

—A NAVRITTO STORY—



The Far *Bell.*

+ NAVRITTO STORIES · HEART & GRIT

The Far Bell

Written & illustrated by Navritto.

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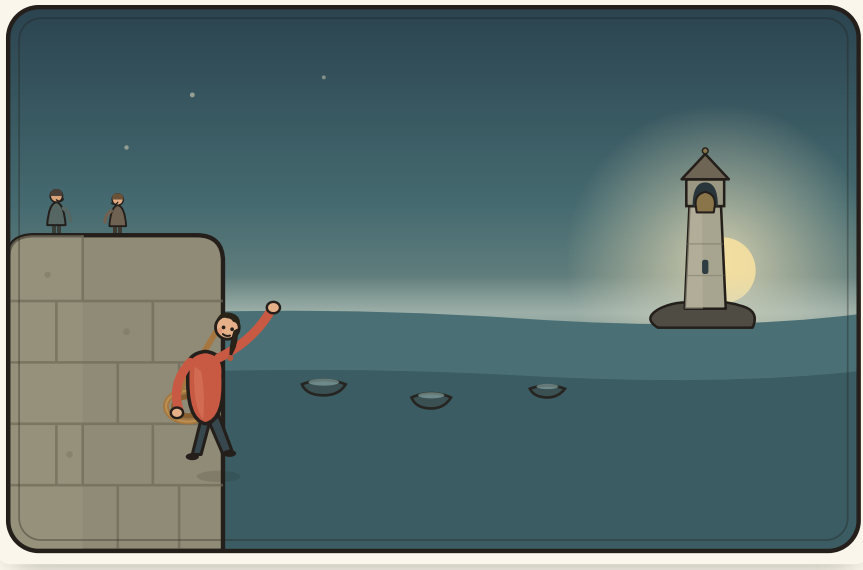
Across the misty water, on a lonely rock, stood an old bell tower. Long ago its deep bell had rung out over the waves, guiding the little fishing boats safely home through fog and dark.

But that was years and years ago. For as long as anyone could remember, the tower had stood silent, and no boat had been guided by its voice. Every evening a girl named Asha came down to the water's edge and looked out at it — and dreamed, more than anything, of hearing it ring again.



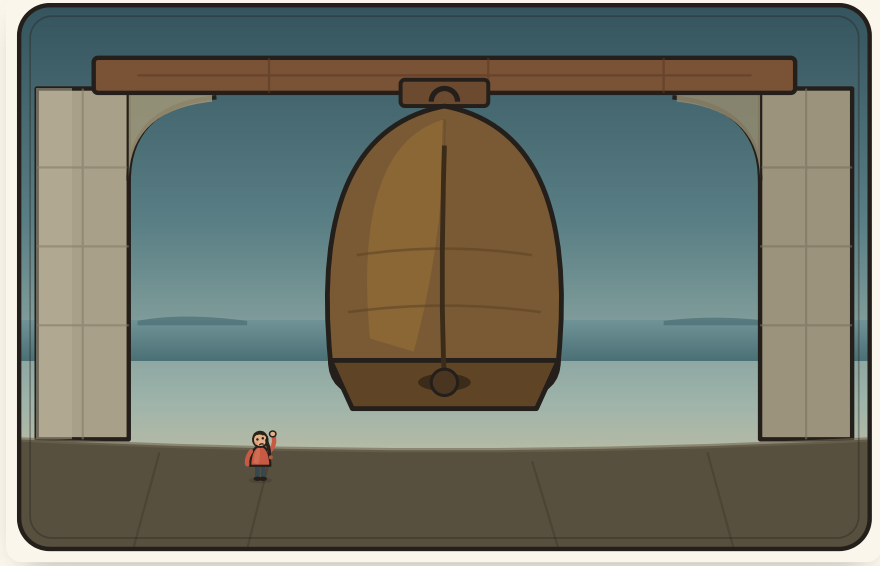
“A child could never reach it,” the villagers said, shaking their heads. “The rocks are slippery and the tide is quick. The tower is far too tall, and the bell far too heavy for small hands. Best forget it, little one.”

Asha listened, and she said nothing. But the dream would not leave her — it stayed, warm and stubborn, right in the middle of her chest. And quietly, deep down, she began to believe that she could find a way.



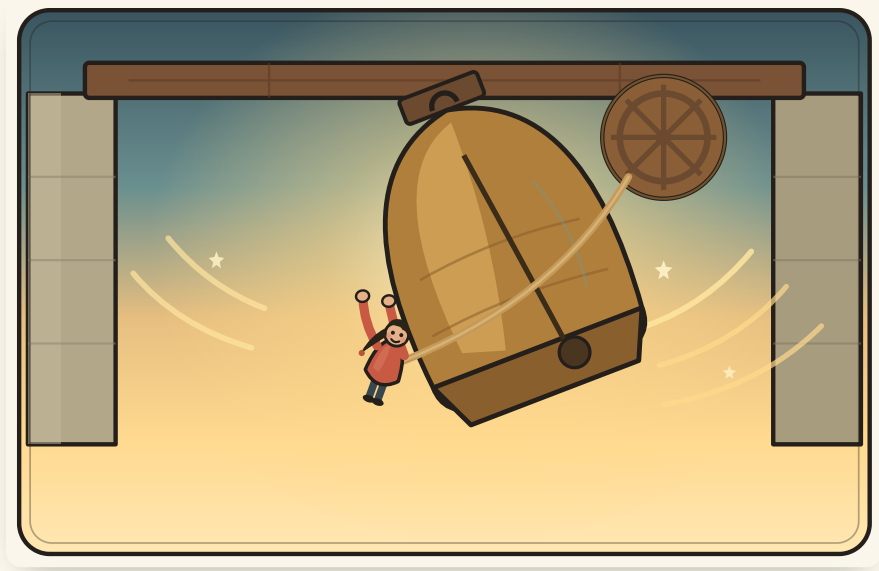
So Asha got ready. She watched the tides morning and night until she knew the very lowest one. She walked the old shingle path along the shore, and practised climbing the steep sea-wall until her hands were sure. She braided a long, strong rope and coiled it over her shoulder.

The others laughed when they saw her. “Still dreaming?” they teased. But Asha only smiled and kept believing — and kept getting ready, one patient day at a time.



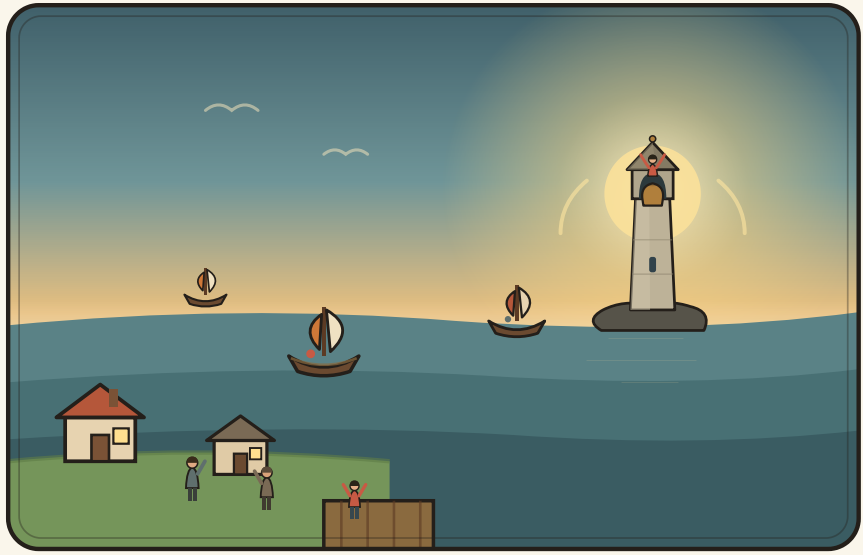
One clear, cold dawn, at the very lowest tide, Asha crossed the wet stepping-stones one careful step at a time. She reached the rock, slipped through the tower's old door, and climbed the worn spiral stairs round and round to the great bell at the very top.

But when she stood before it at last, her breath caught. The bell was enormous — dark and vast and heavier than a hundred children. She pulled with all her might, and it did not move so much as a whisker. Her heart sank right down to her boots.



Then, all at once, Asha understood. Not by force — never by force. She tied her rope high on the bell's great wheel, took hold with both hands, and let her whole small weight swing back and forth with the bell's own slow rhythm. A little at first. Then a little more. Then more.

Back and forth, back and forth she swung — until, with a groan and a shiver, the huge bell tipped, and BOOMED. Deep and golden, the sound rolled out across the whole wide bay, the way it had not sounded in a hundred years.



Down in the village, everyone stopped still. Fishers looked up from their nets; children ran to the shore. The bell that “could never” ring was ringing — and out on the grey water, the little boats lifted their heads and turned, steering home by its deep and steady sound.

And there, high in the tower against the golden sky, stood one small figure, no bigger than a bird. Asha had rung it — because she believed she could, and found her own way. So never let anyone's “you can't” be the end of what you dream.

✦ THE END

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