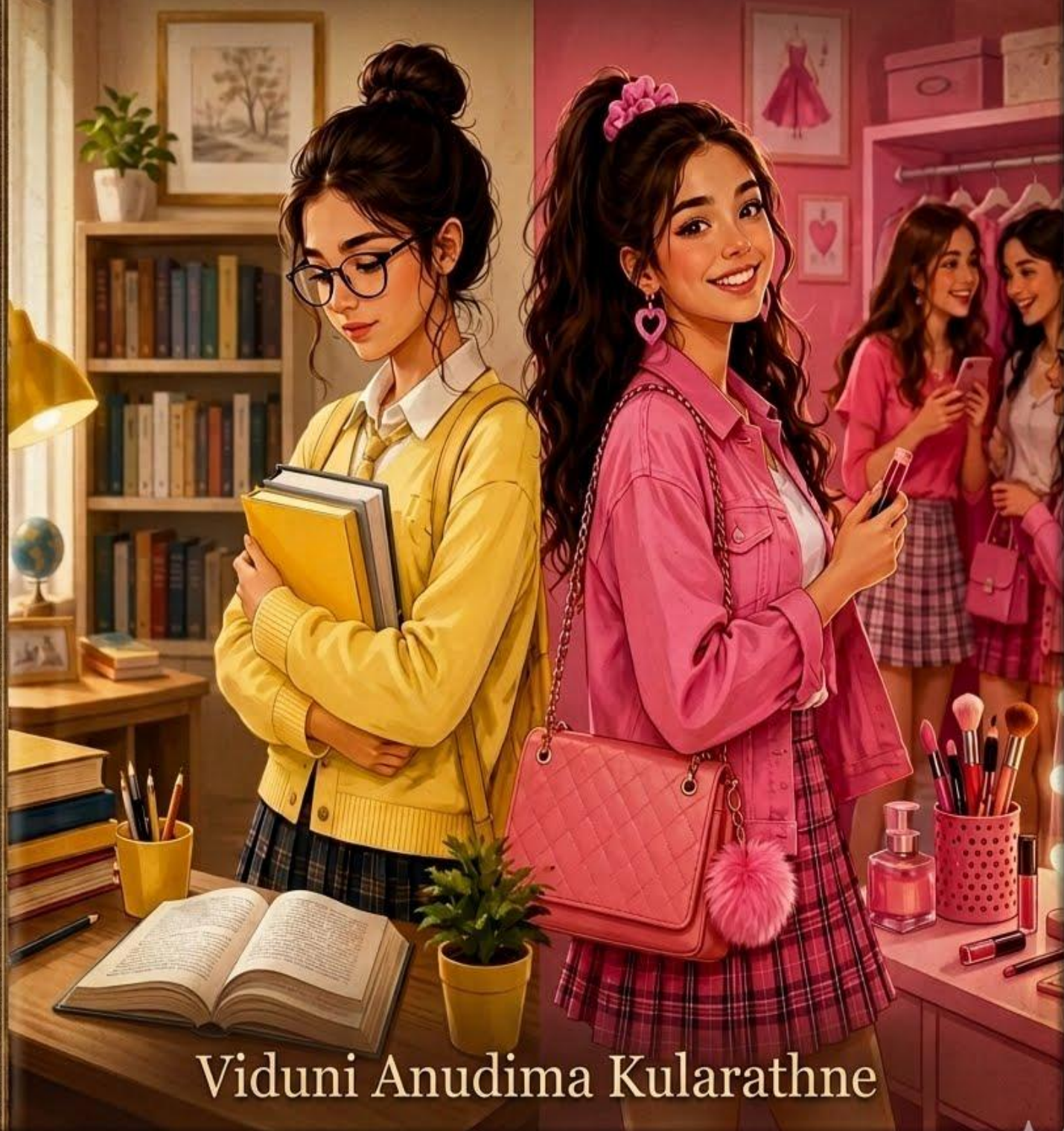


The Colorful Journey of Twins



Viduni Anudima Kularathne

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Other Publications of the Author

Bingo

Mal Kumari

Adventure of Sera and her friends

Nipuni got a new sister

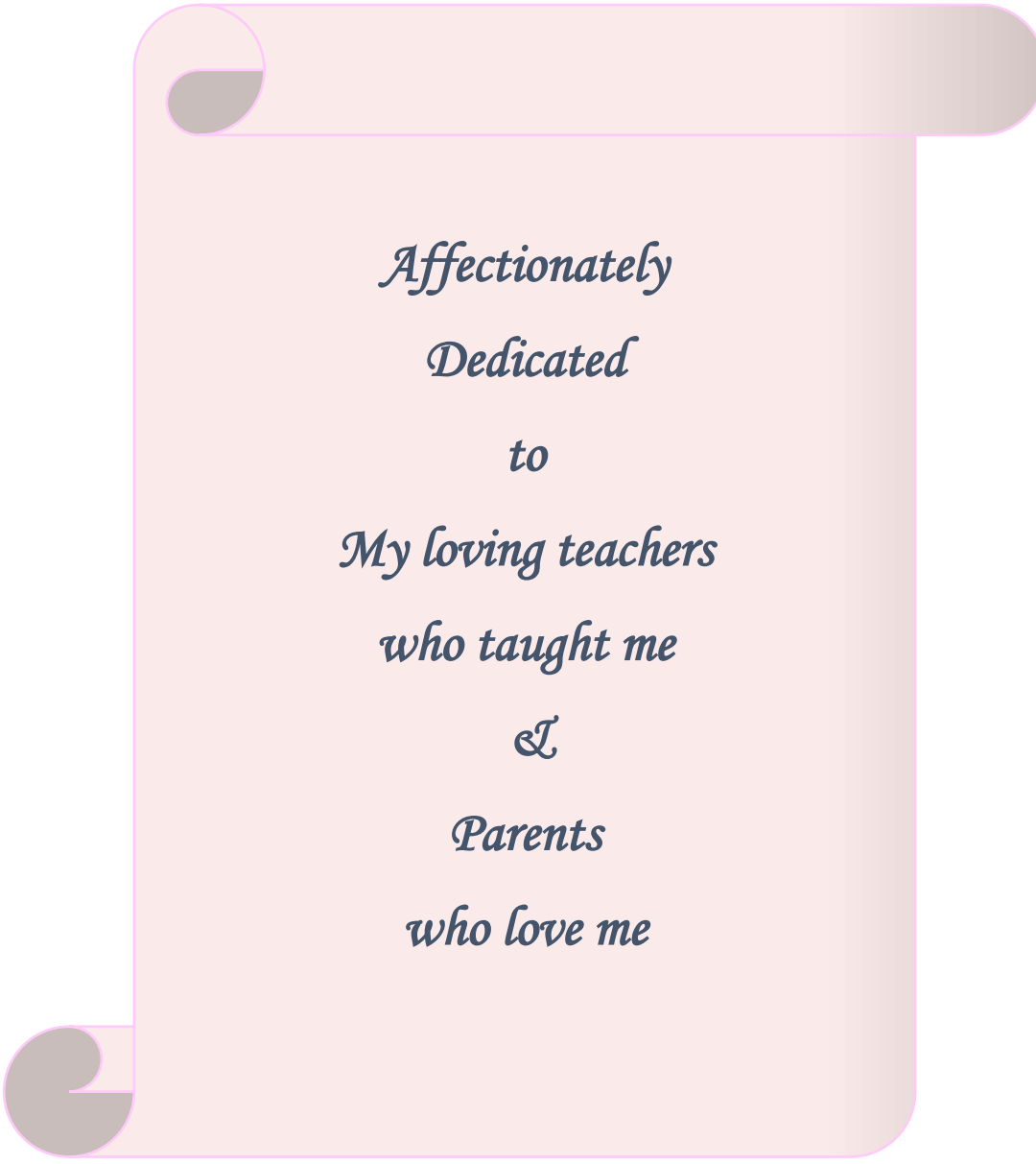
The lost twin

Mahamaya Girls College

Grade 8

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*Affectionately
Dedicated
to
My loving teachers
who taught me
&
Parents
who love me*



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

Lily and Riley were twin sisters, but they were as different as day and night. Lily was quiet, hardworking, and organized. She loved reading books, getting good grades, and keeping everything neat and simple. Her favorite color was yellow, and she preferred spending time with books rather than people.

Riley, on the other hand, loved fashion, makeup, and everything pink. She was cheerful, outgoing, and popular at school. While Lily cared about her marks, Riley cared more about her appearance and social life.



One day, their parents announced some big news. "We're moving to a new city," their father said. The twins were shocked. "A new city?" Riley asked.

"Will I have to leave all my friends?" Lily added.

"I'm afraid so," said their mother gently. "But you'll make new friends."

A week later, the family packed their belongings and began the four-hour journey to their new home. During the drive, Riley chatted with her friends on her phone while Lily buried herself in a huge novel. Their mother suggested they take a nap, but neither of them listened.



Finally, they arrived. The house was enormous. "Wooooow!" the twins shouted together. Even Lily looked up from her book in amazement. Their father smiled and said,

"Those two rooms upstairs are yours. Choose whichever one you like."

Riley immediately ran to claim the biggest room. Lily chose the room with the largest window because it let in plenty of sunlight for reading. Riley unpacked makeup, clothes, decorations, and stuffed animals. Lily unpacked books, notebooks, and shelves. That evening, their mother called them downstairs.



"I'll give each of you a budget to decorate your rooms." Riley squealed with excitement. The next day, they went shopping. Lily bought a study desk, a reading lamp, a vision board,

stationery, and several new books. She left her walls plain white because she liked simplicity.

Riley bought pink paint, colorful neon lights, a vanity table with a mirror, cute decorations, and even a swing for her room. Lily spent less than her budget. Riley spent more.



"It's okay," their mother laughed. "I'll cover the extra cost."

Riley hugged her happily. A few days later, they needed school supplies for their new school. At the mall, Riley immediately rushed toward the colorful stationery aisle.

"I'm getting everything pink!" she announced. Lily quietly chose yellow supplies.

"Eww! Yellow?" Riley laughed. "Are you trying to become a banana?"

Lily rolled her eyes and continued shopping. While Riley admired fashionable backpacks and colorful pens, Lily carefully checked the school supply list. She bought notebooks, textbooks, pencils, rulers, erasers, binders, and a waterproof yellow backpack.

Riley purchased a beautiful pink backpack and dozens of fancy pens and highlighters. When they returned home, Riley discovered she had forgotten half the required supplies. Their mother had to take her back to the store.

Meanwhile, Lily organized everything neatly into her backpack. As she finished, the doorbell rang. She opened the door and found their father standing outside with two bicycles.

"Surprise!" he said. The twins were thrilled.

"Now you can ride to school."

"That's awesome!" Lily shouted. Riley frowned.

"But I don't know how to ride a bike."

"I'll teach you," Lily said proudly.

That afternoon, they practiced riding around the neighborhood. Riley fell a few times but learned surprisingly quickly. Soon, she was riding faster than Lily.

"You learned that fast?" Lily asked in surprise. Riley grinned.

"I guess I'm talented."



While riding, they stopped at a lemonade stand run by a girl named Jenny. Jenny attended the same school. After they bought lemonade, Jenny smiled.

"Since you're new here, it's free. Consider it a welcome gift."

"Thank you!" the twins said.

"We'll see you at school!"

The following day passed quickly. The twins helped their mother cook dinner, decorated their rooms, and prepared for school. Finally, the first day arrived. At school, many teachers confused them because they were twins.

"Riley?"

"No, I'm Lily."

"Lily?"

"No, I'm Riley."

The sisters laughed at first, but after hearing it all day, they became annoyed. Weeks passed, and life at the new school was not what the twins had imagined.

Lily rarely spoke to anyone. During recess, she would quietly sit under a tree or in the library with a book in her hands. She could lose herself in stories about magical kingdoms and brave heroes, but when she looked around, she saw groups of children laughing and playing together. Deep inside, she wished she had a friend to share her favorite books with, but she was too shy to start a conversation.

Riley's days were very different. She spent every free moment making short videos, taking colorful pictures, and posting them online. She was excited whenever people liked her posts, but the smiles on the screen never seemed to fill the lonely feeling in her heart. At school, she was often so busy recording that she forgot to enjoy the moments happening around her.

As the days turned into weeks, the sisters slowly drifted apart. They no longer raced home to tell each other about their day. Lily stayed in her room reading, while Riley stayed in hers editing videos. Even at dinner, they hardly spoke. Their parents noticed that the cheerful chatter that once filled the house had disappeared.

One evening, their mother looked at an old photo album. The pictures showed two little girls building pillow forts, riding bicycles, and laughing until their stomachs hurt. She sighed and showed the album to their father.

"They used to be best friends," she said softly.

Their father nodded. "Now they are so busy with their own worlds that they are forgetting the people around them."

Soon, the twins' birthday was only a week away. Usually, they would spend days planning games, choosing decorations, and making a list of friends to invite. But this year, there was no excitement. Lily wanted to spend her birthday reading a new book. Riley wanted to make a special birthday video for her followers. Neither of them asked what the other wanted.

Their parents knew something had to change. The night before their birthday week began, they called Lily and Riley into the living room. The girls sat quietly on the sofa, hardly looking at each other.

Their mother smiled gently and said, "This year, your birthday will be different."

Their father added with a mysterious grin, "Instead of a big party, we have a special surprise for both of you." The twins looked at each other with curious eyes, wondering what their parents had planned.

"This year," Mom said, "you'll have one birthday party together."

"What?!" the twins shouted.

"But we want separate parties!"

"No," Dad replied. "You need to learn how to work together." The sisters were furious. However, after thinking about it, Lily came up with an idea.

"What if we divide the party in half?"

"Half yours and half mine?"

"Exactly."

Riley wasn't thrilled, but she agreed. Their parents loved the idea. On the day of the party, everything looked amazing. One side was decorated with books, planets, stars, spaceships, sunflowers, and yellow balloons. The other side was filled with pink decorations, unicorns, glitter, princesses, and colorful lights.

Guests arrived carrying presents. Riley's friends immediately crowded onto her side. Lily stood alone. Watching everyone have fun made her feel sad. Then something unexpected happened. Riley looked around and noticed Lily standing by herself. For the first time, she realized how lonely her sister felt.

Meanwhile, Lily noticed Riley constantly trying to entertain everyone and make sure they were happy. She realized being popular wasn't always easy. Suddenly, a group of Riley's friends began laughing at Lily's decorations.

"Who wants a spaceship party?" one girl said. Another giggled.
"Books are so boring."

Lily looked down sadly. Before she could respond, Riley stepped forward.

"Hey!"

Everyone became quiet.

"My sister worked really hard on this." The girls stared.

"I actually think her side is cool," Riley continued.

"The spaceship decorations are amazing."

Lily looked up in surprise. Then she smiled. A few moments later, Lily noticed some children making fun of Riley's unicorn decorations. Without hesitation, she stepped in.

"Leave her alone," Lily said.

"Those decorations are beautiful."

Riley smiled gratefully. For the first time in years, the twins were standing up for each other. Soon, something wonderful happened. The guests began exploring both sides of the party. Riley's friends started playing space-themed games. Some of Lily's classmates enjoyed the colorful dance area.

Eventually, everyone gathered in the middle. They danced together, played games together, and laughed together. The party was no longer divided. It had become one big celebration.

That night, after everyone left, the twins sat together looking at the stars.

"You know," Riley said softly, "I always thought you were boring." Lily laughed.

"And I thought you only cared about makeup." They both giggled.

"But I was wrong."

"So was I." Riley smiled.

"Maybe we don't have to be exactly the same to be best friends." Lily nodded.

"Maybe our differences make us stronger."

From that day on, the twins changed. Lily became more confident and social. Riley became more responsible and organized. They still loved different things, but they learned to appreciate each other's interests.

Most importantly, they learned that being sisters was more important than being different. And from then on, wherever they went, Lily and Riley faced every adventure together.

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)