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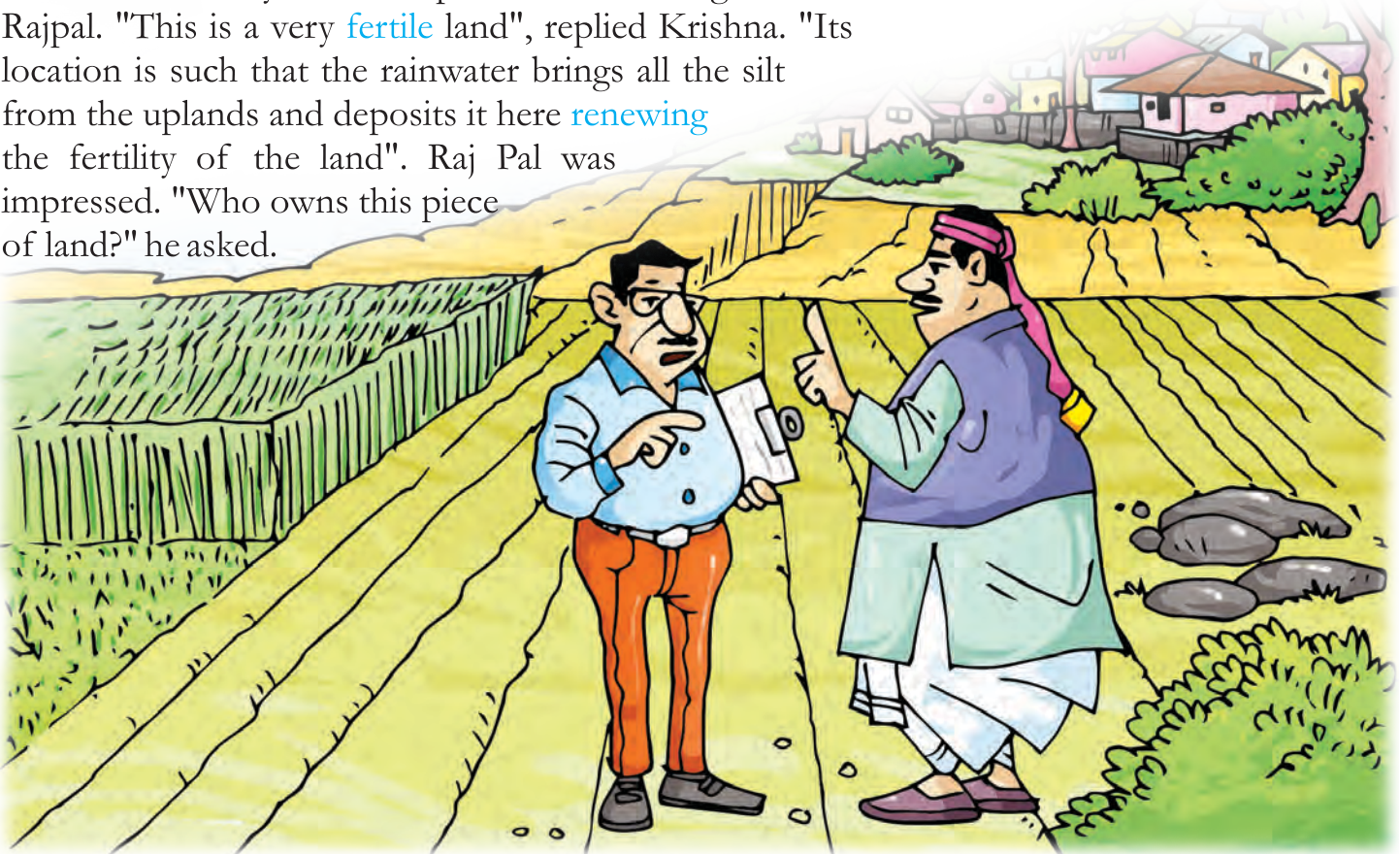
The Magic of Labour



Do you like to do your work yourself or let anybody do it for you? You yourself know the importance of your work and do it with interest. Others will not do it with full labour. The more you work hard, the more you gain. Read this story to know how Birju changed his infertile land into the most fertile one, only by hard labour.

Choudhary Raj Pal took pride in being called the village zamindar even though he stayed in the city. He liked to come once every month to have a look at the fields and talk to his manager, Krishna. One day, he saw a field on the way and was struck by the beauty of the standing crop. "What is that you have planted here?" asked Raj Pal with the pride of a zamindar who owned such a fine plot of land.

"Sir, this is not our land. Our land begins there", Krishna pointed out to the nearby field. Raj Pal noticed that the crops on the nearby fields were poor in comparison and the plants looked weak and wasted. "Why is the crop on this land so good?" asked Rajpal. "This is a very **fertile** land", replied Krishna. "Its location is such that the rainwater brings all the silt from the uplands and deposits it here **renewing** the fertility of the land". Raj Pal was impressed. "Who owns this piece of land?" he asked.



"This belongs to Birju," answered Krishna." He owns only these two acres in the entire village and he spends most of his time here."

"Send him to me," said Raj Pal.

Krishna passed on the message to Birju. Birju appeared the next day at the house of the zamindar.

"You have a fine field Birju," said the zamindar.

"It is all God's grace and your kindness, zamindar saheb", said Birju, happy at hearing his land being praised. "I called you here, Birju, because I liked the land very much. How much are you willing to sell the land for? I wish to buy it."

"Sell the land? No, zamindar saheb! The land is my livelihood. It is like a mother to me. I can't sell my mother."

"Not even if I wanted to buy it?" asked Raj Pal, getting angry.

"But you have so much land all around the village," protested Birju. "Why are you so obsessed with my small plot of land?"

This gave the zamindar another idea. "I will give you thrice the amount of land somewhere else in the village. In place of the two acres that you have, I will give you six acres."

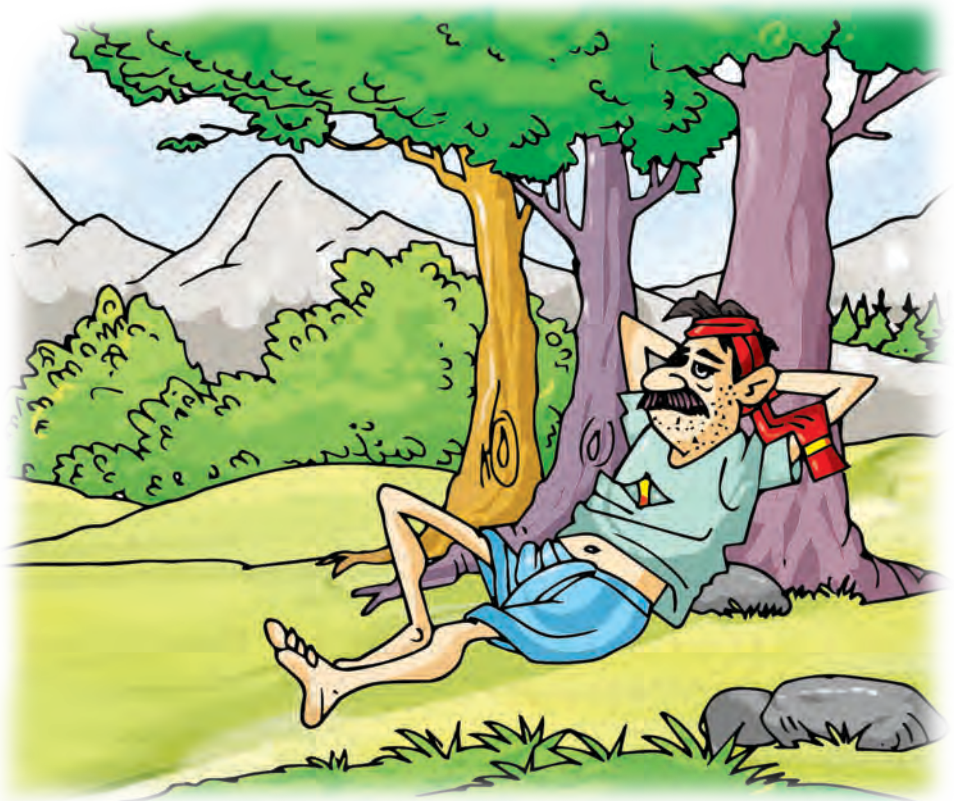
Birju had no chance but to sell the land, but now that Birju had agreed to the deal, Raj Pal felt he had been too liberal. "Yet", he told Krishna, "in order to safeguard my reputation, I have to fulfil my promise."

He spoke to his manager. "Krishna," he said, "is there any part of my land which is presently **uncultivable** and **barren**?"

Krishna replied, "Yes, there some land on top of the hills which does not have any irrigation facility. The soil is also very thin there and full of **boulders**."

This, for some reason, made Raj Pal very happy. "Give it to Birju," he ordered. "Give him six acres there on top of the hills." Birju was shocked when he heard that. "But the land is not fit for anything saheb; what will I do with it?"

Raj Pal was very rude. "I don't know and don't care what



you will do with it. We had reached an agreement today and I hope you are man enough to **abide** by it."

Birju felt **tricked** but decided to accept the infertile, barren land.

Raj Pal was pleased to have acquired such a good piece of land in return for a worthless piece of land. He was so happy at this incident that he didn't return to the village for more than a year and would get news of the village by telephone from Krishna. At times, he would ask about Birju. "What is the fool doing now?"

Krishna used to say, "He is working on his new land."



A year later when he visited the village, Raj Pal was shocked to see that the new land which he had bought from Birju didn't have any crop standing. "What happened?" asked Raj Pal.

"The entire crop was attacked by **pests**," replied Krishna. "It seems as if Birju had cast some sort of **spell**".

This made Raj Pal very angry. Birju had tricked him! He directed his driver to go straight to Birju's farm on the hills. There, another surprise awaited Raj Pal. When he came to Birju's farm, he found it to be green and lush with different crops. He couldn't believe his eyes. "Didn't you tell me that it was a barren land, full of boulders and totally uncultivable?" He asked in anger.

"It was all that and much more", said Krishna, "but this Birju seems to know some black magic".

"I will show him some of my own magic!" shouted Raj Pal, as he walked into Birju's hut.

"You could have called me," said Birju, when he saw the zamindar.

"It is good that I came", replied Raj Pal. "If I hadn't come, I wouldn't have known about black magic. Tell me, where did you learn those filthy black magic tricks? I think I will call a village meeting and have you thrown out of the village."

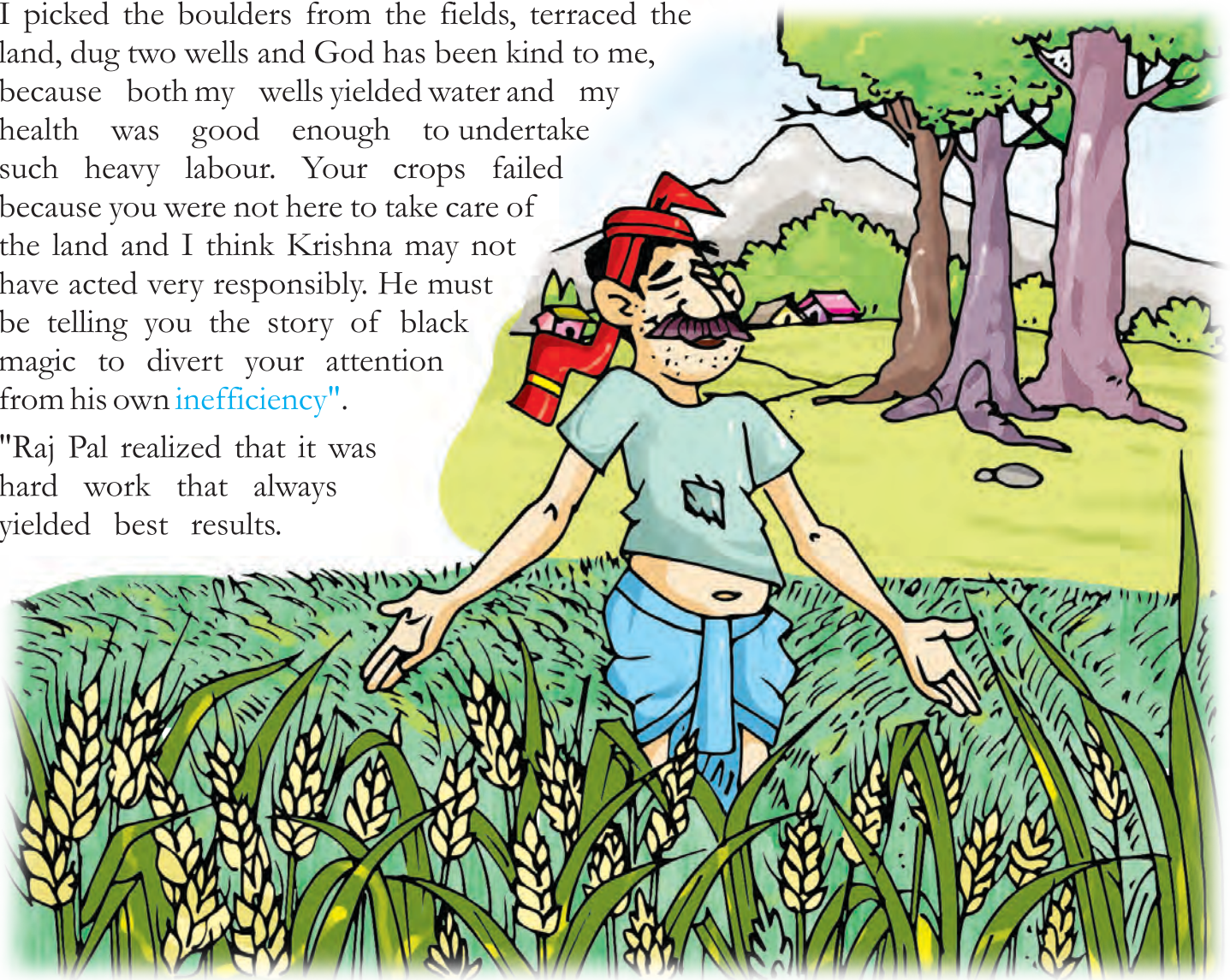
"Did Krishna tell you that I have used black magic?" asked Birju.

"What if he did?" replied Raj Pal angrily.

"Zamindar saheb," said Birju, "you have been misinformed. Even my previous land was not very fertile as many people thought it to be. It was my labour in the land, which made it productive. I was disappointed when you gave me this land, but then I thought that no land is unproductive. I did have to work hard on this land.

I picked the boulders from the fields, terraced the land, dug two wells and God has been kind to me, because both my wells yielded water and my health was good enough to undertake such heavy labour. Your crops failed because you were not here to take care of the land and I think Krishna may not have acted very responsibly. He must be telling you the story of black magic to divert your attention from his own **inefficiency**".

"Raj Pal realized that it was hard work that always yielded best results.



A lesson well learnt, he sold off part of the land and gave away some of the land free to the villagers. He kept with him only as much land as he could manage well on his own.

— Manjoj T Thomas

Word-Web

- **struck** : impressed
- **renewing** : restoring
- **liberal** : generous
- **barren** : not good for growing crops, unproductive
- **abide** : to accept or do what has been decided
- **pests** : insects or animals that destroy crops
- **terraced** : made plain and steps cut out for crops (especially on hills)
- **undertake** : to take in hand or begin
- **fertile** : productive
- **protested** : objected
- **uncultivable** : not worth of farming
- **boulders** : large rocks and stones
- **tricked** : deceived
- **spell** : magic
- **inefficiency** : inability to do something accurately



Comprehension

» Multi-Menu

Multiple Choice Questions

A. Tick against the correct answers.

- Who was struck by the beauty of the standing crop?
(a) Raj Pal (b) Birju (c) Krishna
- Who was the owner of the fine plot of land?
(a) Raj Pal (b) Krishna (c) Birju
- Birju appeared the next day at the house of _____.
(a) Krishna (b) the zamindar (c) Brij Pal
- The zamindar offered Birju to give him _____.
(a) equal to his land (b) double of his land (c) triple of his land
- Birju was given six acres of land _____.
(a) on the top of hills (b) below the hills (c) near the village

» Pick and Fill

B. Fill in the blanks of these sentences with correct words from the box.

unproductive tricked livelihood surprise noticed

- Raj Pal _____ that the crops on the nearby fields were poor.
- 'No, zamindar saheb! The land is my _____.'
- Birju felt _____ but decided to accept the infertile, barren land.
- There, another _____ awaited Raj Pal.
- I was disappointed when you gave me this land, but I thought that no land is _____.

C. Write 'T' for true and 'F' for false statements.

- The zamindar used to live in the village.
- Birju at once became ready to sell his piece of land.
- Raj Pal was happy to see the land which he had bought from Birju.
- The entire crop of zamindar was really attacked by pests.
- It was Birju's labour in the land which made it productive.
- Raj Pal's crops failed because he was not there to take care of his land.

» Matching-Mania

D. Match the words in Column A with their meanings in Column B.

Column A

1. fertile •
2. struck •
3. Uncultivable •
4. disappointed •
5. yielded •
6. filthy •

Column B

- (a) giving no produce
- (b) produced
- (c) unhappy
- (d) productive
- (e) impressed
- (f) very dirty



» Question-Queue (Short)

E. Answer each of the following questions in one or two sentences.

1. Who was choudhary Raj Pal and where did he live?
2. Who was Birju? How much land did he have?
3. How much land did Raj Pal give to Birju in exchange of his piece of land?
4. Who was Krishna? Was he a careful and watchful man?
5. What type of land did Raj Pal give to Birju?

» Question-Queue (Long)

F. Answer each of the following questions in detail.

1. Why was Birju's piece of land so fertile?
2. Why was the zamindar surprised?
3. What type of land was given to Birju in return of his piece of land?
4. What did Krishna reply when Raj Pal saw no crop in the field which he had bought from Birju?
5. What did Brijju do in the barren land given to him by the zamindar?
6. What did RajPal realize in the last? What did he do then?
7. What lesson is conveyed through this story? Write in your own words.



Vocabulary

▶ Match the words in Column A with their meanings in Column B.

Column A

1. pride •
2. owned •
3. silt •
4. shock •
5. worthless •
6. information •

Column B

- (a) a deposit of mud or fine soil
- (b) message
- (c) sudden disturbance
- (d) self esteem
- (e) belonging to oneself
- (f) of no use

▶ Complete the spellings of the following words.

comp__ _ son

safe __ _ ard

wor __ _ less

inef __ _ ci _ ncy

mis __ _ fo __ _ ed

und __ _ ta _ e

b __ _ lder _

irr __ _ ation

pro __ _ st _ d



Think-n-Thrive

- If you were in place of choudhary Raj Pal, what would you have done with Birju and Krishna?



Grammar-Grip

» Adverb of degree

Adverb of Degree shows or answers the question 'how much' or 'in what degree' or 'to what extent'. For Example:

- (a) This questions is **very** difficult. (b) She is **too** active to do the sums.
 (c) Why do you speak **so** loud? (d) You are **partly** wrong and **partly** right

▶ Now use appropriate adverbs from those given in brackets.

1. She is an actress of _____ charming manners. (very, much)
2. You are _____ early today. (some, somewhat)
3. The plane landed _____ yesterday. (late, lately)
4. I shall be _____ obliged if you grant me leave. (much, very)
5. This book is _____ difficult. (very, too)
6. He always gets up _____ than you. (early, earlier)
7. She _____ comes to see me. (ever, never)
8. Why do you speak so _____? (loud, loudly)
9. Come here _____ . (immediate, immediately)
10. The station is far _____ . (of, off)

» Reading Skills

▶ Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

In the early days of Internet marketing, online advertisers employed banner and pop-up ads to attract customers. These techniques reached large audiences, generated many sales leads and came at a low cost. When consumers were irritated at these unwanted online ads, independent programmers began to develop tools that blocked banner and pop-up ads. These tools became very popular with Internet users.

Then came the pay-per-click ads. Unlike banner or pop-up ads, which originally required companies to pay every time a website visitor saw an ad, pay-per-click ads allow companies to pay only when an interested potential customer clicks on an ad.

1. How did advertisers advertise online in the beginning?
2. What were the benefits of the early techniques of online advertisement?
3. Why were tools that blocked ads developed?
4. How was the cost of banner or pop-up ads originally decided?
5. How are pay-per-click ads more advantageous to advertisers than banner ads?

» Fun to write

You are the secretary of the Adventure Club in your school. Write a notice to inform students about a trek the club is organizing near Rishikesh next month. Remember to mention the following details.

- Name of the organizing body
- When and where
- For how long
- Last date for registration
- Cost per person
- Whom to contact

Make your notice attractive!