Gentleness

✍️**Shreevalli Rai Martell**



There was a village, always busy with daily activity, and there was a snake that frequently appeared, creating an atmosphere of fear among passersby. Terrified by the menace of this dangerous snake, the villagers approached a monk living nearby and pleaded, "Swami, because of this snake's harassment, our children cannot play, and we cannot walk on the roads. You must find a solution to this problem." Understanding the villagers' plight, the monk began teaching the snake lessons on gentleness and virtue every day. As days passed, the snake's behavior changed; The snake transformed, it became gentle and noble.

Years rolled by. Peace and tranquility settled over the village. The children of those days grew up and moved to other towns. Eventually, a new generation of children took their place. One day, while playing, these children began poking the snake's burrow with sticks and throwing stones at it, harassing the creature that was living peacefully and minding its own business.

The snake, having become virtuous, tried its best to endure the pain with patience. However, when the children's harassment became unbearable, it quietly slipped away and went to the monk, weeping as it shared its grievance.

The monk listened and said:

"It is true that I taught you to be gentle. But I never told you to sit idly while you are being tortured. Your mistake was in failing to spread your hood and hiss."

Similarly, in our society, when a virtuous person’s self-respect is attacked or when they face injustice, they must roar and fight rightfully; there is nothing wrong with that.

Moral of the Story

"Gentleness is a virtue, but it should not be mistaken for weakness."

While one should embrace a peaceful and noble character, one must also maintain the strength to protect their dignity. Being "good" does not mean allowing others to mistreat you; you must know when to "hiss" to set boundaries and protect your self-respect.