
32. **Daimio** (noun) –(in 19th century Japan) wealthy landowners
33. **Set out** (phrasal verb) – depart प्रस्थान करना
34. **Train** (noun) – procession जुलूस
35. **Approach** (verb) – move near निकट आना
36. **Wayside** (noun) – roadside, किनारे
37. **Custom** (noun) – habit, practice, tradition, convention परम्परा
38. **Pass by** (phrasal verb) – to go past के पास से निकला
39. **Shut up** (phrasal verb) – to close a room, house, etc. बंद करना
40. **Commit** (verb) – Perform करना
41. **Impertinence** (noun) – impudence, insolence, gall, effrontery, cheek अशिष्टता
42. **Prostrate** (adjective) – lying on the ground face downward दंडवत करता हुआ
43. **Procession** (noun) – train, cavalcade, parade, cortege, जुलूस
44. **Caught sight of** (phrase) – glimpse for a moment; suddenly notice. देख लेना
45. **Call out** (phrasal verb) – to ask somebody to come पुकारना
46. **Pretend** (verb) –Make believe with the intent to deceive नाटक करना
47. **Palanquin** (noun) – royal van/ cart पालकी
48. **Draw near** (phrase) – to come closer करीब आना
49. **Burst into** (phrasal verb) – to begin to produce
50. **Delighted** (adjective) – happy, pleased, glad, elated, thrilled खुश

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51. **Reward** (noun) – prize, recompense, award, bonus, repay इनाम
52. **Castle** (noun) – palace, fortress, fort, citadel, stronghold दुर्ग, महल
53. **Gleefully** (adverb) – happily प्रसन्नतापूर्वक
54. **Greedy** (adjective) – grasping, avaricious, avid, covetous, gluttonous लालची
55. **Kneel down** (phrasal verb) – you bend your legs so that your knees are touching the ground घुटना टेकना
56. **Handful** (noun) – A small number or amount मुट्ठीभर
57. **A Particle** (noun) – even a little bit
58. **Sneeze** (verb) – A sudden and violent ejection of air with an audible sound, chiefly through the nose. छींकना
59. **Choke** (verb) – Breathe with great difficulty दम घुटना
60. **Spoil** (verb) – ruin, mess up, damage, screw up, wreck खराब करना
61. **Pomp** (noun) – magnificence, pageantry, grandeur, display, ceremony धूमधाम
62. **Dignity** (noun) – pride, self-respect, nobility, honor, self-esteem गरिमा
63. **Business** (noun) – work कार्य
64. **Seize** (verb) – Take hold of; grab पकड़ना
65. **Drag** (verb) – pull, haul, draw, trail, crawl खींचना
66. **Tumble** (verb) – fall, topple, plunge, drop, पटकना,
67. **Ditch** (noun) – a long channel dug at the side of a field or road, to hold or take away water नाली, गढ़ा
68. **Leave for dead** (phrase) – To abandon or leave behind one because someone assumes one is dead or is going to die मरने के लिए छोड़ देना
69. **Mud** (noun) – muck, slime, sludge, ooze, dirt कीचड़
70. **Dwell** (verb) – live, inhabit, stay, reside, lodge निवास करना
71. **Plenty** (noun) – a situation in which there is a large supply of food, money, etc. प्रचुरता
72. **Green** (adjective) – (here) healthy, active and prosperous

Audio Explanation



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