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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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How the son of a Raja married princess Labam

One day, the son of a Raja – a prince – went into a jungle where he was not allowed by his parents. Talking parrots told him about Princess Labam. They didn't know where she lived, but the prince knew immediately that he wanted to marry her. "I must find her," he said to his parents, "even if I have to die for it." The prince was given a horse and a bow and arrow by his father. His mother gave him a bag of sweets for the journey.

On the way, the prince stopped somewhere to eat his sweets. But there were ants in the bag. "Then I'll give it to the ants," decided the prince. Then the master of the ants stood before him and said, "You are a good person. If you ever have problems, we will help you." Later, the prince came face to face with a roaring tiger. "Why are you roaring?" asked the prince. "I have a painful thorn in my foot," replied the tiger. "Well," said the prince, "I will take it out for you. But don't eat me afterwards!"

"Oh no," said the tiger, "certainly not! Please make me better." And the prince did. "If you ever have problems, my wife and I will help you," promised the tiger.



The prince traveled on and met four fakirs, arguing over various gifts, including a magical bed and a magic bag. The prince said, "Don't argue about these things. I will shoot four arrows in different directions. Whoever gets to the first arrow will get the first gift. Whoever gets to the second arrow will get the second gift, and so on."

The fakirs agreed. The prince shot an arrow. When they returned it, he shot the second one, then the third. While the fakirs were looking for the fourth arrow, the prince ran off with all the gifts. The prince asked the bed, "Take me to the land of Princess Labam!" The bed took him to the house of an old woman. "Oh no," said the woman, "we cannot receive strangers. If the king finds out, I will go to jail."

"Let me stay overnight. I will leave early in the morning," said the prince. "Okay, just for this one night," she said. "Why don't you light a lamp?" the prince asked when it got dark. The woman replied, "The king forbids it. The princess stands on top of the palace in the evening and spreads light until midnight. We don't see her during the day. She only appears in the evening until the workers are done with their work."

At midnight, the prince asked the bed to take him to the princess. She was sleeping soundly in her bed. The prince took out betel leaf, a medicinal plant, from his magic bag. The next day, the princess asked her servants who it belonged to. The servants didn't know. The next morning, the prince had to leave the woman's house. But when the prince said he was sick, he was allowed to stay longer.

The next night, the prince visited the princess again. The princess woke up in a startle. "Who are you? Why are you here?" she asked him. "I am the son of a Raja. I want to marry you," replied the prince. "Okay," said the princess, "I will tell my father that I want to marry you."

However, the king did not simply allow his daughter to marry. Every candidate who wanted to marry her had to perform terrible tasks. The first task was to make oil from eighty pounds of mustard seeds within a day. Fortunately, the hardworking ants helped the prince and he completed the task. After this, the prince had to fight two demons. The tigers helped him and they won the fight.

The king was still not satisfied. Now he had to split a large tree trunk in half with a toy axe. An impossible task!



"Your father will kill me tomorrow," he said to the princess. The princess pulled out a hair from her head and gave it to the prince. "Use this hair. Tomorrow morning, tell the tree trunk that Princess Labam commands it to split in half." And so it happened.

The prince married the princess and they left for his parents' land where they lived happily ever after.