



Anshu's Lake Adventure

by Pinku



The Puja holidays had arrived, painting the sky of Odisha with vibrant colors. Anshu, a cheerful Class 9 student, dreamt of an exciting adventure during his vacation. One sunny morning, he convinced his parents to visit the beautiful Anshupa Lake near Cuttack, a place known for its calm waters.



Reaching the lake, Anshu was instantly captivated. The gentle rustling of leaves, the soft lapping of waves, and the cool breeze filled him with joy. He spotted some boats tied near the shore and, with a spark in his eyes, asked for a boat ride, his parents agreeing after the boatman assured them of safety.



For the first few minutes, Anshu's dream unfolded perfectly. The boat glided smoothly across the sparkling water. He laughed as he dipped his hands into the cool lake, watching sunlight dance on the waves, lost in the beauty of the moment. Then, a strange sound broke the peace.



Mid-lake, Anshu heard water seeping in. Peering down, his heart sank. A small hole was letting water into the boat! Panic rose as the water level increased. He tried to bail out the water, but it was useless. The boat began to sink, and Anshu, who wasn't a strong swimmer, felt fear grip him.



Remembering a TV broadcast of the Olympics, Anshu recalled the swimmers' powerful strokes. Gathering his courage, he took a deep breath and jumped. The cold water shocked him, but he started moving his arms, pushing the water back. Though clumsy at first, he kept going, stroke by stroke.



After what felt like forever, Anshu felt the ground beneath his feet. Exhausted but alive, he collapsed on the shore, the shimmering lake behind him. He had faced his fear and discovered his inner strength. That evening, as the sun set, Anshu knew he had learned a valuable lesson about presence of mind and the power of determination.