

# THE KOEL'S SONG

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Raju lived in the city. But in the summer, when school was out, he headed straight for his Ajja's farm in the village.



One summer morning,  
he woke up early to the sound  
of a beautiful melody.



"Kuhoo, kuhoo, kuhoo..."  
It was the koel singing,  
from the mango tree nearby.





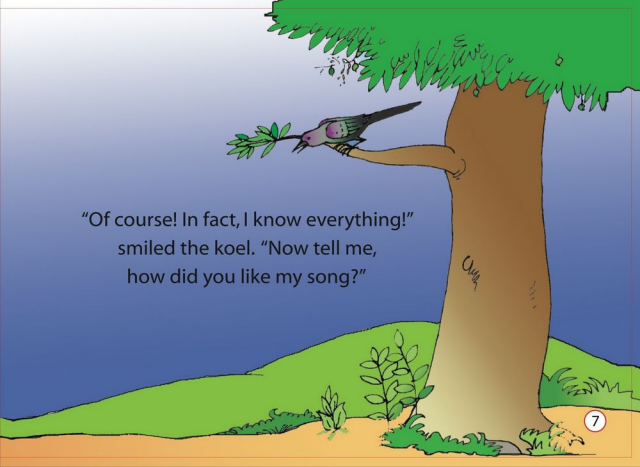
Raju thought he had never heard anything quite so sweet. But where was the koel? Raju searched everywhere for the bird. Finally, he spotted it on one of the branches of the tree.



The koel saw Raju.  
"kuhoo, Raju!" said the koel.  
Raju was delighted.  
"Koel, you know my name!"  
he cried.







“Of course! In fact, I know everything!”  
smiled the koel. “Now tell me,  
how did you like my song?”

"Oh, you sing beautifully!" said Raju.  
"I think you have the sweetest voice  
I ever heard."

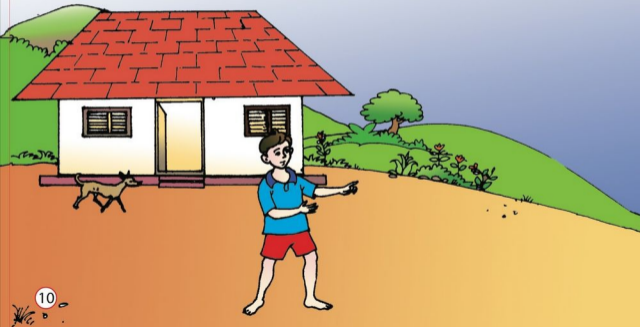


"I'm glad you like it," replied the koel.  
"When it is springtime and the mango  
tree has burst into flower,



we koels are so happy we go "Kuhoo, kuhoo"  
the whole day long."

Raju was very happy. "Koel, why don't you come with me to the city?" he said.  
"Everyone there would love to hear you sing."



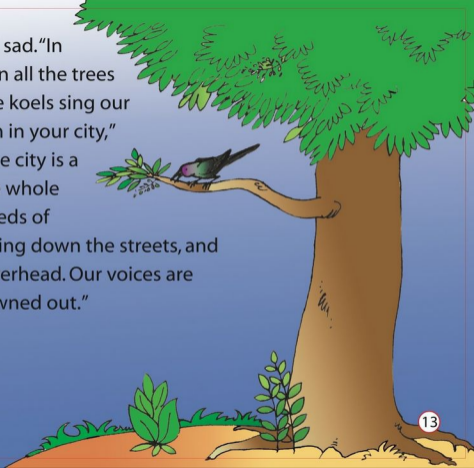
"Me? Come to the city? But why?"  
asked the koel in surprise.  
"So many of my friends and  
relatives already live there."

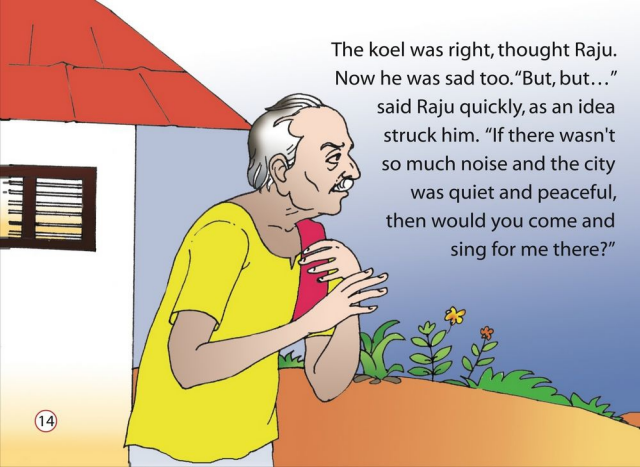


“They do?” asked Raju, equally surprised.  
“Then how come no one in the city has ever  
heard them singing?”



The koel looked sad. "In springtime when all the trees are in flower, we koels sing our hearts out, even in your city," she said. "But the city is a noisy place. The whole day long, hundreds of vehicles go roaring down the streets, and planes drone overhead. Our voices are completely drowned out."

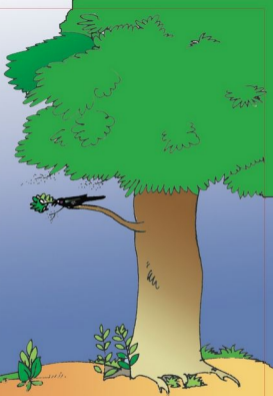




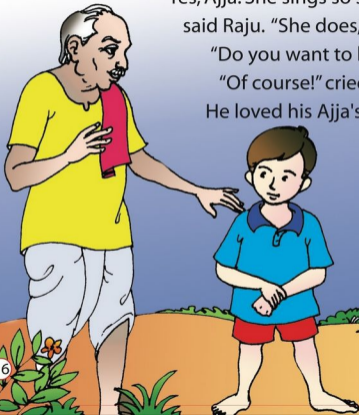
The koel was right, thought Raju. Now he was sad too. "But, but..." said Raju quickly, as an idea struck him. "If there wasn't so much noise and the city was quiet and peaceful, then would you come and sing for me there?"



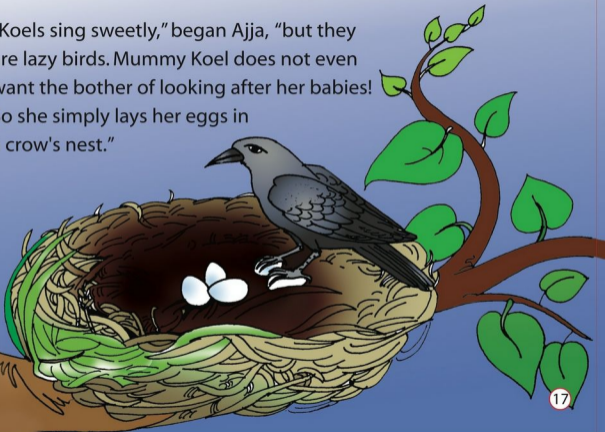
“Sure!” smiled the koel. “Then you would also hear the rest of the koels singing.” Raju was happy. “Raju,” called Ajja, coming out of the house, “are you listening to the koel's song?”



"Yes, Ajja. She sings so sweetly, doesn't she?"  
said Raju. "She does, Raju," agreed Ajja.  
"Do you want to hear her story?"  
"Of course!" cried Raju happily.  
He loved his Ajja's nature lessons.



“Koels sing sweetly,” began Ajja, “but they are lazy birds. Mummy Koel does not even want the bother of looking after her babies! So she simply lays her eggs in a crow's nest.”



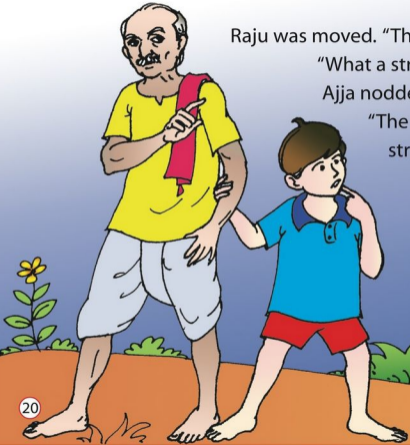
“Mother Crow warms the koel's eggs along with her own,”  
continue Ajja. “Even when the eggs hatch, Mother Crow  
cannot tell that she is feeding a koel chick because it is  
just as black as her own.”



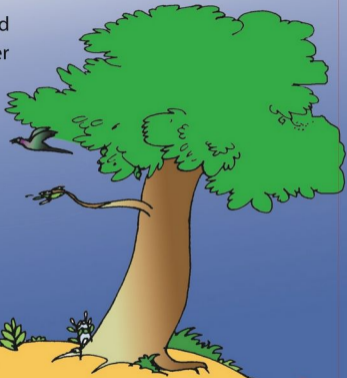
“It is only when the koel chick begins to sing that Mother Crow realizes she has been tricked. Furious, she throws the koel chick out of her nest. From them on, the chick has to look after herself.”



Raju was moved. "The poor thing," he said.  
"What a strange life she has led!"  
Ajja nodded. "Yes, Raju," he said.  
"The animal world is full of  
strange stories like this."



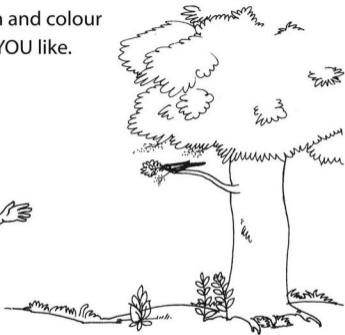
“Kuhoo, kuhoo, kuhoo,” agreed the koel as she flew to another tree, and began singing her sweet song again.



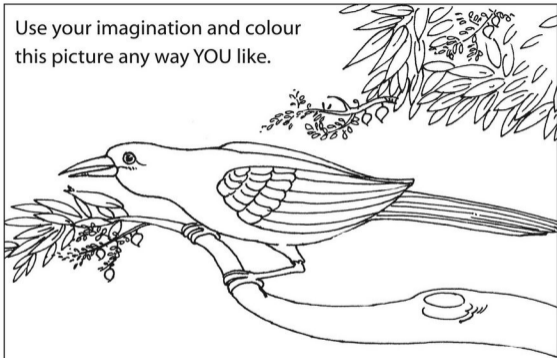




Use your imagination and colour  
this picture any way YOU like.



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this picture any way YOU like.





Hello! My name is Chanda and I am going to be the first Doctor in my family. I'd love to learn computers also. Hritik Roshan is my favourite hero and I love Ashwarya Rai's eyes!

Thank you for buying this book. My friends and I will get to read many more books in our library because you bought this book.



Jayashree Deshpande is a prolific author of short stories, essays, humour and novels in Kannada. She has been writing for nearly fifteen years. Her stories have been published in all leading magazines and publications in Kannada. Jayashree has travelled widely across USA and Europe and loves writing travelogues. Her hobbies include travel, photography and reading literature.



Srikrishna Kedilaya is painter and graphic artist. He has been working in an advertising agency for nearly a decade. He has done the artwork and cover design for several books in Kannada.

**Why don't we ever hear the koel's sweet song in our cities anymore?  
City kid Raju finds out the answers to this and many other questions  
when he chats with a koel on his grandfather's farm.**

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