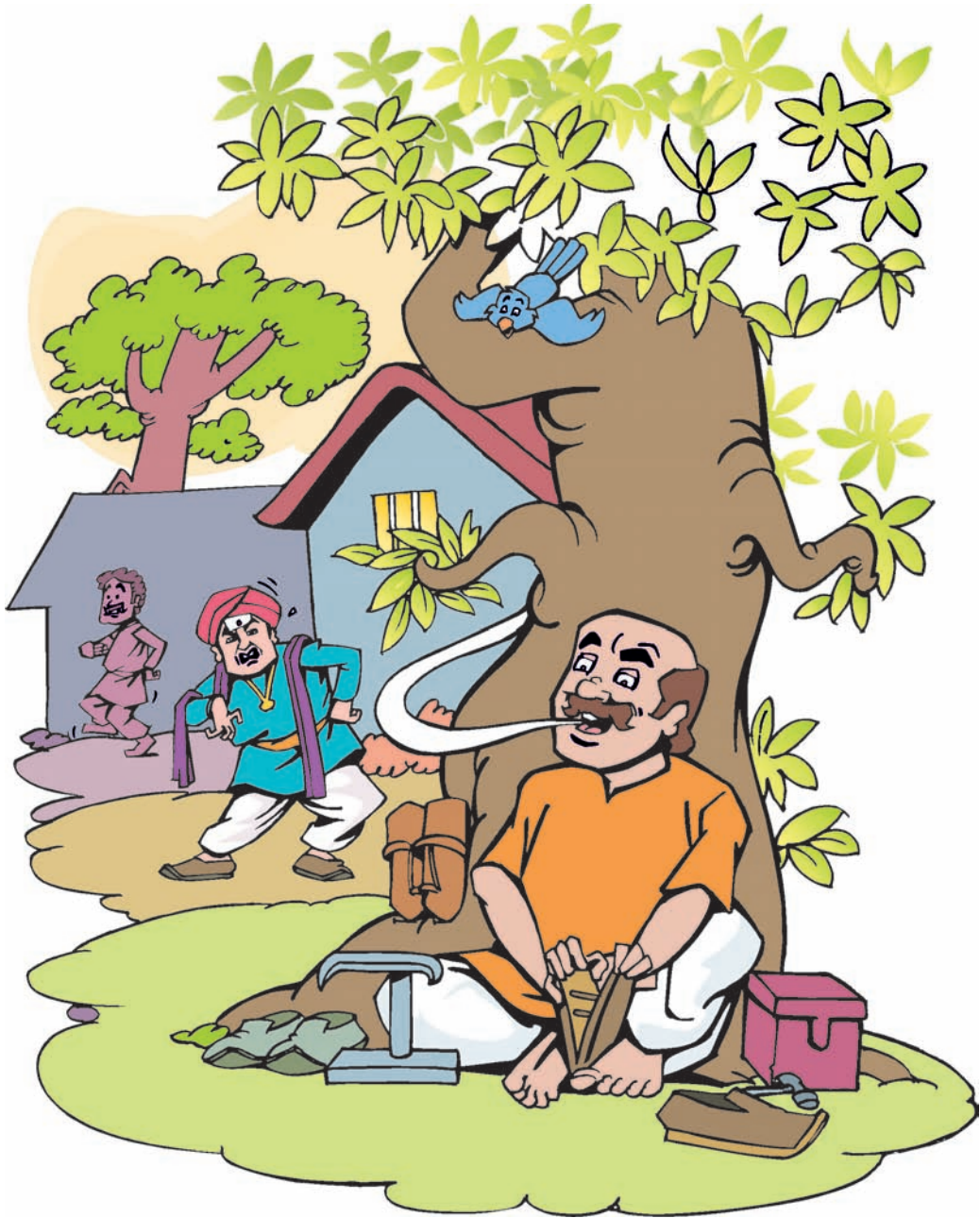


The
Smart Frog
and other Stories

*Retold by Chitra Shastri
Illustrated by Krishna Shastri*

EMESCO

The Merry Cobbler



In the village of Dharmapuram, there lived a cobbler named Muthu. He would whistle and sing all day as he worked. Muthu was happy with his life. He did not mind working hard to earn a living.

One day, a rich man named Shankar was passing the spot where Muthu mended shoes.

“La-la-la-la-la-la-la,” sang Muthu.

Shankar was annoyed. Who was this fellow, disturbing everyone on the street with his singing? What did he have to be happy about, anyway? After all, he was only a cobbler.

Shankar decided to stop Muthu’s singing somehow.

“Hey, you, why are you so happy? Don’t you realize how difficult life is for a man as poor as yourself? Why on earth are you singing, then?”

Muthu was taken aback.

“Life may not be easy, but work is plenty. I have every reason to be cheerful!” he replied.

“Well, your singing disturbs everyone who passes this way,” said Shankar.

“You can’t stop me!” replied Muthu.

“How much do you earn in an entire year?” asked the rich man.

Muthu ignored him and began mending a pair of shoes. Shankar walked away.