



Ekbitte: The Boy Who Could Fit in the
Palm of a Hand
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A long time ago, a poor old man lived in a village. He had no children. The old man had a cucumber plant in his garden. Though the plant had very lush vines and flowers, only one cucumber grew.



The cucumber was very small. Only the size of a human hand. This made the old man very angry.

“May the woman who eats this cucumber have a baby of this very size!” he said angrily.



One day a woman from the neighborhood sneaked into the old man's garden. She saw the cucumber. She picked the cucumber and ate it up.



The woman became pregnant after eating the cucumber. Nine months later, she gave birth to a son.

The baby was tiny. As the child got older, he did not grow much taller. The mother was very worried.



Seeing the size of his body, people called the boy *Ekbitte* since he could fit in the palm of a hand.

When Ekbitte was eleven years old, he said to his mother, "Mother, I want to help you with the chores."

"How on earth can you help me, son?" the mother asked. She was tired from working so hard.

"Let me try, and see it for yourself," Ekbitte

replied.

**ekbitte* means palm-sized in the Nepali language.



"All right then. Bring some straw in from the threshing ground. The buffalo is hungry," his mother said. She didn't believe that Ekbitte could do it.

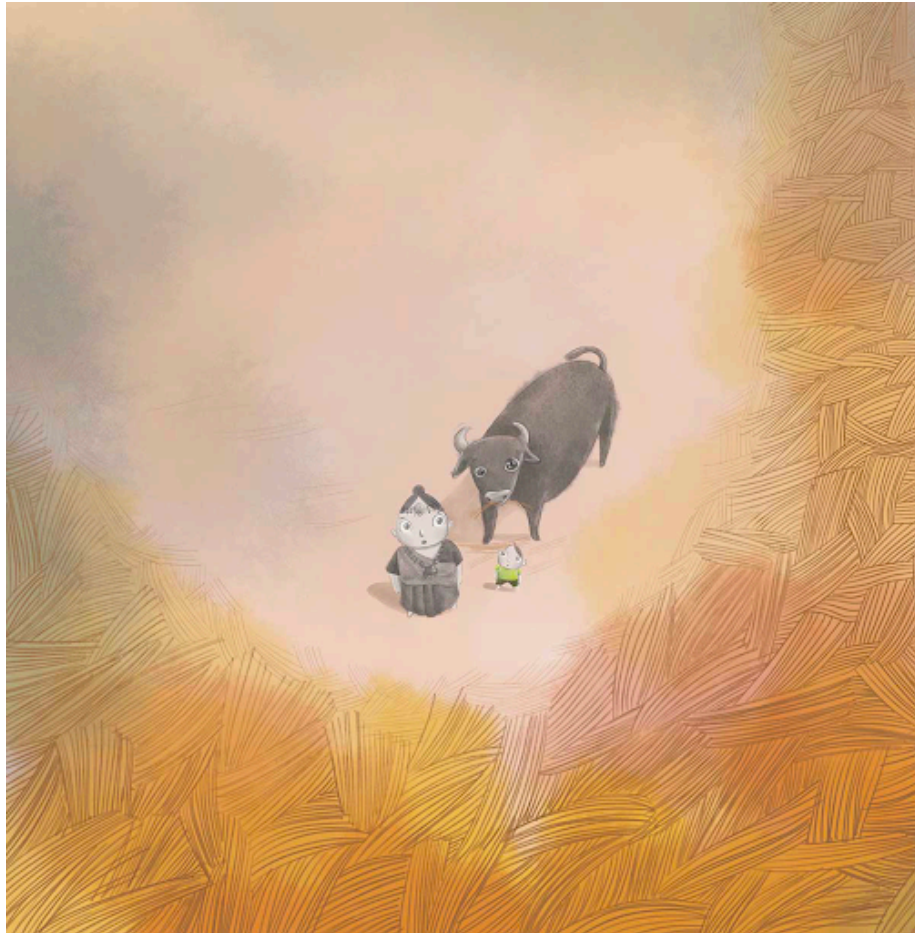
After a while, Ekbitte shouted from the courtyard. "Mother, I have brought the straw. Where do you want me to put it?"



"Put it in front of the buffalo," his mother shouted from inside the house.

"The buffalo will not be able to eat all the straw that I have brought with me. Perhaps you should come out and show me where I can store it?" Ekbitte shouted.

His mother sighed. "Oh boy. You brought a few strands of straw and now you are causing an uproar."



When Ekbitte's mother came outside, she was surprised to see how much straw was lying on the threshing floor.

“What kind of magic is this?” his mother exclaimed.

Despite his size, Ekbitte was very strong.



From then on, Ekbitte did all the household chores by himself. His mother was very relieved. Her face looked brighter and happier every day.



A few years later, she noticed hair on her son's upper lip. He was growing up. She came to him and said, "Son, you are grown up now. It is time for you to marry." So Ekbitte went off to look for a bride.

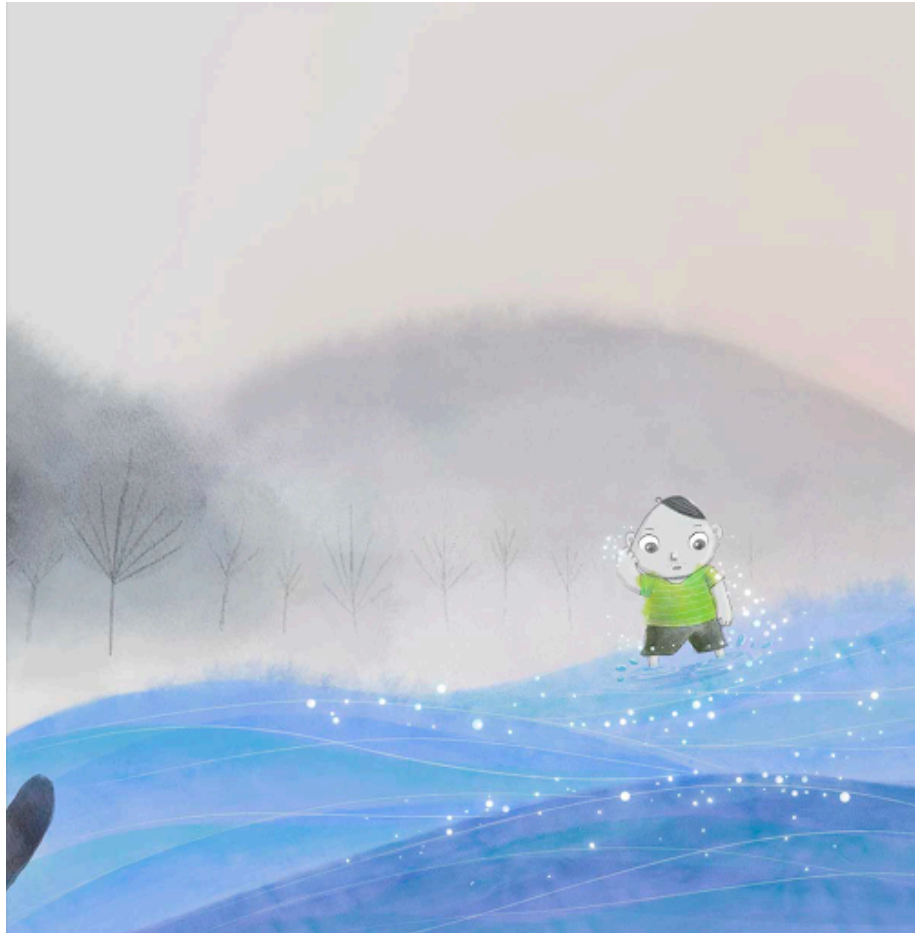
On his way, he met a wild cat. He told her the reason for his journey.

"Take me with you. I may be of use to you someday," the wild cat said.

"Yes, you can keep me company," Ekbitte said. And he pushed the wild cat into one of his ears.



A little further ahead, Ekbitte came across a fox. The fox wanted to come with Ekbitte, too. So Ekbitte pushed the fox into his other ear and moved on.



After walking some distance, Ekbitte came to the big Ganges River.. It was impossible for Ekbitte to cross it.

"Oh Mother Ganga, please help me," he begged the river.

Then, sucking all the water of the river into his ears, he continued on his way.



Ekbitte reached the big city. The king lived there. Ekbitte heard that he had a beautiful daughter. Ekbitte wanted to meet her. He headed toward the palace.



At the palace, Ekbitte greeted the king. "Your Majesty, I want to marry your daughter."

This made the king angry. "How dare you ask such a thing?" the king shouted angrily.

Then the king ordered his soldiers, "Shut him in the chicken coop. Let the chickens peck his body. They will teach him some manners."



The soldiers pushed Ekbitte into the chicken coop.

When the soldiers left, Ekbitte whispered to the wild cat, "Friend, I need your help."

The wild cat came out of Ekbitte's ear and said, "What can I do for you, my friend?"

"Could you please meow for me?" Ekbitte asked.

The cat meows very loudly. The chickens were scared. They panicked and broke the coop apart. All the chickens run loose.

After doing its job, the wild cat went back into Ekbitte's ear.

Ekbitte safely strutted out of the broken coop.



The next morning, when the king went outside, he found the coop broken and the chickens grazing outside. He also noticed that there were fewer chickens than the day before.

Ekbite was standing in front of him and smiling.

The king was even angrier. He ordered his soldiers, "Throw him in the goat pen!"

The soldiers threw Ekbite in the pen and left. This time, Ekbite asked the fox for help.

The fox came out of Ekbite's ear and howled very loudly.

The howling frightened the goats. They ran wild, causing the pen to fall apart. The goats ran free.

After doing his job, the fox went back into Ekbitte's ear.



The next day, the king went to inspect the goat pen. He was surprised to see that Ekbitte was safe and sound.

This time, the king decided to throw Ekbitte into a fire. He ordered all the townspeople to collect dung cakes. They stacked them high in the center of the city.

The soldiers set the dung cakes on fire.



As the soldiers threw Ekbitte into the fire, he prayed to the water, “Mother Ganga, could you please come out and help me?”

A powerful jet of water gushed out of Ekbitte’s ear. It put out the fire in an instant. But even after the fire was over, the water continued to flow out of Ekbitte’s ear. Soon, the city was almost completely underwater.



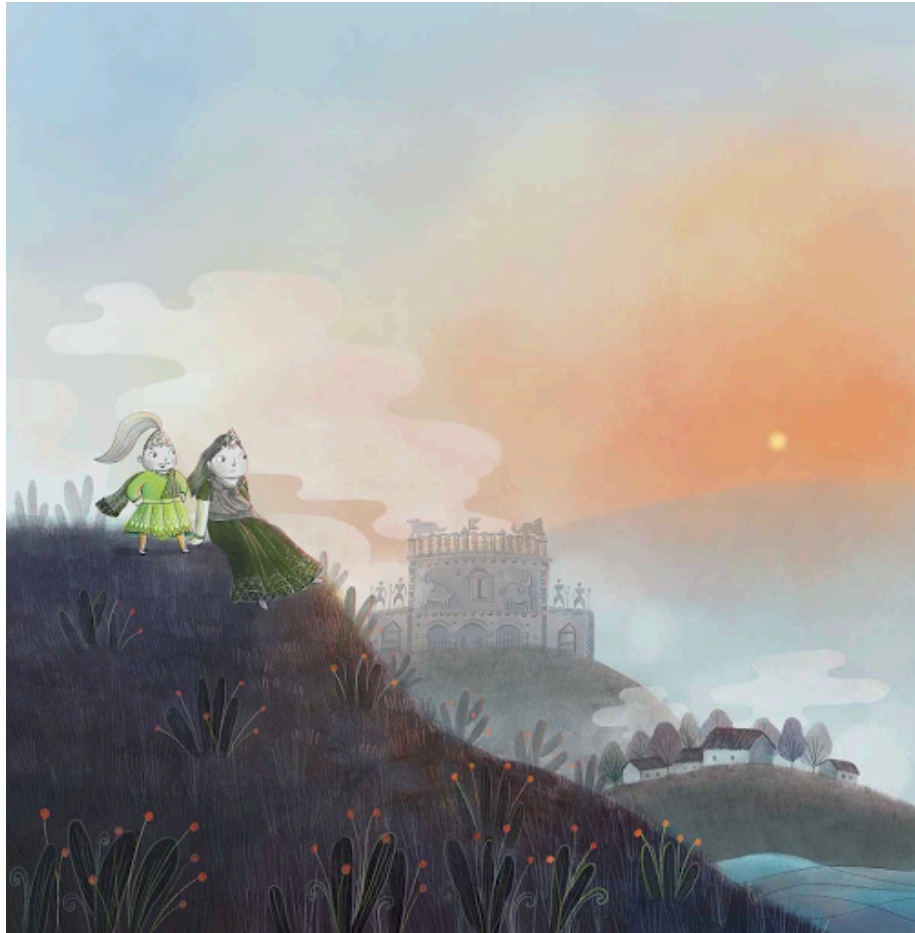
When the king saw that the city was about to sink, he panicked. "Oh Ekbitte, sir! I have made a mistake. You are clearly very strong and clever. Could you please stop the water from flowing?"

Ekbitte said, "Your Majesty, for that to happen, you must give me your blessing to marry your daughter."

The king promised.

Ekbitte said, "Mother Ganga, will you please return to my ear?"

The water went back into Ekbitte's ear. The city was dry again.



The king was amazed.

"You may be small, but you are impressive,"
said the king.

The princess also liked Ekbitte.

The king gave his blessing to let Ekbitte and
his daughter marry.

Ekbitte invited his mother to the city for the
wedding.

The king married the princess and Ekbitte.
Ekbitte became a prince.

After the death of the king, Ekbitte became the king.

He served the country and its people for a long time.

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Original Story

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