

A day in my Village!

Final exams are done, and I am so excited to spend my vacation with my grandmother and cousins in a small village, in South India. Our travel would be a 7 hour journey, partly by train and then by a local bus. Around 5:00 am we packed our breakfast and lunch and left to the railway station to board the train that was scheduled for 6:30 am. We reached the nearby city around 11:30am, and had lunch at the station. It was a hot day and the sun was directly overhead. The bus stop was too crowded as it was summer vacation. Finally, the bus came and we got in. I chose the window seat. The conductor was screaming Ticket! Ticket! And my dad bought the tickets. As the bus moved, the high temperature made the air exceedingly humid. As the line in a rhyme goes, “the people on the bus goes up and down”, we were literally going up and down as the roads were bumpy.

As I was looking through the window, the bus suddenly stopped. It was a railway crossing, and we had to wait for the green signal. Outside the bus, on both sides there were so many villagers with basket full of cucumbers, bananas, jack fruits, and raw mangoes. They were trying to sell them to the passengers waiting for the signal. I love the spiced juicy cucumbers, got some with my mom’s permission. My mom was looking for change in her purse to pay the lady, when the bus started to move. As I was asking my mom to hurry up, I saw the lady walking fast along the side of the bus. Finally, my mom got the exact change and I had to throw the



money out the window, I felt bad doing that but on the other hand was happy that we paid her. Wow!



Those cucumbers were thirst quenching and refreshing, and I heard a loud

whistle reminding us that it was our stop to get down. It was a 10 minutes' walk from the bus stop to my grandma's house.

Dad opened the tall black gate, which was supposed to be the back side entrance of the house. The front entrance was on the parallel street, yes, the houses there used to be so big with front entrance on one street and the back entrance on the other. Walked inside a small pathway with one side loaded with tall grass and other side a well and a big tree. Went straight ahead, all excited to see my grandmother. As I entered the door I could smell the smoke from the clay oven, and my grandma blowing air through a metal pipe to spread the fire. Her eyes were watery from all that smoke, I ran and gave her a big hug. While my parents were bringing in the luggage, my grandma gave me a cup of cold water from a mud pot. Sitting on grandma's lap, munching some delicious home-made snacks, we both had a chat about the travel and the things that happened throughout the school year. Grandma would be the only person who listens to my stories hours and hours, as the busy city life doesn't let my parents do that.

I love my grandma's house as it was more spacious to play and run around. It had a spacious inner courtyard that had stone pillars on all sides. Around this courtyard we had small rooms, which had big wooden doors and the keys for the doors were huge. As I was playing in the courtyard happily,



running around the pillars, my mom called me for dinner. It was time to go to bed. The next day my cousins were supposed to join us. It was really nice to sleep in the space around the



courtyard on a mat with the fresh air coming through the open roof and looking at the moon and stars, but was little scared if somebody



would come inside. So, I always chose to sleep in the center spot, in between all of them thinking that the thief would only catch the person sleeping on the sides, ha-ha!

The next day, I woke up with the beautiful chirping sound of birds and the crows cawing. I could also hear the voice of a lady selling fresh herbs and spinach walking in through our back gate and sat in front of our door. As my grandma started to choose the best spinach bunch from the basket, the lady said, come on Amma! All are fresh. This lady was like a morning news reporter for my grandma, updating her about all the news in the village. After a small chitchat with her, myself and grandma walked to the roadside market that was near the bus stand, where village people line up and sell fresh vegetables from their field. Not much, we bought just two vegetables which was enough for that days cooking. People here don't have refrigerators and they prefer eating fresh daily. Then my grandma turned towards me with a smile, and asked me if I want anything. I pointed my hand towards the tender coconut. We walked towards him and she said, Ayya (respectful way of calling an elder person) give my granddaughter a tender coconut that has lot of water and with little coconut and make sure the water is sweet. I was wondering how that man would know all of these just by looking at it from outside. But to my surprise, the water was so sweet and I bet none of the boxed juices can beat this taste.

We were back home, I was ready to take a shower. We had to get water from the well for everything. It was a nice work out for my parents. My grandma used to take a shower outside next to the well, but I was hesitant to do that. We had a not so neat but a descent bathroom, which my grandma asks someone to clean before we go there for vacation. By the time we had our breakfast, my



cousins were home. We all were having so much fun playing hide and seek, hopscotch, and snakes and ladders, when suddenly we heard a Thud! Thud! Sound. We ran to the kitchen and saw a row of monkeys sitting on the roof

trying to grab some food from the kitchen and my grandma with a big stick chasing them away! Around 2:00 pm the clouds were getting dark and it was about to rain heavily. There used to be two large brass water storage pots with a height of 3.5 feet in the courtyard. My grandma quickly opened these pots and covered its mouth with a clean white cloth. In a few minutes heavy rain started and all the rain water was filtered and collected in these pots, which was later used during the time of water scarcity. And we all had fun playing in the rain!

Each and every day at the village was so memorable, and it was almost time for us to leave from there. Bidding goodbye was always sad, but that's how it is, back to busy schedule running from morning till evening. I can't wait for the next summer vacation!

