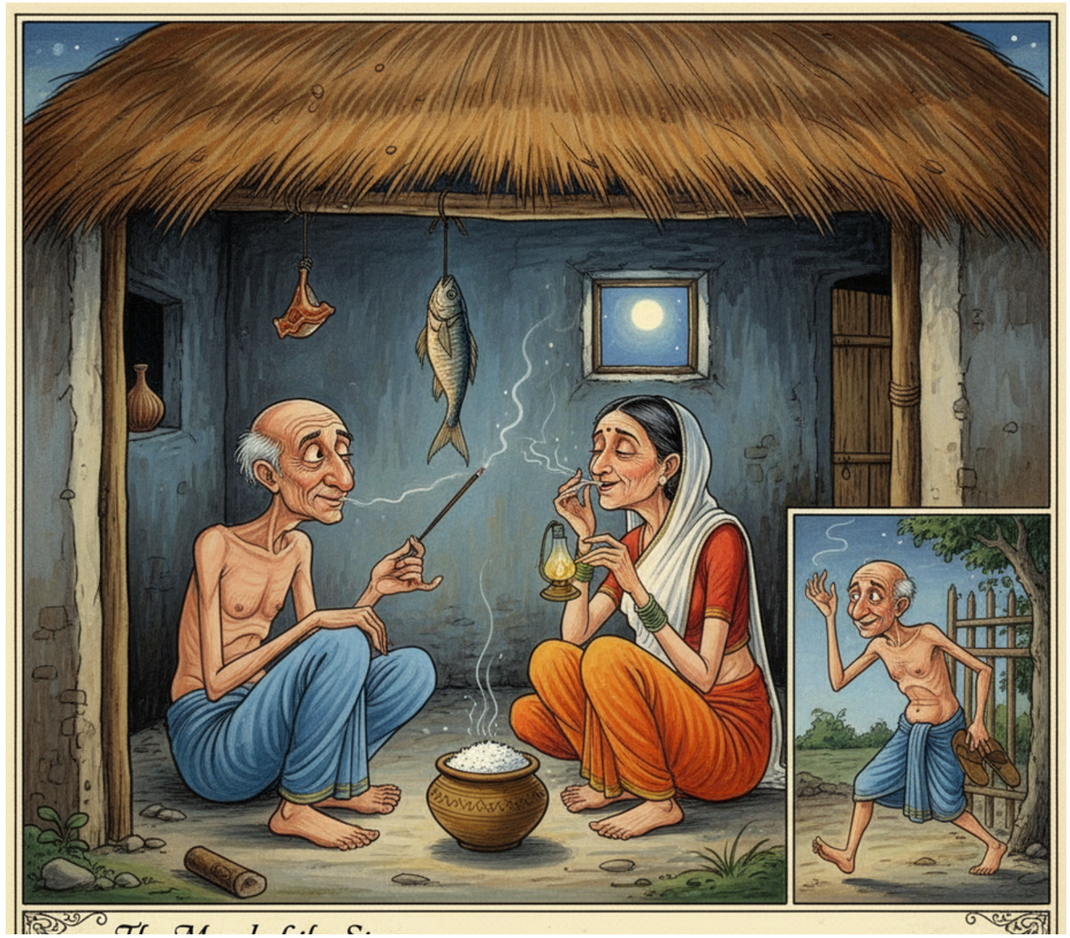
The Paradox of the Miser



Shreevalli Rai Martell

Once upon a time, there lived a husband and wife who were incredibly stingy. Despite their greed, they craved the aroma of fish with their meals every single day! To satisfy this without spending money, they tied a piece of dried fish to a string and hung it from the roof. They would eat their plain rice while simply smelling the hanging fish. Even when offering prayers, they would light an incense stick for just a moment and quickly blow it out to save it for the next day.

One evening, the husband felt like attending a Harikatha (religious discourse) happening a short distance away. He informed his wife and set off. After walking a considerable distance, he suddenly remembered that he hadn't extinguished the oil lamp (chimney lamp). Fearing that his wife might fall asleep and let the oil burn away, he rushed all the way back home.

When the wife saw him return, she asked what happened. After hearing his explanation, she replied, "I put out the lamp the moment you stepped into the courtyard and did everything else in the dark!" But then she added reproachfully, "However, didn't you think about your sandals? You walked all that way back just for this—think of how much the soles must have worn out!"

The husband smirked and replied, "Don't try to be too smart! I carried my sandals in my hands and walked back barefoot!"

Moral of the Story

Savings are necessary at times, but certainly not of this kind. In the short life granted by God, the true quality of a human being is to eat well, live happily, and, if possible, give to others.
The irony is that such people still exist today, which is quite a sad reality. Perhaps it is truly impossible to overcome the destiny (Prarabdha Karma) shaped by one's past lives.