

ENGLISH LITERATURE

(Class-VII)



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Monkey Trouble

by Ruskin Bond

Pre-reading Task

- Whenever we think of an animal or a bird, a particular quality comes to our mind. Pick up appropriate qualities from the box given and write them opposite the names of the animals/birds.

dove : _____
 dog : _____
 fox : _____
 parrot : _____
 monkey : _____

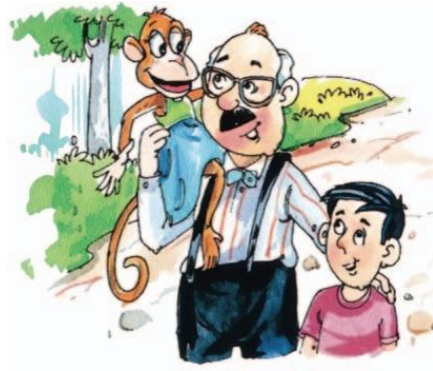


talkative cunning mischievous gentle faithful

- Why do you think street entertainers prefer monkeys to other household pets like cats and dogs? Discuss with your friends.

Read the following story and enjoy the mischiefs of a troublesome monkey.

Grandfather bought Tutu from a street entertainer for the sum of ten rupees. The man had three monkeys. Tutu was the smallest but the most mischievous. She was tied up most of the time. The little monkey looked so miserable with a collar and chain that Grandfather decided it would be much happier in our home. Grandfather had a weakness for keeping unusual pets. It was the habit that I, at the age of eight or nine, used to encourage.



Grandmother at first objected to having a monkey in the house. 'You have enough pets as it is,' she said referring to Grandfather's goat, several white mice, and a small tortoise.

'But I don't have any,' I said. 'You're wicked enough for two monkeys. One boy in the house is all I can take.'

'Ah, but Tutu isn't a boy,' said Grandfather triumphantly. 'This is a little girl monkey!'

Grandmother gave in. She had always wanted a little girl in the house. She believed girls were less troublesome than boys. Tutu was to prove her wrong.

She was a pretty little monkey.

Her bright eyes sparkled with mischief beneath deep-set eyebrows. And her teeth, which were pearly white, were often revealed in a grin that frightened the wits out of Aunt Ruby whose nerves had already suffered from the presence of Grandfather's pet python in the house at Lucknow. But this was Dehra, my grandparents' house, and aunts and uncles had to put up with our pets.

One day Aunt Ruby took us all by surprise. She announced that she had become engaged. We had always thought that Aunt Ruby would never marry—she had often said herself—but it appeared that the right man had now come along in the person of Rocky Fernandes, a school teacher from Goa.



Rocky was a tall, firm-jawed, good-natured man, who visited the house quite often and brought me chocolates and cashewnuts, of which, he seemed to have an unlimited supply. He also taught me several marching songs. Naturally I approved of Rocky. Aunt Ruby won my admiration for having made such a wise choice.

One day I overheard them talking of going to the *bazaar* to buy an engagement ring. I decided I would go along too. But as Aunt Ruby had made it clear that she did

not want me around, I decided that I had better follow at a **discreet** distance. Tutu, becoming aware that a mission of some importance was underway, decided to follow me. But as I had not invited her along, she too decided to keep out of sight.

Once in the crowded *bazaar*, I was able to get quite close to Aunt Ruby and Rocky without being spotted. I waited until they had settled down in a large jewellery shop before **sauntering** past and spotting them as though by accident. Aunt Ruby wasn't too pleased at seeing me, but Rocky waved and called out. 'Come and join us! Help your aunt choose a beautiful ring!'



The whole thing seemed to be a waste of good money, but I did not say so—Aunt Ruby was giving me one of her most unloving looks.



While the jeweller and Aunt Ruby were sifting through the diamond rings, Tutu had slipped into the shop without being noticed by anyone but me. A little **squeal** of delight was the first sign she gave of her presence. Everyone looked up to see her trying on a pretty necklace.

'And what are those stones?' I asked.

'They look like pearls,' said Rocky.

'They are pearls,' said the shopkeeper, making a grab for them.

'It's that dreadful monkey!' cried Aunt Ruby. 'I knew the boy would bring her here!'

The necklace was already **adorning** Tutu's neck. I thought she looked rather nice in them, but she gave us no time to admire the effect. Springing out of our reach Tutu dodged around Rocky, slipped between my legs, and made for the crowded road. I ran after her, shouting to her to stop, but she wasn't listening.

discreet: that does not attract attention
sauntering: walking in a slow and relaxed manner

squeal: long, loud, high cry
adorn: to decorate

She tried to make her escape speedier by leaping on to the back of a passing scooterist. The scooter **swerved** into a fruit stall and came to a standstill under a heap of bananas, while the scooterist found himself in the arms of an **indignant** fruitseller. Tutu peeled a banana and ate part of it before deciding to move on.

[illegible]

deftly: quickly and skilfully