



Haste makes waste

Shivaji, the Maratha chief, was on the run. He had suffered a **set-back**¹ in a battle with the Mughals. He and a few of his close **associates**² got away in time. The party moved through the jungle. After a long **trek**³, they reached a junction. Shivaji turned to his men and said, "If we move in a group, we will be easily identified. Let each of us follow a different route. We shall meet **three days hence**⁴, in the old **rest house**⁵ near Rajgarh Fort." The men protested. Shivaji **overruled**⁶ their objection. He moved on, all by himself. By dusk he was tired. He needed food and shelter for the night? The **flicker**⁷ of an oil lamp, at a distance, **roused**⁸ his hopes. He moved faster till he reached a hut. An old woman was watching a pot, boiling on the fire. She raised her head on hearing footsteps. She saw a stranger at the door. She asked, "Who are you?" Shivaji did not introduce himself. For danger **stalk**⁹ed him, all around. So he said, "A poor traveller. Ma, I seek help from you. I am terribly hungry. I had been on my feet all day long and had nothing but some nuts and fruits I took from the trees." "Come, sit down. I will get you a plate of hot, fresh boiled Kodi (grain eaten by poor people). Nothing more. I am poor. I can't serve a grand feast," she made place for Shivaji to sit close to the fire.

¹ نیروی عقب نشینی

² a person that you work with, do business with or spend a lot of time with

³ a long walk

⁴ ... days, weeks, etc. 'hence : a number of days, etc. from now

⁵ a building used for shelter by travelers.

⁶ to change a decision or reject an idea from a position of greater power ، رد کردن

کنار گذاشتن

⁷ shimmer, لرزیدن ، سوسوزدن

⁸ to make sb feel a particular emotion

⁹ to move slowly and quietly towards an animal or a person, in order to kill, catch or harm it or them



Shivaji thanked her. He washed his face and hands and sat down. The woman placed a plate before him and served the- hot steaming food. Shivaji picked up a **handful**¹⁰ of food from the centre. He wrung his hand in pain. Quickly he dropped the food and waited. The old woman, who watched him, said, "You are like Shivaji." "Shivaji! Why?" he asked.

"Shivaji leaves aside small-forts and hurries to capture big ones. He is terribly **hasty**¹¹. He doesn't know that he must move step by step, gain control over the small forts and then attack the big

ones. Haste makes waste. It gets one into trouble. You were hasty too. Food, when served hot, cools faster at the edges. Instead of taking food from the edges, where it is cold, you picked up a handful from the centre. And hence, got your fingers burn. Shivaji got the message. He thanked the old woman. He cleaned up the kodi. He washed the plate and waited till the old woman had eaten. He helped her clean up the pots. Then she spread a mat on the floor for him to sleep. Next day, at **dawn**¹², he **took leave**¹³ of the old woman. He told her, as he left, "I assure you, I won't be hasty. I know haste gets one into trouble. Thank you for teaching me that lesson."

¹⁰ the amount of sth that can be held in one hand

¹¹ /'heisti/ hurried

¹² daybreak, sunrise

¹³ to say goodbye

"Good. I wish Shivaji also learns that lesson. I wish I live to see Shivaji holding absolute power," the old woman said.

"He has got the message, Mataji," Shivaji fell at her feet.

"What!" the old woman was confused.

"I am Shivaji. Bless me, Mataji. You have shown me the way to succeed," Shivaji reached for the old woman's right hand and placed it on his head.



Good luck: Pakheirian.A