



# KING FEEL FREE

By Rohini Chintia

Once upon a time, in a huge palace, there lived a powerful King. Nobody knew his name but everybody called him 'King Feel Free' because he always said "Feel free" before saying anything. One day, he held a great feast and invited many scholars from around the world to attend it.

When it was time for lunch, the scholars were taken to the dining hall. The scholars were awed by the wonderful spread. They picked their favorite dishes and just as they were about to eat, the powerful king came in and said "Feel free Ladies and Gentleman. Feel

free. Let's have *gajar ka halwa* as the first course, *biriyani* as the second and let's wind it up with *chaat*.



The scholars were stunned for a moment at King Feel Free's statement, but then, silently followed the king's orders.

After lunch, it was time to read. The scholars were taken to the king's library. It was wonderful. Books were lined from the floor to the ceiling in a beautiful array of shelves. The scholars picked a book of their choice and just as they were about to read, the king came in. "Feel free Ladies and Gentlemen, Feel Free" he said. "Let's start our reading session with *The Three Little Pigs*, followed by *Cinderella* and end with *Snow White*".

The scholars were unhappy. But they still did as the king suggested.

When it was time for the scholars to leave, the king said, "Feel free Ladies and Gentlemen, Feel free. Pick up the gifts that you like. You should all take the white linen I ordered from Arabia".

The Scholars left feeling thoroughly disappointed and very sad.

The king was surprised at their unhappiness. He went to the Queen and said, "Queen, I worked so hard to make the Scholars happy and yet they went away feeling sad."

The Queen said, "You've had a tiring day Let's have some dessert". She ordered her maids to bring them. When the dessert arrived the King picked up a triple sundae. Just as he was about to eat, the Queen said

"Feel free king. Feel free. You must first eat vanilla ice cream, followed by chocolate cake and then wind it up with juice."

The king was annoyed. "Queen, you know I don't eat them at all and never in such an order," he said angrily. The queen smiled.

The king realized his mistake. He understood



that he had forced his choices on the scholars. He did not allow them to pick things of their liking; instead he forced his own liking on them. He was ashamed.

He learnt that there is no real freedom without the freedom of choice.

He invited the scholars once again and this time he really let them feel free. He let them choose the dishes they wanted to eat, read their favourite books and also pick their favourite gifts to take home with them. The scholars were very happy and enjoyed the king's feast thoroughly. And they all had a lovely time together.