

## The Talkative Barber

Long long ago a Sultan, whose name was Shahriar, **ruled** over a large kingdom. His queen was a good **storyteller**. Each night she would tell a story to the king. She **narrated ancient** Persian and Arabic folk stories. This is one of the stories, from the Arabian Nights.

In the city of Cashgar, lived a barber who was a great talker. Once the Sultan called the barber to shave his head. The barber started talking non-stop instead of shaving him. The Sultan got angry.

“When are you going to stop talking and begin to do your work?”

The Barber replied, “You **do me an injury** by calling me a **chatterer**. For, everyone says I am very quiet. I have six brothers whom you might call chatterers. Their names are Bacbone (buk-bon), Bakbarea (buk-buria), Bakbac (buk-buk), Alcouz (ul-kooz), Alnaschee (ul-nashi) and Schacabac( shaka-bak). One is **humpbacked**, one is toothless, one is half blind, one is quite blind, one is **deaf** and the other has a defect in his speech and they are all great talkers, but I am the youngest of my family, and I am very quiet and **sparing** with words.”

“Give him three pieces of gold,” the Sultan **cried, losing all patience**, “and send him away. I will not be shaved today.”

“My Master,” cried the Barber, “it was not I who came to seek you, it was you who ordered me to come. So I will not quit your house till I have shaved you.” He then began narrating another story, which **lasted** half an hour. “Stop making your fine speeches and let me go quickly. I have an affair of the greatest importance. I have to go out at noon,” said the Sultan.



When he saw that the Sultan was really angry with him, the Barber said, “O Master, do not be angry, I will begin to shave you.” Saying this, he washed the Sultan’s head and began to shave. But he had not touched him even four times with the razor, when he stopped and said, “My Master, you are acting **hastily** in this matter.”

“Go on shaving me, speak no more”, ordered the Sultan.

“Be patient,” said the barber, “**perhaps** you have not considered well what you were going to do. I wish you would tell me what this matter of great importance is all about and then I will give you my opinion on it.”

“Finish shaving at once,” the Sultan **exclaimed**. But, instead of doing this, the Barber left the Sultan halfshaved to go and see what time it was.

“My patience is **exhausted**,” the Sultan **cried**. “Be calm, my Master and you shall be shaved in a moment,” said the Barber and saying this, he continued shaving the Sultan. But while he was doing this, he could not help talking. “If you could inform me what this important affair is, I would give more advice, which you might find useful,” he said.

The Sultan was completely **fed up** by now and decided to satisfy the barber. He told him that he was giving a **feast** to some friends at noon which was why he was in a hurry to leave.



When the barber heard the Sultan mention a feast he exclaimed, “That reminds me. Yesterday, I invited four or five friends to come to my house today. But I had quite forgotten it and have not made any preparations for them.” The Sultan who was **at the mercy of** the Barber, was ready to do anything to **be rid of** him.

“Be quick and finish your work,” the Sultan replied, “and you shall have all the food that has been prepared for me today.”

“Please show me the food so that I may judge if it is enough for my five friends.”

“I have enough food for you!” the Sultan exclaimed. But he ordered that all the food prepared for his feast be brought in. The Barber looked over the food and said “This is very good but I shall want some fruit for the **dessert** also.”

The Sultan, in **desperation**, since his head was half shaved, ordered that the fruits should also be brought in.



The Barber **left off** shaving the Sultan to **examine** each dish separately.

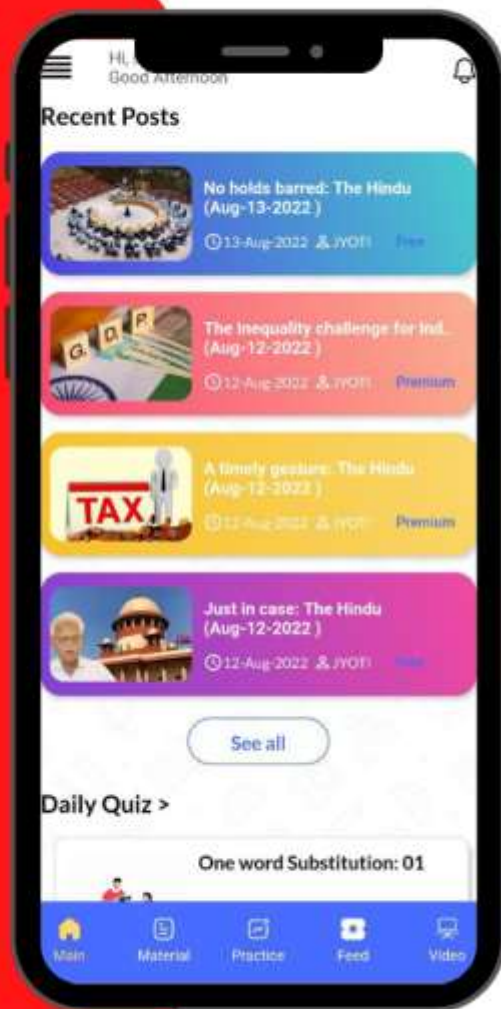
This took up half an hour. The Sultan **stamped his feet impatiently** but the Barber did not hurry.

**At length**, however, he again took up the razor but after a few minutes of work, stopped suddenly and cried, " I never knew that you were so **generous.**"

### Vocabulary

1. **Rule** (verb) – control, command, govern, regulation, order शासन करना
2. **Storyteller** (noun) – Someone who tells a story कहानीकार
3. **Narrate** (verb) – tell, relate, recount, recite, report वर्णन करना/कहानी सुनाना
4. **Ancient** (adjective) – old, antique, elderly, early प्राचीन
5. **Do (oneself or someone) an injury** (noun) – To do something that harms or injures oneself or someone else.
6. **Chatterer** (noun) – someone who talks a lot; Idle, trivial talk; बकवादी/ गप्पी
7. **Humpbacked** (adjective) – having a round raised part on its back कुबड़ा
8. **Deaf** (adjective) – hard of hearing, deafen, indifferent, hearing-impaired बहरा
9. **Sparing** (adjective) – Scanty, meagre, limited; careful कम, अल्प
10. **Last** (verb) – continue for a specified period of time; keep on, go on तक चलना
11. **Hastily** (adverb) – hurriedly, quickly, rapidly, speedily, briskly जल्दबाजी में
12. **Perhaps** (adverb) – Maybe, possibly, perchance शायद
13. **Exclaim** (verb) –To speak suddenly or sharply, as from surprise चिल्लाना
14. **Exhaust** (verb) – Finish, deplete, dissipate, use up समाप्त होना
15. **Cry** (verb) –shout, yell, shriek, roar चिल्लाना
16. **Lose patience** (phrase) – To become or start becoming annoyed, exasperated, or angered (by someone), धैर्य खोना
17. **Fed up** (adjective) – annoyed, unhappy, or bored, especially with a situation that has existed for a long time. तंग आना
18. **Feast** (noun) – A ceremonial dinner party for many people दावत/ भोज
19. **At the mercy of** (phrase) – under the control of someone; without defense against someone. की दया पर
20. **Be rid of** (Phrase) – to be free of an unpleasant person (someone that is unwanted or annoying) से छुटकारा पाना
21. **Dessert** (noun) – sweet, afters, pudding, sweet course, cake मीठा व्यंजन
22. **Desperation** (noun) – despair, despondency, hopelessness, misery, anguish निराशा, मायूसी

23. **Leave off** (phrase) – To stop doing something, typically something that will be resumed later. कुछ करना बंद करना
24. **Examine** (verb) – Inspect, scrutinize, observe परखना
25. **Stamp one's feet** (phrase) – put feet down hard one after another. (usually in anger or frustration).
26. **Impatiently** (adverb) –eagerly, restlessly, anxiously, uneasily अधीरतापूर्वक/ बेसब्री से
27. **At length** (phrase) – after a long time
28. **Generous** (adjective) – liberal, kind, ample, bountiful उदार



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