

The Missing Bat



Level 3

English

Story Book

The Missing Bat

Author: Vaishali Shroff

Illustrator: Tapas Guha

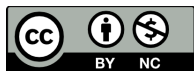
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English

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A funny tale from Kashmir, the land of the willow trees.

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The state of Kashmir is one of the largest manufacturers of cricket bats in India. The abundance of willow trees in this region makes it home to nearly two hundred cricket bat workshops.



Rehman Chacha had a cricket bat factory. One could see cricket bats neatly stacked in rows all around his factory.

The bats were made from willow trees that make the best quality bats in the world.

Rehman Chacha was an old man with a hunchback. He would always be on his feet to get his work done.

He often frowned and used a walking stick wherever he went.





Aamir worked at Rehman Chacha's factory. His son, Ahmed, stayed with him at the factory every day after school. He would stare in awe at the tall stacks of cricket bats.

He would hold the bat after Aamir had chiseled it with his lathe machine and run his fingers across the length of the bat. Gripping it by its handle, he would swing it in the air with a flick of his wrist.



He was only seven, but he dreamt of being Sachin Tendulkar someday.



Before the workers left for home each evening, Rehman Chacha would count the number of bats in his warehouse. He was very particular about his stock. If he found a bat missing, he would start playing detective.

And it happened! One morning when Rehman Chacha opened his warehouse to take the stock out and load it onto his truck, he found that there was one bat less. It was the biggest and lightest one.

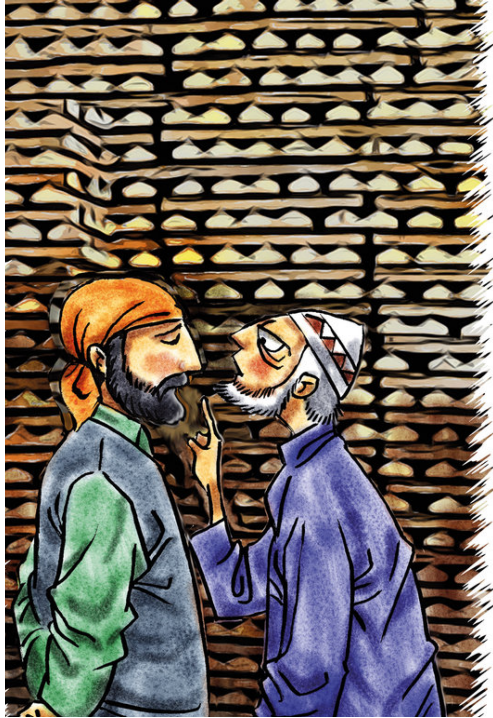
He was furious and ordered all his men to stand in a row. "One bat is missing. Where do you think it could have gone?"



Everyone looked down and shook their heads. It was difficult to look at Chacha when he was angry.

"How can a bat disappear overnight? No one else enters the warehouse other than you all and me," screamed Rehman Chacha as they continued to look down.

Just then Rehman Chacha laid his eyes on Aamir. "Aha! Where is Ahmed, Aamir? He is not to be seen today."



"Ahmed is not well today. He has a bad cold and cough," Aamir answered, still looking down.



Suddenly, one by one everyone started giggling and then laughing, including Aamir.

"Why are all you shameless people laughing?" Rehman Chacha could not get any angrier now.

"We found the missing cricket bat, Chacha!" exclaimed a delighted Aamir.

Rehman Chacha was astonished.
"But...but...but you have all been standing here in front of me. How did you find it? Where is it?" he asked.

Everyone looked down at Rehman Chacha's 'walking stick'. So did Rehman Chacha.



No one knew Rehman Chacha could laugh so loudly. And no one knew til then that he had false teeth!

