

The prince turns into a pauper

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THE PRINCESS TURNS INTO A PAUPER By rajaNaidu
Through the space into the sky with the earthly clouds around us, I felt as if I am getting ready to land. We were travelling from Chennai to Andaman.

It was my first air travel. We were at a very high level, the clouds were underneath right down floating, the sun sparkled on our glass and slowly our plane headed downwards. We were excited.

I said, "Wow! Awesome! The floating clouds are looking like a heap of snow." My brother said, "Wow! See look down the islands are visible, this is the most beautiful thing I have ever seen." The flight was landing in Port Blair. I held the handle of the seat tightly and I felt as if my heart went to the bottom of my tummy. The plane stopped. Then the air hostess welcomed us to Andaman at the aerodrome. I stepped down, the first step, I felt I was Neil Armstrong, landing on the moon, so what even though it's not 1969, as if my arrival was a landslide victory for humanity and civilization.

I felt elated. The dew on the little grass and the fresh breathing air aside made me feel pleasant as if Andaman was waiting for me. As soon as we reached the gate, many people gathered around us, asking either to stay in their hotel or avail their services for the touring or use their taxi or transport. I felt very important. At that moment I felt that I was the princess who was walking on a red carpet with roses spread on it.

We collected our luggage and set into the taxi. On our way to hotel, there was a drizzle as if a lovely music was being played by nature. With every drop of rain, the leaves shook and vibrated as if they were dancing with joy on my arrival to Andaman.

All the markets were decked up decorative lights and beautiful posters were hung everywhere to welcome the tourists in the Andaman Festival. Hotels dished out plenty of choices to celebrate this festival. All the DJ's were busy with the rocking musical party by the beachside or a night in the elegant surroundings of restaurants. We reached the hotel. We were welcomed with roses. It had a very good amenities and pleasing ambience.

Floral decorations spread sweet fragrance into the hotel room. We refreshed ourselves. With a beautiful pink dress I came down enjoying every moment.

My mother locked the room and we sat at the reception. My father started enquiring about the touring. There were four to five families who were waiting to avail the touring services.

All the children of my age came near to me to appreciate my beautiful dress. We chatted for almost 20 minutes. Suddenly I realized that I was alone and my family was nowhere to be seen. I went back to my room, but it was locked. I asked the hotel manager then he said that he doesn't know. I felt as if I was pushed in the midst of an ocean and the tsunami was on its way. I was so terrified as if I was kept in the cellular jails along with the freedom fighters who were brought from their beloved country, India. Iran helter skelter.

I felt miserable. I did not know anybody around, some laughed at me and some winked at each other. They looked like local jaravas surrounded me with their scary faces. Tears rolled down my eyes. The roads were slippery

due to rain. The terrain was uneven my long pink skirt got stuck into the railing of the footpath.

My shoes broke and the dress tore. I felt horrible and lonely. I realized that why Andaman was called 'kala pani'. I felt that the Japanese and the Britishers were pointing their guns at me from their bunkers. I could not see any ray of hope.

I was sure that volcanoes of Andaman would burst open and the lava would surely burn me into ashes. But I couldn't find my parents. I cried loudly. At least in the movie HOMEALONE he was in his own house where as I was far away from my home and parents. Suddenly I got a glance of my mother's sari from the corner of a building. I rushed towards them with the shoes in the in my hand and the dress held above the knee like a pauper as if Mark Twain had authored my this story. I ran and ran towards it with all hopes. I saw my mother, I was relieved.

I asked my mother angrily that why did you leave alone. Then she said, 'Your brother fell off from the steps and fell unconscious, then we rushed to the government hospital which is a part of the cellular jail'. 'Where is he?' I asked. She said 'he is still in the hospital with your father; he has a compound fracture on his right leg, so he has to undergo one operation immediately to set it right, he has also a cut in his head which needs stitches'.

'What happened to you?' exclaimed my mother. 'I was lost' I said and started crying loudly. My mother said 'I was too searching

for you for last one hour??™ ??™ . We had to cut short our trip and return back home without even viewing a single beach or an island in Andaman. I felt as if I, the princess, turned into a pauper.