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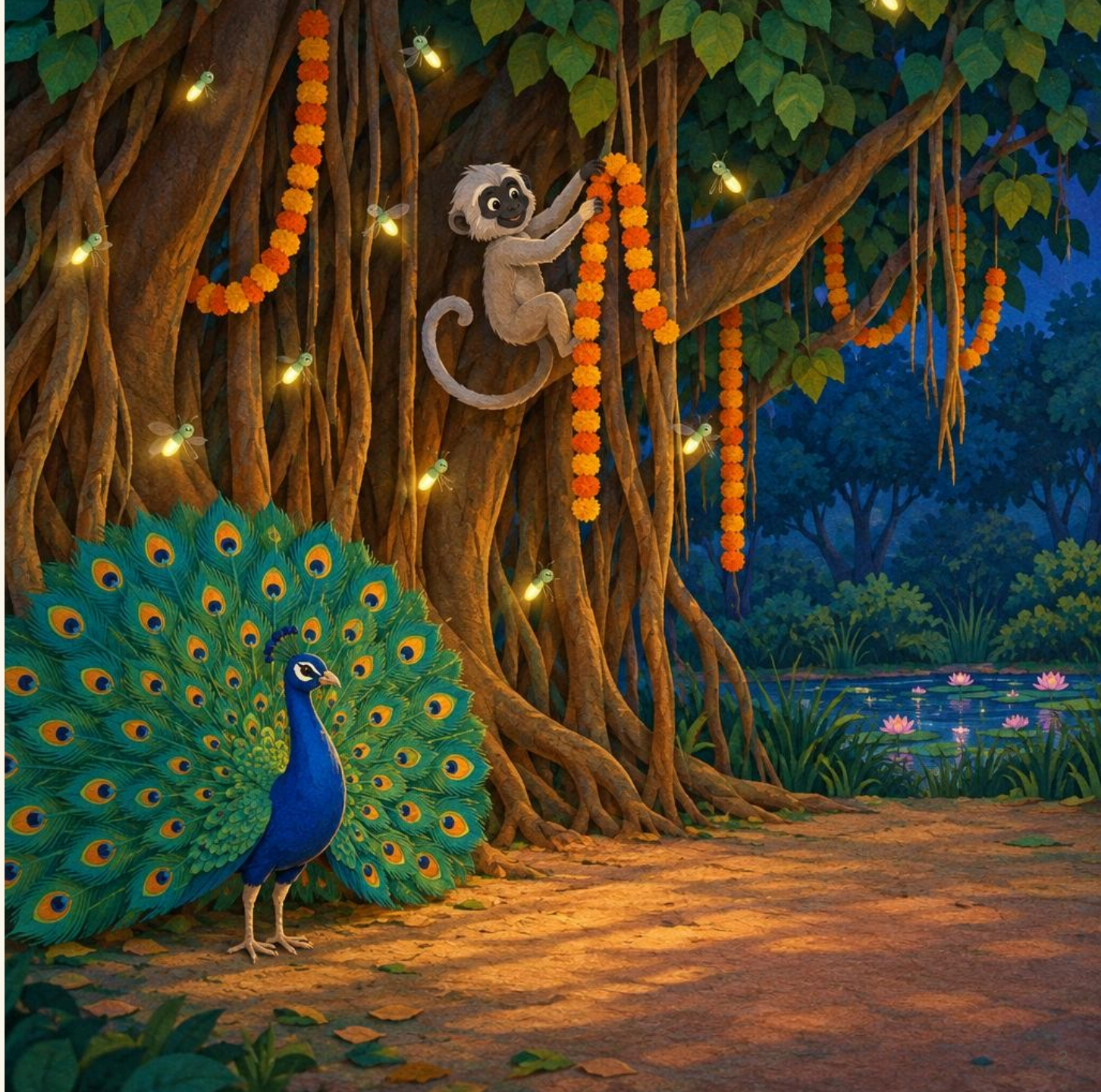
Moti's Quiet Diwali



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Getting Ready in the Wood

On Diwali night, the Banyan Wood was getting ready. Jugnu and the fireflies practised their glow. Mor fanned his tail. Chiku hung marigolds on the hanging roots. But where was Moti?





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Moti Is Hiding

Asha, Jai and Mei arrived with Nani, Laddoo and the star lantern. They found Moti behind the banyan tree. Her big ears were flat, and she was trembling.

Bang!

Far away in town, BANG! went a cracker. Moti jumped. Laddoo hid behind Jai's legs. "I love the Diwali lights," Moti whispered. "But the bangs hurt my big ears."





A Quiet Idea

"Laddoo doesn't like bangs either," said Jai. Mei had an idea. "Could we have a Diwali with lights, but no bangs?" Moti's ears lifted, just a little. "A quiet Diwali?" she said.

Everyone Helps

So everyone helped. Jugnu called all the fireflies. Mor sprinkled marigold petals along the path. Chiku brought bells for soft music. And the children hung paper star lanterns in the hanging roots.





Moti's Turn

"I want to help too," said Moti. She dipped her trunk into the lotus pond and filled it with water. Then she lifted her trunk high, and WHOOSH!

A Fountain of Sparkles

A fountain of water sprayed up into the night. In the light of the lanterns and fireflies, every drop sparkled like a firework. But this firework made no bang at all, just a soft pitter-patter.





The Quiet Diwali

Then the quiet Diwali began. The fireflies glowed. The bells tinkled. Mor danced, Chiku clapped, and Moti swayed with her ears held high. Even Laddoo wagged his tail and danced.

Room for Everyone

Later, the far-away bangs stopped, and the night was still. Moti smiled. "Some friends like big bangs, and some like quiet," said Nani. "On Diwali, there is light enough for everyone."





Happy Diwali, Banyan Wood!

Back home, the family lit one more row of diyas at the window. Far off in the wood, a fountain of sparkles rose up, once more. "Happy Diwali, Moti!" called Jai. And the whole Banyan Wood glowed.

THE END

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