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THE POT OF OLIVES

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BOOK IV

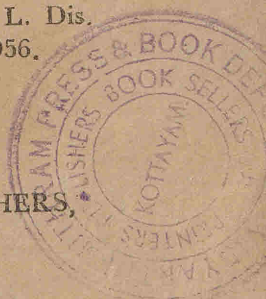
THE POT OF OLIVES

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THE POT OF OLIVES

1. THE MERCHANT OF BAGDAD

Once there lived in Bagdad a good merchant. His name was Ali Khwaja. Ali was a good Muslim. He was a god-fearing man. He prayed[1] to God six times every day and he was kind to the poor.

One day Ali had a dream[2]. He dreamt that he was in Mecca. He dreamt that he went to the holy[3] places and prayed to God.

Ali woke[4] up. He saw that it was only a dream. He thought no more about it.

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1. prayed—പ്രാർത്ഥിച്ചു Mecca (മെക്ക)
2. dream സ്വപ്നം (സ്വപ്നംകാണുക) dream, dreamt
3. holy places—പുണ്യസ്ഥലങ്ങൾ
4. woke—ഉണർന്നു wake, woke

Next day also he had the same dream. Again he dreamt that he was in Mecca. Again he woke up and saw that it was only a dream.

On the third day too Ali had the same dream. For the third time, he dreamt that he was in Mecca.

Then he woke up and said, "This dream has come to me three times. It means that God wants me to go to Mecca. So I must go there."

Next day he closed his shop. He sold everything in it and got a thousand mohurs.

Then he sold his shop for five hundred mohurs. He had a house in the city. He sold it for five hundred mohurs. Then Ali had two thousand mohurs with him.

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mohur – ഒരു സ്വർണ്ണനാണയം.

Ali counted[1] the coins[2] and said, "I don't want so much money to go to Mecca. I want only one thousand mohurs for that. Then I have one thousand mohurs left. What shall I do with it? I should not take all the money with me."

He thought about it for a long time. Then he said, "I have a good friend named Hassan. He is a rich merchant. He keeps his things in a strong room at the back of his house. I will put my gold in a pot and keep the pot in that strong room. I won't[4] tell him that there is gold in it. But I will cover up

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1. counted—എണ്ണി count, counted
2. coin—നാണയം.
3. don't—do not.
4. won't—will not.

the gold with olives. Hassan will think it is only a pot of olives."

Ali went to the market and bought some olives. He brought them home. He put the gold pieces into the pot. Then he filled the pot with olives. The olives covered up the gold. Then he closed the mouth of the pot and took it to his friend, Hassan.

Hassan was sitting in his shop when Ali came with the pot.

"What is that in your hand?" asked Hassan.

"A pot of olives," he answered. "I am going to Mecca. I have only this pot of olives left. Let me keep it in your strong room. I shall take it back when I come back from Mecca."

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olive—a kind of fruit.

"All right," said Hassan, "you may keep it in the room. I shall take good care of it."

He gave Ali the key. Ali went up to the room, opened it and kept the pot in a corner.

"My money is now safe," said he to himself. "For Hassan will never know that there is gold in the pot."

Ali came out of the room, locked it and gave back the key to Hassan.

"Thank you," said Ali as he took leave of him.

That very day Ali went off to Mecca.

TEST:- Fill up the blanks choosing the right words from those given in brackets.

1. Ali was a ——.
   (farmer, priest, merchant).
2. He was a good and —— man.
   (wise, god-fearing, clever).
3. One day he had a ——.
   (fall, dream).
4. He dreamt that he was in ——.
   (Delhi, Syria, Mecca).
5. He had the same dream ——.
   (twice, thrice, seven times).
6. So he sold his house and shop for —— mohurs.
   (a thousand, two thousand, three thousand).
7. He put a thousand mohurs into a ——.
   (box, pot, well).
8. He covered it up with ——.
   (sand, olives, dates).
9. He gave it to —— —— to keep.
   (Kwaja, Hassan, Haran).
10. Then he took a thousand mohurs and went off to ——.
    (London, Bagdad, Mecca).

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2. THE SLAVE

In those days it was not safe to travel alone. There were robbers who killed travellers[1] and took away everything they had.

So Ali Khwaja did not travel alone. He joined a party[2] of men going to Syria. They had camels on which they travelled. Ali bought a camel for himself and set out with them.

They crossed the desert safe and came to Syria. The next day he met some merchants who were going south. They were going to Mecca. Ali joined the party and set off to Mecca.

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1. traveller—യാത്രക്കാരൻ.
2. party—സംഘം.

They travelled through the hot desert for many days and came to Medina. They stayed in the city for three days and then went off to Mecca.

At Mecca Ali stayed[1] for three weeks. He visited[2] all the holy places. Good Muslims from all parts of the world had come to Mecca. He talked to them and was very happy.

"God's will is done," said he. "I have seen Mecca. Now I shall go back to Bagdad."

He joined a party of men going north and set out with them. When they had gone half way, they met some men coming from Syria.

"The road is not safe," they said. "Some robbers came and killed

1. stayed—lived. 2. visited—ಭೇಟಿ ಕೊಟ್ಟ.

three of our men. They carried off our goods. But we escaped from their hands and came away."

Ali and his friends were afraid when they heard this? He did not know what to do.

"God's will be done," said they. "May God help us."

They had their swords with them. They got them ready.

"Let the robbers come. We shall drive them away," said they.

The very next day the robbers came. There were more than forty of them. Ten of them got behind the party.

"We won't allow them to go back," said they.

Then they fell upon Ali and

Fell upon—ആക്രമിച്ചു.

his friends. There was a fight. But it did not last long. Many of Ali's friends were killed. The others ran away and escaped. But Ali fell into the hands of a robber.

The robber tied Ali's hands and feet and took him to their chief.

"How much money have you ?" the chief asked him.

Ali showed him his bag. He had only fifty mohurs with him.

The robbers took the bag from him.

"We shall sell him for a hundred mohurs in Syria," said the chief to his men.

The robbers set off to Syria with Ali. One of them rode on his

---

set off—started.

camel. Ali was allowed to sit behind him. In this way they came to Syria.

The robbers took Ali to the slave market at Damascus. Ali was young and strong. So they sold him for a hundred and twenty mohurs.

Ali's new master was an Arab merchant. He had a shop in Damascus. He wanted a man for the shop. So he sent Ali to work there.

The Merchant had three other slaves. He gave them good food and was very kind to them. But he was a very careful man. He did not allow them to escape.

Four years passed in this way.

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slave — গোলাম.

Then the merchant fell ill and died. On the day he died, Ali escaped from the house. He had some money with him. He had also a set of new clothes. He changed his clothes and ran away from the city.

At the city gate an officer stopped him.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"I am a merchant from Bagdad," he answered. "I had been to Mecca and I am now going home.

Ali had changed his dress. So the officer did not know he was a slave. He allowed him to go.

Soon a party of merchants came that way. They were going to Bagdad. Ali joined them and they travelled together. At last they came to Bagdad.

TEST:- Fill up the blanks choosing the right words from those given in brackets.

1. Ali went to ——.
   (Syria, Bagdad, Mecca).

2. Then he set off to go to ——.
   (Syria, Bagdad, Mecca).

3. On the way, he fell into the hands of some ——.
   (soldiers, robbers, merchants).

4. They sold Ali as a —— to an Arab merchant.
   (teacher, slave, merchant).

5. He lived with the merchant for —— years.
   (two, four, ten).

6. Then he escaped and came back to ——.
   (Mecca, Medina, Bagdad).

3. OLIVES.

Six months before Ali came back to Bagdad, Hassan said to his wife, "It was two years ago that Ali went away to Mecca. He has not yet come back."

"Perhaps he is dead," said his wife.

Hassan had a little son. One evening the boy went out to play.

Then the boy from the next house came there. He was eating something.

"What are you eating?" Hassan's son asked.

"Olives," said the other boy.

"Won't you give me some?" he asked.

"No," said the other boy. "I won't." Then Hassan's son began to cry.

His mother heard him crying and came out.

"Why are you crying?" she asked. "What do you want?"

"Give me some olives to eat," said the boy weeping.

She had no olives in the house. So he said, "I will give you sweets."

"I don't want sweets," cried the boy. "I want olives only. Give me olives."

He went on crying and would not stop.

It was night when Hassan came home. He heard the boy crying.

"Why is the boy crying?" He asked his wife. "What does he want?"

"He wants to eat olives," said she, "but I have no olives to give him. What am I to do?"

"Olives?" said Hassan. "Does he want olives?"

He knew that there were olives in Ali's pot which was in the strong room at the back of the house.

"I have some olives in the room at the back," said he to his wife.

"We have not kept any olives there," said his wife. She did not know anything about Ali's pot.

"Ali has kept a pot of olives in that room," said he. "I shall take a few olives from the pot."

"Those olives are his," said she, "we must not take them."

"I shall take only two or three olives from his pot," said Hassan, "and give them to the boy."

He took a lamp and went into the room. The pot was in a corner. He tried to lift it with one hand. But it was very heavy.

"This pot is heavy," said he to himself.

He lifted it with both his hands.

"It is very very heavy," said he. "Why is it so heavy ?"

He took off the lid and took some olives out of it. He looked at them.

"These olives are bad," said he. "They are not good to eat."

Then he saw something shining among them. He was surprised at what he saw.

"What is it?" he asked and looked at it carefully.

"It is gold!" said Hassan. "It is mohur."

At once he knew why the pot was so heavy.

"It is filled with gold," said he.

He emptied the pot on the floor. There were a thousand gold mohurs in it!

Hassan was not a good man. He loved money too much.

"I will take the gold for myself," said he, "and fill the pot with olives."

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emptied—ഒഴിച്ചു. ഒന്നുമില്ലാതാക്കി. empty×fill

So he took all the gold for himself. Next day he bought some good olives and put them into the pot.

"I will keep the pot in the corner," said he, "and nobody will know that I have opened it."

He did not tell even his wife about it.

The days went by. At last Ali came to Bagdad.

At once he went to Hassan and said, "Friend, I have come back from Mecca. How do you do?"

"O! Thank you," said Hassan. "I am very glad to see you again."

"I have come to take my pot of olives," said Ali. "May I take it, please?"

"It is in the room where you left it," said Hassan. "I shall give you the key. You may go and take it from there."

He gave Ali the key. Ali went to the room at the back and opened it. He saw the pot in the corner.

"It is where I left it," said he to himself. "Thank God for it."

He took up the pot in his hand.

"It is not heavy !" said he. "Has someone opened this in my absence ? "

He took off the lid and looked in with eyes wide open.

"There are olives in it," said he. "Let me see if the gold too is there."

He put his hand into the pot and looked for the gold. It was not there !

"Somebody has taken away my gold," said he. "What shall I do now ? "

He emptied the pot on the floor. But there was not even one piece of gold in it.

"My gold is gone," cried he.

He put the olives into the pot and ran to Hassan.

"Somebody has opened the pot," said he. "Who has done it ? "

"I did not open it," said Hassan.

"I kept a thousand gold mohurs in it," said Ali. "They are not there now."

"What !" cried Hassan. "You said it was a pot of olives."

"But there were a thousand pieces of gold in it," said Ali.

"I know nothing about the gold," said Hassan. "Please do not talk to me about your gold."

"You have taken my gold," said Ali. "Give it back to me or I will call the kazi.[1]"

The kazi was the magistrate.[2]

"You may tell the kazi or you may tell even the Caliph, but I have not taken your gold," said Hassan.

So Ali went to the kazi and told him the whole story.

"Did any one see you put gold into the pot?" he asked.

"No," said Ali.

"Can you show that you are not telling a lie?" asked the kazi.

Ali had no answer to give.

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1. kazi—an officer. 2. magistrate—ന്യായാധിപൻ.

"There is nothing against, Hassan," said the kazi. "People say he is honest. I don't think he has taken your money. I can do nothing for you."

So saying, he sent Ali home.

TEST:- Fill up the blanks choosing the right words from those given in brackets.

1. Hassan's son wanted —— to eat. (sweets, dates, olives).

2. Hassan took some olives from ——. (his shop, Ali's pot)

3. Then he saw the —— in the pot. (olives, gold, water).

4. He took the gold from the pot and filled it with ——. (gold, olives, water).

5 After —— months, Ali came back. (forty, six, two).

6. He saw that Hassan had taken his ——. (pot, olives, gold).

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honest — [illegible]
honest × dishonest

7. He told the —— about it.
(Caliph, kazi, merchant).
8. But the kazi —— find out the truth.
(could, could not).

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4. THE CALIPH

At that time Haroun Al Rashid was the Caliph of Bagdad. He was a great man.

Ali made up his mind[1] to go to the Caliph and tell him about it. So he took a piece of paper and wrote out everything.

On the next Friday he went to the mosque[2] and waited at the gate.

The Caliph came to pray there every Friday. After prayer[3] he came out. When he came to the gate, Ali went up to him and said. "O Caliph, I have something to tell you."

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1. made up his mind—തീർച്ചയാക്കി
2. mosque—പള്ളി 3. prayer—പ്രാർത്ഥന.

The Caliph stopped and asked, 'What have you to tell me?"

Then Ali gave him the piece of paper and said, "I have written out everything on it."

The Caliph read the paper and said, "Come to me tomorrow."

Ali thanked the Caliph and went away.

Next day he went to the Caliph's palace. The Caliph had sent for Hassan and he had come with the pot of olives.

Presently the Caliph came into the hall and sat down.

"Are you Ali Khwaja?" he asked Ali.

"Yes," said Ali.

"Stand there," said the Caliph.

Ali stood on the right side of the Caliph.

"Are you Hassan ?" the Caliph asked the merchant.

"Yes," said Hassan.

He stood on the left side of the Caliph.

"This is not an easy thing," said the Caliph. "Ali says there was gold in the pot. Hassan says he has not taken it. One of you is telling a lie. I am sure about it.

"I am not telling a lie," said Hassan. "I have not taken his gold."

"I speak only the truth," said Ali.

"Well," said the Caliph. "Both of you cannot be true. One is telling a lie. I want to know the truth."

Then he turned to Ali and asked, "Did you keep gold in the pot ?"

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lie—കള്ളം. truth—സത്യം.

"Yes," said Ali.

"How much gold?" he asked.

"A thousand pieces of gold," Ali answered.

"Did any one see it?" asked the Caliph.

"No," said Ali. "No one saw it."

Then he turned to Hassan and said, "Ali left the pot in your house. It was with you when Ali was away. Only you could have taken the gold from it. Tell me, did you take his gold?"

"No," said Hassan, "I did not take his gold."

The Caliph sat thinking for a long time. Then he said, "Give me the pot."

They gave it to him.

He looked at it carefully. Then he took some olives and looked at them.

"When did you place the pot in his room?" the Caliph asked Ali.

"Four years ago," answered Ali, "when I went to Mecca."

"Is it right?" the Caliph asked.

"Yes," answered Hassan. "It was four years ago."

Then he took an olive and gave it to Hassan.

"Look at this olive," he asked, "How old is it?"

Hassan took it and said, "Four years."

But the Caliph said, "It is not even an year old."

Then the Caliph sent for his gardener. When he came the Caliph asked, "Look at these olives. Tell me how old they are."

The gardener, looked at the olives and said, "Six months. They are only six months old."

Then the Caliph turned to Hassan and said, "These olives are only six months old. That means you took Ali's gold and put new olives in the pot six months ago. Now tell me the truth or I will kill you."

Hassan saw that he was caught.

"You are right," said he, "I took the gold from the pot and put new olives in it."

"You have told me the truth now," said the Caliph. "So I won't kill you. But give him his thousand mohurs. Pay a thousand mohurs as fine."

Hassan gave a thousand mohurs to Ali. He had to pay another thousand mohurs as fine.

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fine—دانڈ.

Thus Ali got back his money and the dishonest Hassan lost a thousand mohurs.

Ali was very happy when he got back his money.

"God is great," said he and he thanked the wise Caliph.

TEST:- Fill up the blanks choosing the right words from those given in brackets.

1. Haroun Al Rashid was the — of Bagdad. (emperor, king, Caliph).

2. He was a very —— man. (bad, old, wise).

3. The Caliph looked at the olives and saw they were only —— old. (five years, two days, six months).

4. He knew that —— had taken the gold. (Ali, Hassan, Hassan's son).

5. Hassan gave back the gold to ——. (his son, his wife, Ali

6. He paid a —— of a thousand mohurs. (price, fine, fee).

FINAL TEST

Complete the following sentences choosing the right word from those given in brackets.

1. Ali Khwaja was a merchant of ——.
   (Mecca, Delhi, Bagdad).

2. He lived during the time of Caliph ——.
   (Aran, Haroun, Herod).

3. He dreamt that he went to ——.
   (Delhi, Mecca, Rome).

4. He had the same dream —— times.
   (two, three, seven).

5. So he sold his —— to go to Mecca.
   (horse, shop, fields).

6. He put — thousand pieces of gold in a pot. (a, two, three).

7. He covered it up with ——.
   (dates, sand, olives)

8. Then it looked like a pot of ——.
   (gold, olives, sweets).

9. He placed the pot in the house of ——. and went away to Mecca.
   (Haroun, Ali, Hassan).

10. When he was coming back from Mecca some —— took him prisoner.
(merchants, Arabs, robbers).

11. They sold him to a merchant and he lived with him for —— years
(two, four. eight).

12. Then he escaped and came back to ——
(Mecca, Medina, Bagdad).

13. When he came back, —— had taken the gold from the pot.
(the Caliph, Hassan, the boy).

14. Hassan had filled it with new ——.
(dates. olives, sweets).

15. Ali told —— about it
(his wife, Hassan, the Caliph).

16. The Caliph sent for —— but he said he had not taken the gold.
(Hassan, Ali, the gardener)

17. Then the Caliph looked at the olives and saw they were only —— old.
(four years, six months, two days).

18. He knew that —— had taken the gold
(Ali, Hassan, the gardener).

19. So Hassan had to give the gold to ——.
(the Caliph, Ali the Kazi).

20. The Caliph fined him ——.
(ten rupees, a thousand, mohurs).

Hamlet



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