

# Good Will Grow Out of Good

Tales Of The Sun Or Folklore Of Southern India

Indian

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*Intermediate*  
*10 min read*

In a certain town there reigned a king named Patnîpriya, to whose court, a poor old Brâhmi, named Pâpabhîru, came every morning, with a yellow lime in his hand, and presenting it to the king, pronounced a benediction in Tamil:—

Nanmai vidaittâl, nanmai vilaiyum:

Tîmai vidaittâl, tîmai vijaiyum:

Nanmaiyum tîmaiyum pinvara kâlâm.

“If good is sown, then good will grow:

If bad is sown, then bad will grow:

Thus good or bad the end will show.”

The king respected as much the noble benediction of the Brâhma as he did his grey hairs.

In this way the presentation of the fruit continued daily, though the Brâhmi had nothing to request from the king, but simply wished to pay his respects. On observing that he had no ulterior motives, but was merely

actuated by r̥ajas̥vāna, or duty to his king, the king's admiration for his old morning visitor increased the more.

After presenting the fruit the Br̥ahmi waited upon his sovereign till his p̥ujā(worship) was over, and then went home where his wife kept ready for him all the requisites for his own p̥ujā. P̥apabh̥iru then partook of what dinner his wife had prepared for him. Sometimes, however, a Br̥ahmi neighbour sent him an invitation to dinner, which he at once accepted. For his father, before he breathed his last, had called him to his bedside, and, pronouncing his last benediction, had thus advised him in Tamil:—

K̥alai s̥ottai ta

Ka il Ka adai ollāde,

R̥ājanukku payandu na.

“Morning meal do thou never spurn,

Nor say thou what thine eyes discern,

But serve thy king for fame to earn.”

Thus it was that P̥apabh̥iru began his visits to the king, nor did he ever reject an invitation to dinner, though it might come at a very inconvenient time.

Now on a certain êkâda morning, P̥apabh̥iru went to the king to pay his respects as usual, with the lime and the benediction, but found that he had gone to his p̥ujā and so followed him there. On seeing the Br̥ahmi, the king's face glowed with pleasure, and he said:—

“My most revered god on earth, I thought that some ill must have befallen you, when I missed you in the council-hall this morning; but praised be Param̥vara for having sent you to me, though it is a little late. I never do my p̥ujā without placing my scimitar by the side of the god, but last night I left it in my queen's room. It is under the pillow of the couch on which I usually sleep. Until you came I could find no suitable person to fetch it for me, and so I have waited for you. Would you kindly take the trouble to fetch it for me?”

The poor Br̥ahmi was only too glad of the opportunity thus presented to him of serving his king, and so he ran

to the harem and into the room where the king usually slept. The queen was a very wicked woman and always having secret meetings with courtiers of her husband, so when Pâpabhîru returned he surprised the queen and one of her lovers walking in the garden, he went through, however, to the king's room, and lifting up the king's pillow felt for the scimitar, and went away. True however, to his father's words, "Nor say thou what thine eyes discern," he never opened his lips and went his way with a heavy heart.

The queen and her wicked suitor were greatly alarmed.

"That rogue of an old Brâhmi× has seen us and may report to the king at the first opportunity," faltered the minister.

But the queen, as bold in words as in sin, said; "I will have him murdered before the sun rises. Wait you here. I shall inform the king of what is to be done and report the result to you, and then you may go home."

So saying, she went and stood before her royal husband who was at his worship. Patnîpriya rose up and asked her the reason of her sudden appearance.

Said she, "Your Majesty seems to think the whole world as innocent as yourself. That wretched old Brâhmi×, though his hair is as white as milk, has not forgotten his younger days, he asked me to run away with him. If you do not order his death before to-morrow morning, I shall kill myself."

The king was much vexed with what he heard, and all the regard he had for the Brâhmi× disappeared at once. He called two of his executioners and spoke to them thus before his wife:—

"Take to the east gate of the town a large iron caldron, and keep it boiling to the brim with gingely oil. A certain person shall come to you in the morning and ask you, 'Is it all done?' Without observing who he is, tie his hands and feet and throw him into the boiling oil. When he has been boiled to death, put out the fire and empty out the oil."

The executioners received the order and went away to perform their terrible duty. The queen, too, glad at heart at having thus successfully arranged for the murder of the Brâhmi~~×~~, reported the fact to the minister, but said nothing about the special question to be put by the victim. The minister, much pleased, went to his palace and waited for news of the Brâhmi~~×~~'s death.

When his pûjâ was over the king sent for Pâpabhîru, and the poor Brâhmi~~×~~, never having before been sent for at such a time, made his appearance with a beating heart. When he arrived the king, in order to arouse no suspicion in his mind, said gently to him:—

“My dear Brâhmi~~×~~, to-morrow morning, when you go to make your ablutions, pass by the east gate. There you will see two persons seated by the side of a large caldron. Ask them, ‘Is it all done?’ And whatever reply they give you, come and communicate to me.”

Thus spoke the king, firmly believing that Pâpabhîru would never return to him; while the Brâhmi~~×~~, glad to be able to serve the king a second time next morning, went home and slept soundly. Early in the morning, even a gha~~×~~ikâ before his usual time, he got up, and, placing on his head a bag containing dry clothes, proceeded to the river for his morning bath. He took the road to the eastern gate as he had been ordered, but had not walked far when a friend invited him to a dvâda~~×~~î breakfast.

“My poor old mother did not taste even a drop of water the whole of the êkâda~~×~~î, (yesterday). Rice and hot water for a bath are ready. Pour a little of the water over your head(a small vessel), pronounce one gâyatrí(a sacred hymn) and taste a handful of rice. Whatever may be the urgency of your business, oblige me for my poor mother’s sake.”

Thus spoke his friend, and Pâpabhîru, out of regard to his father’s order never to spurn a morning meal, ran in haste into his friend’s house to oblige him; the king’s order all the while sitting heavily on his mind.

Meanwhile the minister was most anxious to hear the news of the Brâhmi~~×~~'s death, but was afraid to send any one to inquire about it, lest he should arouse suspicion. So he went himself to the east gate, as soon as the sun had risen, and asked the executioners, sitting by the side of the caldron, by way of a simple question: “Is the business all done?” And as they were instructed not to observe who the person was that came to question them, but to tie him up and boil him in the oil, they, notwithstanding his howls, bound him and threw him in. As

soon as he was dead, they extinguished the fire, poured out the oil, turned over the caldron, corpse and all.

The Brâhmi finished his dvâda breakfast, in great haste, and, with the betel leaf still in his hand, ran to the gate to inquire of the persons seated by the caldron whether it was all done. When he put them the question, they smilingly replied:—

“Yes, Sir, it is all done. The minister is boiled to death. We gave full execution to the king’s orders. You may go and report the affair to him.”

The Brâhmi, not knowing the reason for the course events had taken, ran back and reported the reply of the executioners to the king. The minister’s interference in the affair at once kindled suspicion in the king’s mind. He unsheathed his scimitar, and holding it in his right hand, twisted the lock of hair on the Brâhmi’s head into his left. He then asked him whether he had not tried to get his wife away from him the previous morning, and told him that, if he concealed the truth, he would make an end of him. The poor Brâhmi now confessed what he had seen, on which the king threw down the scimitar and fell down on his knees before him.

“The words of thy benediction, O respected Brâhmi, have only now been explained to me. Thou hast sown nothing but good; and good in having thy life preserved, hast thou reaped. The wicked minister—whose conscious guilt made him so very anxious to hear about thy death—because he sowed a bad intention in his heart has reaped evil, even a death that he never expected. Another victim of evil sowing, remains in my queen, in whom I placed an undeserved love.”

So said he, and ordered her to the gallows. The old Brâhmi he appointed his minister and reigned for a long time.

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