

Tales from the Mad Fairy

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Superintendent Yubeedamn

Superintendent Yubeedamn was head of his division. Under his command were officers like sergeant Bozo, sergeant Mc Loud, lieutenant Quail, constable Piggott, constableness Rosasharn, and a Chinese guy titled constable Bum Fatt.

As you may be guessing, the town was a hot bed of mischief and crime, as long as this mickey mouse force had the job of watching over it. A spate of kidnappings had been hitting the area for six months. One day, the super decided to get busy, and called his men together.

“As we have been hearing and reading, there is series of crimes taking place on a daily basis, and the situation is becoming very serious. I know that you boys are a ring of jokers, but I would like to see us wake up and take action. You sit around here all day jerking off, and my precinct is getting a bad name that we ain’t doing nothing. Our reputation must not be spoiled. I want to see some arrests being made!”

“But Mr. Yubeedamn, we have just been doing whatever you tell us,” answered Bozo.

“I want strict silence when I speak. Now just go out and hold someone before I blow up all of you!”

Bozo, Piggott, Quail and the rest of the gang, left with caffeinated heads looking for someone to pay the cake, while the boss and constableness Rosasharn remained behind to clear up the coffee cups, and make private interchanges.

“Now I always tell these fools to act like they are doing something for their money, never mind what I do, but they won’t hear me.” he complained to himself.

An hour later the group came back with a catch all done up in handcuffs.

“I am an innocent man with family. How could you charge me for kidnaping without any proof whatsoever,” he pleaded.

“Don’t worry, we will come up with evidence,” the superintendent assured the distressed prisoner.

“Bozo, Piggott, and Quail, get busy fixing up some evidence on this guy, before I give him a good beating for verbal abuse, or his lawyer gets here!” He ordered. ”Bum Fatt make yourself useful. Put on coffee to brew, immediately !”

Eventually Rosasharn emerged from Yubeedamn’s room ,where she was resting, and almost fainted.

“You have arrested my poor uncle, you dick-heads! What is the reason for this? Get him out of here at once !” she trembled with rage.

“Well we couldna find no one else, and it was getting close to mealtime so we just hauled him in,” explained Piggott,

“Set him free if you know what is good before I set Yubee on all of you,” she howled.

The man was freed and the quaking gang headed out once again to try their luck, before Yubeedamn reentered the scene. Just around the block, they encountered a loitering student with a grown beard and extremely dark sunshades. “He looks like a terrorist all right,” thought Bozo, so the man was dragged in.

Yubeedamn had heard of the previous arrest from the lady officer, so he asked with caution eyeing her, “Is this man related to anyone here?”

“No,” everyone chimed.

“O K. Cool runnings. Quail and others get working on collecting evidence,” and with that he went back into his room, with a package of cigarettes and the coffee pot.

Around ten pm the crew retired to take rest for the night, when the radio signal started to buzz. Emergency! It was constable Piggott who had gone out for night breeze — he wanted to know if anyone was interested in fast food — what would they like. Everyone placed their orders, and even Quail, who was not related to the famous politician named Dan, woke up for a share of the midnight feast.

Bum Fatt was a local recruit who was hired just to increase numbers, and he was being trained by his seniors in police matters. So he was taken outside for solo marching instructions, under the directions of Mc Loud.

“Left right. Left right,” went Mc Loud.

“I mean march! not wagging your fat bum from left to right,” he continued to scream.

“But we are in June, sir, it’s not March as yet.”

“Like this,” and he showed the constable how to do it.

“Left right. Left right,” Bum Fatt imitated, and raced back inside to put up coffee for the super.

“I’ll wring your neck,” Mc Loud screeched, though he was quite glad that the session was so short.

That night he took an urgent telephone call — there was an armed robbery two blocks away, and police assistance was requested.

“Tomorrow after breakfast we will send someone over. Go to sleep and try to rest it off for now,” he shouted over the phone. The tired crew went to rest early that night.

“Let it be known,” Yubeedamn was saying one day, “that no citizen shall carry mace or pepper spray, once I am in charge of this precinct. If these things go off, innocent people will be injured. It will always be outlawed once I am in charge. Those who are qualified to use these items will have to fill up the necessary applications and apply for a license. A permit may be granted in a year time if I approve of the application.”

Mc. Loud, as usual, was delegated to issue the press release.

And innocent people who were denied mace and pepper spray were kidnaped, raped, and robbed, while the Yubeedamn upheld strict laws prohibiting their use. The head of this amazing court of errors issued another decree:

“Let it be known that possession of arms of any sort, including firearms is illegal. Innocent persons could be harmed. No one in this town, including you officers should be armed. Any queries on this matter should be forwarded to me.”

He sat back and waited for to be applauded by the media, but was disappointed after a very short while. The only gun toters in town then were criminals, for Yubeedamn had deemed it so.

The officers planned a party for Rosasharn’s birthday, and the police station was swinging that night. Music blasted accompanied by eating, drinking and

merrymaking. A neighbor appeared to lodge a complaint because he could not sleep. Mc Loud tried to bribe him.

“Please come in and have some cake.” He did, and that calmed him down for the time. Next day the papers printed that that the public was extremely fed up with Yubeedamn and his screwy side-kicks.

There were ongoing murders, robberies and rapes, but the police battalion was on full time holiday, so it seemed. Kidnaping was rampant, while the super and his men played it cool. One day he called another meeting.

“Officers, things are getting quite out of hand, from what I hear. We gotta show the public that we are doing something. I want you to start arresting people, for anything at all. Just try to bring in a dozen or so this week. I’ll call the media and let them know that we’re not sitting idle. We asked for a pay hike and we got it. We complained about vehicles and each of you have a brand new Toyota Land Cruiser. You have new uniforms, free lodging, free food. Let’s try to get some work done in this place for once and for all,” he tried to fire them up.

“I know that none of you, and I’m speaking to sergeant Bozo, sergeant Mc Loud, lieutenant Quail, constables Piggott and Bum Fatt, ain’t got it together to handle no murders and kidnaping. But please officers, show some signs of responsibility and come up with something to put on the papers.”

The pep talk shot up their adrenalin and they went out a crime busting with full force. They also had to work out to slow down the effects of fast foods. A vengeance against criminals flowed in their blood. Energy from all day eating and drinking to be channeled into something, before it destroyed them. Also it was the only way to get Yubeedamn off their backs.

‘Operation Anaconda’ was thereby launched, and publicized in banners, on the TV, radio and newspapers. A week after, the press was flooded with related headlines.

On Monday it was : Man arrested for larceny. The story was that a man was arrested for picking a fruit from a tree on government owned property. On Tuesday the big broadcast was that a boy was held for urinating on public lands. Wednesday’s news was that a woman was held for shoplifting bread ; Thursday, an old lady taken for questioning for illegally selling water on the street; Friday an old man was jailed for driving too slow, and it went on like that for a few more more days.

“Great work ! I know you all can work hard when you want to,” congratulated the chief. “Now they can’t accuse us of getting paid for nothing,” he flattered his team on their success. “The murders and kidnaping are going on, but that is not our fault. We are doing everything we possibly can under the circumstances.”

So while the public reeled, and bawled for murder, the mongoose gang resumed cards, coffee drinking and merry making.

Next morning sergeant Bozo noticed in the paper reports of citizens protesting that this ‘Anaconda’ was just ballyhoo, a show meant to pull the wool over their eyes, and that helpless citizens were being harassed by police. A couple was kidnaped, a girl was missing, and Anaconda’s lips were sealed as usual.

Mc Loud addressed the press next day.

“We are doing everything in our power to solve these crimes. We ask the public to bear with us as we continue to mount investigations. We have sent out search dogs everywhere to locate bodies if the victims have been killed. So we ask their loved ones to be patient until we locate whatever evidence there is.”

Later that evening, Quail asked “But shouldn’t someone have gone out to manage the dogs”

“No need to” answered the super. “That’s why they have been trained. By the way, it’s almost seven pm and they haven’t yet returned. I hope they were not stolen!” he exclaimed with concern.

Next morning early, Quail and Bozo were sent out to search for the search dogs, “before someone steals them,” worried the boss. Bum Fatt was commanded to put on coffee as usual. “Mc Loud and Piggot, remain on duty. The press will be here today to ask questions. Relatives will show up for briefings. Me and the constableness have to go out in a while. I’m driving her to the dentist.” Then he dismissed himself to collect the coffee pot. “But boss, you are the one who should be talking to the press,” answered Piggott.

“Just give me a break. OK? I have to drive out a lady this morning,” was his hot reply.

The relative of a victim came in to complain.

“You people are having a ball, while our family members are disappearing, and no one gives a damn.”

“Constable Mc Loud, please come and take care of this lady. I didn’t sleep too well last night, and I’m getting ready to go out. Mc.Loud! Where in the hell is he.?”

“Taking a nap, boss,” answered Piggott.

“So then, you attend to her,” yelled the boss.

The sergeant spun out some mumbo jumbo that he had heard the day before, about the search dogs, and that two officers had even gone out to search for the search dogs.

“Well I never! Searching for search dogs? You people are clearly standing on your heads,” exclaimed the astounded woman, breathlessly. “Someone is missing, you do no investigation whatsoever, or try to find them alive. Then you send out dogs to find the dead body. This is beyond belief!”

“We are simply acting under orders and doing our best madam. We can’t create bodies if there ain’t none. We can only ensure that there were killings when the dogs find bodies. We sympathize with your plight, but our hands are tied right now till the dogs come in with their report,” was his apologetic answer.

Again the media flashed a range of grievances, by concerned citizens against the superintendent and his disgusting police force, but Yubeedamn didn’t give a damn.

The governor of the state was a second cousin of the superintendent, so no one had the power to check the nonsense that was going on. One day however the governor came to report that his wife was missing and asked if they were doing anything about it.

Nobody at that division had heard about this latest turn of event. The officers, of course, were all busy doing their own thing. Mc Loud was cursing someone on the phone, Quail was in bed, Bum Fatt was serving coffee, Bozo was watching TV, and the head of the tragedy of errors was in his private chambers, with his female friend.

The governor walked into the chief’s room, speechless with horror, but he managed to say in a voice low with anger, “From today on your and your cronies will go on the street. Leave this place at once. I’ve had it to the brim of my head with complaints against you!”

“But I am doing my job, cousin,” answered Yubeedamn. He called, “Bozo, Quail, Mc Loud and others, get moving. The governor is very angry. Take out ten search dogs. His old lady is missing. We must find the body immediately.”

“No, I want you and these looneys to vacate this station. Vacation is over. and I’m giving you an hour to clear out.”

So the wacky clan had to leave and the station remained unmanned for a while. But the dogs were the ones in charge now. From that time on, crimes took a plunge somehow, and every one went about their business without fear. Criminals must have heard about the removal of Yubeedamn and his circle of clowns.

This bunch ended up in the doghouse, for no one would give them jobs with the reputation they had. So they hung round the precinct and ate dog-scrap for their meals. And the head dog would bark “Roff roff! Come get your food, Damn boss.”

They would run in and eat up, for no one else was kind enough even to give them food. So they prayed that the dogs remain in charge, at least to ensure their daily meals. And the media celebrated the end of the reign of Yubeedamn and his staff of sponges.

Legend of the Puerto Rican Jackfruit

Just in front the entrance of the main tower of the University of Puerto Rico, three paths meet. The entire complex is shaded by exotic tropical trees, but the path that leads left was lined with stately handsome jackfruit trees, a tree which has its origins in India.

These jackfruits, called kowah in the West Indies, are the heaviest tree borne fruits alive — one can weigh up to eighty pounds. It is melon shaped, and the outer surface is hard and prickly. The fruits grow out of the upper trunk as well as the branches. They would be left to mature and ripen on the trees, because no one knew the value of them, or that they could even be eaten.

Just as much as passersby were unconscious of them, they were very aware of who went up and down. These fruits, you see, were almost human sized, and apparently had intelligence, and despised having been ignored for so many years. Fruits that grew up to three feet long, with almost five hundred pulp covered yummy seeds and no one noticed — a very painful situation indeed. The only information people cared about was its botanical name — something bizarre like ‘*Artocarpus Heterophyllus*’ which was etched on a label nailed to the bottom of each tree.

In places like Vietnam, these trees were given due respect; even images of the Buddha were carved from their trunks. Certainly it was recognized as an enlightened tree. Whether green or ripe the fruit were eaten with gusto all over Asia. But not here in this island; a little shade was the only worth placed on it.

So the chairman of the council of jackfruits, called a meeting, and asked all the resident fruits to submit plans that would draw attention to them, for these

jacks were semi slow witted; one of them by himself, could not come up with anything that made sense. The trees had been on campus for almost fifty years, and everyone was using the glossy green foliage for shade, but no notice was taken of their mammoth occupants.

A plan emerged after much discussion and thought: one of them was to land on the head of a pedestrian below. Normally when they became fully ripe, the stem would detach and they would drop to the ground, and smash into bits. So it seemed to them that a head would also serve a shock absorber, for a falling titanical jack.

The problem was selecting the right head. Some heads were too triangular, slicing could possibly occur, some were too round — a roll off effect, while some were egg shaped — faster roll off. There were afro heads — the risk of bumping off, and heads that wore large curlers, which could catch hold and imprison the seeds. Some of the rasta heads were too odorous. So they all sat, with their faces in their palms, and worried and prayed for the right head to come along, and one day god sent it to them.

“I hereby select that professor of Information Technology who passes every morning around ten,” announced the cumbrous old chairman of fruits, whose time was coming close to drop.

“You mean the one with the square head?” asked his awkwardly bulky wife.

“Precisely. His head is big and square and I might not even roll off. It would be like landing in a sofa. He has a full soft head of hair — the right cushioning that I need.”

“Good thinking,” said the wife, “I wish I could be so lucky when my time comes.” Every one in the council stood up and clapped, and since the grounded folks never looked up they thought it was just leaves rustling in the wind.

The professor of IT was a man who sometimes practiced the head stand yoga exercise, reason being that he was trying to lose some weight and get his blood to circulate in both directions, for though it flowed down it hardly flowed up to his brain. So the head stand ensured a two way flow; plus it helped straighten out a physical flaw that made him very conscious around the girls — he had a big belly and his legs appeared too thin to carry it. The stand killed two birds with one stone, and the professor now walked with more confidence.

Normally he felt the need to pull in his tummy when there were girls around. Now with the help of waist tightening jockey shorts, all he had to do was inhale

and the pulling in was much more effortless. But since the university population was three quarters female and a quarter male, well, he was inhaling three quarters of the times and exhaling a quarter of the time. He always carried a laptop, to practice his IT. But sadly, though he was a genius of Information Technology and he watched the world through the lap top, he was blind to the fact that he was being watched by some massive fruits almost as weighty as himself.

It was unfortunate that the professor did not also realize that the head stand had gradually flattened the top of his head which was rather big anyway, in order to accommodate a lengthy brain coil. Smart people usually are fitted more yardage, so their heads are more sizeable. The flatness of his head gave it the appearance of a plateau covered with black grass. At least this was how the council chairman saw it from where he was sitting.

“Here he comes, what do you think?” the jackfruit chief nudged the others. And they looked down to check him out, as walked by. One of them let out a wolf whistle, he was so hyped-up, but the folks below thought it was only the birds singing.

“Perfect,” said another one. “No slopes and the acreage is ample.”

So these naughty fruits made their mischievous plans. It is said that coconuts also have eyes, because no one has ever been hit by a falling one. They are a kinder and gentler bunch.

The one chosen for the drop off job was no doubt the elderly chairman, for he was about six months old and about sixty pounds hefty. “Boo Hoo, please don’t leave me,” cried the wife. But he had no choice in the matter. He was overripe and his tonnage was becoming a back breaking problem for the stem. So next morning the professor strutted by with his starched walk, back strait, inhaled breath, laptop, and square head. The jackfruits gathered to cheer, “Hip Hip Hurray,” and some of them sang Auld Lang Syne, while the old fruit aimed and prepared to tug at his stem at the precise moment. There was no need to, for the stem just gave way on its own and PLOPS! He fell down.

What a disappointment it was. He fell just behind the professor’s back, and the poor man escaped unscathed, but he was so much into his prim world that he did not even notice the accident. It was a fascinating mess. The yellow pulp was as fragrant as a perfume made from bananas and pineapples, and it spread everywhere with the wind. The stem splashed a white gummy latex on the pavement. A few birds swept down to enjoy the feast, but their human counterparts went

by with rigid necks, and even declared the smell was too sweet for their noses. Eventually the janitor was called to clean up the luscious mess, and the poor birds had to abandon their ambrosial meal. The fabulous fruit was scooped up, put in a black garbage bag and shoved in the dump by the ignorant cleaner. The onlooking supporters wept in their tree-houses, but no one could do any thing about the situation, because their language was different from humans.

The wife was a few days younger than the deceased chairman, and about five pounds less, and she could not stop the tears from flowing, even when the next day came. At ten sharp, the professor walked by with his plumb back and pulled in stomach — he was also an expert in a different type of IT — Inhaling Technology.

In the tree top she was still shaking with grief, and she was bursting ripe and pregnant with five hundred seeds, covered with pulp, which, when roasted are similar to chestnuts. “Oh my husband !” she was wailing, when suddenly, her fifty five pounds broke loose from the trunk and PLOP! On the professor’s head she landed, and she rolled not down but sat there for a moment, until her whole body started to crumble. The professor thought he had been hit by a cannon ball or maybe a UFO. His breathing quickened; and inhalation and exhalation became even. “Ooh! Oh! Oye! Ooye! Oooye!” he shrieked as the crashing fruit impacted him, and threw him on the ground. The white glue from the stem ran all over his body, and he was quickly buried under five hundred yellow juicy seeds. The birds pounced down at once, but were shoo-ed off by astonished onlookers, and the poor man squirmed in pain and called “Help! Help!” There was a pile of these nuts lying on his chest — chest nuts, and he became the Nutty Professor number two.

He did not have to cry too much for help, though. Quickly, about a hundred people gathered, and before before you could say Jack Rabbit, an ambulance was called. The crowd who was frozen with shock did not clean up the mountain of seeds that covered him. They were so confused. The ambulance driver had to spend time doing it, before loading the fragrant professor in the van. Then he sped off to the hospital, with the horn sounding full blast. In the fracas, even the laptop — center of Information Technology got lost, and the professor almost became unconscious: information — less.



The janitor was off duty at the moment, so the odiferous mountain of yellow seeds, was left for a while, filling the air with sweet aroma. An Indian professor happened to be passing by when he noticed the delectable waste. Immediately he stooped down and started stuffing his mouth with the treat, and spitting out the brown seeds into a bag. By his prompting, many others joined the party, including birds, a rasta-artist, a hippie professor from Spain, a woman carrying a baby (for the professor had explained to her that the jackfruit created milk for nursing mothers), and many of the young students as well. Even a steely old professor sat down to the feast.

It was a day of victory for the jackfruits. They got the recognition that they deserved, and they all gave a big hand of applause at the scene. The crowd below looked up, saw them clapping and cheered back. The dean of the campus came upon the happy scene, and after listening to the Indian expounding the merits of the hulky fruit, declared that from that day on they would be duly harvested in the most fitting way: a net would be strung below the fruits like a hammock to catch them, so that they would not suffer pain and breakage from hitting the ground.

The seeds would be served in the university cafe and turned into drinks and ice cream. No longer would they end up in the garbage. The giants above applauded at the new decree, while the dean gorged himself on a handful of seeds.

The professor was hospitalized for a day and given a stitch on the head, for a stitch in time saves nine. He was back on his job a few weeks later, bought a new laptop and paid more attention to his surroundings, than to inhaling. He lost some weight due to the on head collision, and his image was lowered in the eyes of the girl students, who had laughed without shame at the poor man's tragedy.

He used to eat in the cafeteria, and he noticed that everyone was patronizing this jackfruit in the form of fruit salad, sherbets, et cetera, but the professor of IT never ever partook of one seed ... a small revenge, but it was satisfying enough for him.

A Stir at the Shrine

A sanctified monastery was the setting for this unbelievable tale. There was a young man who with his wife, were new students of meditation. This fellow, unlike the priests who resided at the temple, was still under the strong control of lust, so he and his wife lived aside in an apartment. His goal was to curb his passions by taking association of the priests. He had a job and he therefore was not a full time devotee like his saffron-robed friends. His progress was quite slow but nevertheless, he hung in with them hoping to someday achieve their passion-less way of life.

The fellow had a few extra-marital girlfriends. They lived in other countries, so on the pretext of traveling for business, he would make plans and secretly meet them. His wife was a trusting person who had complete faith in the words of her husband, so whenever he had to go away for two or three weeks, she waited at home and worried for him like all good wives do. She was a housewife, and since they had no kids she missed him even more.

The idea hit him to make a video production of one of his foreign romantic escapades, and it was carried out. Raw footage of every act was recorded, as the video-cam filmed the show in the automatic mode. The hot blooded couple exceeded themselves in the various acts and positions: inverted, perverted, tangents and jobs that are too indecent to mention.

The full hour session was satisfactorily shot and the lovers eventually bade each other goodbye, and the man headed back to his home with his sensual blue movie to enjoy secretly, whenever the wife was not around.

Not too long after, there was a big celebration in Dharmasala, India, headquarters of the religion. It was the birthday of the leader, who was regarded as a representative of god. Members from all parts of the world were attending, and this student was invited to go. So he made the trip together with his wife.

The experience was spiritually lavish — nothing short of divine. The leader gave a long talk. He was covered with beautiful garlands of marigolds, jasmine, and other local flowers. and offered incense, and various articles of worship. It was a very attractive sight to behold. The ceremony lasted all day long, and it was a get-together of nationalities never before seen. Vegetarian food was abundant, and the attendees enjoyed the cool climate and enchanting scenery of this part of the Himalayas. Needless to say, the fellow had carried along his video-cam and never failed to shoot every noteworthy detail of the bash, as is the norm for every tourist, attending a portentous event.

The head monk was speaking about morality, the wisdom of Buddha, and other topics like reincarnation, *nirvāṇa*, the peace formula for a better world, since he was addressing an international crowd. The student diligently captured every word of the address by the hallowed leader. It was an ethereal experience and he and his wife came back and swore that this was their last life in earthly cycle of existence. They would from now on, practice meditation with the aim of achieving *nirvāṇa* in this very life. This was precisely what they started doing every morning and evening — one hour of mantras and incense burning.

The week long festival came to an end, and they sadly packed their bags with as much Indian souvenirs, clothes and tapestries as could be fitted. Flying back home from India, they made plans to visit every year for the occasion, and the wife even shed tears. They promised each other that eventually, they would move to Dharmasala to live, to be close to the most sacred master.

So, back home they started going to their local temple and joined the monks for meditation every evening or as often as they could manage.

Within a few weeks, there was another important festival, the birthday of an important deity, and the priests at the local temple were observing it with full pomp. Meanwhile the student, viewed the film he made in India and edited it to his satisfaction. The idea dawned on him that he should hold a showing of it, at the temple to mark the ceremonious occasion. He was the only visitor from that group to Dharmasala that year so that he wanted to use the opportunity to share his experience with the celibates and guests who would assemble for the ceremony.

The blessed day arrived, and the student and his wife fasted all day, and prayed to the god that they worshiped for health, happiness, and peace. At the temple ceremonies were in full swing and the chief priest had announced to the crowd that the showing of that year's Indian festival was to take place that evening, so

that brought in extra numbers. In the evening time the young man arrived at the temple. Hundreds of people were there chanting mantras. The air was thick with sweet incense smoke. He carried offerings of food for the holy men and he and his wife even sprinkled perfumed water on them as an act of worship.

These dovelike saints accepted his gifts. The atmosphere was very pure and reverent with the sounds of the transcendental chants, sacred lamps burning, and the aroma of holy incense. The gathering prepared their minds to receive the mercy of the venerated master on the large screen TV which was fixed in the center of the hall in front of the main altar.

Everyone sat on the ground on mats as is the custom in oriental temples. The celibates sat apart in a special row while the public congregation also sat in rows behind them. The student was very excited to be the cause of this enlightening show, and it gave him bliss to serve refreshments to everyone present. So he made himself busy in the kitchen preparing trays, filled with cups of tsampa — buttered tea. The name of the revered master was sung reverentially invoking his presence.

He put the movie cassette in the VCR and went about his service in the kitchen, while his wife sat in the audience to soak in once more the image of this godlike man who walked the earth and to hear him expound his auspicious message. Every one put their palms together, and then bowed down on the floor, in anticipation of seeing the master's face, eyes fixed on the screen. Some people chanted OM, holding the breath for almost three minutes.

The master's sitting place came into view. It was shaking somewhat. How happy he was, and always laughing this representative of Buddha, they thought, waiting for his image to appear. His name was solemnly chanted once more, followed by the three minute "Ooommm."

His lotus feet came in view and they all bowed down on the floor once more, in adoration. The *āsana* shook more violently, as this messiah among men commenced his lecture by laughing. His Divine Holiness was a mirthful personality who no doubt was in the mood of the laughing Buddha. Their eyes widened waiting for his blessed form to fill the screen.

Even the camera seemed to be moving with the happy vibrations of the deified one, as some of the guests repeated the famous saying "Don't worry be happy," and chuckled along with their gleeful leader. Shortly afterwards, viewers started squinting their eyes, and cocking their necks in different angles to take in every bit of the action. The master's legs came in view, maybe he was tired from the

day's activities so he seemed to be lying down while laughing. Necks were now slanted to ninety degrees, eyelids squinted to Chinese proportions, to get the best view — amateur film makers sometimes managed to film things upside down. But wait, there was another pair of legs intertwined with the master's. Both in birthday suits? A youthful man and a woman ... rocking and rolling. The seat ... no was a bed ... it rocked from side to side.

Wait a minute! It was a couple engaged in carnal relations! ... Hot-blooded, raw kāma sūtra business! Both moaning in pleasure and the bed shaking passionately. The denuded couple were shamelessly engaging in matters of the flesh without any holds barred. The monks and the congregation gasped ... eyes widened in horror. All of them were frozen with shock. The reverent head of the temple capsized. His shaven head hit the floor — Boop!

“Wow! good god! save us Buddha!” were some of the screams that hit the ceiling, as all hell broke loose in the monastery. Some of the panicking monks threw themselves down in disbelief, and to avoid the pollution of seeing the indecent act. Some of them covered their eyes with their palms. Some shouted mantras to purify the minds from the sin of observing this erotic scene. Some rolled in shock. Some roared. And there was a grand state of confusion and shock.

The student busy with his chores in the kitchen, heard the alarm and was glad to know that his spiritual documentary had put them in a state of religious ecstasy. So he called loudly from the kitchen, to boost them up some more, “Wait until you see the rest!”

None of the monks dared to open their eyes to witness the unholy TV screen or even to approach it to turn it off. Finally the wife managed to put her finger on the off button and the monks' agony ended to some degree.

The student came out encouraging the crowd's ecstasy, “It WAS a once in a lifetime occasion. It was like being in heaven. Wasn't it dear? Why did you turn it off so quickly? It had just started.” The pandemonium in the room was uncommon, he thought. These peaceful men never broke their calm. Maybe the master's presence put them in a state of samadhi. He grabbed the cassette from his wife's hand eager to continue feeding them the spiritual treat, when his eyes fell on the small hand written letters pvte, which stood for private. It was his turn to freeze with shock as he collapsed — Braps! — and crashed into some cups of buttered tea which were in the way.

By an erroneous slight of hand he had brought the blue movie, and every one

was blue with shame, but he was the bluest of them all. He quickly arose. His breath was short and his voice stammered as if it was about to leave him.

“Dear, I tho-thought your cou-cousin had re-returned the mo-movie that he rented at the po-porn shop.”

“I thought so myself, but I had no idea it was at home all this time,” she came to his rescue, even though it was clear to every one that the male involved was none other than her husband. But the chaste wife blinded her eye to this possibility. She built up his story further. “What shame he has brought us today. Dear, I always told you not to invite him to our house, because I know he is a very lustful person.”

So the student spent half an hour asking pardon from the reverent monks who were further astonished by his ability to lie — he denied and swore on the holy book that though the male participant looked like him, he would never dream of cheating on his wife in this manner. “Why would I keep it in my house knowing that my wife could find it?” he reasoned with them.

“Don’t worry my dear,” she supported. “Buddha knows that you are speaking the truth, so no sin will come to you. But we must beg forgiveness from their Holinesses for embarrassing them at this important function. The monks were besides themselves with disbelief at the wife’s blindness and innocence, and in order to help sustain the marital relation pretended to accept the story, and forgave them mentally, although the pardon was not publicly announced. The movie was put in the garbage and the guests had something to gossip about for a few months well. Mantras and hymns were sung all night to exorcise the fleshly atmosphere that had entered the monastery. The couple was counseled to do the same at their home. And the wife and husband left with some measure of peace after repenting for causing the melee.

The moral of this immoral story is that a blue movie made for private viewing pleasure must be guarded as strictly as one guards the private parts, so that serious embarrassment, of this nature, will never ever occur.

The Counted Avocadoes

“Good morning, Herman,” the old man knocked on his neighbor’s front door, early one morning.

“Morning,” greeted Herman.

“I brought you a hand of green bananas. I had to pick a few bunches this morning. They are getting too heavy for the trees now. So I figure it’s time I picked them and put them to ripe.”

“Thank you very much,” said Herman. “You are the most generous man in these parts,” he flattered.

“People complain about me, but I am the most free handed man in this village.” It helped him to say it, but as the dictum goes, the desire for credit is in itself vulgar. But how can we accuse a seventy-five year old man, who worked all his life of being vulgar? We must not take that liberty at all.

The old man had owned twelve acres of land. He had purchased it at fifty dollars an acre in the nineteen fifties. He divided six among his sons, and kept the other six for himself. He kept it under crops: plantains, bananas, breadfruit, avocadoes, lemons, cilantro, whatever could come up was grown.

Day and night he kept an eagle eye on the property. The gift to Herman was rare and maybe was meant to lessen the burden of the load of bananas which he was carrying back home that morning.

“I have to leave quickly,” he said. “I must check on the avocadoes. My son is still in bed and he won’t come around until later.” He left as swiftly as an old man could.

The son was a semi-mute laggard, who was incapable of doing anything but supervised farm work. On the way back the old man counted the avocadoes. One,

two, three, four ... There were twelve on that particular tree. They needed time to get full, so he left them alone.

Next morning, he dropped in around ten o'clock to see Herman, who lived as a tenant in one of his houses.

"Did you hear noises around here last night?" he asked.

"Not a sound," confessed his tenant.

"It seems," he said in worried tone, "that someone is stealing the avocados. Yesterday I counted twelve, and today I see only eleven." The old man was playing dead to catch the thief alive.

The tenant got the jitters thinking that he must be the suspect.

"Well I don't understand how someone would come to steal only one avocado," his tied tongue tried to juggle up something.

The old man left and could be heard yelling to his son in the distance 'Joseph, go right now and re-count the avocados. Look in the grass to see if any has fallen down. I am missing one!'

Joseph came around and began looking as if he was searching for a snake in the bush. He went back home. "No father, I saw nothing on the ground. But all the twelve are on the tree. I just saw them,"

"Blind foolish boy," the old man lambasted the retardate. "You better drink some coffee and wake up. I personally counted eleven about an hour ago, and you will stand there and tell me that you saw twelve!" he was quite upset by now.

The renter was an immigrant from another island, who had come here to better his position, but he could not afford to buy a house as yet.

"I was thinking," he said, one morning as the old man came by, "to buy a piece of land and put up a house on it little by little. Would you think of selling a quarter acre to me?"

"Well I never really thought of selling. You see, I bought land when it was very very cheap. But that was way back then."

"How much did you pay?" the tenant ventured with a timid braveness, and the old man gave him the ask-no-question-you-will-be-told-no-lies look, while trying to abort the loaded subject.

“Everything now has gone up now,” he said, “This small lot you see here, alone, is worth thirty thousand dollars, but I have no plans to sell my land. I worked very, very hard for all of this.”

So the renter resigned himself to continue eating the crumbs that the old man spread on the table before him, until God blessed him with his own house and land.

The old man dropped by most mornings on farm duties. He had cows grazing in the field, but would not put up a shed for them to shelter in when it rained. Violent rain storms and hurricanes would brutalize them for days, as they stood shivering in the furious weather. But the old man thought only of the day he would sell them. This morning he carried an old bath tub.

“See what I got for the cows!” he called out. “It’s for them to drink from. You must treat the animals right, for them to develop healthy, to the right size. I, for one, give my animals the best treatment possible!” he was shouting.

On his way back, he counted the avocadoes once more. Only eleven, he thought, and curse the wretched thief who took the missing one.

While stopping by for his morning chat, the tenant again asked him about property.

“How much do you suppose a house like this would cost?” The structure was an unfinished dwelling into which water from the hills above drained because of bad planning.

“A house in this state,” replied the old philistine, “would cost you eighty thousand dollars — and that is without the land. Everything has gone up these days. Government wants to levy so much tax on your property.”

“How much do you pay?”

“You won’t believe it. One hundred and fifty every year,” he cried out. “Where will a poor man like me get that kind of money? This government is murdering poor people like me and you, Herman. No one cares for us the down trodden people of this country.”

On the way back, he counted the avocadoes, and picked two that were ready for ripening.

In order to avert the hill water, polluted with gasoline from a nearby garage, from running into his home, the tenant paid one hundred dollars to a digger operator to dig a drain to carry the runoff to the side. Next morning, bright and early, the old man and his son went to work filling up the trench. They worked all day but finally got the job done by nightfall.

“The water and mud will flood my land and damage my crops,” he explained to the tenant when he finished the task. So once more, Herman had to squeegee muddy water out of the house when he came from work at night.

The old man came along as usual one morning. “Do you see that refrigerator in your house?” he asked. “Do you know how much I paid for it?”

“No,” answered his tenant.

“A fortune,” he said, “close to five hundred, and that was about ten years ago, and those two door ones have gone up since. I’ve seen them in Sears. That stove cost me three hundred dollars. I sent my son to buy it back then, around the same time. Those things are very costly, Herman, you have to care for them well.”

“Well, I was planning to buy a new stove and refrigerator. The stove top is all burnt off and the refrigerator leaks and runs warm,” complained the tenant.

“Things these days are expensive. That is why you have to take good care. I’ve had mine about twenty years and it’s still almost brand new!” This could have been a white lie to discourage his renter from throwing out the junk.

The old man’s attitude was based on a verse which he memorized as a boy:

’I am monarch of all I survey
My right there is none to dispute
From the center all around
I am lord of the fowl and the brute’

He and his son went to church every Sunday, dressed in long sleeved shirts, felt hats, and pressed knit pants to pray to God for blessings, and entrance into heaven after death. That night, a flashlight played on the avocado tree. The son was checking to make sure all the fruits were there.

The old man had many springs on his land, that were piped into taps in his house. So the tenant asked if he too could get spring water in his tap.

“The pump that goes to your house is broken. Actually, it worked before you came. You must have done something to damage it. If you buy a new one and install it, maybe you can get spring water in your pipe,” was the shrewd reply.

If a hurricane passed the tenant would receive some green bananas, blown down by the wind, next morning. But the only contact he was allowed with the avocadoes was visual — from a distance. It reached the point that he could no more bear the temptation caused by the luscious glistening fruits, so he went one night and stole two.

Next day, the old man came by blue with anger. “They should never steal from an old man like me. Herman did you hear any noise last night? Two more of the avocadoes are gone!”

“I did hear the neighbor’s dogs barking around two a m. It went on for about ten minutes for the most. I thought they might be seeing ghosts, so I didn’t worry too much.”

The old man was blowing hot and cold. “Don’t worry,” he said, “I’m sending my son to make a report to police that there are bandits in this area, and they are stealing my crops. I worked very hard for what I have today, and whoever robs an old man like me, will have to pay.”

He went back, grumbling to himself, and the tenant grinned revengefully.

He used to grow cilantro for selling wholesale to supermarkets, but would not offer a blade to the tenant, or even sell him a dollar’s worth. The tenant had to purchase it at five blades for a dollar. So in every direction, the old man squeezed him tight.

“Herman,” he complained, “food and medicine has gone up so high. I can’t see how poor people like us could survive.”

“Me neither,” answered the tenant.

“What is the world coming to? I used to spend ten dollars for a doctor’s visit way back then, now the fee is fifty. There is no one to protect us from these hooligans, who are ripping the shirt off our backs.. All I can say is that this place needs a revolution. People must come to their senses before everything go to the dogs,” he went on like a hot air merchant.

“Yes,” the tenant supported consolingly.

“I believe in God and he will do for us, because this government don’t give a damn!”

The old man was sturdy as his weeds and similarly set in his attitude. One day, his wife passed away, and he began to grieve quietly. He became lonely, and little by little he became weaker and weaker, and the inevitable diseases that attack a person of his age, assembled around him with trained guns. He suffered with heart disease, cholesterol, stroke, diabetes and a host of attending ailments. He lasted for ten years after his wife departed, until he finally succumbed and went to meet her wherever she was.

Tout le monde came to say farewell to the patriarch. His children and grandchildren wept. It was so crowded that there was no room for the tenant to get a glimpse of the funeral rites, which were being done in the home. The son was speaking about his father’s character: “I will read to you one of his favorite verses,” and he read the Monarch poem, which already had been inscribed below the words Rest In Peace, on the tombstone of the dead man. His burial site was located on the property.

The youngest son who lived with him, and nursed him at the end, inherited the old man’s estate. His wife was not happy with the country life and nagged him constantly to sell everything and go off to New York to live. The land was laden with all sorts of crops and there were a few houses that pulled in good revenue from rent. The son himself was bored of country life — agriculture was not really his calling. He could easily get a job as handyman at any company that provided household maintenance services. The itch to migrate was so great, fueled by the wife’s insistence, that the entire property was sold off at a very cheap price. The property went cheaply because it was hard to get buyers, for most people were moving to the city to escape the stagnancy of country life. Even Herman was able to buy his house with the small savings he had.

And the couple went their jolly way, bought a small apartment in New York, and bought avocados for five dollars each. Eventually they divorced, as city pressures often make people do. Thus, even that small apartment was sold and the money divided. And the old monarch lay silently in his coffin surveying what no longer belonged to him.

Matata Talula

Once, a dog and a half lived together. Now, don't get dumb-fumbled, here my friends. They were two. I mean one was a normal size fluffy and the other was a half-sized fluffy, puffy. But whenever you lined them up together, they looked like one and a half.

They named themselves — the big one called himself Brown Sugar and the small one went under the nomer White Sugar. This was based on the pigmentation of their coats, for they only cared about physical looks, color, and nothing else.

They were very close, and quite proud of themselves. They ate meals, drank water , and partied together. If platform shoes were in fashion, they would have been seen sporting them like two models. In other words this one and a half dog were like twins.

They grooved by themselves and thought that no one was better than them. And they believed that and discussed how most of dogs of the day were low and ugly. And they were the only ones up there, with the goods, at the top of the line of production.

Now a friendless gray dog who had no company to chill with went to check them out, to see if they would play with him. He found their residence easily for their was a large sign outside that read: THE SUGARS.

“Good day, my friends. I is the only other dog in town, and I sometimes feels quite lonely. Today is one of those times. I comes by to see if you would plays with me and give me a good time, because I is maxed out with depression.”

“Why. Certainly not! How dare you ask? Can't you see we are fat, high bred, top dogs and you are just a long, skinny pot hound. Having a low greyhound like you mixing with us, would be very humiliating. Please go back to your home, and

don't bother us. Fast and out of place, little scoundrel!" Brown Sugar and White Sugar shooed him off and laughed, and continued to merry themselves.

"Bye then," was his humble reply, "Matata Talula."

So the lonely gray hound went home crying and woke up with a plan next morning. He dipped himself in a bucket of pink paint and went back once more to talk to the twosome.

"Me name is Pink Sugar. Can you become me friends? I just moves in the area and I don't know no one else here."

"Don't you think we recognize you, scoundrel? You are none else than the low greyhound who came by yesterday. You had a chip in your ear, and one one your shoulder, and your eyes are still full of eye jam, like yesterday. Please, you don't fit into our league at all. So give up your tricks. Us handsome fellas don't need unhandsome blokes like you around."

"I'm sorry, my friends. Matata Talula," he said in his usual dejected way.

So Pink Sugar went back home, with his tail tucked between his legs, and crawled into his kennel, and wept with misery and loneliness. But the luckless dog had forgotten to wash off the paint before it got dry, and next day it felt like cement plastered on him. So he had no choice but to jump in a bucket of paint remover, and after a while the paint shelled out, and he was left with no coat, for all his fur was pulled out as well. And Brown Sugar and White Sugar pampered their soft long shag with shampoo, hair conditioner, and emollients.

That same day, entered on the scene another dog who came from a faraway town called Mississippi. Now the dogess, for it was a she, was named after the said town, and she called herself Missy for short.

Everywhere she went, she carried a bottle with a yellow foamy liquid, which she drank from when she was thirsty. She came upon the lonely scraggy Pink Sugar with his bare skin and they became friends. Pink Sugar invited her to have a bowl of water, but she declined saying that she had her own quencher. And besides, she didn't drink tap water because of the chlorine content which could cause kidney stones.

Then Missy took out her bottle, had a pull with an organic straw, capped the bottle, and put it away safely, lest the precious drink became misplaced.

“I is curious to know what is that you is having. It does looks like beer to me,” Pink Sugar asked.

“Oh, this is a special protein which I take every day. It destroys kidney stone. It’s not like the tap water that causes stones.”

“And where from you buys it ?”

“I make it myself.”

“I sees, very very interesting. Do you has a name for it?”

“Leek fluid.”

“You means like onion juice?”

“No my friend, urination. Urination in simple language is piss, comprende?”

“Si, senorita. Matata Talula.” Pink Sugar did not want to wear out the patience of his only friend.

“And it keep you healthy?”

“Of course, my friend. How do you think I walked from Mississippi?” On saying this, Missy took out the bottle and took a lilliputian sip.

“Ah! I sees what you mean Missy-sip-pee.” Pink Sugar knocked her head for not thinking of it before. So the two kept each other company and the days passed and Pink Sugar did not feel unwanted any more. The days were no longer dreary, and they went quickly in the company of his new lady friend.

Time flew by and a new dog appeared on the block, introducing himself with the quaint name Chuckleberry Grin. He added a touch of gaiety to the duo’s life, by doing things like hopping backwards on two legs, head-stand and tail-stand yoga, the flip, and salsa dances for which he played rhythm with his mouth.

He made the two friends chuckle and grin so much, and when they got thirsty, he went in search of berries and made them into berry punch. And the three of them lived like twins. They lacked no company for theirs was the sweetest around. The health freak Missy, the clown Chuckleberry, and the barebacked Pink Sugar, who even forgot about the insults from Brown and White Sugars.

Now it happened that there was a tick plague hitting the town, and the five dogs were in great danger of extinction. The ticks searched up and down the borough, but could find no more than five dogs to invade. So they went to work. In a short

time Brown Sugar and White Sugar's coats were crawling with ticks, and they buried themselves deep down in layers, for there was no exit through the maze of shag.

The two doubled in weight because of the mass of ticks that was drilling into them. Brown Sugar now climbed from forty to eighty pounds, and White Sugar from twenty to forty pounds. And no weight loss programs could do anything for them.

And these ticks sucked and sucked the life out of these poor brutes, and no one was around to assist them. After some time, Brown Sugar borrowed a weed wacker to try to graze the ticks out of his friend, but accidentally, he sliced into some flesh with it, and the half dog dropped dead.

A human neighbor noticed that the bigger Sugar could hardly walk with the heavy load of ticks, which were consuming him like leeches. So he went to Home Depot, bought some Tick-Be-Gone, and sprayed down the dog: the ticks died. Then the kind neighbor, instead of letting the dog go around with a body full of rotten ticks, used a regular lawn trimmer and mowed off his tickish fur.

Some of the Tick-Be-Gone had seeped into his skin, and he was beginning to feel ill. Anyway, he walked around to see if he could shake off the drowsiness, till he finally reached the area where the three friends lived.

Now, they were saved from the merciless ticks. You see, Pink Sugar was coatless from the time she submerged herself in the bucket of paint remover. The ticks therefore had no place to hide and reproduce, for they only stay in forested areas for protection reasons. Pink Sugar was well known as a stalker.

When the ticks discovered Missy and tasted her blood they spat it out in disgust because of the bitter leeky taste. So they climbed off her back and retraced their steps to get far away from the odor. Chuckleberry was saved because he was always frisking around doing yoga or some sort of silly prance. So that whenever the ticks tried to settle down on him they would violently shaken off.

Slowly, Brown Sugar made it to where they lived and knocked on their door. Pink Sugar recognized him and the yams in his eyes which were nothing but dried tears. And she felt sorry. "Come in from the sun and sit down. You looks much smaller than the last time I sees you. Tell me what is your troubles.?"

"Well, the tick plague which you might have heard about finished off White Sugar," technically a lie since she was the one who shaved off her friend's flesh.

“Since I have no one to help me in Dogswood, I figures I should walk around and do a little thinking, which is what I was doing when I stumbled into your place.” This was another untruth because the wretched dog was hopeful of encountering Pink Sugar once more to gain his help and friendship.

“Well we here is a warm and friendly bunch. Isn’t we, Missy?”

“Matata Talula.” Missy had picked up the slang used by people of very dark or gray color to mean that all was OK. Many times she would use it out of context, but she nonetheless wanted to show off her fluency in ethnic tongues.

“We always likes to do a good turns to anyone who come for helps. Right, Missy?”

“Matata Talula.” Pink Sugar restrained a hearty grin, which almost busted out of her cheeks, as she tried to keep it down, and Brown Sugar was impressed by the fancy vocabulary.

The ailing dog was seated on a cushion, and Pink Sugar oiled him down with Johnson’s Dog Oil. Chuckleberry Grin spun on his head and made him laugh his head off.

“Would you like to have a drink? I am sure you must be very thirsty,” asked Missy.

“Matata Talula,” answered the sick Sugar. He was already getting the grip of the language and feeling right at home. Pink Sugar broke out in hysterical laughter, almost frothing at the mouth. “I surely am thirsty after walking all those many miles, but I was so ashamed to ask, since you all have been so nice to me.”

“No need to feel ashamed here,” called Missy, who headed to the back with a heavy bladder. The warm frothy beverage was emptied into a bowl and brought out and presented to the weakened dog. She sipped it and disliked it’s bitter pungent taste, but not wanting to look ungrateful she said: “It is quite good actually. What is the name of it?”

“It’s Leek juice,” Missy replied, “Like in onions.”

The dog shook her head affirmatively to show that she was also knowledgeable.

“It will bring you back to health and your shag will grow back in place — because I know there are some juices which make hair grow back in the wrong places, such as on the soles of the feet.”

“Yes, I’ve seen those,” answered Brown sugar, pretending to know, in order to prolong the attention of the conversation. Then she gulped down the whole bowlful of the beverage and thanked Missy for being so helpful and caring.

Then the brown pooch wrote a note on a piece of a brown paper bag:

MY DeeR DiNGoS,

THaNKS FOR Taking Me iN aND SHoWiNG So mUch LOVe aND
CaRE WhEN I KNeEDeD IT. I HeREbY aPPLY FoR ASSYLUM IN
YoUR DoGHouSE, BeCauSE I LiKe YouR DoGMaS.

YOUrs DOggEDLee,

B. S.

The application was accepted. and the four lived happily ever after.

Portrait of the Author



Anjani Drupati Singh

Ms Singh is ...