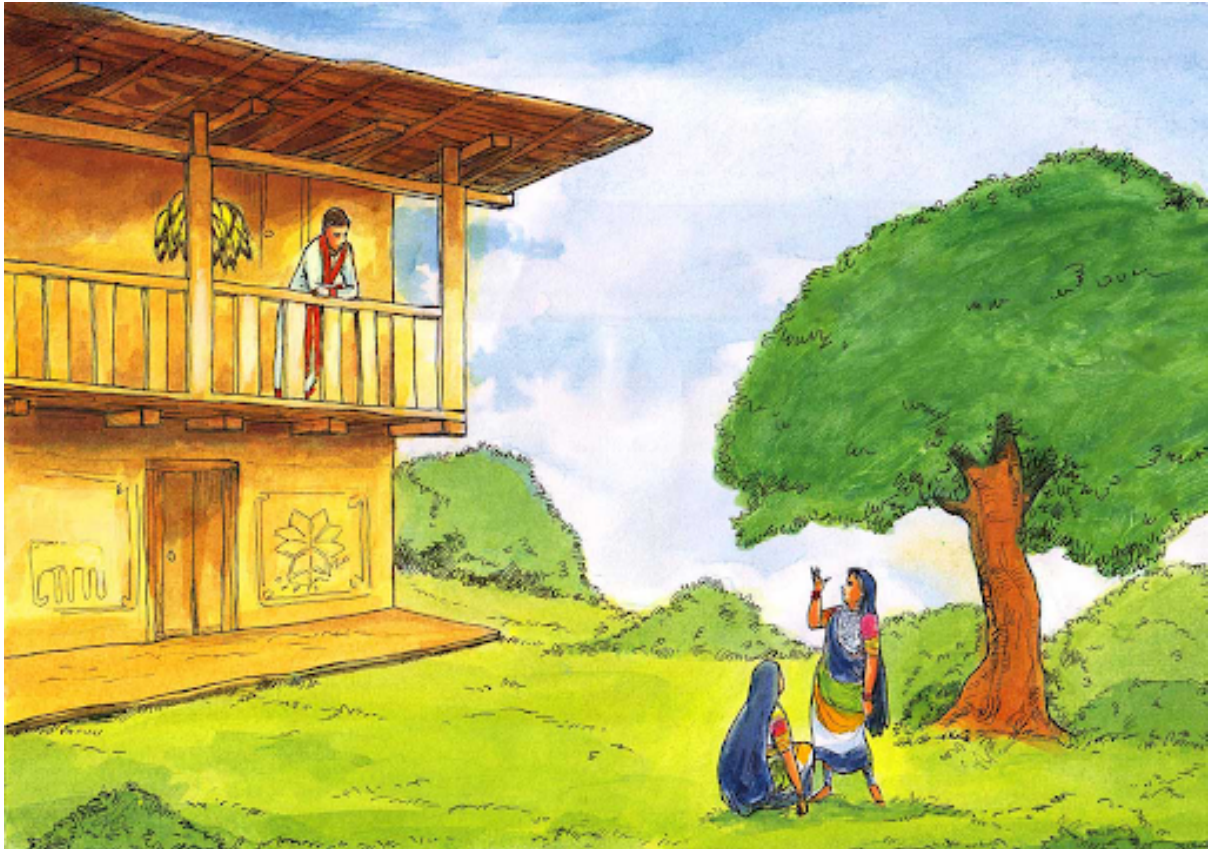


Prince Dhola's Journey
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A long time ago, there was a prince. His name was Dhola. He was engaged to a woman named Maru, but they had never met. Dhola had two friends named Ribia and Sibia. They were sisters who lived in the palace. They knew how to perform magic.



Dhola knew that Maru lived in a faraway place called Pingal. Sometimes he would think about Maru. He wanted to meet her.

Ribia and Sibia were jealous.

"Dhola, let's play hide and seek," they said.

"I don't want to play," Dhola said. He was very sad.



"Why are you so sad, Dhola?" Ribia asked.
"I'll show you some magic!" Sibia said. She took out a magic box and performed a trick. Dhola loved magic. His face lit up. When Sibia showed him magic, he forgot all about Maru.



But very soon, he remembered Maru again.

"I'm going to find her," he said.

"Do not go!" the sisters said. "You have never met her. You do not know her. Marrying someone you do not know is a bad tradition."
"

"You are right but I still want to meet her," said Dhola.



"I do not think Dhola will play with us after he meets Maru," Ribia said to Sibia.

"You are right. We should not allow him to go anywhere near her," replied Sibia.

They started thinking about how to stop Dhola from seeing Maru.



One day, a parrot came to the palace. It made a lot of noise. There was a letter tied to its foot. Ribia and Sibia took the letter and read it.

"Dear Prince, I am Maru, your fiancée. Please come and see me," the letter read.

Ribia and Sibia were very angry when they read the letter.

"Hide the letter before Dhola sees it," said Ribia.

Sibia tore the letter into many pieces. Then

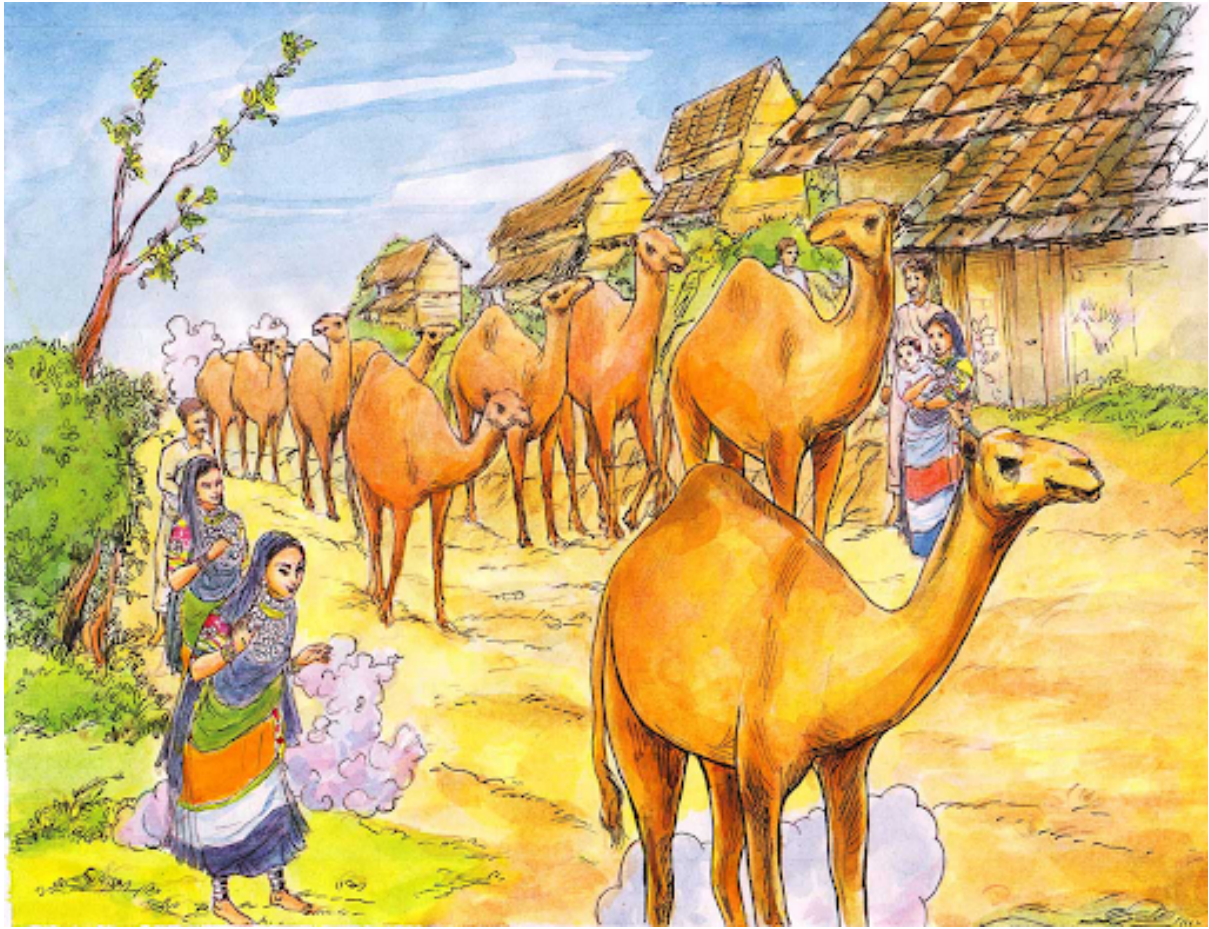
she imprisoned the parrot in a cage.



Maru waited, but the parrot never returned to her. She wrote another letter. This time, she sent it with the help of a crow.



Ribia and Sibia read this letter, too. They tore the letter into pieces. They put the crow in the cage with the parrot.

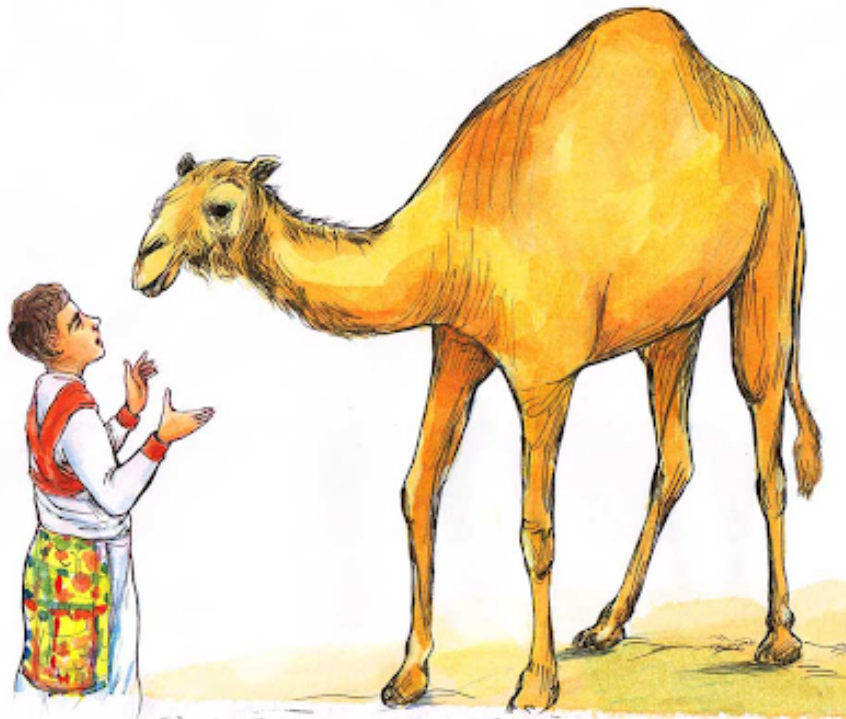


There were camels in Dhola's kingdom. They often went to Pingal to graze.

"These camels know about Maru. They may take Dhola to her someday," said Sibia.

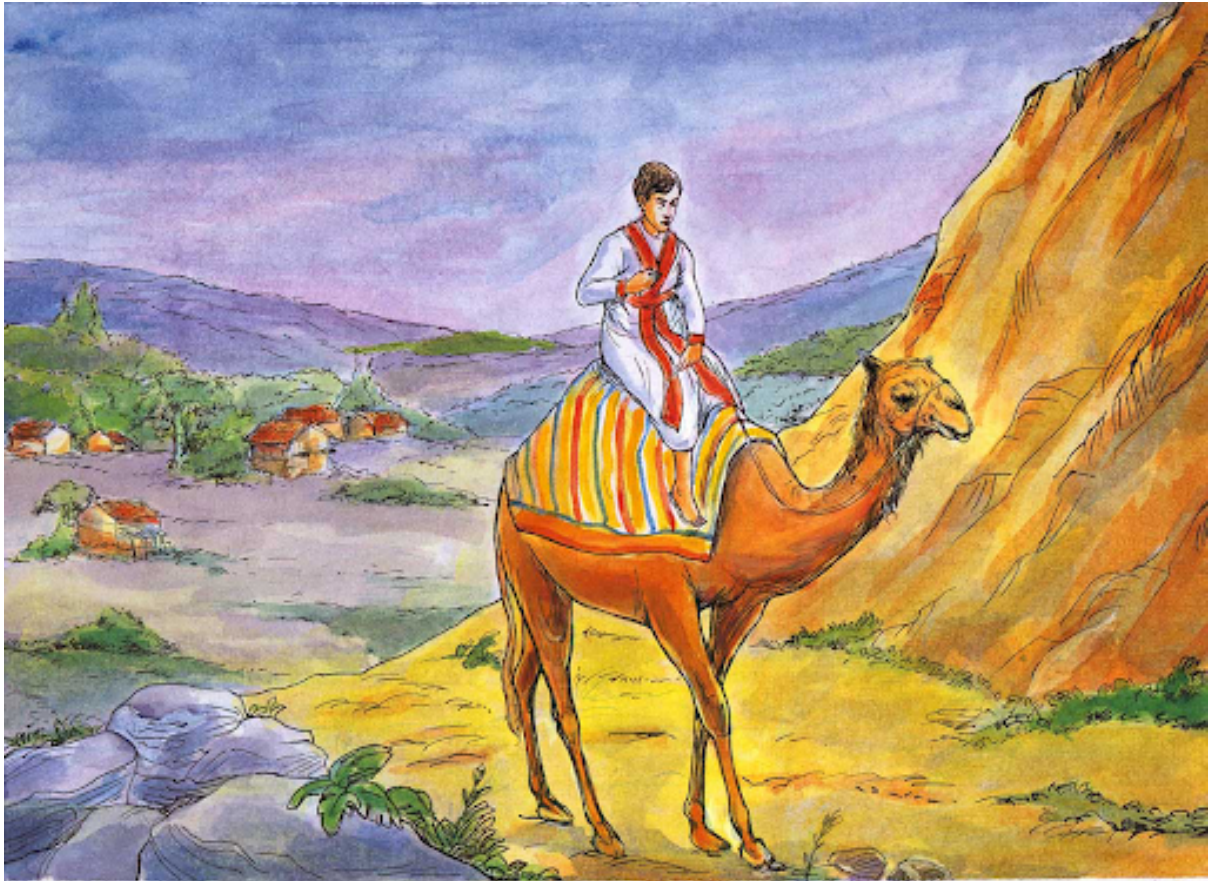
"You are right. They must be driven away," said Ribia.

Ribia and Sibia chased the camels away. But one old camel stayed behind.



"Oh camel! My dear Maru lives in Pingal. Could you please take me there?" asked Dhola.

"Of course! I would be happy to take you to Maru. But we cannot tell Ribia and Sibia," said the old camel. "If they find out, they will try to stop us."



Dhola had always been suspicious of Ribia and Sibia so he believed the old camel's words.

The camel said, "You should play a game of dice with Ribia and Sibia. Play until they fall into a deep sleep. Then you can sneak out of the palace."

Dhola played dice with Ribia and Sibia all through the night. In the early morning, the prince climbed onto the camel's back and

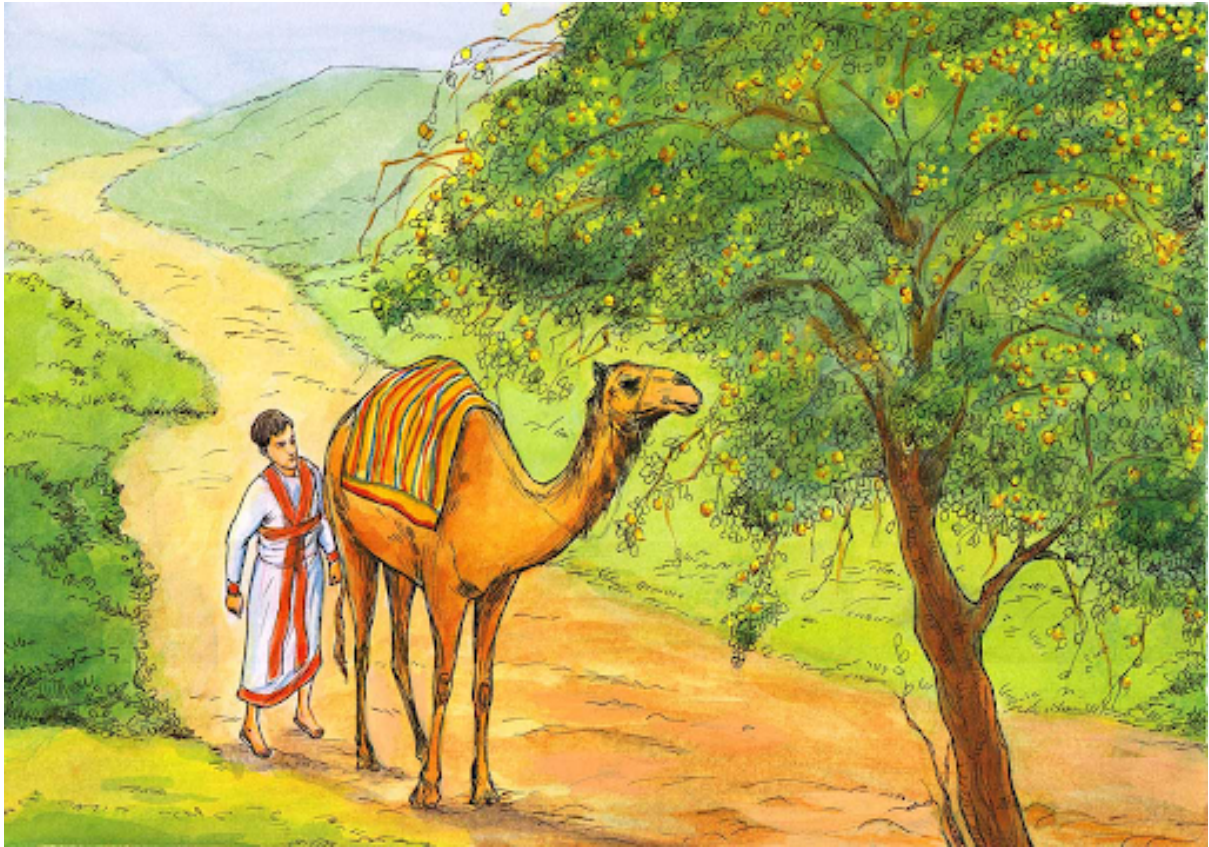
rode toward Pingal.



"Where is Dhola? Where has he gone?" Ribia asked as soon as she woke up.

"I think the old camel has taken him to Maru's house. We must stop them," said Sibia.

They took out a magic box and said, "*Abracadabra!*"



On their way to Pingal, Dhola saw bushes covered with wild fruit.

"Camel, stop and let me pick some delicious fruit," Dhola said. He got off the camel and started picking the fruit.

The camel was worried. "I have walked this way many times in the past. There were no bushes here until yesterday. Ribia and Sibia must have used magic to grow them. They are trying to stop us," he said.



Dhola listened to the camel. They continued on their way. Soon they came to a nest of thorny branches. It was blocking the road. Dhola slashed the branches with his sword until the road was clear.

Then the camel moved forward with Dhola on his back.

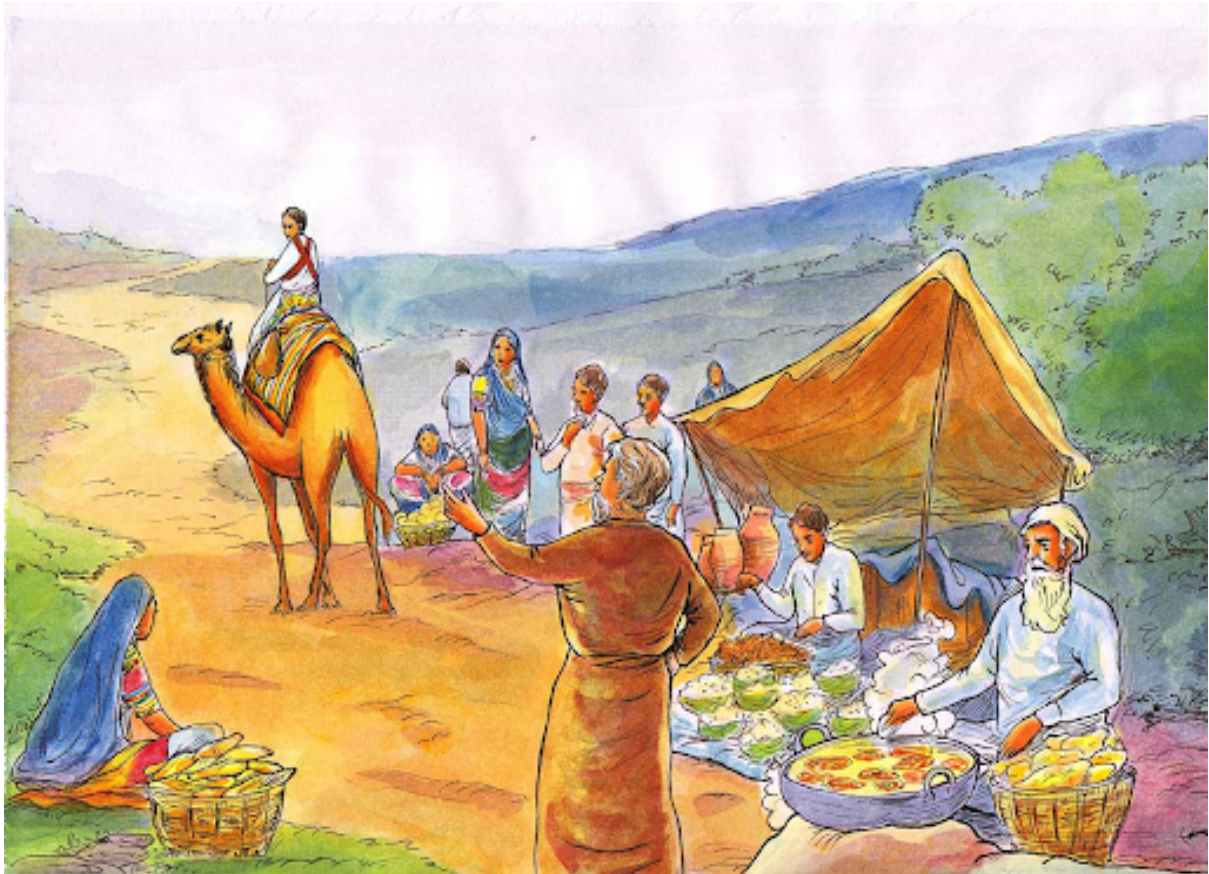


Ribia and Sibia were following the prince and the camel.

"Look! These footprints are fresh. They are not far," Ribia said.

"Let's move fast," Sibia said, gasping for breath.

Again, Ribia took out a magic box and said the magic word, "Abracadabra!"



Dhola and the camel reached a big market.

"All this food looks so delicious! I would like to have at least one bite," said Dhola.

The camel shook his head, "Let's not delay. The girls will be here any minute now. There was no market here until yesterday. Ribia and Sibia must have used their magic to create it."

"But I am so hungry," Dhola said.

"Then, you'd better ask for something without getting off my back," said the camel.

A shopkeeper handed a bag of food up to Dhola. Without wasting any time, the prince and the camel moved along.



Ribia and Sibia reached the market area, but Dhola was not there.

“Enough is enough. Using our magic powers is not working. We must get to them immediately,” said Ribia angrily.

She held the magic box in her hand. She closed her eyes and said, “*Abracadabra!*”

As soon as Ribia uttered the magic word, the sisters began to fly.



Ribia and Sibia found Dhola just as he reached the river. They grabbed the camel by his tail and started pulling backwards. The camel could not get away.

"Prince Dhola, cut off my tail. Quick!" yelled the camel.

Dhola cut off the camel's tail. Ribia, Sibia, and the camel's tail fell in the river and were swept away. Dhola and the camel reached the other side of the river safely.



The old camel was in great pain. Dhola bandaged the camel's wound.

"There is nothing to worry about now. Their magic does not work on this side of the river," said the camel.

Dhola lay down on the grass while the camel grazed. After a rest, they continued on their way.



Finally, Dhola arrived at Maru's house. Maru was sitting in the courtyard.

"That's your Maru! Look how beautiful she is," said the camel.

Dhola walked up to Maru. "I'm Prince Dhola. I'm here to take you back to my palace," he said.

Maru was very happy to see her prince.



On that day, Maru's elder sister had come to visit. Maru told her sister that Dhola had come to take her away with him. "I wonder when we will meet again?" asked Maru's sister.



The two sisters went outside together. They sat on a swing and sang songs of both joy and sorrow.



The next day, Dhola and Maru returned to their palace.

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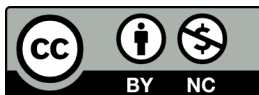
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Original Story

Prince Dhola's Journey. Author: Indra Chaudhary. Illustrator: Nabin Nalbo. Editor: Krishna Dip Sigdel. Contributor: Bandana Tulachan, Anuradha.

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