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Illustrations: Santosh Pujari and Ketan Raut

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Going Home

Written by Rukmini Banerji

Illustrated by Santosh Pujari Ketan Raut

School is over. Children are leaving. Teachers are leaving. Everyone is going home.



I come out of the gate.

I am in a hurry.

I do not have time to play. I do not have time to talk.

I want to get home fast.



I walk down the lane.

It is a narrow lane. I can see crowds up ahead.

There is a big road there.



The big road has lots of traffic.

Cars, trucks and cycles,
motorcycles, scooters
and auto rickshaws.

Some are going this way.

Some are going that way.

I know how to find the gap and run to the other side.



I have reached the divider.
There is traffic in front.
There is traffic behind.
I must be careful.



I am on the other side. I almost crash into the `chanawallah'. He growls. I say ``Sorry," and run along.



I walk past the shops.

People are buying all kinds of things.

There is a toyshop.

I cannot stop.



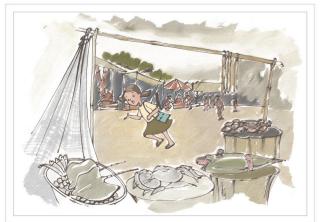
I walk faster and faster.

Now there are fish shops.

Big fish, small fish,
long fish, flat fish.

Shiny fish, dull fish.

So many fish in every shop.



Now I must run.
Past the video shops,
past the barber shop,
past the cloth shop,
past the pan shop.
Running, running,
running down the lane.



Finally I reach home.

Oh, good! I am not late.

My father goes to work in the afternoon. He has not left as yet.

His cycle is still here.



My father comes outside, my mother is behind him. I give my father a big hug. My father gives me a big hug. Then he goes to work.



Now there is no hurry. I have lots of time. 24



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