

"Le'mme Live My Life" is the story of a naughty and adventurous Little Monkey, who has always lived in a jungle, and has never seen humans before in his life. This little monkey has always done what his heart told him to, without fear of anyone.

So, when humans come to the jungle for a Safari, he too wants to go for a Safari to the Human jungle. When told by others about the consequences of going to the human world, his only question is - Why can't I go for a safari to the human jungle, when humans can come for a safari to the animal jungle? Are we not made by the same God? The innocent Little Ribbi doesn't realize that he being an animal, he cannot live that kind of life - that the humans won't allow him to live their life.

And when he sees the human jungle, where animals are abused and tortured, he doesn't know how to react to it. He doesn't know whether to run away from all this, or face it. Now he is stuck between the two world - the human jungle and the animal jungle. Now he has only three options - if he wants to live in the human jungle, either to live like the rest of them as a caged animal, or die. Or else he could somehow run away to his very own jungle and live peacefully thereafter.

But, can this Little Ribbi's conscience allow him to run away? Can he live in a cage like a slave?



Usha Shetty

Le'mme live my life....

Le'mme live my life....



Usha Shetty

*Published by Fultus Corporation
www.fultus.com*





Le' mme live my life....

by
Usha Shetty

Second Edition

ISBN 1-59682-088-8

Copyright © 2006 by Usha Shetty
All rights reserved.



First Edition Published by For The Cause Intl. (4tc)

Cover art by Ramesh Padmashali

Published by Fultus Corporation

Corporate Web Site: <http://www.fultus.com>

Fultus eLibrary: <http://elibrary.fultus.com>

Online Book Superstore: <http://store.fultus.com>

Writer Web Site <http://writers.fultus.com/shetty/>



All of the characters and companies in this book are fictitious, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or companies, is purely coincidental.

No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations embodied in reviews and critical articles.

The author and publisher have made every effort in the preparation of this book to ensure the accuracy of the information. However, the information contained in this book is offered without warranty, either express or implied. Neither the author nor the publisher nor any dealer or distributor will be held liable for any damages caused or alleged to be caused either directly or indirectly by this book.

Table of Contents

Part I. Life In The Jungle	5
Chapter 1. Life of Little Ribbi	7
Chapter 2. The Safari	14
Chapter 3. The Oncoming Safari.....	22
Chapter 4. Little Ribbi's Dilemma	28
Chapter 5. The Safari Day	33
Chapter 6. Siddi And Little Ribbi Are Friends	42
Chapter 7 Aftermath Of The Safari	49
Chapter 8. Little Ribbi's Anguish	54
Chapter 9. Mainu And Ishu Finally Face Little Ribbi.....	59
Chapter 10. Everybody Tried To Stop Him	64
Chapter 11. Final Farewell.....	70
Part II. Out Of The Jungle.....	73
Chapter 12. Little Ribbi Steps Into The Human Jungle.....	75
Chapter 13. Ishu Is Caught	79
Chapter 14. Little Ribbi Caught Too	86
Chapter 15. Bully Becomes Friend	91
Chapter 16. Animals Open Their Heart To Little Ribbi	97
Chapter 17. Mainu Sets Out To Find Siddi	101
Chapter 18. Mainu Meets Siddi	105
Chapter 19. Ishu Sent To Lab	109
Chapter 20. Search For Ishu	117
Chapter 21. Ishu's Pain	121
Chapter 22. Little Ribbi Couldn't Tolerate Ishu's Sufferings.	127

Part III. Little Ribbi Takes A Silent Vow	131
Chapter 23. Little Ribbi Sends Mainu & Ishu Back Home.....	133
Chapter 24. He Burns The Cabin, And The Van.....	139
Chapter 25. Word Spreads	145
Chapter 26. He Burns The Lab.....	149
Chapter 27. He Burns The House.....	153
Chapter 28. The Junglees Are Proud	156
Chapter 29. Little Ribbi Keeps His Vow.....	159
Chapter 30. Little Ribbi's Speech.....	163
Chapter 31. Little Ribbi Still Remembers Him	172
From The Author	174

Ie' mme live my life....

Part I

Life In The Jungle

Chapter 2

The Safari

Then one day, when all the animals had finished their day's work of hunting and collecting food, and they were relaxing - the elderly animals busy talking about politics and the problems faced in hunting, the kids busy playing nearby, Kawi the crow came kawing and screaming loudly at the top of her voice. 'There's a safari coming to the jungle.' She screamed at the top of her voice for everybody to hear, and perched herself on the topmost branch of the banyan tree, so that the whole jungle crowd could see her, and started breathing hard, as if she had run for her life.

Kawi was a crow whose job was snooping around and making a hue and cry about small small things. The animals usually never took her word seriously. But this *was* different. She wouldn't dare do this if she wasn't sure - because then the Lion King would have her torn apart.

All eyes turned towards Kawi. The animals stopped doing everything they were doing - Young and old stared at her without blinking. Animals, who were eating, dropped their food. The kids too stopped playing. Little Ribbi also looked around and stopped pulling at his friend, the little donkey's tail. The screaming stopped. The animals, which were running around, came nearer, and stood in attention. It was as if time was suspended for a while. There was pin-drop silence everywhere. Nobody knew how to react. Little Ribbi, who had never seen this kind of scene before, looked from one to the other. He didn't know what was happening around him. He had never heard words like *safari* before in his life. He didn't know whom to ask.

Le'mme live my life....

Just then the Lion King, who was sitting on the huge rock nearby, and talking to his ministers, raised his head, stared hard at Kawi, and roared loudly, 'Do you know what you're talking?' His roar reverberated in the deep deep corners of the jungle. The animals shivered.

Kawi shivered with the force of that voice that was directed towards her, and looked around. She stuttered, 'Yes your highness. I *did* hear the forest officers talking about some kids coming here for a safari.'

The animals around didn't dare open their mouth for fear of getting at the wrong side of the Lion. He was known for his short-temper.

The Lion King got up from his seat with full force, his face red with anger. His mane of hair stood on ends, making him look bloodcurdling. His ministers too got up from the place. There was silence everywhere. The Lion King stomped his right foot hard on the huge rock and looked around, the royal mane of hair around his neck making him look all the more sinister. His head rose up to the sky with arrogance. He stomped his foot and looked around him with anger and arrogance, commanding respect. 'How dare these humans come here every time they feel like having fun! I *hate* this attitude. Do we go to their homes and disturbed them? Would they tolerate it if we do that to them?' Lion King was really very angry at this news. The animals around him were silent. They knew the Lion's anger very well. And they also knew how much he hated humans. So no one dared speak to him, or utter a word in front of him. Kawi too sat quietly without telling anything.

Little Ribbi sat quietly where he was, looking at the happenings around him. He *knew* that something was wrong. But didn't know *what*. He had seen such gatherings before, but he had never seen human beings before. He didn't know what they were. He had never heard of them. And he *was* excited now. His ears stood straight. He wanted to know more about what was happening. So he inched closer to the Lion King. Little Ribbi moved close enough to the Lion and sat down, his ears all attention, and looked up at the huge creature stomping his foot on that huge rock, on which he and his ministers, Bhalu the bear and Foxy the fox stood. Both Bhalu and Foxy were exactly the opposite in everyway - looks and mind. Bhalu was big

and gruff and hairy, whereas Foxy was slim and graceful. Bhalu was a simpleton, with a simple clean mind, whereas Foxy was sly, smart and cunning. The peahen, Pia, who was head of the birds, was also one of the ministers. She stood behind Foxy.

Janu could see Little Ribbi from far, and was worried for him. He was inching much closer. And Janu knew how impatient this little creature was. She was worried that Little Ribbi would open his big mouth now and start asking questions. She knew how inquisitive he was, and she also knew how he'd be itching now to ask questions. But she couldn't even move from her place. She didn't know how to pull him back. She knew how hot headed the Lion King was.

The Lion King moved around, without looking up and without noticing anything around him, deep in thought. 'How can they just come here and intrude into our privacy. I just can't believe this. Why should *we* run from our own homes and hide somewhere, when *they* are the ones who should be running from us.' He sat down and looked around. 'These humans will always be greedy. They'd always want to pry into others' lives. And we couldn't stop it - Because even the guards standing at our gates are humans. And some of us animals are living in their homes and farms as *domesticated* animals.' He almost spat out the word *domesticated*. 'Shame on us animals !' He roared louder. His face had by now twisted with rage. And Little Ribbi could see each and every hair and wrinkle of his *clearly* - He was so close.

All the animals around him nodded without a word. Till now the entire jungle had assembled in front of the King. Things seemed to be pretty serious in this jungle, as there was usually no unusual topic for discussion. It was the same everyday. But this topic seemed very serious, and the animals were also very serious alongwith the King. Suddenly the Lion King asked kawi, 'So when are these fools coming?'

Kawi looked around, knowing very well that now *she* was the center of attraction, and that everybody was looking at her, and replied proudly, 'Two days from today.'

Le' mme live my life....

'I see.' The King said, bobbing his head and breathing hard. 'So we only have two days to run from our own homes.' He looked around at everybody and commanded, 'Tomorrow, the same time, everybody will assemble here. Then we'll decide what to do. I need to plan a few things.' 'And,' he continued, pointing his finger at Pia, 'I'd want your spy birds to poke their nose around and get me some more information about this.'

Pia nodded and looked at the birds pointedly, who nodded in unison, and flew away to their respective jobs.

The birds of this jungle had a vital role in the management committee. And because they could move faster than the four legged animals, the job of spying, communicating and broadcasting was handled entirely by the birds, the head being Pia, who was one of the ministers in the jungle, apart from Foxy and Bhalu. The portfolios of distributing work, maintaining discipline, and advising the King, were handled by Bhalu and Foxy.

The King moved out with his ministers, and the animals dispersed, talking to each other about human stupidity. Janu heaved a sigh of relief.

Little Ribbi, who was waiting desperately for this moment, ran to Mainu and Ishu, who were seated behind with the kids, and asked. 'What are *human beings* Mainu?'

Rani, the cuckoo, laughed out aloud. 'He doesn't know what are human beings!'

Mainu reprimanded her. 'He's just a kid Rani. Stop laughing.'

Rani made a face and kept quiet.

Little Ribbi asked again, 'What's a *human being* Mainu?' '*Human beings* are animals like us who do not have hair on their body, and who run on two legs. They don't have tail.' Mainu replied patiently.

'And you monkeys are supposed to be their ancestors.' Rani laughed out aloud, thinking that everybody would join her. But when she looked around, everybody was serious and staring at her with that *we'll-eat-you* kind of look.

Mainu gave her a look that made her wriggle on the little branch that she was sitting on. Little Ribbi, who didn't understand anything, again asked Mainu, innocently, 'What part of the jungle do they live in Mainu? How come I have never seen them?'

'They don't live in jungles.' Mainu explained patiently, staring at Rani, daring her to continue with her laughter. But Rani looked away, still smoldering from her previous insults.

'Then where do they live Mainu?' Little Ribbi continued, now sitting attentively in front of Mainu, resting his cute little face in his hands, and his elbows on his knees. 'They live beyond this jungle. Every place beyond this jungle belongs to the human race. They are far more superior than us animals.'

'With just two legs!' Little Ribbi's eyes were as big as saucers.

'Yes. They've far more superior brains. And far better arms and ammunitions.'

'Vow! They sound very great. Isn't it Mainu?'

'They are.' Mainu said, nodding and looking at Little Ribbi lovingly. 'But don't ever befriend a human being. He'll *see* to it that you're in his cage, at his mercy, like a dog.'

'Like a dog? What do you mean by that Mainu?'

'There were some traitors amongst us who preferred to be faithful to humans, because they thought that they were as brainy as the humans. And these humans, what they did, they made them their slaves, chained them, gave them their leftover food and made them do their work. Now the domesticated dogs are in lovely homes, eating out of a bowl and living the human life, but chained. And the ones who aren't domesticated are on the roads. People can behave with them the way they want to. They eat human dirt, and when humans get tired of them, the dog van comes and takes them away and kills them as if they are nothing.'

'Can't we help them Mainu?' Little Ribbi asked, his eyes wide, and full of concern.

Ie' mme live my life....

'No we can't. They won't come here. And we can't go there.'

'But how can the *humans* come here?'

'They *can*. They're much more superior than us. You'll see.'

'What if the animals get angry and attack them?' Mainu asked, his eyes twinkling with mischief.

Mainu smiled. 'Then the forest officers will get their guns and come and kill us, or the human beings will try to kill us.'

'They are so powerful to kill us in our own homes?' the mischief turned into concern again.

'Yes.' Mainu nodded. 'They have everything they want. And if they don't have it, they'll make it. They can't run as fast as us. So they made cars, which runs faster than us. And the humans just have to sit in it and press some buttons. They can't fly like the birds. But they made aeroplanes, which can fly faster than any bird. And they just have to sit in it and press some buttons. See? They don't have to do anything. They're any day smarter than us. They force the cow to give milk to *them*. They make the buffaloes slog in their fields. They make the camels run in deserts, with loads. They're using the donkey like a slog, without *any* respect. Not only that,' Mainu continued, 'they also try to degrade a human being by calling him a *donkey*. You know what is the meaning of *donkey* as per the human vocabulary?' She continued, as Little Ribbi and Ishu shook their head in negative. 'Well, *donkey* means a stupid, brainless, spineless and useless creature.'

Ishu and Little Ribbi opened their mouth in awe. Mainu continued. 'The cat is one other animal that belongs to the *tigers'* family, but living with humans and catching rats for them. Can you believe that? The horse is doing the racing for them and making money. The parrot is doing the talking for them. Just imagine how they're behaving with us animals. Just imagine!' Mainu was all irked up by now, thinking of the animal race that preferred to spend their lives as slaves. 'It's better to live freely as a King for *one* day, then spend a hundred years in a cage, however beautiful that cage is.'

Little Ribbi sat through this with eyes wide open, not believing that a race so powerful existed in this world. 'And this is not the only thing.' Mainu continued, still deep in thought. 'They've even taken some monkeys to the streets and are forcing them to dance there and make money. White rats and rabbits are used as guinea pigs in research centers. And the amount of pain they go through is unbearable. Even death is much better than that. Then the amount of hens and goats and sheeps killed everyday is just beyond limit.'

'Why are they killed?'

'Because humans can eat chicken and lamb chops.' Mainu mimicked. '*They love it.*' She made a face.

Little Ribbi couldn't believe this! He had started hating humans already, that too without seeing them. But he wanted to see them anyways. He wanted to see how anybody could be so powerful, with just two legs and no fur skin, and no tail.

As the sunset, and darkness tried to embrace the jungle in her arms, all the animals started walking back home. Little Ribbi was very quiet. Mainu and Ishu could feel it. Little Ribbi was usually very naughty and restless. He could hardly sit quiet. *Hardly*. And today, seeing him quiet, Mainu and Ishu just looked at each other and kept quiet. They knew that Little Ribbi didn't know anything about the human beings, and he was deep in thought. They knew *very* well that Little Ribbi wasn't somebody who'd sit quiet till he knew more about human beings. And now this was going to be his topic of conversation - His topic of thought. Once he got a topic he'd pry deep into it till he wasn't satisfied to the core. That was our Little Ribbi. And this was going to be a great topic for him from now onwards, till he actually saw them.

As soon as reached home, Little Ribbi hugged his mother. She was busy in the kitchen, laying out the dishes. She knew this little cartoon very well. As soon as he stepped in, he'd ask for food. He'll always be hungry. No matter how much he ate all day, he'll put one foot inside the door, and say, 'I'm hungry Mommy.' So Janu was busy preparing food for him.

Le' mme live my life....

As she turned and saw him, before he started his usual *I'm hungry Mommy*, she announced. 'Food is ready. Freshen up.'

Still he said, childishly, 'I'm hungry Mommy!' and hugged her. Janu said lovingly, 'I know honey. And you must be tired too. Go freshen up soon. It was a long day today, and we all need to go out early tomorrow morning. We need to gather food for the safari day.' As soon as the word came out of her mouth, she bit her tongue.

Little Ribbi was heading for the bathroom. And as he heard the word *safari*, he turned back. '*Safari!*' he screamed loudly. 'Tell me Momma, what is the meaning of safari? And what is the meaning of human beings?'

Janu closed her eyes, at this slip of tongue – *bad slip* she thought. She took a deep breath and sat down. 'Safari means humans coming to the jungle to have fun and see the jungle beings.' She explained patiently. She knew that this won't be the end, and she knew that she'll have to explain a lot to this little one, who had no end to his inquisitiveness and his questions. She knew that it would be a long night. Little Ribbi was known for his questions. And who else knew him better than the one who gave birth to him.

And so it was. Janu spent a long time explaining to her son what was the meaning of human beings and motors and civilization and safari.

From The Author

We had gone for a safari to the jungles of Bandipur and Madhumalai. There, two foxes were eating something, and when they saw us, they left their food and ran. I felt so sad. I thought, 'Why should *they* run, when they are in their own home – the jungle. Will *we* run if a wild animal comes to our world? *We* will make his life miserable, isn't it?' And that's when I thought that we humans have taken too much for granted. We hurt anybody who is weaker than us, especially the animals, who can't speak, who can't express their feelings.

But that doesn't mean that they don't get hurt. That doesn't mean that they are not like us. Why don't we realize that even *animals* have life. Even *they* feel pain. Even *they* are hurt. Even *their* mother goes through the same labour pain that our mother goes. Even *they* love their kids. Even *they* have a life like us.

The idea of Little Ribbi came when I put myself in an animal's shoe. I thought, if someone misbehaves with me, how would I react? Would I keep quiet? What would I do?

Thus, the idea of 'Le'mme Live My Life' took shape. And then I thought, why not use the funds to help the helpless. Hence, **For the Cause Intl.(4TC)** was formed.

For the Cause Intl. donates its entire proceeds to the **For The Cause (4TC) Foundation**, that takes care of both humans and animals who are not able to fend for themselves. **4TC** is gearing up to build orphanages, oldage homes, and care centers for the blind, handicapped, sick, aids effected, leprosy effected and animals. Its main aim is to eradicate poverty, illiteracy and sickness.

My sincere thanx to the people who helped me write this book. Who helped me believe in myself. Who kept encouraging me during times

Le'mme live my life....

when I thought I've lost. Who helped me build this organization.

Thanx a lot! Thanx a lot! to all of you friends, advisors and good wishers.

Usha Shetty

Le'mme Live My Life

This is what I want to do in my life

This is how I want to be

This is how I want to live my life

And this is what I want to be

I want to Live my life the way I want to

And let me be free to do what I want to

I'm going to live my life the way I want to

And I'm going to do what I want to

For The Cause Intl. (4tc)

35/1, 2nd Floor,

Wilson Garden,

Bannerghatta Road,

Bangalore 560 030

India

e-mail: mail@forthecause.org.in

website: www.forthecause.org.in