

Student's Name

Professor's Name

Course Name/Code

Date

### **Autobiography of a Mango Tree**

Hello! I am a Mango Tree, and I have lived in this garden for longer than most of the people who visit it can remember. I began as a small seed, no bigger than a child's fist, pressed into the warm soil one monsoon season by an old man who never saw me grow tall. From that seed I pushed my first roots downward and my first shoot upward, reaching toward a sun I had never seen but somehow already knew was there.

My early years were slow and quiet. I was small enough that the garden wall blocked the morning light, and I had to grow at an angle to find it. The rains came and went, and each season I grew a little taller, a little wider, a little more sure of where my roots belonged. By the time I was ten years old — if you can call it that for a tree — I was taller than the wall, and the sun was finally mine for the whole day.

Now I am one of the oldest things in this garden. My trunk is wide and my branches spread far enough that four children can sit in my shade at once, which they often do. Every summer I give mangoes — sweet, heavy, orange ones that bend my branches with their weight. The birds arrive before the mangoes are even ripe, sitting in my upper branches and watching, patient as I am. I do not mind. There is enough fruit for everyone.

I have seen many seasons from this spot. I have seen children grow into adults and come back with children of their own. I have stood through storms that took other trees and droughts that turned the grass yellow. I am still here. A tree does not measure its life in years

the way people do. It measures it in roots — how deep they go, how firmly they hold. Mine go very deep indeed.

