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## 1

# Monkey Trouble

by Ruskin Bond

## Pre-reading Task

1. Whenever we think of an animal or a bird, a particular quality comes to our mind. Pick up appropriate qualities from the box given and write them opposite the names of the animals/birds.

dove : \_\_\_\_\_  
 dog : \_\_\_\_\_  
 fox : \_\_\_\_\_  
 parrot : \_\_\_\_\_  
 monkey : \_\_\_\_\_



talkative      cunning      mischievous      gentle      faithful

2. Why do you think street entertainers prefer monkeys to other household pets like cats and dogs? Discuss with your friends.

## Read the following story and enjoy the mischiefs of a troublesome monkey.

Grandfather bought Tutu from a street entertainer for the sum of ten rupees. The man had three monkeys. Tutu was the smallest but the most mischievous. She was tied up most of the time. The little monkey looked so miserable with a collar and chain that Grandfather decided it would be much happier in our home. Grandfather had a weakness for keeping unusual pets. It was the habit that I, at the age of eight or nine, used to encourage.



Grandmother at first objected to having a monkey in the house. 'You have enough pets as it is,' she said referring to Grandfather's goat, several white mice, and a small tortoise.

'But I don't have any,' I said. 'You're wicked enough for two monkeys. One boy in the house is all I can take.'

'Ah, but Tutu isn't a boy,' said Grandfather triumphantly. 'This is a little girl monkey!'

Grandmother gave in. She had always wanted a little girl in the house. She believed girls were less troublesome than boys. Tutu was to prove her wrong.

She was a pretty little monkey.

Her bright eyes sparkled with mischief beneath deep-set eyebrows. And her teeth, which were pearly white, were often revealed in a grin that frightened the wits out of Aunt Ruby whose nerves had already suffered from the presence of Grandfather's pet python in the house at Lucknow. But this was Dehra, my grandparents' house, and aunts and uncles had to put up with our pets.

One day Aunt Ruby took us all by surprise. She announced that she had become engaged. We had always thought that Aunt Ruby would never marry—she had often said herself—but it appeared that the right man had now come along in the person of Rocky Fernandes, a school teacher from Goa.

Rocky was a tall, firm-jawed, good-natured man, who visited the house quite often and brought me chocolates and cashewnuts, of which, he seemed to have an unlimited supply. He also taught me several marching songs. Naturally I approved of Rocky. Aunt Ruby won my admiration for having made such a wise choice.

One day I overheard them talking of going to the *bazaar* to buy an engagement ring. I decided I would go along too. But as Aunt Ruby had made it clear that she did



not want me around, I decided that I had better follow at a **discreet** distance. Tutu, becoming aware that a mission of some importance was underway, decided to follow me. But as I had not invited her along, she too decided to keep out of sight.

Once in the crowded *bazaar*, I was able to get quite close to Aunt Ruby and Rocky without being spotted. I waited until they had settled down in a large jewellery shop before **sauntering** past and spotting them as though by accident. Aunt Ruby wasn't too pleased at seeing me, but Rocky waved and called out. 'Come and join us! Help your aunt choose a beautiful ring!'



The whole thing seemed to be a waste of good money, but I did not say so—Aunt Ruby was giving me one of her most unloving looks.



While the jeweller and Aunt Ruby were sifting through the diamond rings, Tutu had slipped into the shop without being noticed by anyone but me. A little **squeal** of delight was the first sign she gave of her presence. Everyone looked up to see her trying on a pretty necklace.

'And what are those stones?' I asked.

'They look like pearls,' said Rocky.

'They are pearls,' said the shopkeeper, making a grab for them.

'It's that dreadful monkey!' cried Aunt Ruby. 'I knew the boy would bring her here!'

The necklace was already **adorning** Tutu's neck. I thought she looked rather nice in them, but she gave us no time to admire the effect. Springing out of our reach Tutu dodged around Rocky, slipped between my legs, and made for the crowded road. I ran after her, shouting to her to stop, but she wasn't listening.

**discreet:** that does not attract attention

**sauntering:** walking in a slow and relaxed manner

**squeal:** long, loud, high cry

**adorn:** to decorate

The jeweller left his shop and ran after us. So did Rocky. So did several bystanders who had seen the incident. And others, who had no idea what it was all about, joined in the chase. As Grandfather used to say, 'In a crowd, everyone plays follow-the-leader even when they don't know who's leading.' Not everyone knew that the leader was Tutu. Only the front-runners could see her.

She tried to make her escape speedier by leaping on to the back of a passing scooterist. The scooter **swerved** into a fruit stall and came to a standstill under a heap of bananas, while the scooterist found himself in the arms of an **indignant** fruitseller. Tutu peeled a banana and ate part of it before deciding to move on.

From an **awning** she made an emergency landing on a washerman's donkey. The donkey promptly panicked and rushed down the road, while bundles of washing fell by the wayside. The washerman joined in the chase. Children on their way to school decided that here was something better to do than attend classes. With shouts of **glee**, they soon overtook their **panting** elders.



Tutu finally left the *bazaar* and took a road leading in the direction of our house. But knowing that she would be caught and locked up once she got home, she decided to end the chase by **ridding** herself of the necklace. **Deftly** removing it from her neck, she flung it in the small canal that ran down the road.

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**swerve:** to make a sudden sideways movement

**indignant:** expressing anger and surprise

**awning:** a sheet of cloth or plastic outside shops to keep sun and rain off

**glee:** feeling of excitement

**panting:** breathing heavily

**ridding:** freeing

**deftly:** quickly and skilfully

The jeweller, with a cry of **anguish**, **plunged** into the canal. So did Rocky. So did I. So did several other people, both adults and children. It was to be a treasure hunt!

Some twenty minutes later, Rocky shouted, 'I've found it!' Covered in mud, water-lilies, ferns and tadpoles, we emerged from the canal, and Rocky presented the necklace to the relieved shopkeeper. Finally the ring was bought, the engagement was announced and a date was set for the wedding.



A few days before the wedding I found Tutu in the kitchen helping Grandmother prepare the wedding cake. Tutu often helped with the cooking, and, when Grandmother wasn't looking, added herbs, spices, and other interesting items to the pots.

I'm not sure exactly what went into that wedding cake when Grandmother wasn't looking—but I did spot Tutu **stirring** in some red chilli sauce, bitter gourd seeds, and a generous helping of egg-shells!

It's true that some of the guests were not seen for several days after the wedding but no one said anything against the cake. Most people thought it had an interesting flavour.

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**anguish:** suffering caused by pain or worry  
**plunged:** fell suddenly forward or downward  
**stirring:** mixing and moving

**A. Some statements based on the story are given below. Tick (T) for true statements and (F) for false statements. Rewrite the false statements after making corrections.**

1. The street entertainer who sold Tutu had three other monkeys.




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2. Rocky often gave chocolates and walnuts to the narrator.




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3. Rocky took Aunt Ruby to a jeweller's shop for buying an engagement ring.




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4. Tutu followed the narrator to the jeweller's shop without being noticed.




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5. Tutu put some herbs and spices in the wedding cake.




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**B. Answer the following questions in not more than 30 words each.**

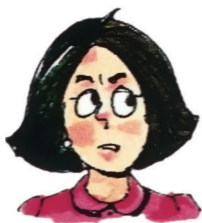
1. How was Grandmother convinced to keep Tutu as a pet?
2. Why did the narrator follow Aunt Ruby and Rocky secretly to the jeweller's shop? What reason did Tutu have for following them?
3. Why did the people in the *bazaar* chase Tutu?
4. What did Tutu do with the necklace? How was it restored to the shopkeeper?
5. Why do you think some guests were not seen for several days after the marriage?

**C. The sentences below give an account of the menace that Tutu created in the bazaar, but the sentences are jumbled. Rearrange them by writing appropriate serial number in the box provided against each sentence. The opening sentence is given.**

Tutu followed Aunt Ruby and Rocky secretly to the jeweller's shop.

- (a) Rocky, the jeweller and several people in the market followed her.
- (b) Tutu leapt on the back of a scooterist.
- (c) She slipped into the shop without being noticed.
- (d) Tutu rushed out into the market.
- (e) Tutu took the road leading to the narrator's house.
- (f) She then landed on a donkey which panicked and rushed down the road.
- (g) She threw the necklace into a canal.
- (h) Aunt Ruby and the jeweller saw her and tried to grab the necklace.
- (i) Rocky dived into the canal, traced the necklace and returned it to the shopkeeper.
- (j) She took a pearl necklace and put it round her neck.



**II HOTS**

Some animals have a sharp mind. They amaze us by their actions. Do you think they are able to think in the right direction? Why/Why not?



### III Life Skills

Do you like Tutu? If given a chance, would you like to keep her as a pet?

### IV Values

The narrator decided to secretly follow Aunt Ruby and her fiance Rocky to the market. Is he justified in doing that?

### V Writing Skills

Tutu took a pearl necklace from a jeweller's shop and created a huge mess in the market before finally throwing it into a canal. The jeweller felt quite tense about the whole episode. Write the jeweller's diary entry describing how he felt at Tutu's mischief.

#### About the Author

Ruskin Bond was born in Kasauli, Himachal Pradesh, in 1934. He was brought up at different places that included Jamnagar, Dehradun and Shimla. He wrote his first novel *Room on the Roof* when he was just 17 years old for which he received the **John Llewellyn Rhys Memorial** prize in 1957.

Ruskin Bond has now been writing for more than six decades. His collections of short stories—*The Night Train at Deoli*, *Time Stops at Shamli* and *Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra* are worth reading. Replete with unassuming humour and quiet wisdom, his stories manifest a deep love for nature and people.



## 2

# Birdie, will you pet?

by W. Allingham

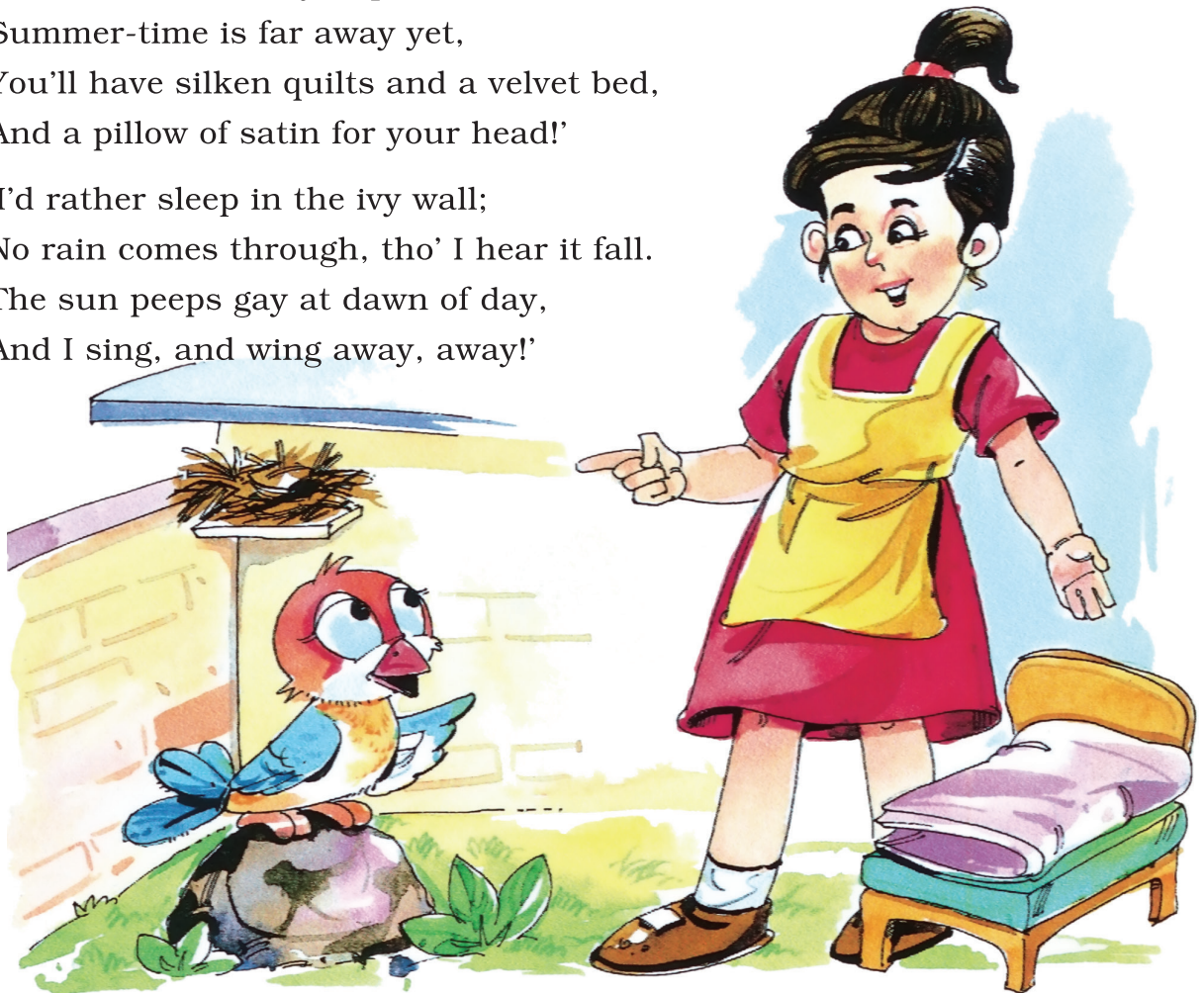
## Pre-reading Task

1. If asked to choose between money and freedom, what would you choose and why?
2. Can you think of a few things that come with freedom and cannot be bought with money?  
Discuss with your partner and prepare a list.

**Now read the poem given below where a child is tempting a bird to be her pet.**

**CHILD :** 'Birdie, Birdie, will you pet?  
Summer-time is far away yet,  
You'll have silken quilts and a velvet bed,  
And a pillow of satin for your head!'

**BIRD :** 'I'd rather sleep in the ivy wall;  
No rain comes through, tho' I hear it fall.  
The sun peeps gay at dawn of day,  
And I sing, and wing away, away!'



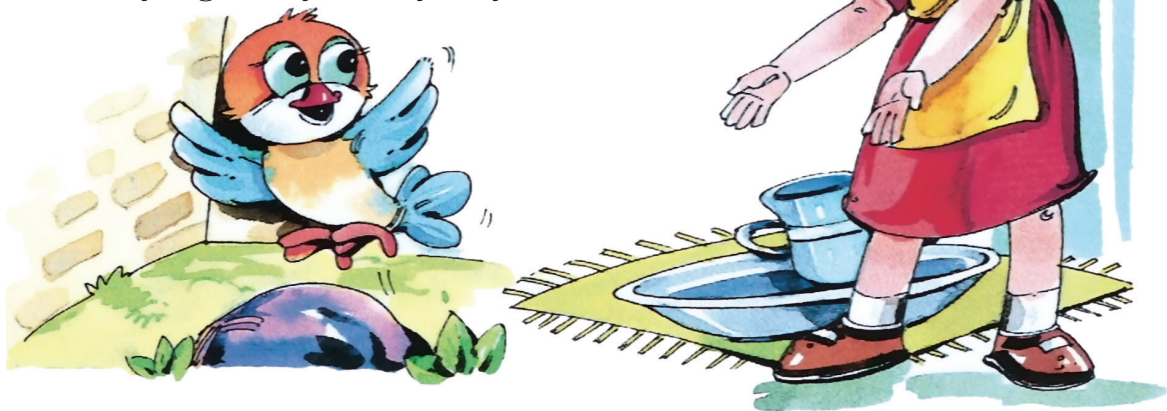
**CHILD** : 'O Birdie, Birdie, will you pet?  
Diamond-stones and **amber** and jet  
We'll string on a necklace fair and fine,  
To please this pretty bird of mine!'

**BIRD** : 'O thanks for diamonds, and thanks for jet,  
But here is something **daintier** yet—  
A feather necklace round and round,  
That I wouldn't sell for a thousand pound!'



**CHILD** : 'O Birdie, Birdie, won't you pet?  
We'll buy you a dish of **silver fret**,  
A golden cup and an ivory seat,  
And carpets soft beneath your feet!'

**BIRD** : 'Can running water be drunk from gold?  
Can a silver dish the forest hold?  
A rocking twig is the finest chair,  
And the softest paths lie through the air—  
Good-bye, good-bye to my lady fair!'



**amber**: a brown substance for making jewellery

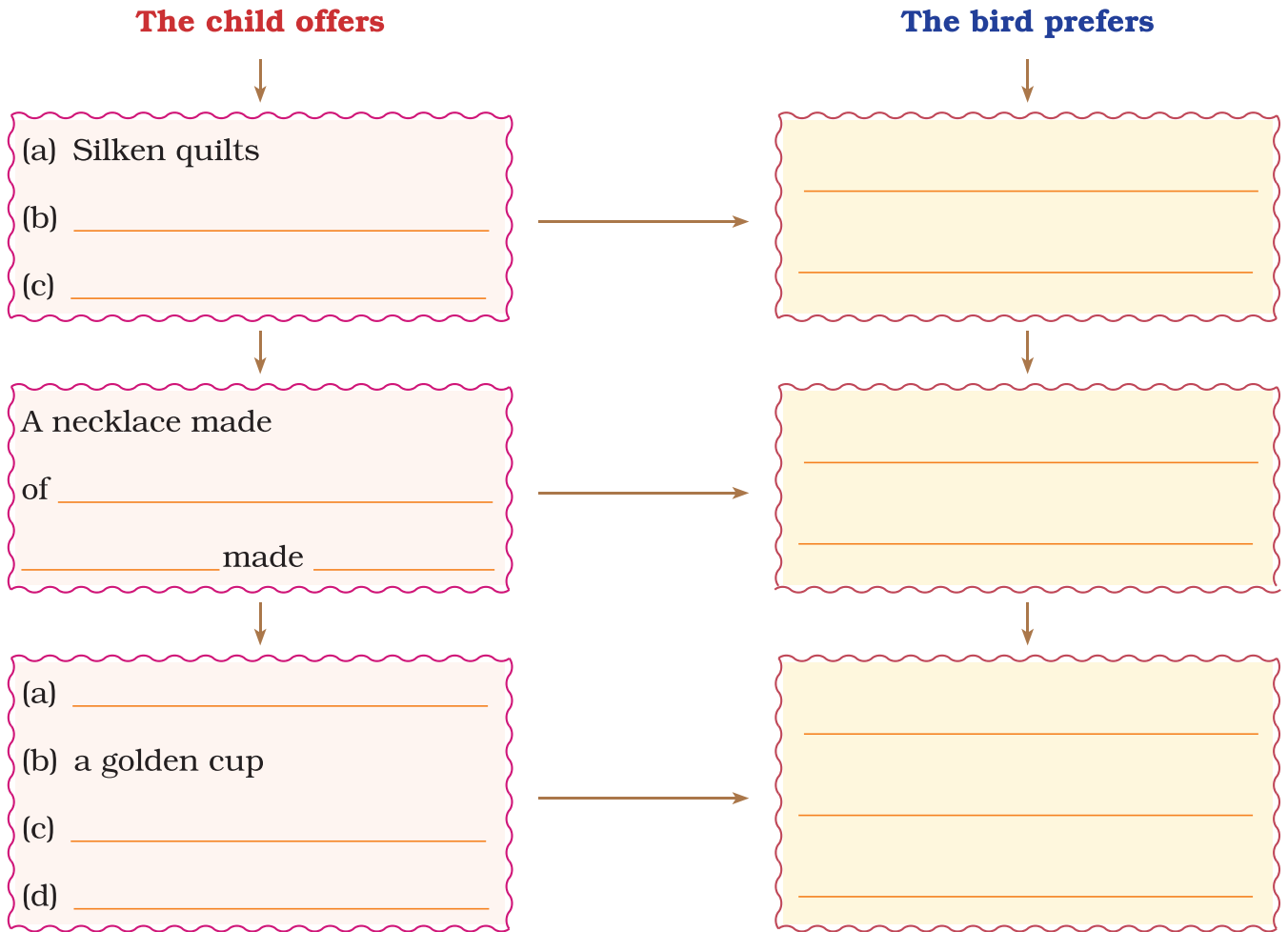
**daintier**: sweeter

**silver fret**: decorated with silver thread

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Understanding the Poem

A. In the poem, the child offers various comforts to the bird in exchange for its freedom, but the bird declines them. Complete the chart given below by filling in the offers made by the child and the bird's preference over them.



B. Read the extracts given below and answer the questions that follow.

(a) I'd rather sleep in the ivy wall;  
 No rain comes through, tho' I hear it fall.  
 The sun peeps gay at dawn of day,  
 And I sing, and wing away, away!

- (i) Who is 'I' in the above lines?
- (ii) Ivy is a plant. What does the bird want to convey by describing it as a wall?
- (iii) What does the speaker prefer ivy wall to?



(b) A feather necklace round and round,  
That I wouldn't sell for a thousand pound!

- (i) What is the necklace offered by the child made of?
- (ii) What is the necklace that the bird has made of?
- (iii) Which necklace does the bird prefer? Why?



**C. What is the rhyme scheme of the poem?**

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**D. Pick out at least three examples of alliteration from the poem.**

- (a) \_\_\_\_\_ Stanza 2
- (b) \_\_\_\_\_ Stanza 2
- (c) \_\_\_\_\_ Stanza 3

**II HOTS**

Why does the bird refuse to accept the various comforts offered by the child? Discuss.

**III Life Skills**

Is freedom just the right to live as we wish?

**IV Values**

Why does the child call the bird 'birdie'? Why does the child use the word 'birdie' twice?

The child in the poem realises that the bird cannot be lured. She has her own priorities in life. Freedom is equally important to her. The child decides to share the conversation between her and the bird with her friend through a letter. Write the letter in not more than 120 words.

### About the Author

William Allingham was born on 19 March 1824 in the little port of Ballyshannon, County Donegal, Ireland. He produced excellent lyrical and descriptive poetry, and the best of his pieces are thoroughly national in spirit. He published *Poems* in 1850, followed by *Day and Night Songs*, a volume containing many charming lyrics, in 1855. His verse is clear, fresh, and graceful.

Other works are *Fifty Modern Poems* (1865), *Songs, Poems, and Ballads* (1877), *Evil May Day* (1883), *Blackberries* (1884) and his most famous work, *The Faeries*.

