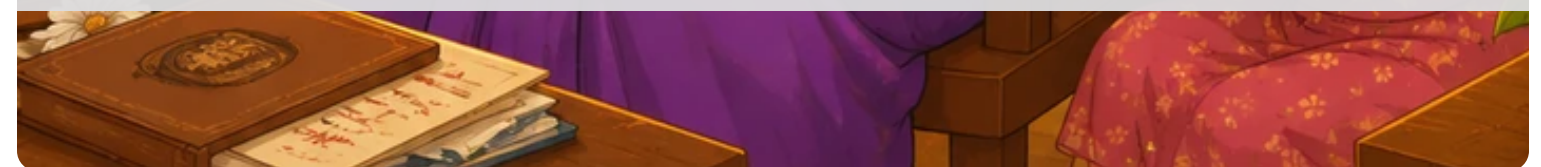




Shashikala: The 85-Year Journey of a Loving Mother

Pravin Salve





In a small, sun-drenched village, a little girl named Shashikala was born into a home filled with laughter. She was the youngest treasure of her parents and the sweet little sister to four protective siblings.



Shashikala was a spirited child who loved the outdoors, often seen following her mother into the emerald green fields. Though she was a bit stubborn at times, her playful and naughty nature made her the heart of the family.



The village square was her playground, where she spent hours playing traditional games like Atyapatya and Lingorcha with her friends. Her energy was boundless as she ran and laughed under the vast, open sky until the sun began to set.



No tree was too high for Shashikala, who could climb as swiftly as a squirrel. She would effortlessly perch on the high branches of mango, tamarind, and berry trees, picking the best fruits for her friends and family.



As she grew into a young woman, Shashikala married a brave Indian soldier and stepped into a sprawling new home. She took on the responsibility of his large family with grace, caring for her parents-in-law with deep respect and devotion.



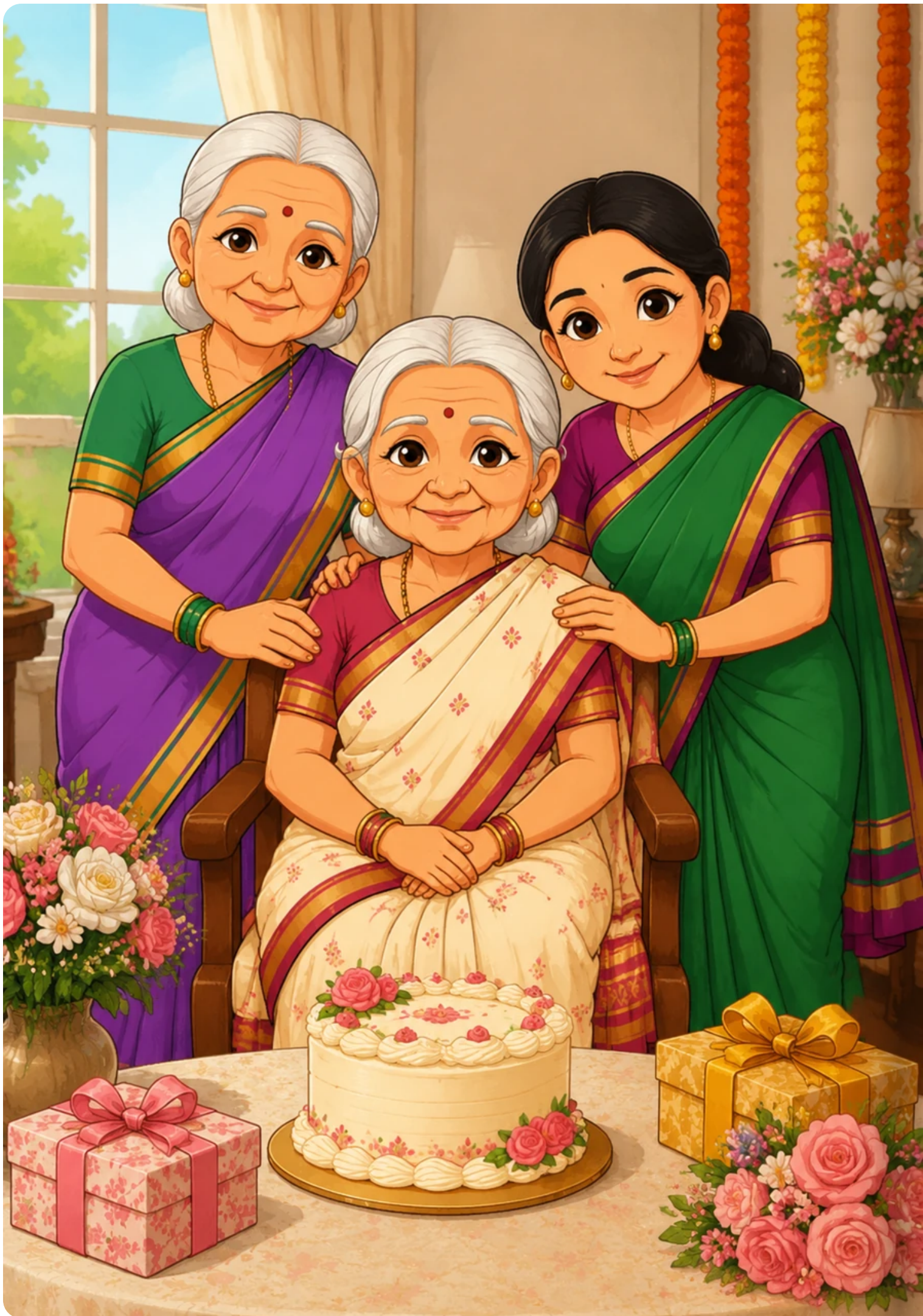
Life took a new turn when her husband retired from the army and joined the India Security Press in Nashik. Shashikala moved to the vibrant city with her husband and children, turning a new house into a sanctuary for her family.



With a heart full of love, she raised her children to be kind and strong, guiding them through every step of life in a nurturing environment. She was the steady hand and the warm embrace that kept the entire family together through every season.



Years passed, and Shashikala became the beloved grandmother and great-grandmother to a new generation. She spent her days rocking babies and telling stories, her lap always open for a tired grandchild who needed her magic touch.



On a bright morning in May 2026, Shashikala reached a magnificent milestone—her eighty-fifth birthday. Her face, etched with beautiful lines of wisdom, told the story of a long life lived with immense courage and compassion.



To celebrate her legacy, the whole family gathered for a grand party, bringing a modern cake for their traditional and beloved Mauli. Sachin and Vidya proudly walked her to the stage, honoring the woman who remains the foundation of their lives.