

THE FISHERMAN AND THE CONCH-SHELL

It had a poor fisherman.

Everyday he used to go in the sea to catch fish but he never make a big catch. Day after day he goin.

His wife used to quarrel with him. "Leh we go back by my father" - she said.

"I done tell you ah not going back there. Even if we have to eat salt and rice we staying right hya" the fisherman replied.

"I don't know you so stubborn. If we go there mih father go give you a wuk in the estate."

"Me eh going to live no *ghardhambha* life and besides we managing alright over here" - he said.

He took up his net, pitch-oil, water and set out on his way.

After being in the sea for a while he decided to pull up his net. The catch as usual was a small one but he noticed a conch-shell which had an unusual glow. He took up the shell and to his surprise he heard a voice from the shell saying "You going to get rich if you pray to me." Immediately he dropped the shell. He was stunned with what he just heard. After a few minutes he took up the shell and wiped it. The glow was still there. He decided to take it home.

ghardhambha - a man living at his in-laws home.



TO HIS SURPRISE HE HEARD A VOICE FROM THE SHELL

When he reached home he told his wife about the happenings.

His wife said, "You expect me to believe that", and throw down the shell.

The poor fisherman took the shell and placed it in his *puja-room*.

That night he got a dream. In the dream the shell was again talking to him. He got up scared and pondered whether this could be real. He decided to offer prayers to conch-shell just in case.

This time the conch-shell in a heavenly voice said.

"Ask for whatever you want and you will get it. The only problem is that whatever you get your neighbour will also receive twice the amount".

The fisherman became even more frightened and in a trembling voice said "I want a new big boat to catch fish". "Your wish is granted" the shell replied. The fisherman did not tell his wife anything, he just took up his equipment and set out to the jetty. There to his amazement he saw a large boat with he name mark on it. It was then he realised that what the conch-shell said wa. true.

Next to his boat he saw two other boats with the neighbour mark. He was happy and said, "Everyday you can't catch hell god does smile on you someday."

puja-room - prayer room.

With the big boat now he catching plenty fish.

As time went on he became wealthy. Anything he wanted he just ask the conch-shell.

"Hey Sankh baba (Oh father conch-shell)" I want a new house he said. The fisherman get the new house but he neighbour get two house.

Anytime and everytime he ask for something he neighbour getting two. The fisherman start to get vex because he neighbour getting more rich then he. So the fisherman decided to ask for bad things.

"Hey sankh baba I want one ah me foot to break." he said.

One ah the fisherman foot break he neighbour two foot break.

"Hey sankh baba, I want one ah me hand to break." he said.

One ah the fisherman hand break the neighbour two hand break too. The fisherman was still jealous of he neighbour because he was still more rich.

The fisherman said "Hey sankh baba, I want one ah me eye to get blind" Again one of the fisherman eye get blind and the neighbour two eye get blind.

Hey Sankh Baba - Oh father conch-shell.

Now it happen that two ah dem dey just so. The fisherman cya enjoy what he get. So he gone by the *sankh baba* and he say. '*Hey Sankh baba*, I now have everything and I cya enjoy it.

The *sankh baba* responded, "If you wasn't so jealous you woulda be happy."

Recorded :
with Jaikaran Edmund - 1905 - 1990
La Romain.