

## PRINCESS SEPTEMBER

The King and queen of Siam and their nine daughters. Queen finds it confusing with the names of them. So King decided to call them by the names of the months. The youngest one was named September.

*The King's gifts:* the king had a peculiar habit of gifting others on his birthday. One year he gifted his daughters each with a green parrot in a golden cage. They were happy in spending with the parrots who can sing "God save the King" and "Pretty Polly" in seven languages.

*But Princess September was sad because she found her parrot died one day morning. However the queen and her maids tried to console, she was not. And crying without eating her supper.*

*That night Princess September saw a little bird come into her room. It began to sing.*

*It sang about king's garden, the gold fish, the willow tree etc. the princess forgot about her supper.*

*The little bird was very courteous to the princess. Though it was not looking pretty it sang well. The princess was delighted and went to sleep.*

*The next morning, the bird was taken to her eight sisters. The bird sang different melodious songs to them. The king and the queen were surprised and delighted to see the bird.*

*The king praised that the bird sang much better than the parrots, who reminded of his councilors speaking in seven languages.*

*The eight sisters of the princess September were jealous of this. The parrots also looked sad. But the bird flew round. It sang like a lark and a nightingale.*

*So they went to her and told her that they would buy, with their pocket money, a beautiful parrot for her in the place of her dead parrot. But she refused and said that she has a pet bird who sings melodiously for her. The bird has gone to her father-in-law.*

*They said, she cannot call that bird as hers because it can fly away at any time, as it is not inside the cage. They told her “safety first”.*

*The Princess started worrying about her little bird. It might have been caught in the snares. The hawks could have caught it. Or it must have forgotten her.*

*When the bird came back and told her that its father-in-law was giving a party and all wanted it to stay. So it stayed there. Princess took and put it inside the golden cage. The bird couldn't believe it. It asked what that joke was.*

*The princess told it was not a joke. Cats were roaming in the night. The bird would be safe in the cage.*

*When the princess asked it to sing, the bird started to sing but it stopped in between.*

*The next day the bird asked the princess to let it out of the cage. But the princess told it that it was much better where it was. The bird tried to come out but it couldn't go out.*

*The other princesses came and told her that the bird would soon get used to the cage. But the bird asked to open the cage.*

*When the princess asked the bird to sing, the bird it could not sing. It wanted to see the trees, the lake and the green rice growing fields. It did not eat food.*

*Princess was worried but her sisters told her to be firm.*

*The next day when the princess came to the cage to see the bird, she cried to see the bird as it looked dead. The bird said that it could not sing unless it was free. And if it could not sing, it would die.*

*Then Princess set the bird free. She promised would not put it in a cage again. The bird replied that it loved the princess. It came to her. It would sing the loveliest songs for her. It would also never forget her. The bird flew away.*

*The princess was sad to leave the bird.*

*The other princesses made fun of her for leaving the bird like that.*

*But the princess had a hope. So she kept her windows opened day and night. The bird returned. It sat on her shoulder. It ate out of her hands. It sang for her. The bird could come and go any time it like.*

*The princess grew very beautiful. The king got her married to the*

*king of Cambodia. She was carried all the way to the city on a white elephant.*

*But her sisters never slept with their windows open. They grew very ugly. The king got them married to his councilors. They were given a pound of tea and Siamese cat each.*