

# MODULE 4

LESSON- 2

A GIFT OF CHAPPALS

# BEGGAR

Poor man-very weak-  
hungry-blisters on feet-  
brown teeth

The music-master came out of the house and took an **unappreciative** look at the three of them sitting quietly under the tree, playing marbles. Then he searched for his chappals in the verandah, where he had put them.

“Lalli!” he called, after a few moments. She hurried up to him.

“Have you seen my chappals, my dear? I remember having kept them here!”

Ravi, Mridu, and Meena silently watched Lalli and the music-master search every corner of the verandah. He scurried around, looking over the railing and **crouching** near the flower pots to look between them. “Brand new, they were! I went all the way to Mount Road to buy them!” he went on saying. “They cost a whole month’s fees, do you know?”

**Unappreciative**\*- unvalued, **crouching** \*- knees bent

“Then soon Lalli went in to tell her mother. Rukku Manni appeared, looking **harassed**, with Paati following her.

“Where could they be? It’s really quite upsetting to think someone might have stolen them. So many vendors come to the door,” worried Paati.

Rukku Manni caught sight of Ravi, Mridu, and Meena sitting under the tree. “Have you children...” she began, and then, seeing they were curiously quiet, went on more slowly, “seen anyone **lurking** around the verandah?” A sharp V-shaped line had formed between her eyebrows. Another straight, tighter one appeared in place of her usually soft, pleasant mouth. Rukku Manni was angry! thought Mridu with a shiver. She wouldn’t be so upset if she knew about the poor beggar with sores on his feet, she tried to tell herself.

**Harassed**\*- stressed, **lurking** \*- move in a secret way

Taking a deep breath, she cried, “Rukku Manni, there was a beggar here. Poor thing, he had such boils on his feet!”

“So?” said Rukku Manni , turning to Ravi. “You gave the music-master’s chappals to that old beggar who turns up here?”

“Children these days...!” groaned Paati.

“Amma, didn’t you tell me about Karna who gave away everything he had, even his gold earrings, he was so kind and generous?”

“Silly!” **snapped** Rukku Manni. “Karna didn’t give away other people’s things, he only gave away his own.”

“But my chappals wouldn’t have fitted the beggar’s feet...” Ravi rushed **brashly** on, “And Amma, if they did fit, would you really not have minded?”

“Ravi!” said Rukku Manni, very angry now.

“Go inside this minute.”

**Snapped\***- sudden sharp sound,      **brashly\*** -energetically

She hurried indoors and brought out Gopu Mama's hardly worn, new chappals. "These should fit you, Sir. Please put these on. I am so sorry. My son has been very naughty." The music master's eyes lit up. He put them on, trying not to look too happy. "Well, I suppose these will have to do... These days children have no respect for elders, what to do? A Hanuman **incarnate**... Only Rama can save such a naughty fellow!" Rukku Manni's eyes flashed.

She didn't seem to like Ravi being called a monkey, even a holy monkey. She stood stiff and straight by the front door. It was clear she wanted him to leave quickly.

**Incarnate\***- represent in human form,

When he had **clattered** off in his new chappals, she said, “Mridu, come in and have some tiffin.

Honestly, how do you children think of such things? Thank God your Gopu Mama doesn't wear his chappals to work...” As she walked towards the kitchen with Mridu and Meena, she suddenly began to laugh. “But he's always in such a hurry to throw off his shoes and socks and get into his chappals as soon as he comes home. What's your Mama going to say this evening when I tell him I gave his chappals to the music-master?”

**Clattered\*- made a rattling sound**

\*\*\*\*\*