

ENGLISH

BHOLI

~Summary~

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Bholi's First Few Years

Bholi was one of seven children of Ramlal. Ramlal was a well-to-do man as he was the Numberdar of the village. There was no lack of comforts in his home but Bholi was still neglected. She fell off her cot when she was just ten months old. Her brain suffered some damage and she was slow in learning things. So, everyone called her Bholi. An attack of small pox at the age of two years left her pock-marked on her entire body. She learned to speak when she was five but she stammered. Everyone made fun of her. Even her parents took her to be just an ugly burden.

Bholi Goes to School

Once the Tehsildar came to inaugurate a new primary school in the village. He asked Ramlal to send his daughters to school. Ramlal could not say no to him. His wife objected that no one would marry the girls if they went to school. But, then she felt that Bholi was ugly and it would be difficult to get her married. So, they decided to send only Bholi to school.

Bholi Prepares for School

Bholi was fearful of going to school at first. Then, she was given new and clean clothes to wear. She was given a bath and her hair was oiled. Now, she felt better. She thought of school as a nice place. All these years no one had taken so much care of her.

Bholi's First Day at School

Bholi found the classroom full of girls like her. She was afraid and sat in one corner. She was attracted to the colourful pictures on the wall. She was much impressed by the realistic pictures of birds and animals. The teacher asked her name. Bholi stammered and then started crying. After the other children left, the teacher came back to her. She called her lovingly. This time Bholi was able to speak her name better. The teacher encouraged her. She asked her to be fearless. She also told her to come to school everyday. Bholi felt as if a new life was beginning for her.

A Match for Bholi

After a few years, Bholi's parents got a marriage proposal for her. Ramlal was not very happy. The man was a widower with grown up children. But, his wife was unconcerned. She just felt that as Bholi was so ugly that proposal was good for her. Her father wanted to know how Bholi felt about the proposal but her mother refused to ask Bholi about it.

Bholi Stands up for her Rights

When the wedding was about to take place, Bishamber Nath asked for five thousand rupees to marry Bholi as she had pock-marks. He also threatened to walk away from the ceremony. Ramlal was afraid of the humiliation and so, with tears in his eyes, he handed the dowry money to Bishamber. Bishamber proceeded to garland Bholi but Bholi threw the garland away. She asked her father to take back the money and refused to marry the greedy coward. Everyone went away. Ramlal asked her what she would do now. She just told him she would work as a teacher in the same school where she had studied. Her education has changed her outlook.

Conclusion of Bholi

In the chapter – Bholi illustrates that proper moral and emotional protection should be given to children during the formative years of childhood to help them grow up into responsible citizens.