

#FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Timeless Truths

"If loyalty were real, water would never cook the fish."



In a world overflowing with noise and distraction, certain truths cut through with undeniable clarity. Whether whispered in wisdom or learned through life's harsh realities, these reflections offer a sobering look at the human condition. From family dynamics to the silence of grief, these insights remind us of life's beauty, betrayal, and brevity, all in a few sharp lines. Here are 15 such truths that resonate more deeply the older we get.

1. The Enemy Within
"When the axe came to the forest, the trees said, 'The handle is one of us.' Until they felt its cuts."
Trust is often betrayed not by strangers, but from within our own circle.

2. Mistakes and Maturity
"A pencil becomes a pen as a child grows, so they learn that not all mistakes can be erased."
A powerful metaphor for growing up, and being held accountable.

3. Mortality's Quiet Reminder
"One day, the ground we walk on will become our roof."
A poetic way to confront the inevitable end we all share.

4. When Loyalty Is a Lie
"If loyalty were real, water would never cook the fish."
Even what sustains you can destroy you, if loyalty is missing.

5. If Only...
"How I wish RIP meant 'Return If Possible.'"
A mournful wish that captures the weight of irreversible loss.

6. A Father's Silent Dream
"The day you lose your father is the day you realize he was the only man who wanted to see you better than himself."
Often unspoken, a father's love runs deep, and endures through loss.

7. Future Fears, Present Loss
"You may not even be part of the future you're stressed about today."
A striking reminder to live in the now.

8. Misplaced Fear
"The sheep feared the wolf all her life, but it was the shepherd who ate her."
Sometimes, danger comes from those who appear to protect.

9. Family Isn't Always Fair
"Just because you have a good mother doesn't mean your father has a good wife."
A blunt, unsettling truth about the imbalance of love within homes.

10. The Evolution of Pain
"As children, we cried loudly to be noticed. As adults, we cry silently so no one notices."
Emotional expression changes with age, but the pain remains.

11. Wisdom on a Plate
"My mother always said, 'Don't talk while eating.' I didn't know she meant in life too."
Sometimes, the smallest sayings carry the biggest lessons.

12. Kindness Has No Guarantee
"Being a good person doesn't mean the world owes you kindness."
Goodness is its own reward, but not always returned.

13. Disposable Help
"When the blind man gained sight, he threw away the stick that guided him."
Gratitude often fades once people no longer need you.

14. The Price of Belonging
"Nowadays, you may need money to be accepted by your own family."
When wealth determines worth, even at home.

15. The Illusion of Togetherness
"Family is like a forest: united from a distance, but divided up close."
Appearances often mask emotional separation.

Final Reflection

Each of these truths may strike a different chord depending on who reads them, but collectively, they offer a striking narrative on betrayal, love, mortality, and identity. In a time when headlines change by the hour, sometimes, it's the quieter observations that stay with us the longest.



● Kshema Jatuhkarna

In a story by Rudyard Kipling, the mongoose is made a hero, the story goes thus.

Nearly drowned from an intense seasonal thunderstorm, a curious and adventurous mongoose, later named Rikki-Tikki-Tavi for his chattering vocalizations, is rescued by a small British family, a man and wife and their son Teddy, residing in a large home and garden in India. After Rikki revives, he explores the house and quickly endears himself to the family. He spends his first night there cuddling with Teddy as he sleeps; the wife fears that Rikki will bite Teddy, but the man assures her that Teddy is a safer with Rikki than if he had a bloodhound to watch him.

The next morning, Rikki explores the house and garden where he befriends other creatures including Darzee, a carefree tailor bird and his sensible wife, and Chuchundra, a timid muskrat. But he soon encounters two cobras, named Nag and his mate Nagaina, who are highly protective of what they deem to be their territory and now fear Rikki as a threat to their unborn children. Scared at first, Rikki soon remembers that a mongoose's purpose is to fight and kill snakes, and feeds them both off after a brief skirmish; after they slip away, Rikki realizes he now has his work cut out for him, not only with the fact that he cannot take on two cobras at once, but also that there's no herbal antidote for a cobra's bite.

Later that day, a dust-brown snake, named Karait, threatens Teddy. Unaware that the smaller snake is even more dangerous than a cobra, Rikki fights and kills Karait, and then presents its body to the man as proof of the mongoose's victory. That night, Rikki goes for his nightly walk and overhears Nag and Nagaina scheming to kill the family to take over the house for their hatchlings and drive Rikki away. Nag enters the house's bath-



room before dawn waiting for the kill. But Rikki is able to sneak up on Nag and makes the first move ambushing him from above in the darkness, tightly biting down on his hood. The ensuing struggle awakens the man, who shoots and apparently kills Nag with a shotgun.

The next day, a mourning Nagaina swears vengeance, and on Rikki's direction, Darzee's wife diverts Nagaina as Rikki goes and destroys all but one of the cobra eggs. But the subterfuge is temporary as Nagaina goes to the house veranda and threatens to strike Teddy while his parents helplessly watch. Holding the last cobra egg, Rikki taunts and distracts Nagaina as Teddy is pulled to safety, and tells her that Nag was already dead when the man shot him. As they fight, Nagaina grabs her egg and quickly retreats, but Rikki chases her down a cobra hole. Fearing the worst, Darzee mourns Rikki's death via song, but moments later when Rikki emerges and declares Nagaina dead, Darzee changes his tune from sadness to elation. With the immediate danger neutralized, Rikki dedicates himself to protecting his new home, ensuring that no snake would dare show its head within its walls.

A lovely tale, probably inspired by the already well-known Indian tale about a faithful mongoose, the Indian children have been hearing from grandmothers for years, but let us know the animal. A mongoose is a small, dynamic mammal with a long body and short legs. Mongooses are famous for standing their ground against venomous snakes, both in literature and in real life, but they're also complex creatures with many other interesting quirks. So, know them! Here are a few things you may not know about mongooses.



Mongoose Is

Mangus In Marathi and Tamil Mangisu in Telugu, Mungisi in Kanarese

Humans have long admired mongooses for the animals' ability to kill venomous snakes, including cobras and adders. Mongooses are formidable opponents for snakes largely because of speed and agility, which helps the mongoose avoid the reptiles' fangs and launch quick attacks when sensing an opening. But some mongoose species also have an extra advantage: They've evolved resistance to neurotoxic snake venom and keep fighting even after receiving a bite that would kill most animals their size. They're not immune to the venom, but thanks to special mutations in their nervous system, the neurotoxin has difficulty binding to their nicotinic acetylcholine receptors, rendering it less effective.

#GENIALLY WILD



The Plural Is 'Mongooses,' But It's OK to Say 'Mongoose'

Since English speakers are accustomed to the plural of 'goose' being 'geese,' it might feel strange to say 'mongooses' when referring to more than one mongoose. 'Mongooses' is indeed the correct plural form, but some dictionaries also recognize 'mongoose' as an alternative. So why is 'goose' in the word 'mongoose' in the first place? The animal's name may have come from *mangusu* in Marathi and Tamil, *mangisu* in Telugu, or *mungisi* in Kanarese. The current English spelling is believed to have arisen from folk etymology, according to Etymology Online.

There Are About 30 Mongoose Species Around the World

Mongooses belong to the taxonomic family Herpestidae, which includes some 30 species across 20 genera. They're native to Africa, Asia, and southern Europe, but some species have also spread beyond their native range. Mongooses vary in size from the dwarf mongoose, which measures about eight inches long and weighs less than a pound, to the white-tailed mongoose, which can grow to a little more than two feet in length and weigh 9 pounds.

They Have a Few Tricks for Defeating Venomous Snakes

Humans have long admired mongooses for the animals' ability to kill venomous snakes, including cobras and adders. Mongooses are formidable opponents for snakes largely because of speed and agility, which helps the mongoose avoid the reptiles' fangs and launch quick attacks when sensing an opening. But some mongoose species also have an extra advantage: They've evolved resistance to neurotoxic snake venom and keep fighting even after receiving a bite that would kill most animals their size. They're not immune to the venom, but thanks to special mutations in their nervous system, the neurotoxin has difficulty binding to their nicotinic acetylcholine receptors, rendering it less effective.

They Have Diverse Diets

Mongooses are mainly carnivorous, but they're known to supplement their diets with plant matter. Despite their defenses against venomous snakes like cobras, mongooses often target smaller, simpler animals as prey. A mongoose diet may include insects, earthworms, crabs, rodents, birds, lizards, and snakes, as well as both bird and reptile eggs.

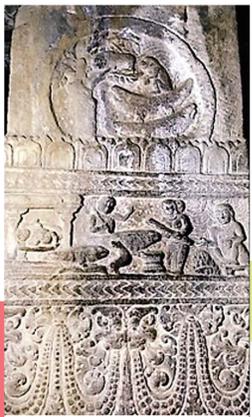
Some Species Are Semiaquatic

Mongooses have adapted to a wide array of habitats around the world, from deserts to tropical forests. They can even be semiaquatic, proving adept in the water as they hunt fish, crabs, and other aquatic prey. The marsh mongoose, for one, is reportedly an excellent swimmer that can dive for 15 seconds at a time while hunting.



Reaching New Heights: National Skyscraper Day

celebrated on September 3, National Skyscraper Day pays tribute to the towering marvels of modern architecture that define city skylines across the world. These vertical giants are not just feats of engineering but symbols of human ambition, innovation, and progress. From the Empire State Building in New York to the Burj Khalifa in Dubai, skyscrapers reflect a blend of design brilliance and urban functionality. In India, cities like Mumbai, Gurugram, and Bengaluru are embracing high-rises as solutions to urban space constraints. The day honors the visionaries, architects, and engineers who dare to build upward, transforming skylines and inspiring future possibilities.



The woman and the mongoose. Panchtantra fable engraved in many temples such as Virupaksha temple at Pattadakal.

They Can Wreak Havoc Outside Their Native Habitats

Humans have sometimes introduced mongooses to new habitats in hopes of controlling snakes and pests like rats. These types of plans have usually backfired. Often, the mongooses not only fail to stop the pests but also become an invasive species, causing more trouble than the snakes or rats ever did. The Javan mongoose, for example, was introduced to many tropical islands around the world in the 19th century, often to control rats at sugarcane plantations. The animal went on to decimate native birds in Hawaii, and it remains a problem on every Hawaiian island but Lanai and Kauai. Similar results played out around the world, from Fiji to the Caribbean. In 1910, the Javan mongoose was brought to Okinawa to help control the venomous habu, a native pit viper. But the snakes are nocturnal while the mongooses are active during the day, so the two species didn't cross paths often enough. Instead, the mongooses began to prey on other native wildlife, including endangered species like the Okinawa rail. Given the threat of invasion, mongooses are banned in many places outside their native range, including the United States and New Zealand.

Showstopper- The Story Of The Loyal Mongoose

There was once a Brahman named Godly (orig. Devasharma) in a certain town. His wife mothered a single son and had a pet mongoose. And as she loved little ones, she cared for the mongoose also like a son, giving him milk from her breast, and salves, and baths, and so on. But she did not trust him, for she thought: "A mongoose is a nasty kind of creature. He might hurt my boy!"

One day, she tucked her son in bed, took a waterjar, and said to her husband: "Now, Professor, I am going for water. You must protect the boy from the mongoose." But when she was gone, the Brahman went off somewhere himself to beg food, leaving the house empty. While he was gone, a black snake issued from his hole and, as fate would have it, crawled towards the baby's cradle. But the mongoose, feeling him to be a natural enemy, and fearing for the life of his baby brother, fell upon the vicious serpent halfway, joined battle with him, tore him to bits, and tossed the pieces far and wide. Then, delighted with his own heroism, he ran, blood trickling from his mouth, to meet the mother; for he wished to show what he had done.

But when the mother saw him coming, saw his bloody mouth and his excitement, she feared that the villain must have eaten her baby

rajeshsharma1049@gmail.com



#HEALTH

Why The Young Have Heart Attacks

The key finding is that young men and women often have different risk factors

A new study is the first to identify which risk factors are more likely to trigger a heart attack or acute myocardial infarction for men and women 55 years and younger.

The researchers discovered significant sex differences in risk factors associated with acute myocardial infarction (AMI) and in the strength of associations among young adults, suggesting the need for a sex-specific preventive strategy. For example, hypertension, diabetes, depression, and poverty had stronger associations with AMI in women compared with men. While heart attacks are often associated with older adults, this population-based case-control study examined the relationship between a wide range of AMI-related risk factors among younger adults. The key finding is that young men and women often have different risk factors. Seven risk factors, including diabetes, depression, hypertension or high blood pressure, current smok-



ing, family history of AMI, low household income, and high cholesterol, were associated with a greater risk of AMI in women. Among men, current smoking and family history of AMI were the leading risk factors. Rates of AMI in younger women have increased in recent years, says Yuan Lu, an assistant professor at Yale School of Medicine and the study's lead author. "Young women with AMI are an unusual or extreme phenotype on account of their age," she says. "In the past, we found that young women, but not older women, have a twice higher risk of dying after an AMI than similarly aged men. In this new study, we now identified significant differences in risk factor profiles and risk factor associations with AMI by sex."

RAISE AWARENESS

Raising awareness among physicians and young adults is the first step, researchers say. National initiatives, such as the American Heart Association's 'Go Red for Women' campaign, should expand to increase awareness about cardiovascular disease risk in young women, they say.

"We are moving more towards a precision medicine approach, where we are not treating each patient the same, but recognizing that there are many different subtypes of AMI," Lu says. "Individual-level interventions are needed to maximize health benefits and prevent AMI."

The study is among the first and the largest in the United States to comprehensively evaluate the associa-

HEART ATTACKS IN YOUNGER PEOPLE

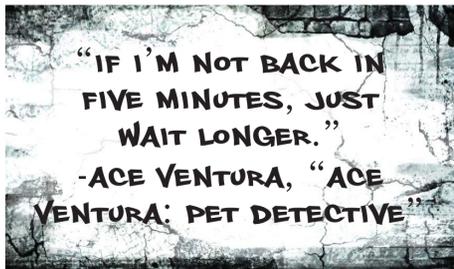
In the United States, hospitalization rates for heart attacks have been decreasing with time, according to research in the journal *JAMA Cardiology*. "However, if you analyze the proportion of these patients by age, you will find that the proportion of younger people who are hospitalized for heart attack is increasing," says Lu. "So, it seems there's a general trend for AMI to happen earlier in life, so that makes prevention of heart attack in younger people, especially, important."

Lu emphasizes the importance of education. "When we talk about heart attack in young women, people are often not aware of it," she says. "If we can prevent women from having heart attacks, that will improve outcomes." Raising awareness about the incidence of heart attacks in younger women is a key part of the strategy, she says. The next frontier of cardiovascular disease prevention in young women could be better understanding the role of women-related factors.

Previous studies have shown that women-related factors may be associated with risk of heart attack, but there are limited data on women under the age of 55. "We hope to explore women-related factors including menopausal history, pregnancy, menstrual cycle, and other factors and analyze whether that's contributing to the risk of heart attack," she says.



THE WALL

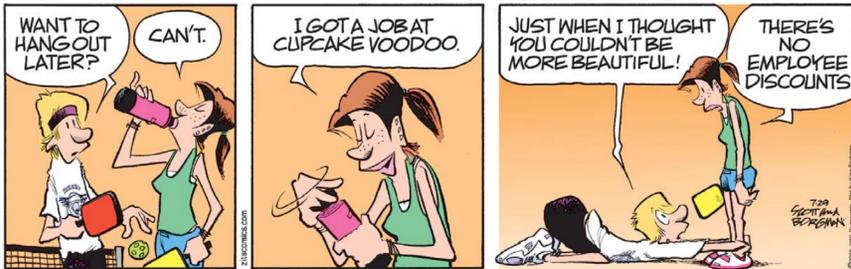


BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman