

The Elephant Bride

By

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The story begins with the return of Paromita, the youngest daughter of the Gauripur royal family of Assam, who has been studying in Canada. She comes home for the grand Durga Puja festivities, a tradition the family has upheld for generations. The palace is alive with rituals and decorations, but Paromita notices something unsettling, beneath the celebrations, fear grips the household.

Soon, strange misfortunes strike. Family members fall ill one after another, and the family businesses begin to collapse. The royal priest declares that the reason lies in an ancient curse: every fifty years, the family's elephant must be married to another of pure royal lineage. Only then can the curse be lifted for another half century. The last such ceremony was held fifty years ago, and the time has now come again.

Paromita, educated and rational, dismisses the idea as blind superstition. But her relatives, desperate and terrified, cling to the priest's words. The search for a royal-blooded elephant begins.

The journey first leads the family to Kerala, where they believe they will find the perfect match. But the elephant there has already been sold. Following the trail, they make a startling discovery: the animal now lives in their very own village, cared for by a poor man who has nothing but the elephant.

This man, though impoverished, treasures his elephant as family. When the royals approach, offering money and power, he refuses to part with her. His defiance enrages them. For the Gauripur royals, accustomed to having their way, denial from a commoner is intolerable.

Paromita, however, admires his love and dignity. She aligns herself with him, choosing empathy over her own family's arrogance. Seeing the cruelty of the situation, she proposes a daring plan: they will substitute a neglected circus elephant in place of the royal-blooded one. By doing so, they not only protect the poor man's bond with his animal but also give the circus elephant a chance at care and dignity.

The circus owner, weary and desperate, agrees to the exchange. The plan succeeds for a time. The palace hosts a grand wedding ceremony, believing the curse has been appeased. But soon, the deception is uncovered. The family, humiliated, lashes out. They accuse the poor man of betrayal and plot to punish him.

The climax unfolds in a moment of chaos. As the man's life is threatened, his elephant, fierce and protective, intervenes. With Paromita's help, the animal rescues her master from the family's wrath.

At that very moment, the frail grandmother, bedridden for months, rises and confronts the family. She reveals the truth they have refused to see: "Superstition is a disease. We humans divided ourselves into castes. Wasn't that enough? Now we divide animals too?" Her words shake the pillars of Gauripur Palace.

Shamed and awakened, the family finally abandons their blind faith. They employ the poor man in the palace, entrusting him with the care of both elephants. The animals are married, not for superstition but for love and companionship.

The story closes with a quiet moment, the elephants standing side by side, the poor man watching over them with pride, and Paromita looking on, knowing that the true curse has been lifted: the arrogance and blind belief that once shackled her family.