Five Chinese Brothers
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पांच चीनी भाई
क्लेर हुचेट बिशप

अनुवाद: अरविन्द गुप्ता
Once upon a time
there were
Five Chinese Brothers
and they looked exactly alike.

बहुत पुराने जमाने की बात है।
चीन में पांच भाई रहते थे।
उनकी एक खास बात थी।
पांचों भाई देखने में बिल्कुल एक जैसे लगते थे।
They lived with their mother in a small house not far from the sea.

वे सभी अपनी मां के साथ रहते थे। उनका छोटा सा घर, समुद्र के पास था।
The First Chinese Brother could swallow the sea. The Second Chinese Brother had an iron neck. The Third Chinese Brother could stretch and stretch and stretch his legs. The Fourth Chinese Brother could not be burned. And, The Fifth Chinese Brother could hold his breath indefinitely.

Every morning the First Chinese Brother would go fishing, and whatever the weather, he would come back to the village with beautiful and rare fish which he had caught and could sell at the market for a very good price.

One day, as he was leaving the market place, a little boy stopped him and asked him if he could go fishing with him.

"No, it could not be done," said the First Chinese Brother. But the little boy begged and begged and finally the First Chinese Brother consented. "Under one condition," said he, "and that is that you shall obey me promptly."

"Yes, yes," the little boy promised.

हर सुबह, पहला चीनी भाई मछली पकड़ने के लिए समुद्र के किनारे जाता था। चाहें मौसम खराब क्यों न हो, उसे हमेशा ही सूंदर और बेशकीमती मछलियाँ पकड़ कर लाता था। इन मछलियों को वो गांव की हाट में बड़े ऊंचे दामों पर बेचता था। एक दिन जब वो बाजार से बापस आ रहा था तो एक छोटे लड़के ने उसे रोक कर पूछा, ‘क्या आप मुझे अपने साथ मछली पकड़ने के लिए ले चलेंगे?’

‘नहीं, यह संभव नहीं है,’ पहले चीनी भाई ने जवाब दिया। परंतु छोटे लड़के ने बहुत जिद्द करी और हार नहीं मानी। उसने बड़ी आरजू-मिनत की।

‘एक शर्त पर,’ उसने कहा, ‘तुम्हें मेरी बात को फौरन मानना होगा।’

‘हां! हां! जहर,’ छोटे लड़के ने वादा किया।
Early next morning, the First Chinese Brother and the little boy went down to the beach. "Remember," said the First Chinese Brother, "you must obey me promptly. When I make a sign for you to come back, you must come at once." "Yes, yes," the little boy promised.

Then the First Chinese Brother swallowed the sea.

And all the fish were left high and dry at the bottom of the sea. And all the treasures of the sea lay uncovered.

The little boy was delighted. He ran here and there stuffing his pockets with strange pebbles, extraordinary shells and fantastic algae.

अगले दिन सुबह, पहला चीनी भाई और छोटा लड़का समुद्र के तट पर गए।
‘भूलना मत!,’ पहले चीनी भाई ने कहा, ‘मेरी आप्ता का अच्छी तरह पालन करना। जैसे ही मैं इशारा करूं, तुम झट से वापस आना।’
‘हाँ, हाँ, बिल्कुल,’ छोटे लड़के ने कहा।

उसके बाद पहले चीनी भाई ने, समुद्र के पूरे पानी को पी लिया।
पानी खत्म हो जाने से सारी मछलियां समुद्र की तलहटी पर सूखी रूप में फंस गयीं और छटपटाने लगीं।
समुद्र का अनमोल खजाना साफ दिखाई देने लगा।

इतनी सुंदर चीजें देखकर छोटे लड़के की खुशी का ठिकाना न रहा।
बो इधर से उधर दौड़ने लगा और अपनी जेबों में खूबसूरत सींगियां, अदभुत शांत और नायाब चीजें भरने लगा।
अगले दिन सुबह को पहला चीनी भाई और छोटा लड़का दोनों समुद्र के तट पर गए।

‘याद रखना,’ पहले चीनी भाई ने कहा, ‘तुम मेरे आदेश का तुरंत पालन करना।
मैं जैसे ही इशारा करूं तुम फौरन वापस चले आना।’
‘हां! हां!’ कहकर, छोटे लड़के ने अपना सिर हिलाया।
Near the shore the First Chinese Brother gathered some fish while he kept holding the sea in his mouth. Presently he grew tired. It is very hard to hold the sea. So he made a sign with his hand for the little boy to come back. The little boy saw him but paid no attention.

इतनी देर में समुद्र के बिजने पर पहले चीनी भाई ने कुछ मछलियाँ इकट्ठी कीं।

अभी तक उसने समुद्र को कसकर अपने मुंह में बंद रखा था। परंतु अब वो समुद्र को पकड़-पकड़ एकदम धक गया था। समुद्र को इस तरह मुंह में पकड़ रखना कोई आसान काम नहीं था।

इसलिए उसने अपने हाथ से छोटे लड़के को तुरंत वापस आने का इशारा किया।

छोटे लड़के ने इशारा देखने के बाद भी उसका पालन नहीं किया।
The First Chinese Brother made great movements with his arms and that meant "Come back!" But did the little boy care? Not a bit and he ran further away. Then the First Chinese Brother felt the sea swelling inside him and he made desperate gestures to call the little boy back. But the little boy made faces at him and fled as fast as he could.

उसके बाद पहले चीनी भाई ने बड़े ओर से अपने हाथ-पैर हिला-हिलाकर, छोटे लड़के को तट के पास आने का इशारा किया। परंतु क्या उस छोटे लड़के ने उसकी बात मानी? बिलकुल नहीं। छोटा लड़का अपनी मस्ती में किनारे से और दूर दौड़ने लगा।

तब पहले चीनी भाई से न रहा गया। उसे अपने मुंह के अंदर समुद उफनता हुआ महसूस हुआ। उसने छोटे लड़के को वापस बुलाने की भरसक कोशिश की। परंतु छोटे लड़के ने उसका बस मुंह बिखाया और तेजी से और दूर भागने लगा।
The First Chinese Brother held the sea until he thought he was going to burst.

All of a sudden the sea forced its way out of his mouth, went back it its bed ... and the little boy disappeared.
When the First Chinese Brother returned to the village, alone, he was arrested, put in prison and condemned to have his head cut off.

On the morning of the execution he said to the judge:
"Your Honour, will you allow me to go and bid my mother good-bye?"
"It is only fair," said the judge.

So the First Chinese Brother went home .... and the Second Chinese Brother came back in his place.

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So the First Chinese Brother went home .... and the Second Chinese Brother came back in his place.
All the people were assembled on the village square to witness the execution.

The executioner took his sword and struck a mighty blow.
But the Second Chinese Brother got up and smiled. He was the one with the iron neck and they simply could not cut his head off.

Everybody was angry and they decided that he should be drowned.
On the morning of the execution, the Second Chinese Brother said to the judge:
"Your honour, will you allow me to go and bid my mother good-bye?"
"It is only fair," said the judge.

So the Second Chinese Brother went home.... and the Third Chinese Brother came back in his place. He was pushed on a boat which made for the open sea.

When they were far out on the ocean

सजा चाले दिन दूसरे चीनी भाई ने जज साहब से प्रार्थना की,
‘क्या आप मुझे अंतिम बार अपनी मां से नहीं मिलने देंगे?
मैं उने आखिरी अलविदा कहना चाहता हूँ।’

‘अवश्य, यह तो तुम्हारा हक है,’ जज साहब ने कहा।

अनुमति मिलने के बाद दूसरे चीनी भाई घर गया और उसकी जगह पर तीसरा चीनी भाई वापस आया।
क्योंकि सभी भाई देखने में बिल्कुल एक-समान थे इसलिए किसी को भी शक नहीं हुआ।

तीसरे भाई को एक बड़ी नाव में समुद्र के बीच ले जाया गया।
the Third Chinese Brother was thrown overboard.

समुद्र के बीच-बीच पहुँचने के बाद तीसरे चीनी भाई को नाव से उठाकर समुद्र में फेंक दिया गया।
But he began to stretch and stretch and stretch his legs, way down to the bottom of the sea.

And all the time his smiling face was bobbing up and down on the crest of the waves.

He simply could not be drowned. Everybody was very angry, and they all decided that he should be burned. On the morning of the execution, the Third Chinese Brother said to the judge:

"Your Honour, will you allow me to go and bid my mother good-bye?"
"It is only fair," said the judge.
So the Third Chinese Brother went home ....
and the Fourth Chinese Brother came back in his place.
He was tied up to a stake.
Fire was set to it and all the people stood around watching it.

In the midst of all the flames they heard him say: "This is quite pleasant."
"Bring some more wood!" the people cried.

The fire roared higher.
"Now it is quite comfortable," said the Fourth Chinese Brother,
for he was the one who could not be burned.
Everybody was getting more and more angry every minute
and they all decided to smother him.

"चौथे चीनी भाई को एक पत्थर लगाय खड़े से बांध गया। फिर खड़े को आग लगा दी गई।
इस नज़रे को देखने के लिए सारा गांव उड़ गया। कुछ समय बाद चारों ओर ऊंची-ऊंची लपटे उठने लगी।

उस समय चौथे चीनी भाई ने कहा, 'यहां तो मुझे बड़ा मजा आ रहा है।'
उसकी बात सुनकर लोग चिल्लाए, 'और लकड़ी लाओ!'?

चीरे-चीरे करके आग की लपटें आसमान को छू लगी।
‘अब तो मुझे जनता का मजा आ रहा है!’ चौथे चीनी भाई ने कहा। असल में उसे जलाया ही नहीं जा सकता था।
गांववाले यह सब देखकर गुस्से से आग-बुझने हो गए।
सबने चौथे चीनी भाई को चट्टी में झींक कर खत्म करने का निर्देश लिया।"
They were not going to be tricked again!
So they stayed there all night and even a little after dawn,
just to make sure.

गांववाले पूरा रात घटटों के सामने खड़े रहे।
उन्हें डर था कि मुजरिम उन्हें चकमा देकर कहीं भाग न जाए।
Then they opened the door and pulled him out.
And he shook himself and said, "My! That was a good sleep!"
Everybody stared open-mouthed and round eyed.
But the judge stepped forward and said,
"We have tried to get rid of you in every possible way
and somehow it cannot be done.
It must be that you are innocent."
"Yes, yes," shouted all the people.
So they let him go and he went home.
And the Five Chinese Brothers and their mother all lived together happily for many years.

End