



Lazy Mama

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Knock, knock!
Amma opened the door.

“Raghu Mama!” Amish and Soni
cried, giving him a big hug.





Raghu Mama was their mother's only brother. He always told the best stories and brought them the most interesting presents.

But there was one problem with Raghu Mama.





Raghu Mama was so lazy that he could sit in his chair, for hours and hours and hours, reading or watching TV. Or just sleeping.

He would not do any work around the house or even go to the market to buy groceries. Amma was fed up of his laziness.

“So, Raghu,” said Amma. “Planning to spend the holiday in your favourite chair as usual?”

“Oh no!” said Raghu Mama. “This time I’m going to explore underwater caves, climb tall mountains, and chase tigers in the jungle.”

“Where, where?” exclaimed Amish and Soni. “We want to come too!”

“Hah!” said Amma. “What a joke!”

Raghu Mama smiled mysteriously.





The next day, when Raghu Mama was in his room, Amish and Soni overheard him talking to someone.

"Wow!" he was saying.

Then, "That's AMAZING!"

A little later, "OH NO!"

The children burst into his room. "What happened, Raghu Mama?"



Raghu Mama was in his favourite chair, wearing a pair of big black goggles. There was no one else around! Soni and Amish exchanged a curious look.

“Is everything okay, Mama?” Amish asked, staring at the dark goggles that hid almost all of Mama’s face.

Raghu laughed and took off the goggles. “Here, try this,” he said to Soni.

“What is it?” asked Soni. The goggles were so heavy that she had to hold them with both hands.

Raghu Mama carefully put the goggles on Soni's face. The goggles were dark and she couldn't see anything at first. Then he pressed a button.

Suddenly Soni was in the ocean! There were colourful fish all around. She turned her face to the left and saw a big turtle swimming beside her. It was so close that she thought she could reach out and touch it.

Then she turned her face to the other side . . .

"Eek!" she cried as a huge shark swam very close to her.





“Let me see, let me see!” said Amish, trying to take the goggles off a stunned Soni.

“It will be your turn next, Amish,” said Raghu Mama. “I have just the adventure for you.”

Amish put on the goggles and Mama pressed another button.

“Ooh, I can see herds of chital! And langurs!” Amish was in a thick forest full of trees. He could hear different bird sounds. When he looked up, he could see a flock of geese flying in a V-shaped formation across the sky.





"It feels so real," said Soni. "When I wore the goggles it was as if I were swimming underwater!"

"Yes," said Raghu Mama. "I guess that is why it is called 'Virtual Reality'."

Soni was confused. "But doesn't 'virtual' mean 'not real'?" she asked. "So how can you have 'reality' that is not real?"

"That is a really smart question," said Raghu Mama. "We call it Virtual Reality, or VR, because it makes you feel that what you are watching is real. So it is almost real."

"Help!" cried Amish. "A tiger is about to eat me up!"

Raghu Mama laughed. "Don't worry, you are quite safe!" he told Amish.

"It is like watching a movie, but better," said Soni, excited.

"Exactly," said Mama. "When we watch a movie in a cinema theatre, the screen is only in front of us. When we wear the VR goggles, it feels like the movie is all around us."



“So, do you want to spend your summer vacation exploring Virtual Reality like me?” asked Raghu Mama.

Amish took off the goggles and thought for a bit. “I think I prefer the REAL reality,” he said.

“But why?” asked Raghu Mama, surprised.

“I saw a juicy mango in the jungle,” said Amish. “And now I want to eat one. I can’t do that in Virtual Reality.”

“I want one too!” said Soni. Both of them ran to the kitchen.

“Wait for me!” said Raghu Mama, right behind them, finally off his favourite chair.





Virtual Reality Bytes

1. The term “Virtual Reality” was first used in 1983 in a science fiction story called *The Judas Mandala* by Damien Broderick.
2. Virtual Reality (VR) is made by very powerful computers that can use the small screens inside goggles to create a three-dimensional (3D) world that looks and feels very much like a real world.
3. VR goggles have sensors in them that detect how your eyes are moving. For example, if you look up, the picture in the goggles changes to what you would see if you were looking up in real life. So if you were in a jungle, like Amish, and looking up, the screen would show you a sky instead of the forest.

4. Virtual Reality is not just used for playing games and exploring new worlds. It can also be used to train people to do difficult jobs. Firefighters can use VR to practise rescuing people from burning buildings, and astronauts can practise living in space and exploring new worlds. Imagine being able to understand what walking on Mars would be like before even setting foot inside a spaceship!

5. Are VR goggles safe for children to use? Most scientists believe that it has the same effect as watching a small screen like a mobile phone, so we need to be careful about how often and how long we use it.

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Lazy Mama

(English)

When lazy Raghu Mama claims that he can go on wild adventures without leaving his chair, Amish and Soni are amazed. How does he do it? Can Amish and Soni go on these adventures too?

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



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