



Bansi the best

Bansi is five. She used to live in a small village in a hot country far away. Now she lives in a big, noisy city in this country. She finds it very strange. Bansi lives with her mother and father and auntie and uncle.

One day Bansi's auntie said, **'Let's walk to the park, Bansi. It's not far, but we have to cross three roads. You must hold my hand all the way'**.

The first road was very busy. Bansi saw cars and big buses and noisy motorbikes and lorries zooming along.

'How will we get across?' asked Bansi.

'I'll show you,' said her auntie.

They came to some coloured lights on poles.

'These are traffic lights,' said Bansi's auntie. **'And this is a pedestrian crossing. If you press the button here, the lights will turn red and the cars will stop. Then we can cross safely.'**

Bansi pressed the button, then Bansi saw the lights change colour. Green, amber, red. When the lights turned red, the traffic stopped.

'Look,' said Bansi's auntie, **'the green man is lit up so we can cross. But we must still look and listen for traffic.'** Bansi held on her auntie's hand and they crossed the road. Bansi was a little scared but she was excited too.

They walked along the pavement for a little while, past shops and houses and big buildings covered in shiny glass. Then they came to another road.

'Where are the lights?' said Bansi. **'Can I press the button again?'**

'There are no traffic lights here, Bansi,' said her auntie. **'But there is another place we can cross.'** They stopped by a funny stripy pole with kind of yellow ball on top. Bansi thought it looked like a giant lollipop.

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'Look at the stripes on the road,' said Bansi's auntie. **'This is called a zebra crossing.'**

Bansi remembered seeing a stripy zebra in a book at home.

'How do we cross here, auntie?' she asked.

'It's easy - we wait for the traffic to stop. And we stop, look and listen.'

Bansi and her auntie didn't have to wait long. A big white van slowed down then stopped. Bansi looked the other way and she listened. A taxi stopped too. **'Good girl,'** said Bansi's auntie. **'We can cross but you must keep looking and listening for traffic.'**

A few minutes later, Bansi saw a big green park with swings and a slide. But it was across another road.

'Is there a zebra crossing here, auntie?' said Bansi.

'No, there's isn't a zebra crossing or traffic lights on this road,' said her auntie.

Bansi looked worried. **'Then how will we cross over?'**

'We will stop, look and listen. We stand by the road where we can see, and we look both ways and we wait until no traffic is coming. Then we can cross safely.'

And that's just what they did. They stopped, they looked and they listened. Bansi saw that the road was clear both ways. She held onto her auntie's hand and they crossed over.

At last, Bansi was at the park. And it was a wonderful park. As well as swings and climbing frames there was a big pond and ducks and people with little boats, and beautiful flowers and so much to see and do.

The next day Bansi told her father all about the park.

'It sounds like a magical place,' he said. **'I would love to see it myself.'**

'Then why don't we go now?' said Bansi.

'I don't know the way,' said her father. **'Like you, Bansi, I am new to this country.'**

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'Then we'll ask auntie to come as well,' said Bansi.

So the three of them set off for the park.

When they came to the traffic lights, Bansi reached for the button. **'This is a pedestrian crossing'** she said. **'When, I press this button, the traffic lights will go red and the traffic will stop.'**

'And what must we remember to do here?' said Bansi's auntie.

'Stop, look and listen!' said Bansi, smiling.

When they reached the next road, Bansi took charge again.

'Watch out for the zebra crossing, father. It is stripy on the road and has two big lollipops.'

'You know so much, Bansi,' said her father.

'Auntie showed me,' she said. **'The traffic will stop if we wait here, but we must stop, look and listen again.'**

When they reached the last road by the park, Bansi took hold of her auntie's hand and her father's hand. She told them to wait on the edge of the pavement, and to look both ways for traffic.

'We must listen too,' she said. **'Just to be safe.'**

When they crossed and reached the park, Bansi's father laughed.

'Bansi, you're the best teacher I ever had.'