

Friday 17th July 2009

Every summer, my family and I go to visit my grandparents in India, and the summer of 2009 was *no* exception. My grandparents live in an idyllic and picturesque village on the coast of Southern India. A week after we had reached my grandparents' house, our cousins arrived from America!

That summer was *amazing*; all the things that we got up to together! However, there is one day which I remember more vividly than *any* other: Friday 17th of July 2009. That day started off as usual, I woke up early as the Indian sunlight flooded in through the bedroom windows. I got up leisurely, in my own good time, yawning. After having brushed my teeth with clove-flavoured toothpaste, I went into the kitchen having been lured by the aroma of *delicious, freshly-made* pancakes! To my utmost surprise I was greeted by my brother and our cousins, (Joshua and Joanna), who were *already* in the dining-room; devouring the sizeable stack of pancakes, ravenously!

After our heavy breakfast we went to pick some *choice* mangoes, as it was nearing the end of the season. I can still remember those mangoes: they were as green as grass. We were soon exhausted (picking mangoes in **intense heat** is *rather* difficult!), so we trooped into the kitchen to ask for some *refreshing* **ice-cold** lemonade.

Cricket is India's most-loved sport and it was our favourite pastime, so we decided to have a game. As usual, my brother was in charge, so *who* was batting? (He was; obviously)! Unfortunately, I have to confess that I was whining at, 'never getting to bat', when we heard Joanna shriek, "Aargh!"

We dashed over to where she was standing (Joanna was beside an old jackfruit tree), wondering if this was something genuinely important and serious or if it was Joanna; just being her *usual timid and cowardly self*! I soon found out the answer, for it was **then, then**, that

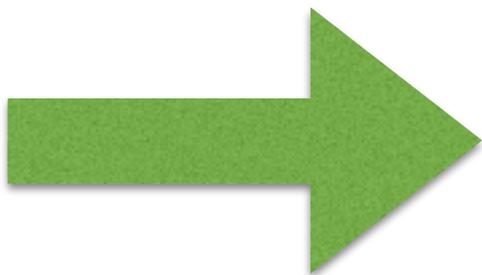
I caught my first glimpse of that *horrible* viper which was in fact *camouflaged* in sand! That *creature* was **vicious** and **venomous**!

As the viper came slithering and sliding towards us we ran, shouting, “Snake! Help! Help!” No matter how mature or ‘grown-up’ a person is, when faced with true danger, a human’s natural instincts will take over. Then my Uncle came *charging* out of the house and *confronted* the viper, armed with only, my great-grandfather’s wooden walking-stick. He struck it *repeatedly* on its head, “Thump!Thump!Thump!”, until the snake moved no more! Snakes are **not adorable**, **many** are *deadly*.

In India, to ensure that a snake is not alive, it is burnt, so that is what we did, (we stuck to tradition)! We dug a small pit, put the now dead viper into it and then placed leaves and branches over the snake. It was then set **ablaze**!

This experience was truly frightening. I definitely do not remember it fondly, but I will **never, ever** forget it!

A picture of the snake. Vipers in that part of South India are known in the vernacular as ‘Pambu’. Pronounced as: Palm-b.



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