



Five wishes in the jungle

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Dedication

*I respectfully dedicate this book to
my loving family, who care for and support me,
and
to all my teachers,
who guide and educate me with
kindness and devotion.*



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.

One golden evening five best friends were playing in a park. And they decided to go to the jungle near by their village.

Let's go before the sun set lily said while grabbing everyone's hands. The jungle wasn't scary at all. It was warm and alive. Fireflies blinked like tiny stars. Birds chirped sleepy song , air smelled like rain and flower.



Sophia walked ahead bravely.

“if someone get lost, just follow me” she said with a grin. “you? You’re the one who gets lost in school corridors.” Ema teased.

Everyone laughed.

They walked deeper they found something strange a small glowing tree in the middle of a tree guard. It leaves shimmered like silver “ whoa do you guys see that?” Emma whispered.

In the base if the tree there was a wooden sign.

“MAKE A WISH TRUE HEART”



“should we try?” Ella asked softly.

Then one by one touch the tree and make a wish.

Sophia - never break their friendship

Lily - wish happiness

Ella -courage

Emma - peaceful days

Chloe - closed her eyes and wish stay friends together no matter where life takes us.

Suddenly tree sparkled brighter.

Wind blows around them.

Then silence.

The glow faded.

Nothing looks different.

“Did anything even happen?” Lily asked.

But when started to walking something felt knew

Thet weren't scared of dark anymore.

They weren't arguing.

They were laughing more.

Holding hands tighter.

A week passed life went normal.

School homework teasing each other sharing snacks.

But something felt different.

Every night at exact time 11:30

Chloe kept waking up.

Same time same feeling.

The next day she told others.

"Your dreaming too much" Ella laughed.

But then

Emma said quickly "wait I also woke up at 11:30 yesterday"

Me too Lily added.

Sophia frozen "guys me too"

They all stared at each other silently.

It wasn't a coincidence.

That evening they made a decision.

"we are going back to the tree" Sophia said.

The jungle looked very different at night the air was colder. The trees are taller. Fireflies glow brighter like tiny lanterns are guarding the path.

Lily grabbed Sophia's sleeve.

"Why does it feel alive"

"Because it is" Chole said.

Leaves rustled even without wind. Soft footsteps echoed but not their crack. A twig snapped somewhere behind them.

“Did you guys hear that?” Emma whispered.

“Don’t scare me” Ella said while grabbing Emma’s hand. When they walked deeper they gasped. The glowing tree it’s brighter than before. Way brighter.

Its branches shimmered blue and gold like the night sky. And in the trunk there were small symbols to match their wishes.

Sophia – a heart

Lily – tiny flame

Ella – a sun

Emma – a moon

Chloe – five stars connected together.



“Guys this wasn’t here before” Chloe said suddenly.

The ground trembled.

The symbols started shining.

And the tree spoke not with the voice inside there heart.

YOUR WISHES WERE HEARED BUT EVERY WISH HAS A TEST.

“A test” Sophia whispered.

TO KEEP YOUR WISHES YOU MUST PROTECT IT.

Tree said.

Wind blows around them.

Then some creepy shadows started moving between the trees.

Watching

Waiting

Moving

Emma swallowed “Ella what is that?”

Sophia stepped forward trying to stay brave.

“I think our wishes weren’t free.”

The shadow came closer.

The fireflies suddenly circled around the five girls like shields of lights.

Tree glowed brighter.

Stand together.

Without thinking they grabbed hands.

The moment their fingers locked.

A golden light exploded from them.

When they opened their eyes the shadows were gone. Everything went quiet again.

Slowly the glow faded.

The tree returned to normal.

But something has changed.

On each of their wrists a tiny glowing mark appeared the same symbol as their wish.

"What is this?" Lily whispered.

Emma smiled nervously.

"I think we just became the guardians of the forest".

They all stared at each other.

Half scared half exited.

Chloe grinned "So basically we are magical now".

Ella laughed "Best wish ever".

Under the moonlight five best friends walked home together.

"We are not just friends now something more and stranger" Chloe said.

After that night nothing felt normal anymore.

The glowing mark on their wrists they didn't disappear they stayed at day time but glowing softly at night time.

Like tiny stars under their skin.

At school Ella kept squeezing hers.

"Why do I feel like we are superheroes".

"More like mosquito bite" Sophia teased.

But lily didn't laugh.

Because since that night she kept feeling like

Watched.

One evening five of them were walking home together. The sky was orange and purple. Birds flying back to their nests.

Everything was peaceful so peaceful.

Ella suddenly slowed down "Guys don't turn but I think someone is behind us".

Emma froze "Don't say it".

"I'm serious".

Step step step but when they turned no one.

Empty road

Just wind.

Sophia forced laughter “See? No one just your imagination”.

Crack

A stone rolled across the ground by itself they all jumped.

“That’s not imagination” Chloe said.

Then Lily felt like her wrist mark is burning.

“The tree” she whispered “Something wrong”.

That night at 11:30 all phones buzzed at same time.

One message unknown number just three words

“COME TO THE TREE”.

“What the” Lily gasped.

“I didn’t send that” Sophia said.

“It wasn’t me” Lily said.

They didn’t even question it they know the forest is calling them.

When they reach to the jungle

The air felt heavy

No fireflies

No sound.

The glowing tree looked weaker this time its light flickering.

And then

A shadow moves behind them tall too tall long arms no face just darkness shaped like a person.

Sophia grabbed Chloe’s hand “What is that?”.

The tree’s light trembled.

The wish taker.

The voice echoed in their hearts.

“ITS FEED ON BROKEN FRIENDSHIP FEAR LONELINESS IF IT REACHES YOU YOUR WISH WILL DESSAPEAR”.

Tree said with a weak voice.

the shadow started moving towards them slowly dragging steps.

Sophia whispered “I don’t like this I don’t like this at all”.

“What do we do?” Chloe asked.

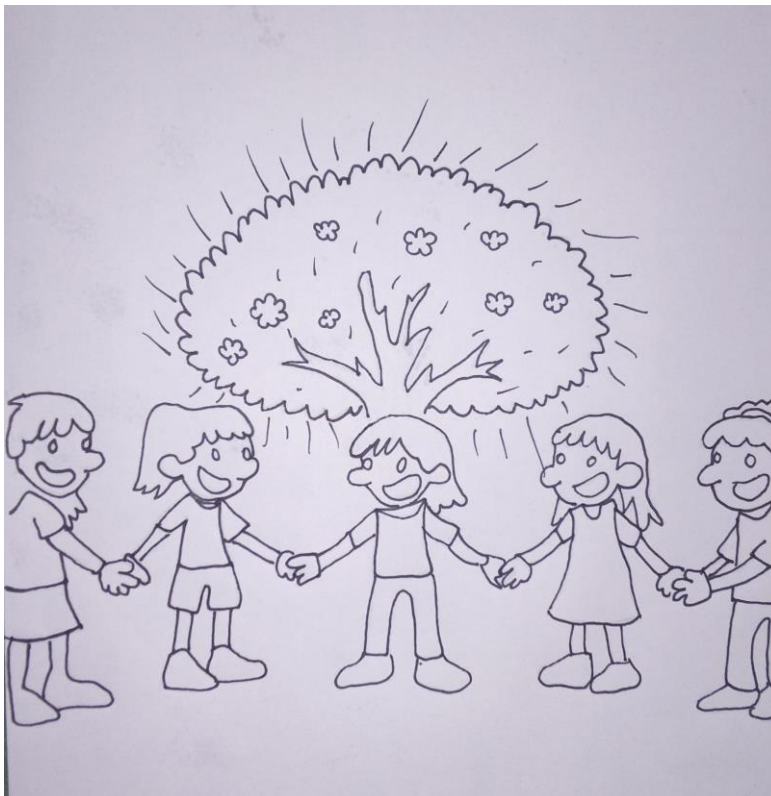
Suddenly their wrist bands began to glow brighter.

Hot brighter

Connected by thin lines of light like invisible treads tying them together.

Lily remembered the tree words.

“Stand together”



“Don’t run” she shouted.

“Now hold hands”

“But its coming” Emma started crying.

Trust me.

They grabbed hands in a circle.

The moment they touched their symbols lit up.

Heart

Flame

Sun

Moon

Stars.

Like a shield of light.

The shadow tries to step closer.

But light push it back.

Harder and brighter.

Sophia squeezed their hands “Think of something happy”.

Emma yelled “think about us being idiots together”.

Ella laughed through fear “think about our lunch fight”.

Chloe smiled “think about staying together”.

Lily closed her eyes “I wish we never be alone”.

BOOM

A wave of golden light exploded.

The shadow screamed.

Then shattered into smoke.

GONE

The clearing became warm again.

The tree glowed brighter than ever

“YOU PROTECTED YOUR WISH BUT THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING”

Only the beginning

All looked at each other.

Breathing hard

Heart racing

Then Lily said “So basically we are fighting for friendship and eating monsters now”.

“totally” Sophia added.

Chloe grinned “kind of cool though”.

Emma smiled softly “as long as we are together I’m not scared”.

“Agree to that” Ella added.

Chloe looked at her glowing star mark.

For the first time

She didn’t feel afraid.

She felt strong.

“Next time” she said while smiling.

“Let’s bring snacks saving the forest makes me hungry”.

They all laughed.

And under the glowing tree

Five guardians are ready for the whatever darkness come next.



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)

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