

Duty in Despair

Once during a famine, a desperate man stepped out of his house to earn a living. He came across a fruit farm. Hungry, he decided to steal some fruits. But, as he started plucking, the farmer came chasing after him with a stick. The man ran into a nearby forest and climbed a tree to evade the farmer.

From his vantage point, the man witnessed a disturbing scene. There was an injured cheetah who was unable to walk. The man wondered how the poor cheetah would survive, for it couldn't move, let alone hunt and eat. As he pondered, to his horror, he saw a ferocious lion approach the cheetah. The lion was returning from a hunt and was holding a huge piece of fresh meat in his mouth. All the animals ran away, except the helpless cheetah. Then, something strange unfolded. Instead of attacking his vulnerable rival, the lion laid his piece of meat in front of the cheetah and walked away.

The man was elated. After all, he had just witnessed God's play. He understood that God has a plan to take care of everyone and decided that he too will surrender to Him.

When things go wrong and all hope is lost – don't despair! For there is always someone out there who will take care of us – be it our comrades or our society – the sign of God may come in many forms to rescue us.

The man came down the tree and sat under its shade, waiting for someone to come and feed him. Two days went by, but no food arrived. Famished and almost ready to leave without hope, the man saw an old sage walk by.

He stopped the sage and told him everything. He then asked the sage, "Oh wise one, God had shown his mercy on the injured cheetah, then why has God been so cruel to me?". The sage smiled and replied, "It is true that the Creator has a plan for everyone. But son, you took his sign in a wrong way. He doesn't want you to be the helpless cheetah, he wants you to be the lion!"

When things go wrong, we have a choice – either wait to be rescued, or become the rescuer. For sometimes, the entity that needs to be saved is not self alone – God's signs may be pointing us towards our comrades or our society.

The injured cheetah represents our planet. It is bleeding. Our India is no exception. Our country and its poor are counting on India's brave lions to rescue them.

Today, the integrity and loyalty of each privileged Indian citizen is at test. It's a test in which, I have no doubt, all of us will excel. With an undying focus on professional, economic or social duties we are delivering. With trust behind our government's each well-intended decision. With positivity to pull up the spirits of our demoralized countrymen. With a united front to silence those who aim to distract us from our mission. And above all - with an inspirational story for our grandkids...

We were there when 2020 happened. Yes, we were the Lions. And together, we won!