



Row, Row, Row your Boat

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Raju lives in the city. But every summer, when school is out, he heads straight for his Ajja's house in the village.

One of the things he loves to do there is to take a walk along the river with Ajja and Ajji.





The river in Ajja's village is always clear and cool. Its banks are lined with pale yellow sand and lush green trees, dotted here and there with huge boulders.

At some places, steps lead right down to the water! When the trees are in bloom, everything looks so beautiful it takes your breath away.


“Why don’t we go down to the river this evening?” asked Ajji one day.

“Can we, really, Ajji?” asked Raju, excited.

“Of course we can!” said Ajja. “Maybe Raju would also enjoy a boat ride on the river. Do you think you would like that, Raju?” “It sounds wonderful!” said Raju.







That evening, Raju, Ajja and Ajji went down to the river. Ajji was carrying a picnic basket full of Raju's favourite eats. The three of them sat in a cool mango grove on the riverbank, watching children playing around them. From where they sat, they could see a number of people enjoying an evening swim in the river. Some of them were teaching their children to swim too.



All the children were swimming with something long and white tied to their backs. "What is that on their backs, Ajja?" asked Raju, puzzled.

"It is a vegetable called a bottle gourd," explained Ajja. "The gourd is hollowed out, then left to dry in the sun. When it is completely dry, it floats on water. Tie it to your back and you will float in the water too! That way, you can learn to swim without worrying about drowning."







"That sounds like fun," said Raju.

"Ajja, do you think I could learn swimming with a gourd too? I really want to!"



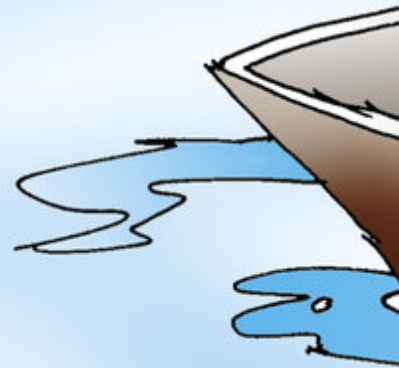
“Why not?” said Ajja. “You can start tomorrow.”
“Really? I would love that!” said Raju, delighted.
Why, maybe he would be a champion swimmer by the end of his
summer vacation!



After their little picnic, Ajja, Ajji, and Raju walked along the river until they reached a jetty.

There were several rowboats tied up at the jetty.

Ajja pointed to one of the boatmen, and said, "These are the people who row the boats and take people on rides on the river."





Ajja spoke to one of the boatmen, who agreed to take them all on a ride. The boat was tossing about gently in the water, making Raju a little nervous about stepping into it. Ajja held his arm firmly and helped him in.

Once the boat began to move, Raju's fears disappeared and he began to enjoy the ride.





The river flowed calm and gentle. The water lapped against the sides of the boat and the boatmen sang in rhythm, rowing strongly with both arms.

Little fish leaped out of the water and went back in. The pleasant evening breeze stirred up the water and the grasses. Raju trailed his hand in the cool water of the river. He was enjoying himself.



"Are you enjoying the ride?" asked Ajja, breaking into his thoughts.

"Very much, Ajja," smiled Raju.

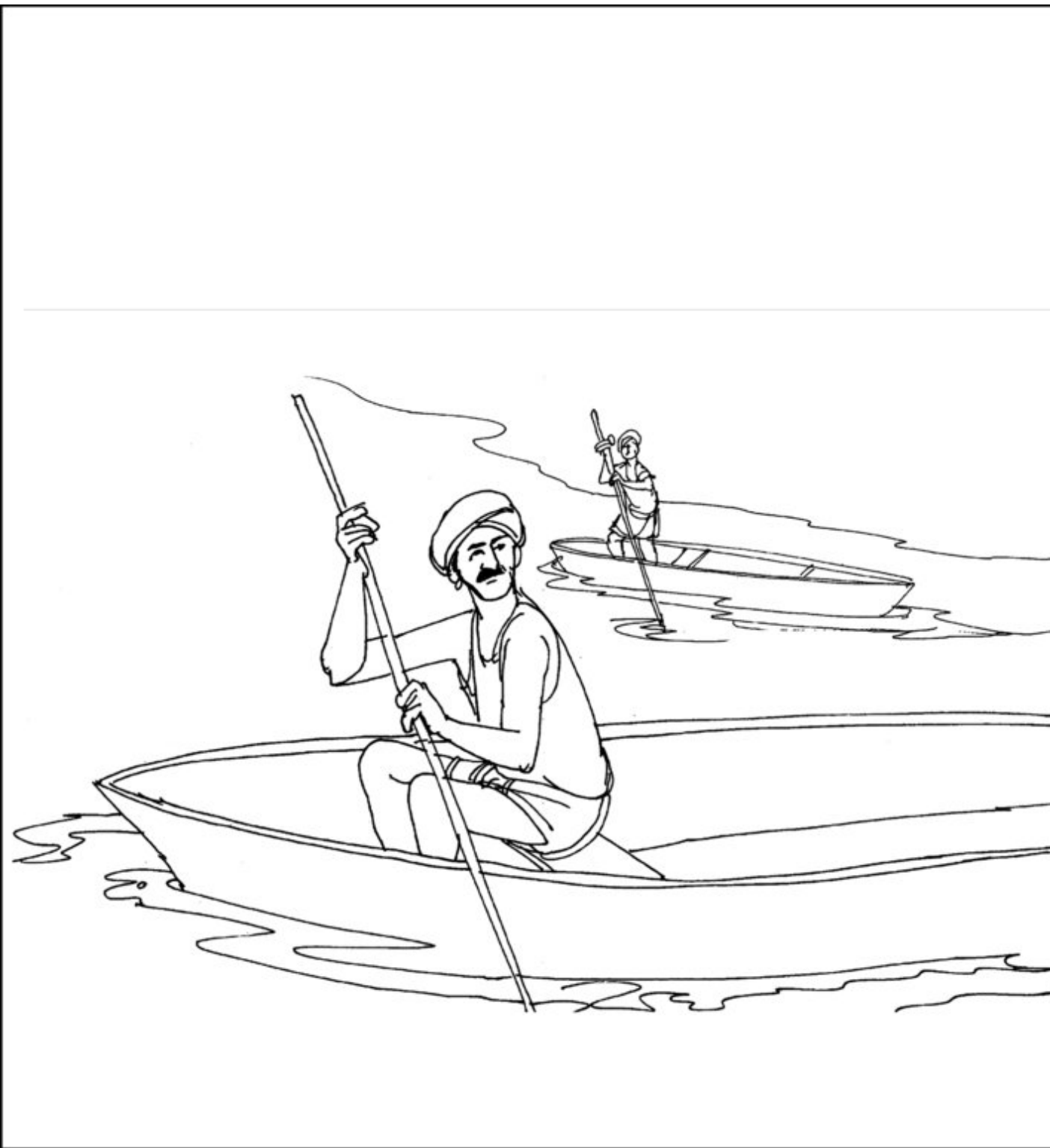
"When you go back home, don't forget to tell your friends about your boat ride!" said Ajji.



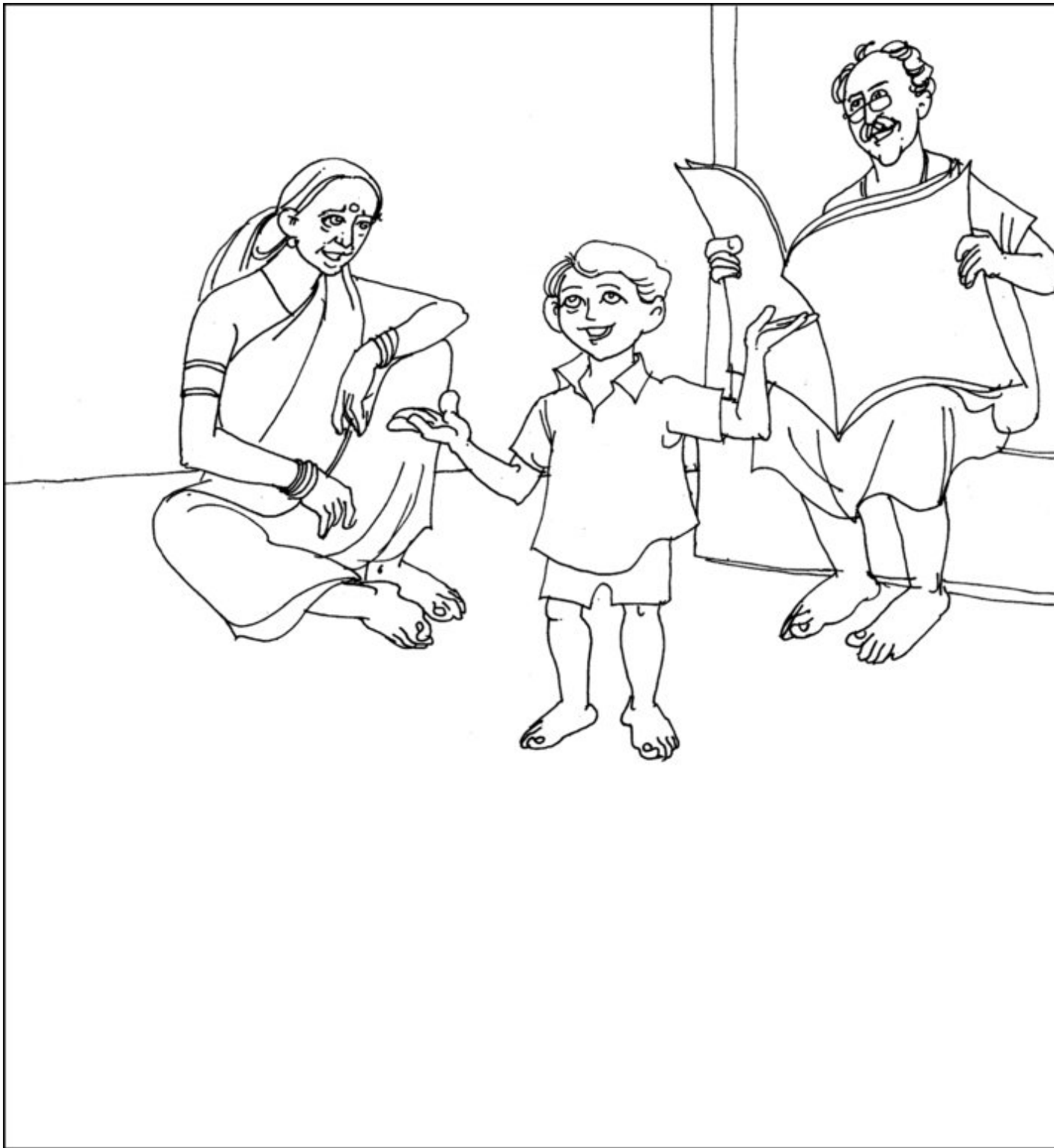
"I won't, Ajji," said Raju. "And I'm sure they will all agree that I am a very lucky boy indeed."







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YOU like.



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Row, Row, Row your Boat

(English)

Visiting Ajja and Ajji in the village is always exciting for Raju, but this time, his grandparents have a special surprise for him. One evening, when they are taking their usual walk along the river, Ajja suggests a boat ride. Why don't you join them?

This is a Level 3 book for children who are ready to read on their own.



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