



Geethyavi Gunawardana

The Final Home

Geethyavi Gunawardana

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Dedication

This book is lovingly dedicated to
my dear sister,
whose love, kindness, and unwavering support
have been a constant source of
inspiration in my life.



Foreword

In an increasingly complex global future, the "Hemamala Upahara" book project, led by Mahamaya Girls' College, stands as a turning point in girls' education. Over a decade, it has successfully nurtured thousands of children to become young authors.

This year, by collaborating with other schools, we aimed to provide students with a wealth of new experiences. The goal was to develop multi-faceted skills, including communication, values, and creative growth. As a result, children have written books that pay tribute to Princess Hemamala, who brought the Sacred Tooth Relic—the supreme symbol of the Buddhist world—to the Hill Country (Kandy).

I extend my gratitude to everyone involved, including the students who contributed their creativity and the teachers who guided them.

Shashikala Senadhira

Principal

Mahamaya Girls' College

Congratulatory Message

It is a great honor for me, as the Governor of the Central Province, to send a congratulatory message for the launch of the books created through the Hemamala Tribute Book Creation Project initiated by Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy.

Education is the fundamental foundation for the progress of society, and it is further strengthened through books and literary creations. It is clearly commendable that students' talents, creativity, and intellectual abilities are emerging through projects such as this.

I believe that this book creation project will provide valuable knowledge and a precious literary contribution not only to the students but to the entire society. Furthermore, I hope that through such efforts, future writers who will bring pride to Sri Lanka will emerge.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation and blessings to the Principal, the academic staff, the students, and everyone involved who dedicated themselves to this successful endeavor. I wish this project and the book launch ceremony great success.

Sarath B.S. Abeykoon

Governor, Central Province

Emeritus Professor, University of Peradeniya

2026.05.10

Congratulatory Message

I highly appreciate the noble and outstanding effort of the Principal and the academic staff of Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy, the student daughters, the students of other participating schools, and everyone who dedicated themselves to plan and implement this book publication project. The project was organized under the leadership of Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy, with the participation of other schools in the Kandy Zone, with the aim of encouraging children toward book creation within the current school system, as a tribute to Hemamala Kumariya who brought the Sacred Tooth Relic to Sri Lanka.

For several decades, Sri Lanka has been committed to providing free, compulsory, quality, and equitable education to all children, thereby producing a future generation of intelligent and skilled citizens. In such a context, this book creation program for school children helps develop creative ability, critical thinking, and other positive qualities for a balanced and well-rounded personality, and contributes to building a future knowledge-based society.

May all activities of the Hemamala Tribute Book Creation Project be successful through the blessings of the Sacred Tooth Relic.

Pradeep Nilanga Dela

Diyawadana Nilame,

Sri Dalada Maligawa.

2026.05.10

The Final Home

From young age I've been longing for a pet. Before my 13th birthday I asked my parents if I could have a pet dog.

But they refused to buy a pet because dogs and other kind of pet except fish need a lot of love and care. And when they get sick, we need to take them to the doctor and given the vaccines and medicine. Also, we can't go on long trips because of the pet or we have to somehow take it with us. Because of these reasons I couldn't have a pet dog. I was really sad but knew how much effort we should put when keeping a pet.

Even though, I didn't have a pet dog I had a lot of pet fish everywhere in the house. There are fish tanks in my bed room, kitchen, garage,

garden and downstairs. I think fish are the easiest kind of pet to take care of. They only need a tank or a pond and food. When they get sick, you just need to buy a bottle of medicine from the fish store and put some drops of the liquid to the pond or a tank and stir well. It doesn't cost a lot as taking a dog to the vet.

My birthday was held on 26th of June. It was a sunny Saturday. After celebrating my birthday, I went to ride my bicycle with my mother, in the evening.

When riding the bicycle, I met our neighbor aunty. She was taking her Dog "Dixy" on a walk. Later on, that day my mother asked me if I wanted a pet so badly, we could get a turtle if I like. I didn't have a choice so I agreed. So, I told my mother to tell aunty if she knew any places to find a turtle. After my mother told her the

story, she said that she'll call us if she found a place that sells turtles.

On the 29th, in the afternoon when me and my mother were drying the clothes, my mother got a call from our neighbor aunty. My mother said that the neighbor uncle found a turtle and if he should bring it in the evening.

I got so excited and said “yes”. The uncle's shop is in the market. In the middle of the market, there is a big pond and people in the market was cleaning it and uncle found some turtles and asked to bring one.

When the call has ended, I am ran down to the basement and grabbed a big blue colour basin. With my mother's help, we bought it into the corridor of my bedroom and kept it in the corner of the wall.

My mother kept a big log in the middle of the basin. Then I added two rocks and two caves made out of coconut shells. The uncle told that the “turtle loves to eat water spinach so much”. I kept it in a pot and placed it in the pond.

In the evening, the uncle gave me the turtle. It was inside a plastic container with spinach leaves and some murky white water. It was the size of my palm. I was scared to touch it at first but then I got used to it. After filling basin, I placed it in the water. It paddled straight into a cave.

I and my sister named it as “**Hezel Snow**” as the turtle was a girl. Looking at the size of the tail and shell you can identify if it’s a girl or a boy. Girls have a sort tail and boys have a long tail and girls are larger than boys.

After sometimes, I peeped through the window to see if the turtle was alright and the turtle was sunbathing on a rock while munching on some leaves. Then it saw me and paddled back into the water. That's when I saw something amazing the colour of her shell and face changed. Yellow it was when outside water and red and orange it was when inside water.

When I went to lift it off water, it started to poop continuously. I learned it is scared of heights. I have to clean her basin once a week which I hated to do. She eats a lot for we have to buy water spinach bunches thrice a week. Because of that a lot of Algae forms in the basin under one week.

One month went by, and I thought it was lonely. So, my mother and sister insisted me to put it in the outdoor pond. So that there are fish it could play with. But I didn't like that idea

because turtles are known for running away. But at last, I put it in to the pond. We searched for another turtle but no fish shops owned them. I asked the uncle to bring another but he said they are still constructing the pond and they send the turtles and fish to another house.

My father made a little net fence around the pond so that predators can't get in and also the turtle can't get out. It lived happily in there.

On the third week, my father went to feed it in the evening. After some time, he came to me and said "she wasn't in the pond". I ran in the pond and put on some gloves and searched in the pond for about one hour. The pond was small, but we couldn't find Hezel. So I searched the garden our garden is large because my mother loves gardening, and there are many good hiding spots. The search took at least three hours. But we couldn't find her. I cried half an

hour. I loved her so much, and now she was gone.

I searched the next day also and found some sand that was dug out of the pond, and that's when I realized it had escaped.

After 8 months, I had a chess tournament in a school about 4 km away from our house. We had 7 rounds, and the tournament was held for three days. On the second day, as I was playing my 6th round, my friend's mother said there was a turtle roaming around the pond in the school. I got excited and ran towards the pond, but it was the size of a watermelon.

On the last day, when we were leaving the school, I spotted a little turtle's head popping out of the water near the big turtle. That's when I realized it was my pet Hezel.

It was exactly her but I didn't know how she got there so. We asked the security uncle if he knew and he said that because of the heavy rain and floods that occurred due to "Ditwah cyclone", the turtle came with the water to the school. I wanted her so badly but I thought that she had a new friend in a big pond. She would be happy. I said "farewell" took a final glance and came home. I will never forget her, for she will always remain in my heart.

I love you so much HEZEL.

My Dear Hezel...

For my birthday, I got a new pet

I didn't know.

But I wanted a cat,

Perhaps a dog or may be two.

*But neither of them were in the box
Nor a bird, or a fish, or a little cock.
Not furry or just a little cute
For, it was a baby turtle cute and cool.*

*A boy or a girl, I don't know
I lift it up, a girl it was.
Fearful but beautiful, the little thing was.
As it slept on the nearest pool.*

*We made a little pond in the room.
So, I could watch it clear and close.
Whenever it escaped or maybe not.
In the pond, it stayed far and long.*

*But one day it escaped from the pond,
Or did it get snatched from its rock.
But it hides in the morning,
And comes at day.*

*We searched all day morning till noon,
No sign no trace so desperate I was.
I cried and cried but no one knew,
For in my heart I was broke to two.*

*Positive thoughts I thought and I'd be okay.
Hezel my turtle where are you at.
But always remember I love you so much,
For you'll be in my heart close, but for long.*

The end.





Geethyavi Gunawardana

Afterword

With the approval of the Ministry of Education, this research-based project has empowered thousands of student authors for over ten years. Educationists recognize it as a program that significantly enhances the quality of school education.

In alignment with modern educational reforms, encouraging students to author a research work is a milestone in this journey. In this digital age of "Smart" technology, the modern school must demonstrate through research that books and technology should be used together. This is because the unique joy a child receives from a book cannot be replaced by anything else.

To prevent children from drifting away from books—which remain our primary educational tool and storehouse of human knowledge—Mahamaya Girls' College has spearheaded the "Hemamala Upahara" project for many years. Its primary objectives are to foster academic discipline, promote values, and pay tribute to Princess Hemamala, who fulfilled a historic mission to empower women.

We express our gratitude to the Principal, teachers, parents, alumni of Mahamaya Girls' College, representatives of other schools, the Diyawadana Nilame, and the staff of the Sri Dalada Maligawa (Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic) for their support.

Seneviratne Mahalekam

(Project Creator)