



THE SNOW QUAIL

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Dedication

This is my second attempt of publishing my creative writing, I would like to thank my loving parents for their priceless assistance, my teachers who advised me and encouraged me, I would like to extend my gratitude to my loving friends at school who appreciated my work and my loving loku amma who assisted me and tolerated me. I owe you all.



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

Forward

I am pleased to extend my greetings on the occasion of this e-book project organised by Mahamaya Girls' College Kandy collaborating with our School Library Council.

This initiative reflects the creativity, critical thinking, and enthusiasm of our students. It is encouraging to see young minds engaging in reading, writing, and sharing knowledge through modern digital platforms.

My sincere appreciation goes to the Librarian, Library Council, teachers, and students whose efforts made this publication possible. May this project inspire a continued love for learning and discovery.

A special word of thank you to Mr. Seneviratne Mahalekam for his continuous guidance given to our teachers and students.

Wishing you every success.

Dr. Lalith Navaratne
Principal
Greenhill International School

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 Snow Quail

Once upon a time, in a distant village, a little girl lived with her parents in a simple hay cottage. The little girl was known as Charlotte Bronte. Her father was a farmer who worked in the village's fields.

Little Charlotte was only 4 years old when her mother died. But just before she died, she gave a little white quail to her daughter.



“It was a present given to me by my mother and your grandmother.” She used to say.

“Listen to me Charlotte, listen well, this isn’t a normal quail, this is a magical quail which helped me when I was your age, and it will protect you too. Whenever you fall in a trouble, just give this quail a little water and food and it will help you.” Saying so, she died.

After a few years, Charlotte’s father brought home a new mother for Charlotte. Unfortunately, this lady wasn’t kind as Charlotte imagined. She was cruel and treated her badly. She also had a daughter who was 2 years older than Charlotte,

but she was no different. Together, they made Charlotte do all the housework and never gave her a proper rest.



One cold and wintery day, the stepmother had a pleasure to eat berries. But she knew that they grew deep in the frosty wood, and she nor her daughter would be able to get them. So, she called Charlotte, and told her to get the berries she wanted.

“I want you to go into the frosty wood and collect a few berries for me. And if you can, bring some firewood to warm up the house. “Saying so, the stepmother told Charlotte to go.



“May I please have some bread, water and a cloth to keep myself warm?” Asked Charlotte.

“You may, but don’t expect me to give you supper today.” Scolded the stepmother.

So, Charlotte set out into the wintery woods to collect the berries. It was already dark when she arrived. She quickly collected the berries and started collecting the firewood. But it was late night when she finished.

“Oh, how am I supposed to go home now?” Said Charlotte who was worried. Suddenly she remembered the quail that she brought with her. She quickly unpacked her bag and took out the bread and water. She kept the food close to its mouth and the quail ate it! She gave a little water and the quail drank it too! Unexpectedly, after the quail had ate and drank, it started to glow and speak!



“What do you seek
O’ little girl,
It will be given
with a magical twirl,
To whom I’ll help
with pure hearts,
And to those who help
from the start.”

Charlotte then explained what her stepmother had said to her and how she was unable to go home.

“Don’t worry, I’ll help you. All you need to do is go forward and make a sharp left turn. Then you will see a little light in the distance. Go towards that light.” Said the quail.

“But how am I going to see in the dark? It’s pitches black and I can’t see a thing! Said Charlotte.

“I can light the way for you, so you can see.” Saying thus, they went on. After sometime Charlotte saw the light, just as the quail said. The path was lit and the light was actually coming from a house. Charlotte thanked the quail.

“If you need help, just give me food and water again.” said the quail, and turned into a stone like statue.

Charlotte went inside the house.

There she found a gnome, sitting in an armchair. She excused herself and asked whether she can spend the night there. The gnome agreed saying that he hadn't any visitors and he was happy to have some company.

After sometime, Charlotte felt hungry and tired because of collecting the fruit and wood. So she decided to eat the remaining bread. She took it and warmed it by the fire.

“Can I please have a little bread to eat?” Said the gnome, who was looking hungrily at the piece of bread.”

“Of course, you may. In fact, have the whole thing, I'm not hungry anymore.” Said kind Charlotte.

“Why, thank you little girl!” Said the gnome.

The rest of the night passed peacefully. When Charlotte and the gnome went to bed, they saw that there was only one bed. The gnome offered it but Charlotte refused politely saying she can sleep on the floor.

The next morning when Charlotte woke up, she saw bags of gold, silver and diamonds everywhere. There were necklaces, rings, and any jewel one could imagine. But when she called for the gnome, he wasn't in sight. She looked in every corner of the house but the gnome wasn't there.



Charlotte thought that these treasures were the gnome's so she didn't take any. Then out of a beaming light, the gnome appeared and said, "I have rewarded you because of your kindness. You have a very pure heart. For that reason, take anything from here that you wish!"

Charlotte was speechless, she thanked the gnome immensely, and collected frocks, jewellery and many other wonderful things for her and her family. Then she set out back home.

Once outside, the gnome's house vanished! "How strange this is," Thought Charlotte. Since the berries that she plucked last night had rotten so she plucked some more.

Back at home the stepmother was waiting to scold and beat poor Charlotte, but when she arrived, the stepmother was filled with awe. Even the stepdaughter felt very jealous of Charlotte. Charlotte, even though their complaints, shared the jewels and frocks with them. At night the stepmother told her daughter to go to the gnome's house and get some jewels of her own. The daughter agreed but said "Mother, there is a quail who protects Charlotte which was given by her late mother. And if you want jewels, first you will have to get me that quail, mother."



So, at late night, the stepmother crept into Charlotte's room and stole the quail.

The next morning, before Charlotte woke up, the stepdaughter set out to find the gnome's house. Her mother packed pancakes, and wine for her. She bid goodbye to her mother.



When she got deep into the forest, it was already the evening. So, she took out the quail and gave food and water to it. Once again, the quail shone and spoke.

“What do you seek
O’little girl,
It will be given
with a magical twirl,
To whom I helped
with pure hearts,
And to those who help
from the start,”

Take me to the gnome’s house.” Exclaimed the stepdaughter. The quail kindly lit the path for her but she didn’t care. When they reached the gnome’s house, the stepdaughter didn’t even thank the quail for his kindness.

She barged into the gnome’s house and didn’t even bother to excuse herself. But all the same, the gnome welcomed her warmly.

As the evening went on, the stepdaughter felt tired from walking so she took out her pancakes and started eating them.

“Can I please have some pancakes?” asked the hungry gnome.

“Of course not!” Boomed the girl. “My mother made these for me and I’m not giving it to anyone. If you’re hungry, go find something to eat!”

The gnome felt sad and hungry. He in fact didn’t have anything to eat. The poor gnome stayed hungry through the night. When they were going to bed, the girl jumped on the gnome’s bed and started sleeping. The disappointed gnome sighed, and slept on the cold, damp floor.



The next morning when the step daughter woke up, the gnome was nowhere to be seen. She searched for the jewels. Oh no! They were filled with gruesome insects. There were caterpillars and many other disgusting bugs.



The step daughter gave a cry and bolted out of the house, as it disappeared. She ran all through the forest. Sometimes she fell and bruised herself. At last, she stopped by a stream to clean herself and her wounds. Then she realized that she was lost and took out the quail. She plucked some berries from the nearby trees and gave it a little water from the stream.



The quail started to glow again. And it asked what the matter was. The stepdaughter started to cry and asked, "Why was I treated so badly by the gnome. What did I do wrong?"

The quail answered,

"The gnome treated you the same way you treated him. You scolded him, yet he welcomed you. You treated him badly, yet he didn't complain. Remember, whatever you do, good or bad, that same thing will happen to you.

The end.



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)