

A Forest Adventure

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Level 4



It was a sunny morning. Anu woke up at 7:00 am and she was really excited. She had a field trip to Nallamala forest - a big forest in Telangana.

She hurried and got ready quickly, had breakfast, packed her bags and boarded her bus. In the bus, she sat in her seat beside her friends Sneha and Aditi. She was smiling wide and said, "Hi!" waving at them. "You look really happy today, Anu!" Sneha said.

"I have a field trip today!" Anu said, grinning.

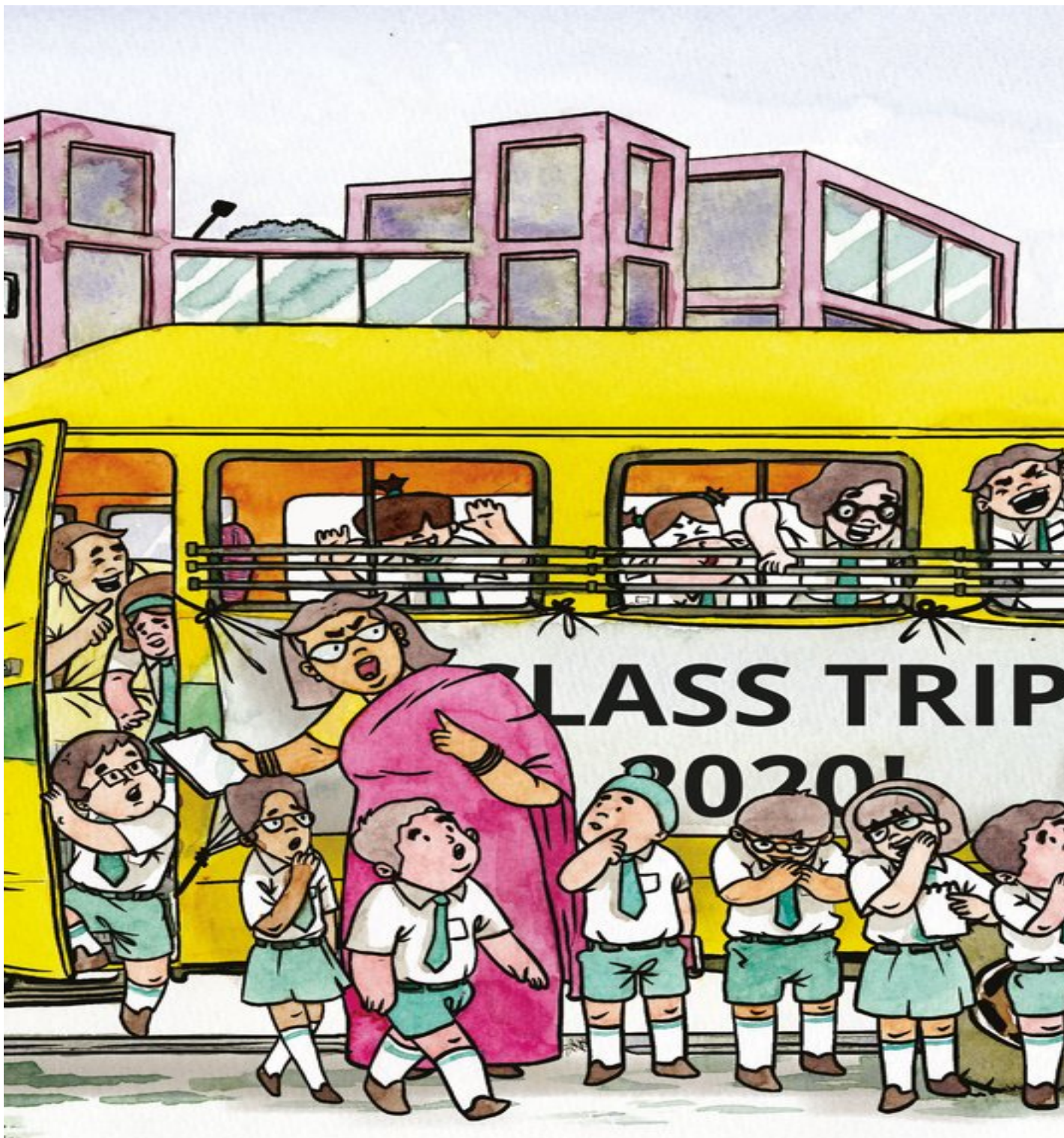
"So, where are you going?" asked Aditi, curious.

"To Nallamala forest!" Anu announced. "I am really excited!"

"Are you sure you want to go to a forest on this sunny day?" Sneha asked.

"I just don't care!" Anu replied. "I just love field trips!"

They continued the bus journey by playing games, talking about their friends, etc.



After their bus reached school, Anu ran to her classroom and waited for her friends. She checked the snacks she brought: chips, wafers and juices.

Slowly, her friends entered the classroom. Before the assembly, the girls and boys in her class had a debate on who is going to get the backseat in the bus. At last, the boys got the backseat.

After the assembly, all the students set their bags and got ready to leave. They were told that they had to leave section wise.

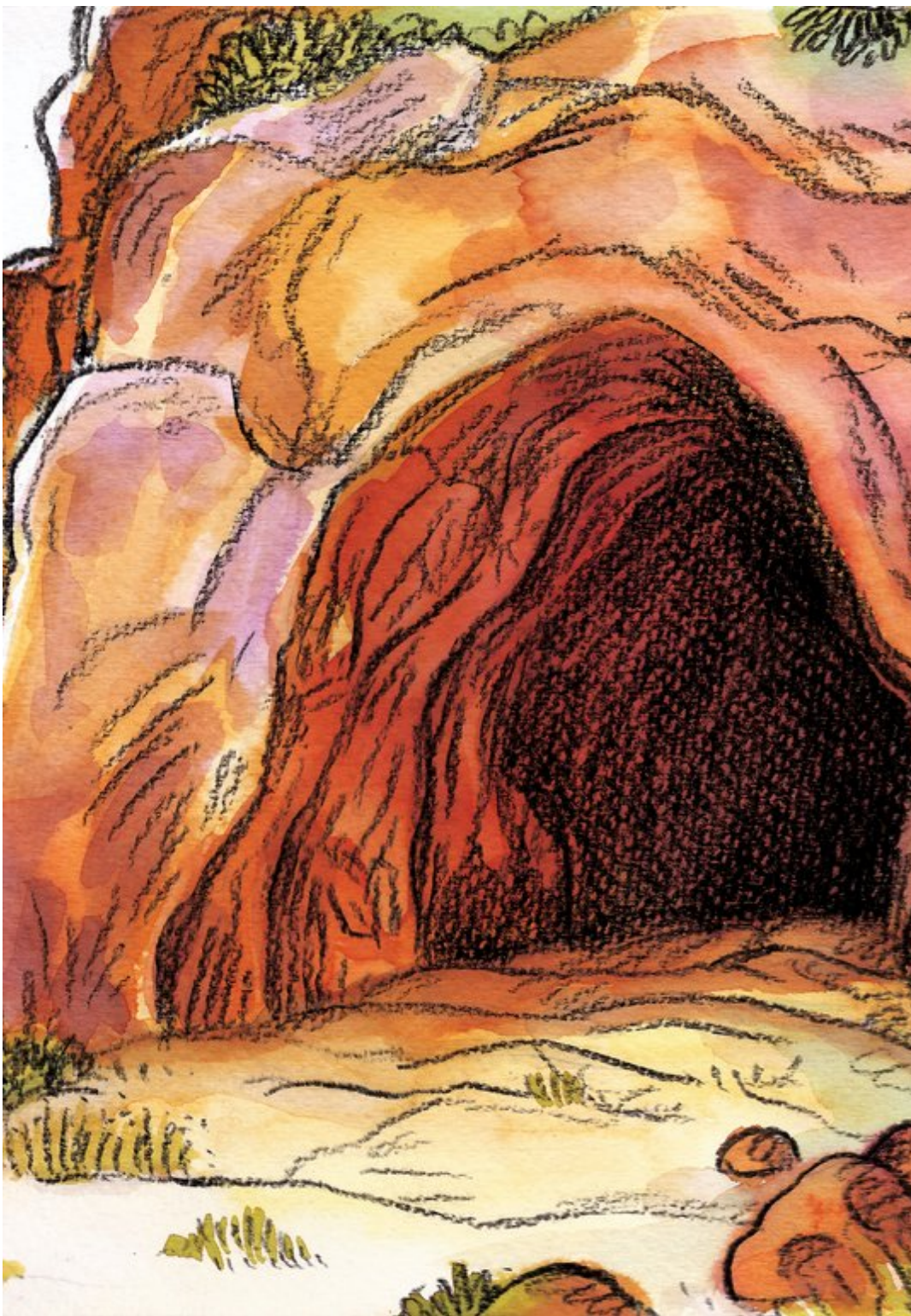
In the bus, Anu and her friends enjoyed a lot. They played games, sang songs and shared their snacks. After about two hours, they reached the forest.



The students set up a picnic, explored the forest looking at the trees, animals and insects. Anu and best friends, Reena, Divya and Soumya, found a beautiful spot to play. They decided to play Hide & Seek. Divya and Soumya had to count and Anu and Reena had to hide. As they both started counting till 100, Anu and Reena ran into the woods.

A few minutes later, they found themselves completely surrounded by trees. They looked back and saw nothing but trees. "We are lost!" said Reena, sadly.

"Let's look around and see if we can find someone who can help us," Anu assured her.



They walked a few miles and saw a cave.

“Maybe we can rest in that cave for a while” Anu told Reena, pointing to the cave.

“I’ll go and find something to eat, I’m feeling hungry. ” Reena said.

“Ok, I will find a few stones to make fire,” Anu concluded. “It’s dark inside the cave.”

Anu found few stones and sticks inside the cave and rubbed them hard together until she saw signs of fire. She put a few sticks so that the fire can sustain for a longer time. The fire completely lit up the cave.

Anu looked around and saw a hollow passage which was really dark. She felt really curious to know what was inside, and if she could get any help. She took a stick and got some fire on it and went inside. After a few steps inside the cave, Anu heard loud snoring. She assumed that there was someone inside to help her and ran inside. There, she saw that a lion was sleeping in that cave. She dropped the fire stick and shouted, “Aaaaaahhhhhhhhhhh!!!”



While Anu and Reena were in the woods, here Divya and Soumya were searching for them.

“We made a really big mistake sending those two to hide,” said Divya.

“Yeah, the two best friends must have found good hiding places and must be hiding together,” Soumya replied with certainty.

“I think it would be better now if we stop chit-chatting and start finding them,” Divya said. “Now let’s go!”

They looked around, warning each other not to go too far, and after about an hour, they were still looking for Anu and Reena.

“Divya, I think they are lost,” Soumya said.

“Maybe, you are right. Now let’s report this to Revati ma’am,” agreed Divya. “She might help us find them.” Saying this, they quickly went to Revati ma’am.

Revati ma’am was their class teacher and was good at observing things. Divya and Soumya decided she was the one who could find Reena and Anu.



By the time they reached Revati ma'am, they were huffing and puffing. "Ma'am, *huff*, ma'am, *hhh!*" "What happened, Divya and Soumya?" Ma'am asked, with concern.

"Ma'am, we were playing Hide & Seek in a beautiful spot of the forest. Both of us had to count, and Anu and Reena had to hide. We searched for them for more than an hour, but still didn't find them. We think they're lost!" Divya explained.

"Oh my! You made a mistake sending those two. Both of them together don't care about the rest of the world," Revati ma'am said. "Now, let me send a message to all the parents saying that we would have to start late. But if any of your parents live nearby, they can pick you up."

"Ma'am, I live nearby, but I don't want to leave until we find Anu and Reena!" Divya said with determination.

"Me too!" Soumya agreed.

"Alright, I'll tell both of your parents and inform Anu and Reena's parents too!" Ma'am said. "Now show me where you were playing so that we can look for more clues."



Divya and Soumya showed the spot where they were playing and ma'am looked around and found a candy-shaped clip.

"This is Anu's clip!" Soumya pointed to the clip and said.

"Hmmm....." Ma'am murmured and picked up the clip.

Meanwhile, Anu was stuck in this cave with a lion snoring right in front of her. She was still figuring out how to escape without making noise when Reena entered the cave.

"Anu, where are you?" She was looking for Anu. Anu couldn't speak because if she does, the lion will wake up. Already she almost woke up the lion. Anu was still thinking about the lion while Reena entered the lion's den.

She didn't seem to notice the lion, because as soon as she saw Anu she yelled, "Anu! How could you be so irresponsible? You were supposed to stay near the fire!" "Ggrrrrrrrrrrrr!" The lion was fully awake now. Anu was absolutely terrified, but Reena stayed as calm as possible. "Relax," She told Anu. "It's okay,"



Then she did something which gave a shock to Anu. She picked up the fire stick Anu dropped, pointed it to the lion and said, "Stay back."

She said that in a tone that was calm but threatening, even to Anu.

The lion got tensed, and took a step back. Part of Anu was relieved, but part of her was feeling sorry for the lion. She believed that it was wrong to threaten animals. "Wait! Don't do that! It will scare the lion!" Anu told Reena.

"Shh!" Reena warned, putting a finger on her lips. She gave the fire stick to Anu and slowly walked towards the lion.

Anu was stunned. She knew Reena was brave, but she never thought that Reena was brave enough to face a lion. The world should know this. Wow!

Anyway, as she walked towards the lion, the lion took a few steps back. Slowly, the lion began to relax. Reena moved forward and touched the lion's mane.



“Poor thing, his leg is badly injured.” she mumbled and turned towards Anu.

“He needs help! Don’t worry, this lion is completely harmless. It’s just 5 years old.” She said.

“How did you know?” Anu asked with uncertainty.

Reena smiled. Then she said, “I’ve told you many times that I’ve been to Africa. There, I learnt about wilderness survival. I also studied lions, how to recognize their age by looking at their size. I also learnt to read their expressions from our tour guide, who owned a lot of lions. This one is not like the other lions, hunting for food. It doesn't have friends because all animals run away from it, because it looks scary. Now come on.”

Anu hesitated at first, but she trusted Reena’s word. So she moved forward and felt the lion’s mane. It was amazingly soft. She asked Reena, “What do you think we should call him?”

Reena thought for a while and started to say something but Anu stopped her. “After watching Lion King, I think we should call him Simba. What do you say?”

Reena smiled. She looked at the lion and said, “Simba.”



Simba roared with satisfaction. Anu and Reena started chatting with Simba as if he understood everything.

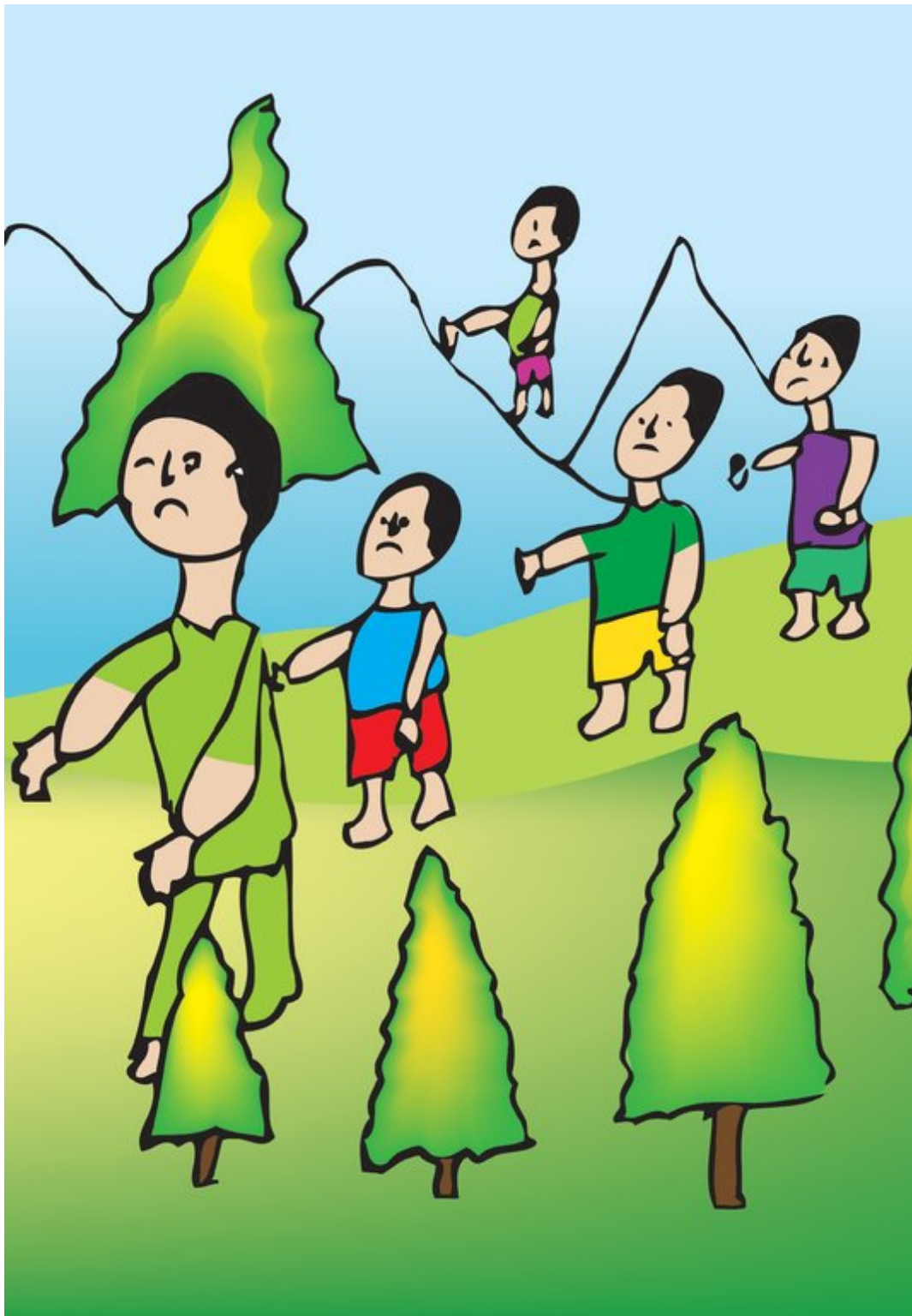
While the girls were with Simba, Revati ma'am and their two friends were looking for more clues. They followed the path in which they found Anu's clip and found themselves in the middle of the woods.

Divya looked down and found two sets of footprints. "Look!" she said, pointing to those footprints. "Let's follow the trail!" exclaimed Soumya, excited that they were going to find their friends.

Alas, her excitement did not last for long. Soon, the sets of footprints led to different directions. Revati ma'am sighed. "Maybe they are not Anu and Reena's footprints," She said.

Divya's eyes lit up. "But maybe we can find someone else who might have seen them!"

"Alright then! Both of you can follow the footprints towards the left and I will follow the other one," said Revati ma'am.



Divya and Soumya agreed. The girls followed Anu's footprints, which led them directly to the cave. Revati ma'am followed Reena's footprints, which first led her to a few trees and then to the same cave.

As soon as Divya and Soumya stepped into the cave, Revati ma'am also came inside. First, they were hesitant. But then they decided this was the place where they will find us.

"This place is completely lit up with fire," Soumya said, looking at a passage where smokes of fire fell down everywhere.

They followed the fire into the hollow passage and saw Anu and Reena. They didn't seem to notice Simba because Divya directly went to Reena and hugged her. "Reena! I'm so happy to see you!" she said. "Me too!" Reena replied.

Then she saw Simba and shouted. "Aaaaahhhhhh! Www-what is this llll-lion doing hhhh-here?" she asked. "Come on! Let's run away before it hurts us!" She started pulling Reena and Anu by their hands.



“Stay calm, Divya. It won’t hurt you!” Anu consoled her.

Divya was unsure and looked at the innocent-faced lion.

“But it’s a wild animal!” she said, still frightened.

“Divya is right!” Soumya interfered. “You can’t trust a wild animal, that too a predator!”

Even Revati ma’am started saying all about lions and the three of them started arguing with Anu and Reena. They explained about what all happened and Reena told all about what she learnt in her journey to Africa.

After a long chat, they understood what Reena and Anu were trying to convey.

“So what are we going to do with Simba?” Soumya looked at Anu and Reena for an answer. Both of them exchanged looks and nodded to each other.

“We have been discussing this,” Reena started.

“Yes, we have decided that we can hand Simba to the forest officials so that he can be cared for,” Anu continued.

“But when?” Divya asked.



"Let's think about it later," Soumya replied.

"Yeah, for now, I am hungry," Anu said, hugging her stomach.

All of them burst out laughing.

They walked back to their playing spot, and had their lunch. The time was 3:30 pm now. After having their lunch, they went back to find their bus. They expected to see nobody, but all their friends were still there playing and waiting for them to be back.

Their class MLA (class leader), Pragya was the first one to see them.

"Hey! Are you both alright?" she asked Anu and Reena. Then she spotted Simba. Instead of being scared, she turned excited. She shouted to everyone, "Hey everybody, listen! Anu and Reena are back with a lion!"

Everyone ran to them. Karan, the eldest boy in their class was the first to come and look at the lion.

"Where did you find it?" he asked.



They narrated the entire incident to everyone. At last, they said his name was Simba.

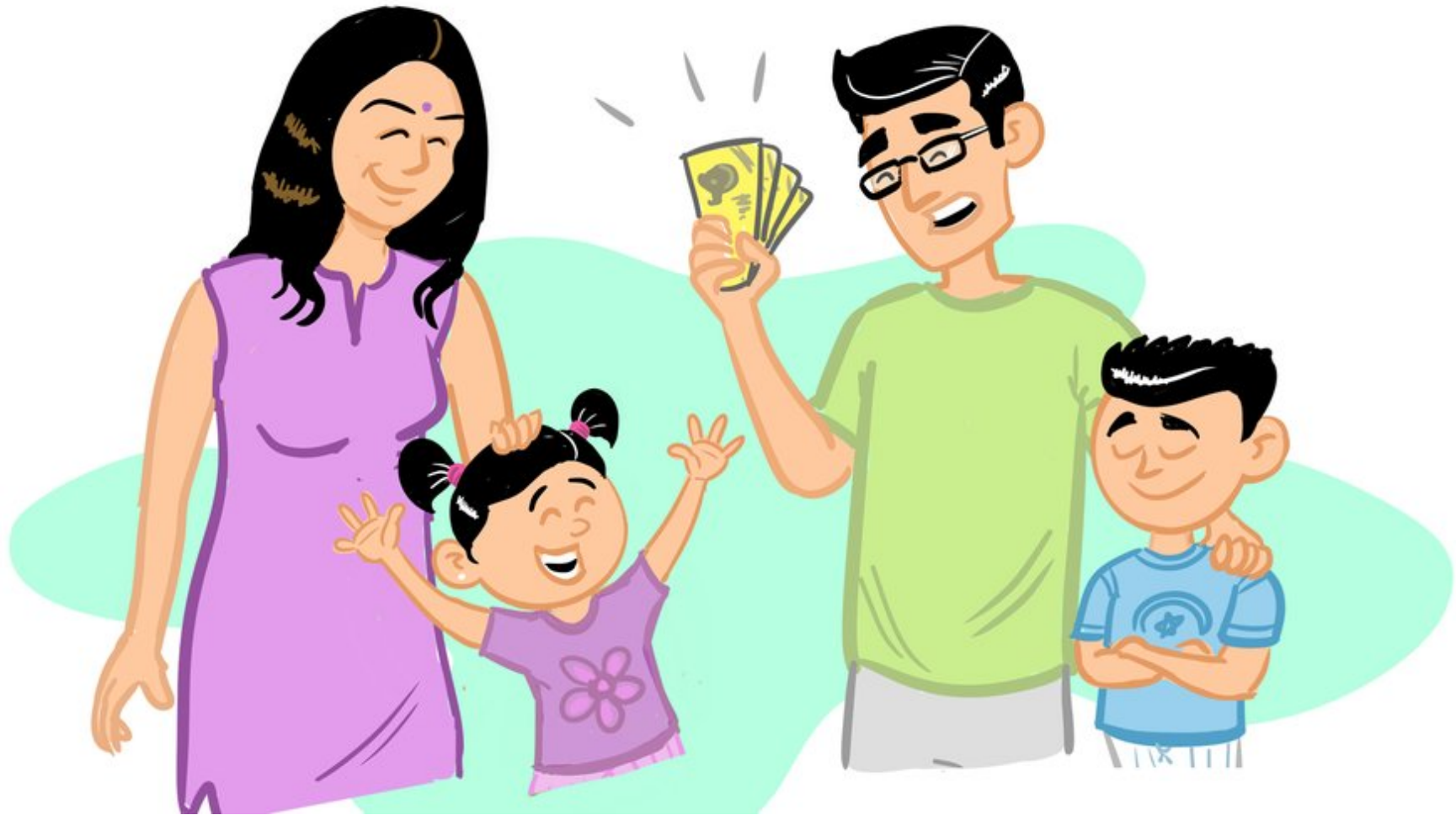
“Great name!” a girl called Shreya said.

“Hey!” Soumya told me. “I almost forgot. While we were looking for you, we found this.” She gave Anu her clip. Anu smiled. “Thank you!” she said.

All of them, including Simba, boarded their bus and started chit-chatting. Few kids were bombarding Reena and Anu with lots of questions. The girls joyfully answered all their questions.

Very soon they reached office of forest department. As kids were engrossed in excitement, they didn't realize they reached office. They met officials and explained them whatever happened and then handed over Simba.

The officials were surprised and impressed on the bravery displayed by the children and appreciated them for the kindness and concern towards the lion cub. They also offered children a special tour on their next visit.



After reaching home, Anu told all her adventures to her parents. They were scared at first but then got impressed and felt happy at the bravery Anu and Reena had shown. Next day, the school Principal Geeta ma'am visited each classroom, (in the whole school) and told about Anu and Reena's adventures. She said that from now onwards she will arrange trips for the whole school to go to Nallamala forest every year.

All of them learnt a lesson: We should not judge a book by its cover. Just because an animal is from the wild, we should not leave it in a helpless condition.



PRATHAM BOOKS

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Created by Nishita ande (11 years old), *with the help of* Nishita Ande.



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A Forest Adventure

(English)

This story is about adventure of school girls who went on a class trip to Nallamala forest. While playing they lost in forest and encountered a lion. Read the story to find how they dealt with lion.

This is a Level 4 book for children who can read fluently and with confidence.



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