



Purnima International School

Shree Swaminarayan Gurukul, Zundal

Lesson 2 - The Adventures of Toto

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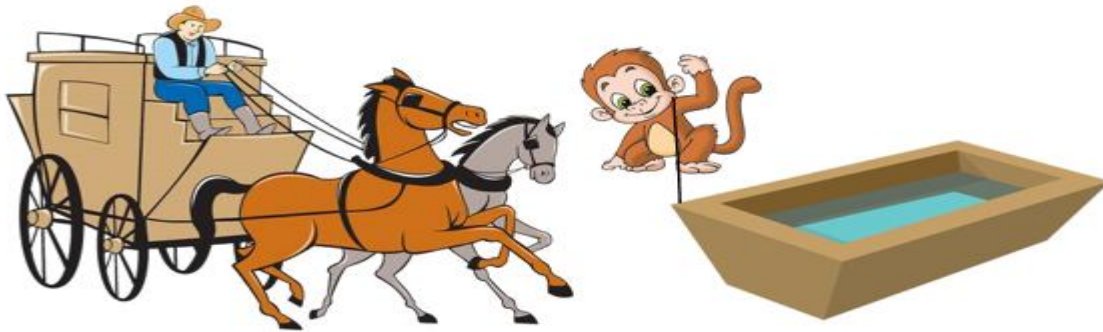


Introduction

This is a humorous and adventurous story of a naughty monkey named 'Toto'. The writer's grandfather bought the monkey from a tonga driver. The pranks played by Toto have been narrated in an interesting way and make the story a must read for us.

Explanation

The writer's grandfather purchased a monkey named Toto from a tonga driver by paying five rupees to him. The tonga driver had tied the little red - coloured monkey to a feeding trough, so that he could not run away. When the writer's grandfather saw the monkey, he had a desire to add him to the collection of a



animals which he had in his zoo at home.

The writer gives a description of Toto. He had bright, shiny eyes which were full of mischief. The eyebrows were deeply set on his face. His teeth were like pearls. Many ladies belonging to the Anglo - Indian community got scared when they saw his teeth which were displayed when he smiled. Toto's hands were dry and wrinkled as if they had been dried in the sun like pickled vegetables. He had a long tail. The writer's grandfather thought that the tail added to the good looks of an animal. Toto's tail was like a third hand for him. It helped him hang from the branch of a tree. He also used it to lift objects which were beyond his hand's reach.

The writer's grandmother was against the grandfather's attitude of bringing new pets - birds and animals. So, the grandfather thought that they would conceal this fact from her until she was in a good mood. At that time, they would disclose this to her. The writer and his grandfather secured

Toto in a little cupboard in the writer's room. In order to be sure that Toto did not escape, they tied him to a hook in the wall.



The writer and his grandfather went to Toto after a few hours. The sight was shocking. Toto had torn the decorative wallpaper. He had broken the hook and had escaped from his binding. Also, he tore the writer's blazer into thin pieces.

"He's clever," said Grandfather. "Given time, I'm sure he could have tied the torn pieces of your blazer into a rope, and made his escape from the window!"

The grandfather was quite delighted to see Toto's adventure. He felt that Toto was very clever. He said that if they would have given him more time, he would have tied the thin pieces of the writer's torn blazer into a rope and would have escaped out of the window.



Toto was shifted to the servant quarter. He was put in a cage. He would live with the other pets in grandfather's zoo. The zoo comprised of a tortoise, a pair of rabbits, a squirrel and the writer's pet goat. Toto was very mischievous. He did not let the animals sleep at night. The writer's grandfather had to leave for Saharanpur the next day. He decided to take Toto along as he was unmanageable.

The writer was disappointed as he could not accompany his grandfather and Toto on the trip. His grandfather narrated the happenings of the trip to him later. He had got a special bag for Toto. It was made of a strong material - canvas. He placed some dry grass at the bottom of the bag. On the trip, the bag would be Toto's home as he would live in it. The bag had a zipper on top of it. The writer's grandfather ensured that when the bag was closed, Toto would not be able to escape out of it. Neither could he come out of the opening as it was closed with a zipper, nor could it bite the strong canvas material in order to run away. Still, Toto made unsuccessful attempts to come out of the bag. Due to this, many times the bag would roll on the floor or it would certainly jump in the air. These movements were *noticed by the people on the railway platform and made them curious to know what was inside the bag.*



Turnstile: a mechanical gate consisting of revolving horizontal arms fixed to A vertical post, allowing only one person at a time to pass through

Toto remained secured in grandfather's bag till Saharanpur. At the Saharanpur railway station, the writer's grandfather was taking out his ticket to cross the turnstile. At that time, Toto peeked out of the bag and smiled at the ticket collector.

The ticket collector was astonished to see a monkey in grandfather's back. He recovered quickly and asked grandfather to pay the ticket money for travelling with a dog.



Grandfather was unsuccessful in explaining to the ticket collector that Toto was a monkey and not a dog. He insisted that Toto was not even an animal with four feet. But the ticket collector was firm that Toto fell in the category of dogs. Grandfather had to pay 3 rupees for Toto's ticket.

Grandfather was disappointed and in order to take revenge from the ticket collector, he took out his pet tortoise from his pocket. He asked if he was supposed to buy a ticket for it too. The ticket collector took a look at the tortoise, pushed it slightly and announced that grandfather was not required to buy a ticket for it as it did not fall in the category of a dog.

The writer's grandmother finally came to know of Toto's presence in the house. She allotted him space in the stable along with the family donkey Nana. On the first night in the stable, grandfather visited Toto. He found Nana restless, pulling its rope in order to stay away from the heap of hay.

Grandfather hit Nana on the back in order to stop it. Nana jumped back with a jerk and Toto was dragged along with her



In the winter season, Toto enjoyed having a warm bath. He would pretend to be selfish and before starting his bath, he would check the temperature of the water. He would copy the writer and stepped into the tub, one foot at a time. Finally, he would sit in the water with his face out of it. Then he would rub himself with soap. When the water became cold, he would run out of it to the stove in the kitchen in order to dry himself. Toto got annoyed if he was laughed upon, he would get hurt and then, refused to take bath. The writer recollects an incident when Toto had almost boiled himself.



In a large kettle, water was boiling on the stove. Toto climbed up to the stove and removed the lid from it. He felt that the water was warm enough for him to take a bath. He entered the kettle with his head out of it. When the water started boiling, it became hot for Toto. He thought of coming out of the kettle but as the temperature outside was cold for him, he stayed in it. Toto kept on jumping in the kettle for a while. It was when the writer's grandmother arrived that she took the half boiled monkey out of the kettle.

If there is a part in our brain that governs our ability to create mischief, then that part in Toto's brain was highly developed as he had great capacity to do mischief. He was always busy doing mischief. Whenever the writer's aunts passed him, he tried to tear their dresses.

The writer recollects another incident when Toto created a lot of mischief. At lunchtime, a dish of rice was placed on the dining table. When the family reached to eat, they found Toto eating it. The writer's grandmother screamed at Toto and in response, he threw a plate at her. When the aunts tried to catch Toto, he threw a glass of water in their face. When the grandfather arrived, Toto left the place through a window with the dish of rice along with him. Toto remained out the entire afternoon. He sat on a branch of the Jackfruit tree, determined to eat all the rice. As the grandmother had screamed on him, he wanted to annoy her further and so, after eating the rice, he threw the dish. It broke into several pieces.

Finally, grandfather realised that Toto was not suitable to be kept at home. They could not afford the frequent losses that he gave them. He tore clothes, curtains, wallpapers and broke dishes. So, the grandfather sold Toto back to the same tonga driver for a sum of three rupees.

