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A Father's Lap

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Which is the highest throne in the world?

Some might say—a king's throne.

Some might say—the seat of power.

Some might say—vast wealth.

But one who has viewed the world while resting their head in a father's lap would likely smile and say—

"No... the highest throne is a father's lap."

To sit on that throne, one needs neither a crown nor any qualification.

All that is needed is a father... and two tiny arms reaching out towards him.

The "Puranic" tale of Dhruva conveys this very sentiment in a unique way. The pain of being denied his rightful place in his father's lap drove that little boy to undertake such rigorous penance that he secured the highest, brightest, and foremost position in the heavens—the Dhruva Star. Denied a lap on earth, he found a place in the sky that remained unshaken for ages.

Today, science calls this "emotional bonding" and a "sense of security." For a child, a father's strong arms are not merely a means to be lifted up.

They convey a message to the child's little mind—

"Don't worry... I am here."

But to understand this better than any book could explain, one need only look at Aditri, a baby girl just a few months old.

Aditri was, at that moment, the world's youngest and most adorable "decision-maker."

Age—barely six months.

Knowledge—virtually nil.

But preferences?

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Crystal clear!

And her top choice was—Papa.

The moment Papa appeared, Aditri's face would light up, as if someone had suddenly opened an entire toy shop right in front of her.

Arms raised high.

Legs kicking in the air.

Eyes sparkling.

And sounds escaping her lips that perhaps only Papa could translate—

"You're here! Where were you all this time?"

Seeing her joy upon spotting Papa made the rest of the family happy, too.

Yet, deep down, a playful little competition was underway.

Grandpa would think—

"Little one, do get a bit excited when you see Grandpa, too."

Grandma would complain—

"We haven't loved you any less, you know."

Her brother would wonder—

"What did I do wrong? I'm your brother, after all!"

And Mom?

Mom was the most hardworking player in this competition.

She was the one who cared for Aditri day and night.

Feeding, bathing, dressing, doctor visits, sleep, tears, laughter—Mom handled it all. Yet, the moment Aditri saw her father, her joy was such that her mother would sometimes wonder—

"What exactly does this child see in her father?"

One day, she found a chance to answer that very question.

Mother took Aditri to the doctor alone.

She had her examined.

Then she thought—

“Let’s take the child for a little drive today.”

The car moved.

The breeze blew.

The roads changed.

Shops went by.

Trees raced backward.

Mother looked at Aditri.

Aditri was gazing outside.

Mother thought to herself—

“Look, today your mother is going to show you the whole city. Now you’ll realize there is some entertainment in the world besides just Papa!”

But little did Mother know that the real test was yet to come.

Suddenly, Mother turned the car.

The car arrived—

At Papa’s office.

Now, the real experiment began.

Aditri was taken out of the car.

She was perfectly calm.

Then…

Her eyes fell upon Papa.

And just like that!

It was as if someone had pressed a hidden “button of joy” inside her.

Her face lit up.

Both hands reached out toward Papa.

Her feet sprang into action.

Her eyes seemed to say—

“Stop, stop… just stay right here.”

Mother tried to turn her back toward the car.

Aditri looked at Papa again.

Mother said—

“Come, dear, let’s go for a drive.”

Aditri’s eyes answered—

“Why?”

Mother tried again.

This time, Aditri turned her face firmly toward Papa.

As if saying—

“Mommy, we’ve come all this way, and now we’re going back? Absolutely not!”

Mother laughed.

The little girl had delivered her verdict without uttering a single word.

The car lost.

The office won.

And the true winner was—Papa.

In that moment, Mother realized that children are very clever—but their cleverness holds no selfishness. They do not calculate who will give them what.

They do not know whose pockets are deep,

or who owns a car,

or who can buy them expensive toys.

They simply sense—

with whom my heart is safe.

Perhaps Aditri felt the same way.

Her mother placed her in her father’s arms.

And then, what happened left her mother completely silent for a few moments.

Aditri, who had been kicking and waving her limbs in excitement, calmed down the instant she nestled against her father's chest.

Her head rested upon his chest.

Her tiny fingers grasped his clothes and went still,

as if to say—

"It's all right now… I'm not going anywhere."

And suddenly, her eyes welled up with tears.

Why?

Perhaps because, for the first time that day, she understood—

The child she had carried in her womb for nine months, the one she had given birth to, the one she nurtured every moment...

That child held a corner in her heart for her father—a place that required no logic to reach.

Only love could reach there.

Perhaps, for a fleeting moment, Aditri's future flashed before the mother's eyes.

Today, she is little.

Tomorrow, she will go to school.

Then college.

Then a job.

Then, a world of her own.

One day, perhaps that very daughter—who today stretches out her arms at the sight of her father—will grow up to the point where she has to make time just to hug him.

Today, her father lifts her into his arms.

Tomorrow, she might have to offer him support as he walks, holding his finger.

Today, if the daughter is scared, she hides against her father's chest.

Tomorrow, perhaps her father will be worried about something, and she will place her hand on his shoulder and say—

"Papa, I'm here for you."

How strange time is.

The arms that once held the daughter—one day, that very daughter begins to support those same arms.

A tear escaped the mother's eye.

She quickly wiped it away.

Perhaps she didn't want anyone to see.

Her husband asked—

"What happened?"

She smiled.

She said nothing.

She simply looked at Aditri.

And said to herself—

"Today I understood... a child is born from a mother's womb, but the space for relationships within her heart is created the moment she is born."

That day, her husband was sitting in his office.

Aditri was in his lap.

And the mother was standing right there.

No significant words were exchanged between the three of them.

Yet, a story was being written in that room—a story that needed no words.

A father held his daughter close to his chest.

A daughter listened to her father's heartbeat. And watching the two of them, a mother understood that—

Love in a family is not divided; it multiplies.

When Dhruva found no place in his father's lap, he carved out a place for himself in the heavens.

Aditri found her father's lap.

Perhaps that is why, for her, the entire sky lay right there—

Within the circle of her father's arms.

And that day, a nine-month-old baby girl conveyed a profound truth without uttering a word—

A child does not crave the most expensive things in the world.

She simply needs the assurance that when she reaches out her arms,

Someone will be there to hold her.

For in childhood, there is no throne higher than a father's lap.

And no matter how much time passes…

There is no sky higher than the memory of the security found in a father's embrace.

Perhaps that is why daughters remain little girls to their fathers, even as they grow up.

And fathers?

Even when looking at their grown-up daughters, deep down, they still see—

That tiny Aditri,

Who would forgo a car ride just to choose her father's lap.

And perhaps, in that memory…

A father's eyes, too, quietly well up with tears.