The Ascetic and the Devoted Wife

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Once, there was a sanyasi (ascetic) who performed severe penance to gain spiritual powers. One day, while he was meditating, a parrot flying above dropped its droppings on his head. Angry and proud, the sanyasi looked fiercely at the parrot, and instantly the bird was burnt to ashes.

The sanyasi became proud of his power and thought he was very great. He decided to show his power to the villagers.

The next day, he went to a village asking for alms. At one house, he called out for food, but the woman inside was busy caring for her sick husband and elderly parents-in-law, so she came out a little late.

The sanyasi became angry and glared at her, expecting her to burn like the parrot. But nothing happened. The woman calmly said, “Do you think I am that helpless parrot? Give up your pride and come back down to earth.”

The sanyasi was shocked and asked how she knew about the incident with the parrot. The woman replied, “Through my devotion, duty, and selfless service, I can understand your pride. Unless you give up your ego, your knowledge and powers are useless.”

Hearing this, the sanyasi realized his mistake and became truly enlightened.

Moral: Knowledge and power have no value if they are overshadowed by ego and pride.