

# Mriga Putra



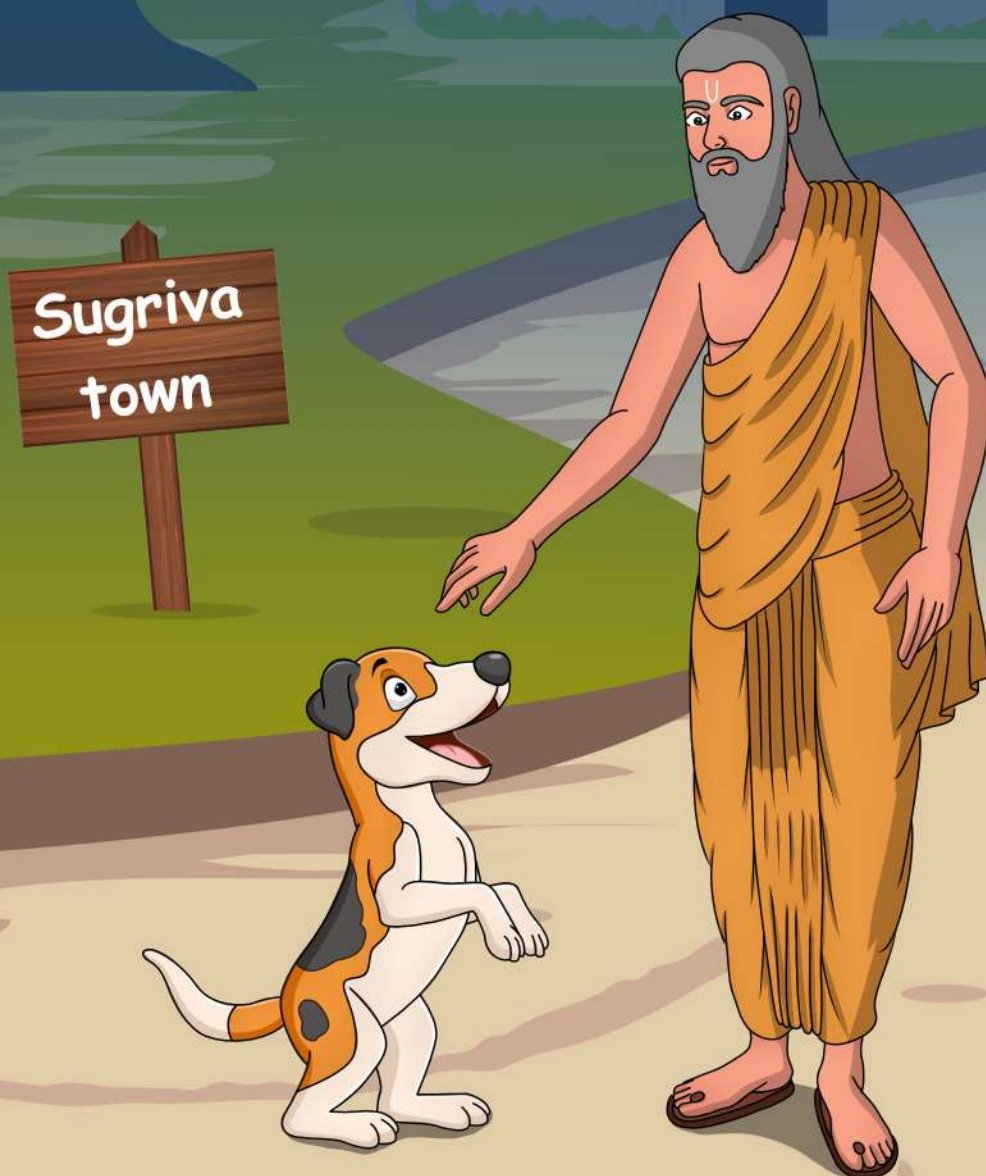
King Balbhadra was the ruler of Sugriva. Mrigavati was his principal queen. Balasri was the crown prince. He was very dear to his parents. Out of Love, he was known as Mriga Putra. The marriage of Mriga Putra was celebrated with great pomp and show. A lot of wealthy ornaments and clothes were received in marriage.



King Balbhadra gave Nandan Palace to his son Mriga Putra. Mriga Putra was enjoying life with his wives like an angel. The wives were very beautiful, intelligent, and obedient. Plenty of comforts and luxuries of life were available to Mriga Putra.



Once, a Jain monk came to Sugriva town. He was observing vows of self-restraint and austerity. He was full of virtue. He had controlled his desires. He had love and compassion for animal and plant life. He had no attraction for worldly things. Gold to him was nothing but a shining stone. He was always looking within. His face was weak but shining with divine luster. Even when the sun was shining bright and it was extremely hot outside but the monk was on the burning road with a smiling face.



Mriga Putra looked at the monk thru the window of his palace. He kept on looking at him. He was finding a great grandeur in the monk. The monk appeared to him a known person. He found great interest in looking at the monk compared to the sweet music in the palace.



Mriga Putra was trying to remember where he had seen such a man before. By seeing the monk with deep attention and pure heart, Mriga Putra recalled his previous birth. It became crystal clear in his thoughts that he was a monk in his earlier life. He had observed the vows of a monk meticulously. He had undertaken austerities. The fruit of his actions is that he was born into a royal family.



He is loved and respected by all. All the sensual pleasures are available to him. He realized that sensual pleasure leads one astray. They do not give real happiness. They end in pain. They cannot save us from the cycle of birth and death. They have no meaning before Divine Happiness - of the soul. So his mode of thinking changed. Earlier he was enjoying sensual pleasures but now he had no interest, no enjoyment, and no happiness in them. He realized that real happiness is in self-control.



He went to his parents and MRIGA PUTRA said:  
O Mother, O Father, I have realized the  
sufferings in the hell and the life of a dreadful  
animal. I have enjoyed sensuous pleasures. They  
are like poisonous fruit. They lead to continuous  
suffering. I have no interest, no happiness in them.  
I have no longer any delight in worldly life. Kindly  
allow me to become a monk.

MOTHER: My dear, you have a tender body. You  
have all the pleasures of life.



MRIGA PUTRA: O mother, the body is not permanent. It is impure. It has been born from impure matter. It is a miserable vessel of suffering. It is a temporary residence. It is like foam or a bubble of water. I shall have to leave it one day. It is an abode of illness and disease. It has two enemies - old age and death. Palace, ornaments, wives, property, and relations are also temporary. I shall have to leave them behind when the death will come. They cannot save me from death.



One, who does not follow Dharma, comes to grief in the next life. He who follows Dharma, who becomes a monk, who observes self-discipline, he does not suffer in next life. When a house is on fire, one takes away valuable things. Now, the whole world is on fire. It is suffering from old age and death. I shall save myself. So please allow me to be a monk.



FATHER: Son, it is difficult to perform the duties of a monk. A monk must have thousands of virtues. He has to be impartial toward everyone--whether friends or enemies. He has to control his anger completely. He is never careless in his speech. He has always to speak the truth and only that truth that does not hurt anyone. He can never tell a lie even out of fun. This is again difficult. He cannot take anything which is not given. He has nothing of his own. He has to beg even for a toothpick. You have lived in the palace. You have many persons to attend on you. This sudden change will be very difficult for you.



A monk has to observe a severe vow of chastity, my dear. You have tasted sensual pleasures. You are young. After enjoying such a happy life, it is difficult to stay away from the company of women. A monk does not take food at night. During the day also he eats whatever he gets in his wanderings for begging. Sometimes he gets tasteless food. But he has to bear with it. He cannot keep anything for the night or the next day. He has to bear with hunger and thirst, heat and cold. This life of a monk is a life of self-denial. It is a life full of miseries and miseries alone.



It is very difficult for you. A monk cannot shave; he has to pluck his hair. It will be very difficult for you. You are not yet ready to lead the life of a monk. Self-control is tasteless like a mouth full of sand. It is difficult to cross the river or to swim against the turbulent waves. The same is the case with the life of a monk. It is extremely difficult to observe so many duties.



MRIGA PUTRA: O father and mother, I know these difficulties as you have told. But I am very familiar with these difficulties. I have suffered dreadful pains of body and mind many times. I have undergone the pain of life and death an infinite number of times. In hell, I have suffered more heat than here. I have been roasted several times there. The intensity of cold is a thousand times more than here. I have suffered extreme pain when I was hung on a huge shalmali tree bristling with sharp thorns. I was pushed up and down. I was crushed many times like Sugarcane in the sugar mill. I was screaming for help but nobody came to my aid. I was a great sinner at that time. I was atoning for my sins. I was torn to pieces by wild dogs. I was thrown down and cut. I have been knocked down like an antelope.



Suffering from thirst, I ran towards the river Vaitarni to drink its water but I was killed by flowing currents that were sharper than razor blades. I have been slit, cut, and skinned with sharp-edged razors many times. As a fish, I have been hooked. I have been made to drink burning fat and blood as I had liked wine and liquor in earlier lives. O father, suffering in hell was more painful than any suffering as human beings. I did not get relief even for a second in hell.



FATHER: Son, a man is free to become a monk but it causes great disappointment as a monk cannot take any medicine.

MRIGA PUTRA: Father, you are right but please look at the animals and wild beasts. Who gives them medicine in the forest? A wild animal moves about alone. I shall also move alone like a monk. A wild animal walks about or takes a rest after taking the food. I shall also do the same way meditating on myself. Kindly allow me to become a monk.



PARENTS: Son, go as you please but after accepting the monkhood do not look behind towards the worldly life. Stick to your goal.



Mriga Putra then gave up his claim to the property. He gave up his friends, his wives his sons as one shakes off the dust from the shoes. He became a monk. He observed five vows of non-violence, truth, non-stealing, celibacy, and non-attachment. He practiced five Samitis and three Guptis. He spent his time and energy in mental penance and physical austerities.



He was compassionate to all living beings. He was indifferent to pleasant and unpleasant things, to eating and fasting, to success or failure in getting food in begging. He was breaking his fast once only after every month. He stopped all the reasons for the influx of Karma. He meditated upon himself. Then he obtained self-purification and perfect knowledge, Kevalgnan. Finally, he got liberation.



The moral of this story  
is that real happiness  
lies in self-discipline and  
in controlling passions.

