

## **The Monkey and The Boy**

**By Prabhu Talajia**

There was once a boy whose name was Ocdungus, although everyone called him Umgus for short. He once went to his father's office to express his wishes. Umgus's dad, whose name was Monoquence said he would fulfill all his wishes on one condition.

"What is it?" asked Ocdungus excitedly.

His father replied, "The condition is that when you ask something, only after I fulfill it will you ask for your next wish."

Umgus was delighted. He thought, "Finally!"

He said, "My first wish is that we go to the jungle and meet some animals because I have never seen anything in the jungle. In fact, I have never gone to any other wild habitat."

His father agreed. According to the set condition, his dad, accompanied by a few men just to be safe, went to the forest. There, a very hungry tiger attacked the group. Although Monoquence and the other men were successfully killed, a monkey suddenly came out of one of the trees and pulled Ocdungus up into the trees where the tiger could not get them since they do not know how to climb trees.

The monkey asked, "What is your name and why were you stupid enough to come to this part of the forest?"

Umgus replied, "I am Ocdungus, son of the office worker Monoquence. We are very rich because, as I said, my dad is an office worker and only rich people can afford to work in offices because it is very expensive."

The monkey then asked, "Why were you stupid enough to come here?"

Umgus replied, "I am not to blame for their deaths. I only said I wished to go to the forest. I never mentioned where in the forest. They

are the only ones to blame since they decided this part out of the gigantic forest.”

“Back to your first opinion, since you are very rich, you must have learnt a lot,” the monkey said. He knew at that time that the arrogance of Ocdungus was rising to extreme levels. He, according to his very smart brain, said, “If so, then please answer a riddle to confirm your basic knowledge.”

Umgus asked, “What is the riddle? I will answer it in approximately two minutes,” he said proudly.

The monkey laughed and said, “Don’t be so proud. Someone will take away your pride (it can also be me).”

Umgus began to swell in anger. He said, “Ask me the riddle. You know that I can easily defeat you in strength, if not wits.”

The monkey said, “Hah! You will not... Whatever, let’s go back to the riddle. The riddle is this: It lives in trees but is not a bird, it wears brown clothing but is not a saint and finally, it contains water, but it is neither a pot nor a cloud. Tell me, what is it?”

Umgus began to think seriously. Although he had been solving many hard riddles in the past, this one seemed like a challenge to him and removing his past achievements. He now was thinking about what the answer was. The monkey gave him two minutes, as the approximate time he had declared to be. The monkey then, after the said time was over, gave him extra time to finish the seemingly hard riddle.

At last, the monkey piped up, “It’s five minutes since you started thinking about the riddle. Should I tell the answer?” Umgus agreed.

The monkey said with a voice that made the riddle sound very easy, “It’s a coconut! It lives in trees by growing in them, when they are ripe but not overripe, they have a brown coat (shell) and they have coconut water housed inside them. So, the correct answer is a coconut.

You can't answer such a simple question and claim yourself to be knowledgeable! You are the biggest fool I have ever met. Go! Never return to the forest again or else I will personally ask the tiger to eat you up. Bye! See you never!"

Umgus returned to his home shamefully and never expressed a single wish before anyone.

He never told his wishes; he fulfilled them on his own; he at least tried to. One more wish was in his mind that wanted to be satisfied first, "I want to take revenge." He then proceeded to the forest with all the things and their quantities so he could live there for approximately a year. A few days later he arrived at the exact same spot as the incident and his insult.

He shouted, "*Monkey!*"

Nothing happened. He was now agitated and angry. Then suddenly a lion came out of the thick foliage of the jungle.

He asked, "Hey, who are you and what are you doing?"

Umgus said the same compliment to himself that he had said to the monkey. The lion laughed.

He said, "I shall ask a riddle. If you answer it correctly, you will get whatever you want. But if you get the wrong answer, you shall be eaten by me. Accepted?"

Umgus agreed, but was not ready for one more surprise riddle.

The lion laughed again and said, "I will send it by your father's ghost. Or, better, I shall ask it in person. For now, go home and rest."

Umgus finally vocalized his thoughts. "I am not ready for the riddle," he said. The lion then growled, snarled, and went away. Umgus then returned to his home and vouched never to go back to the forest again.

The End