

# *Saving a Life*





Meena is a little girl who lives in a village with her parents, her grandmother, her brother Raju, and her baby sister, Rani. Mithu, the parrot, is her best friend.

In many ways, Meena is like any other little girl you know. She is friendly but is not afraid to ask questions.

Share in Meena's adventures as she laughs, climbs trees, asks questions and solves problems, and shows you all the things that a little girl can do.

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One day, Meena, Raju and Mithu were playing with their friends.



Suddenly, Meena noticed some plants that had dried up. She knew that they would die without water.



Meena and Raju watered the plants, which soon seemed to revive.





When the children got back home, their old aunt had arrived for a visit. Aunt was very old-fashioned. She believed that girls should not play or go to school – instead, they should stay at home and learn to do the housework.



Meena's mother told Aunt that Meena was learning housework, and she was also learning many other things at school.

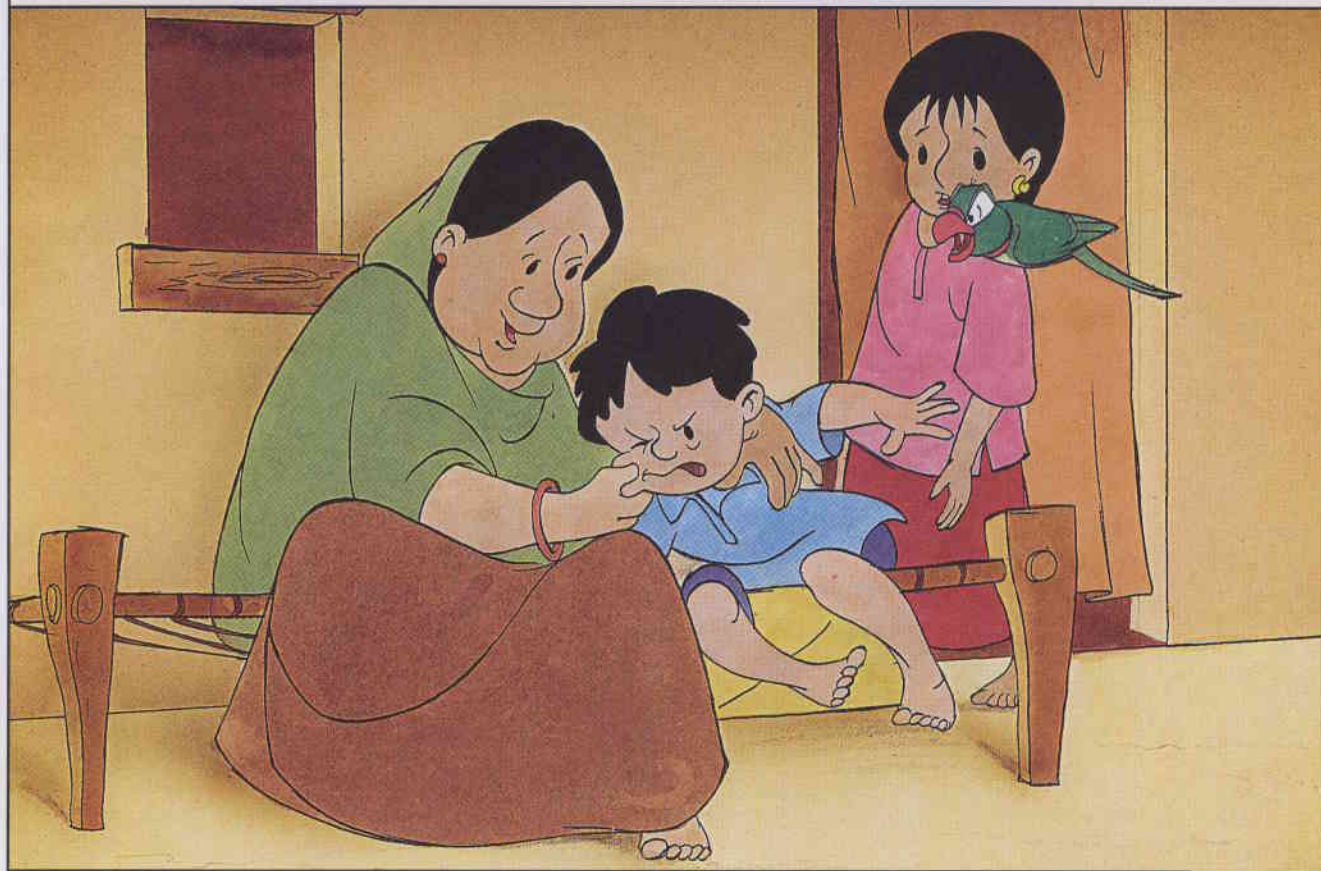




Aunt was also upset because Meena's mother's new baby was a girl, not a boy.



Aunt loved boys. She pulled Raju to her and gave his cheek a big pinch.





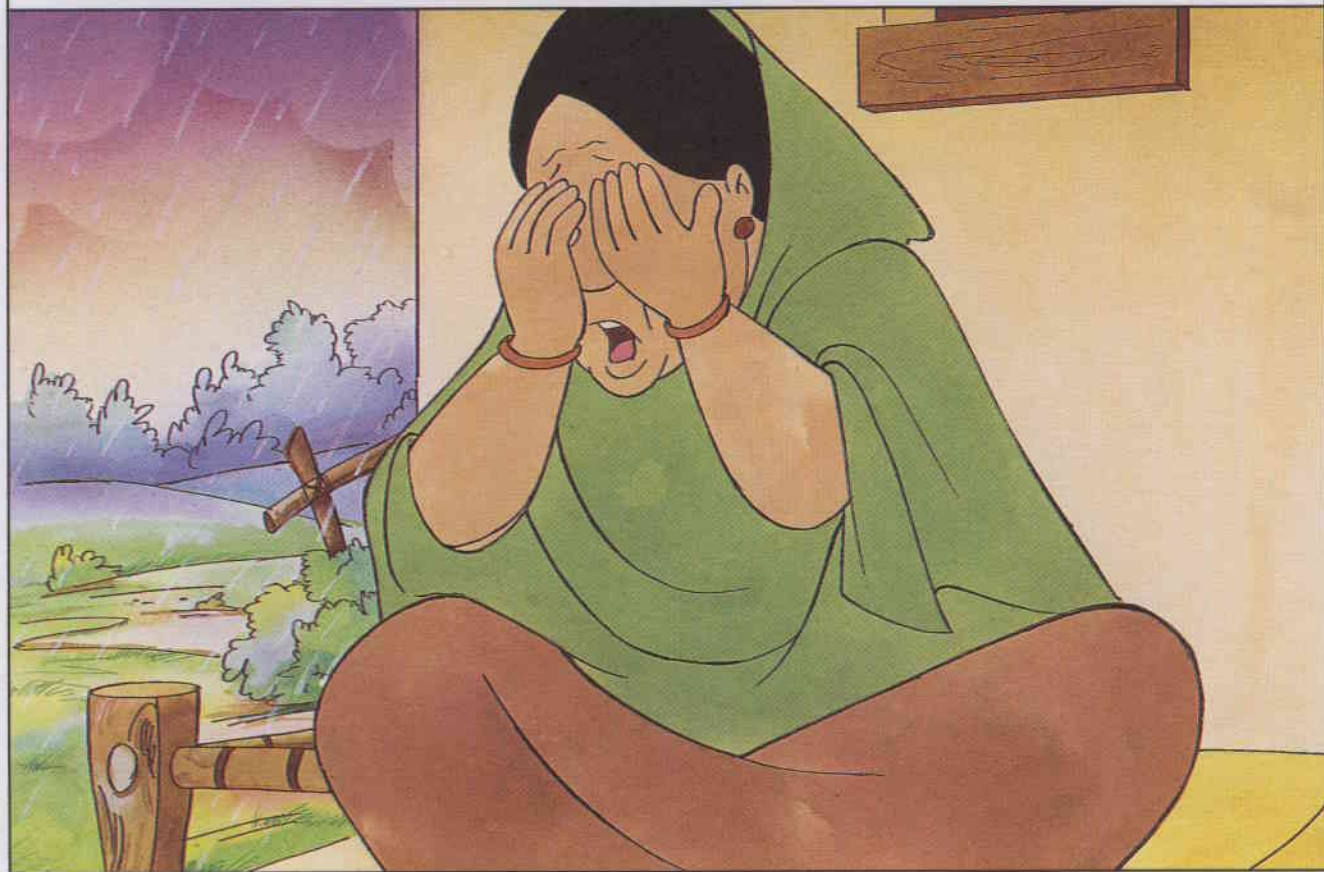
Aunt was annoyed with Mithu. She did not like parrots flying free. So, she bought a cage and tricked Mithu into it.



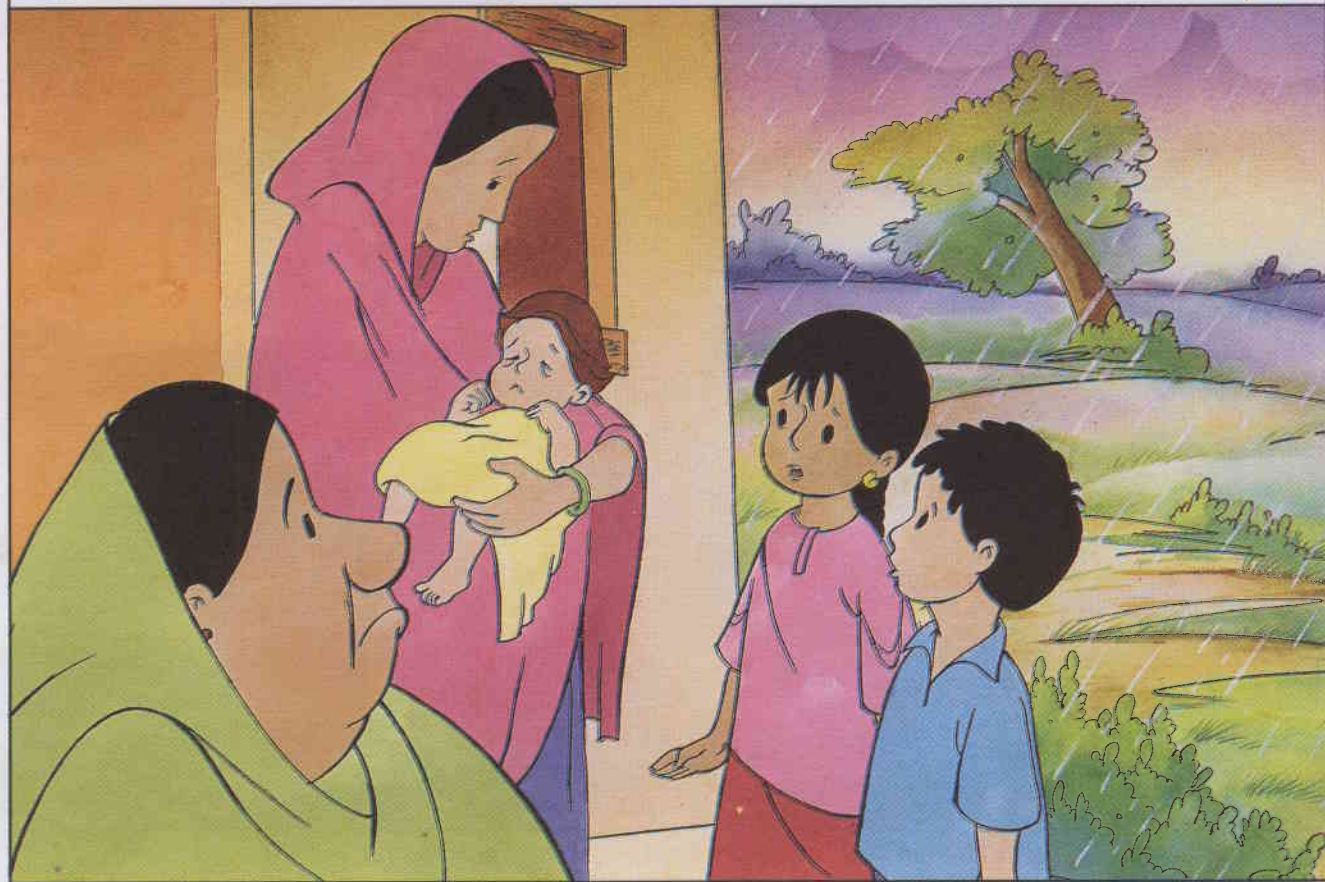
That evening, it was stormy and wet. Baby Rani had diarrhoea, and she was vomiting as well. Father had not yet got back home, and the health worker lived far away. Nobody knew what to do.



Aunt remembered her baby dying of diarrhoea when it was only one year old.



Meena and Raju said they would go to their teacher's house. Teacher would know what to do.





Thunder and lightning flashed around them as the children ran to find Teacher.



Teacher explained that diarrhoea can be very dangerous because the baby loses a lot of water from the body. If too much water is lost, the baby may even die.



To save a baby with diarrhoea, it should be fed lots of liquids – rice water, dal water, coconut water, and especially, mother's milk.





The storm was now worse than ever. How would the children get back home to tell Mother what to do?





Just then, Mithu flew in. He had managed to escape from Aunt's horrible cage.



Meena asked Mithu to fly back to Mother with the message, "Give plenty to drink."



When Mithu flew back home, Father had returned. Meena's parents heard what Mithu had to say. Then they started giving baby Rani lots of liquid. Aunt was horrified that they would listen to a parrot. Sometimes Rani vomitted, but they continued to give her drinks with a spoon, sip by sip.



Meena woke up the next morning to find that the storm had stopped and that baby Rani looked much better. She even smiled.





Meena's teacher stopped by to see the baby. "As long as there is no blood in the stool, she will get better soon," said Teacher. "Just remember to continue to give her plenty to drink, and plenty to eat as well so she can get strong again."

Soon, baby Rani was well again and even Aunt had to agree that Meena, Raju and Mithu had saved the baby's life. Meena, Raju and Mithu say, "Give children with diarrhoea plenty to drink and eat."





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