



World Organisation  
for Animal Health

# SKETCHING CHANGE

TALES FROM VETERINARIANS ACROSS ASIA-PACIFIC



**KALI'S JOURNEY: FROM FEAR TO KNOWLEDGE**



Scan the QR code to access the comic stories in this publication in digital format, and to read several others.

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## ABOUT THIS VOLUME

The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) is committed to strengthening gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) within the veterinary sector. Our recent work in Asia and the Pacific has shown that, while there is a growing number of qualified women and diverse professionals in the sector, many still face barriers shaped by longstanding norms, insufficient adjustments and unequal opportunities.

As noted in regional studies conducted by WOAH in Asia-Pacific, gender stereotypes influence perceptions within the veterinary sector, and the absence of reasonable accommodations reinforces the exclusion of persons with disabilities. These findings highlight the need for continued awareness and action across institutions, training systems, and professional communities.

To foster this change, WOAH has expanded its GEDSI initiatives, including awareness raising events and partnerships with veterinary associations and networks in Asia and the Pacific region, in particular the Federation of Asian Veterinary Associations (FAVA), the Asian Association of Veterinary Schools (AAVS) and the International Veterinary Students' Association (IVSA). The Comics Competition Promoting GEDSI in the Veterinary Sector, organised between December 2025 and January 2026, invited veterinary students and professionals to reflect creatively on what an inclusive profession looks like.

The competition aimed to celebrate storytelling, artistic talent, veterinary commitment and GEDSI values, and to inspire dialogue through accessible and engaging narratives. Among the winning submissions, the comic presented here captures the imagination, concerns, and aspirations of veterinarians in different parts of the Asia and the Pacific region. The story reminds us that inclusion is not only a policy goal—it is a shared cultural commitment that strengthens the profession and the communities it serves. While we could not award all participants with prizes, we appreciated all entries and will be sharing additional comic stories of note on our website (see QR code on the cover inner page).

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to the winners of this competition, and thank all participants for adding their voices to this important conversation. This comic enriches WOAH's ongoing efforts to promote a veterinary sector where everyone can thrive, advancing our mission to improve animal health and welfare globally and ensure a better future for all.



**Dr Tomoko Ishibashi**  
**WOAH Regional**  
**Representative for Asia and**  
**the Pacific**

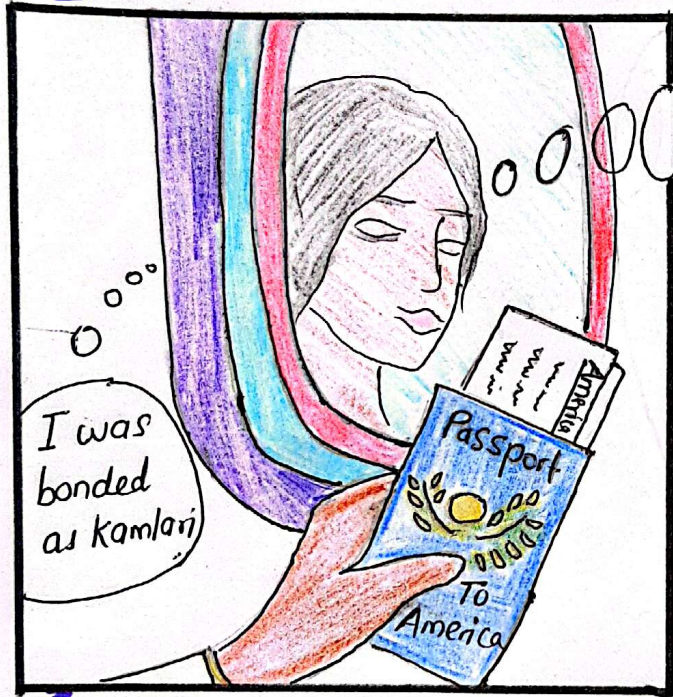
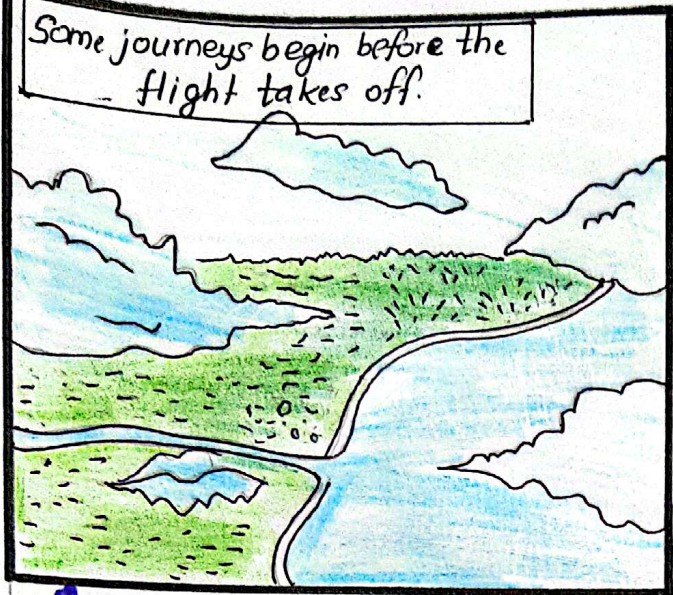


**Dr Naree Ketusing**  
**WOAH Sub-Regional**  
**Representative for South-East Asia**

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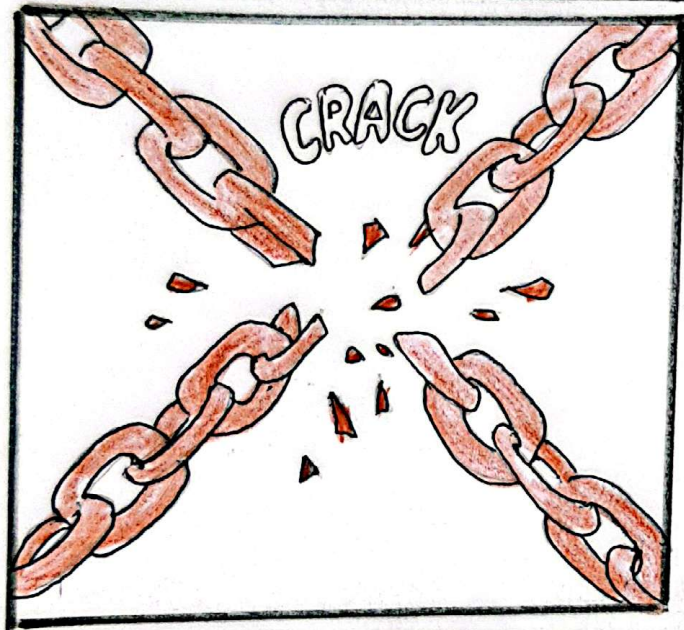
Kali's Journey: From Fear to  
Knowledge

”





But hope never left me.



SKAN organization rescued me.

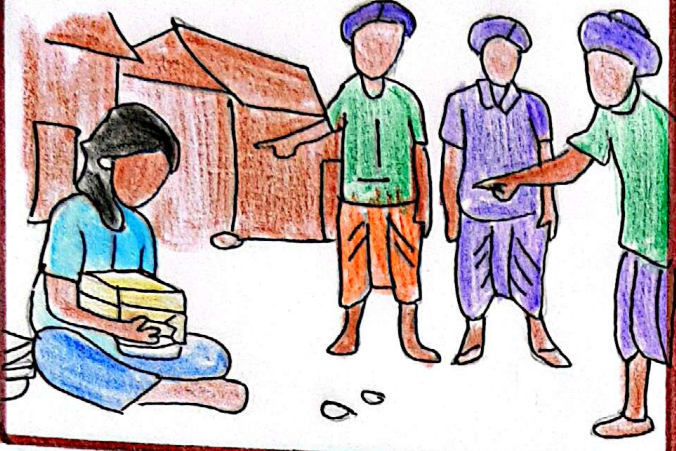


You will go to school

Someone believed in me

A door opened

You are a girl,  
you cannot study



But I dared to dream



I chose  
learning



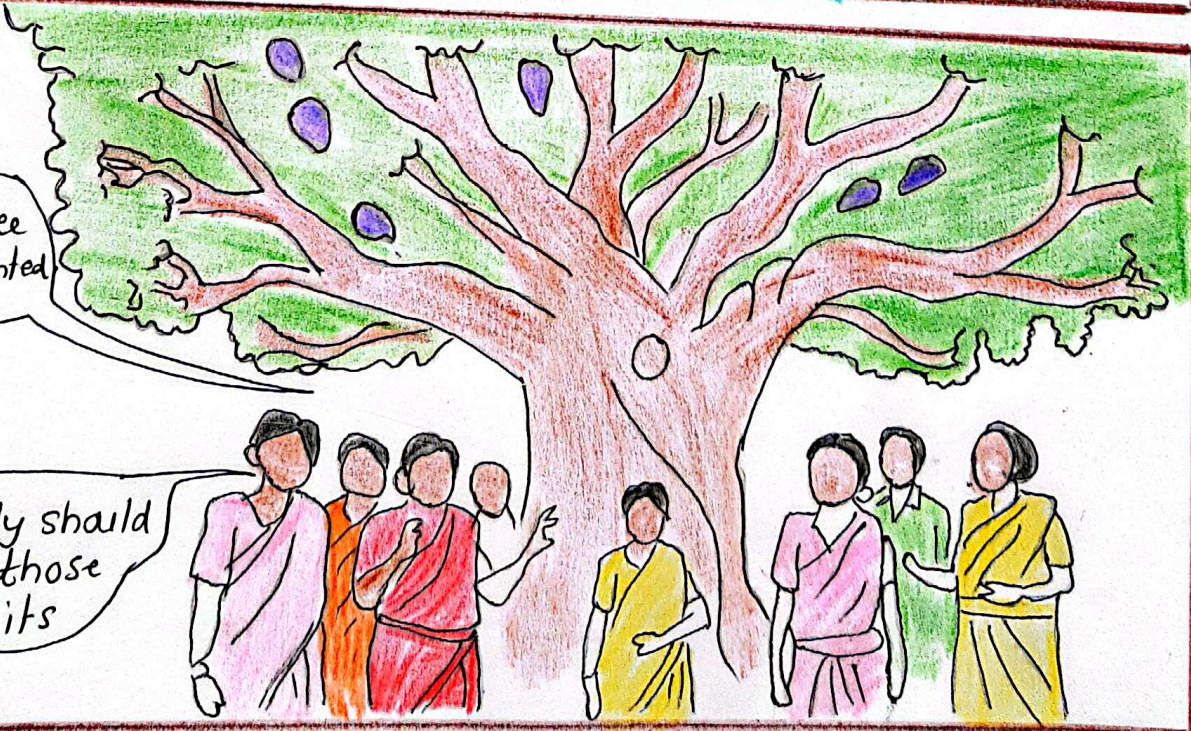
I chose evidence

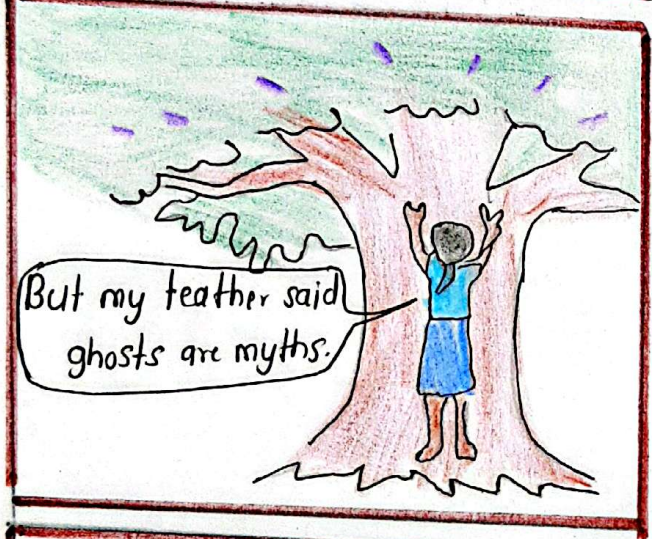
I chose  
equality  
and education.



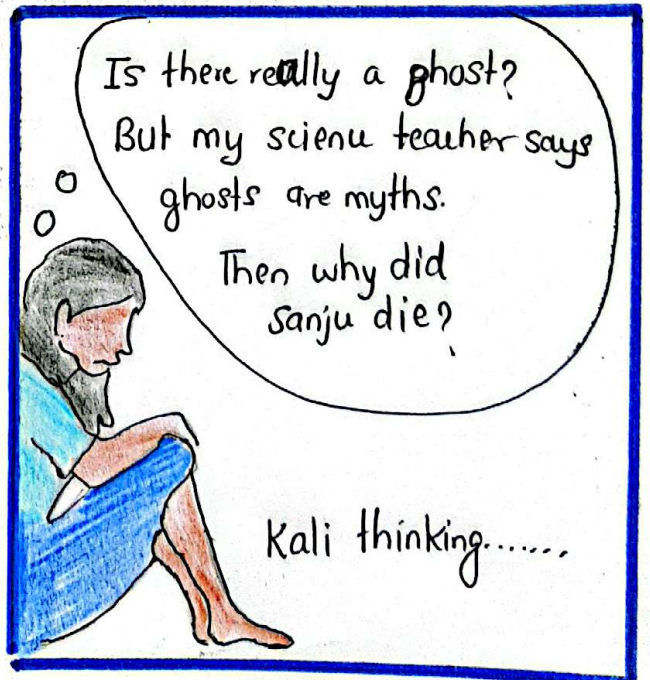
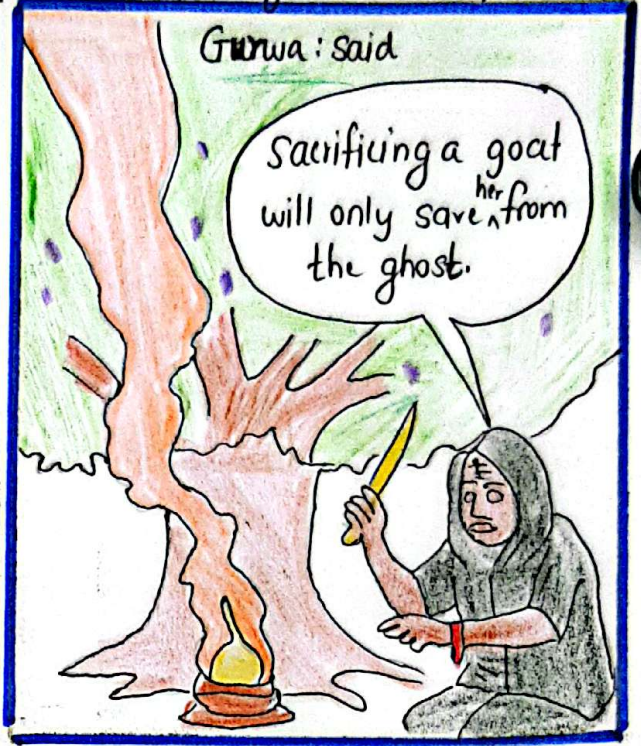
This tree  
is haunted

Nobody should  
eat those  
fruits





After 7 days, Sanju fell ill due to rabies. But.....



After 1 month, kali falls sick.

Oh no..... first Sanju,  
now her



I will call the garwa,  
I can't lose my  
daughter



Kali's mother...

A red rooster  
& a goat  
is needed.

only sacrifice  
to the ghost  
will save  
kali



sacrifices done



Even after sacrificu, kali  
didnot recover.



Am I..... going to die  
too?



Help arrived.

A madam from SWAN organization took Kali to hospital for treatment.



She has symptoms of Anemia



Patient: Kali Tharu  
Diagnosis: Sickle cell Anemia

Sickle cell anemia can be managed with medications & nutrition

Not a curse



Every disease & death has scientific reason behind it!



But doctor..... My friend died from a dog bite. What could be the reason?

Villagers say..... it was a ghost

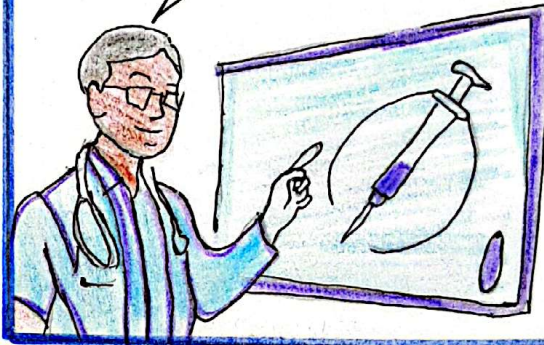


Dog bites can transmit rabies.  
Rabies is fatal, but 100% preventable.

Doctor how can it be prevented?



Rabies can be prevented by immediately washing the wound, getting anti-rabies vaccine & ensuring pets are vaccinated regularly.



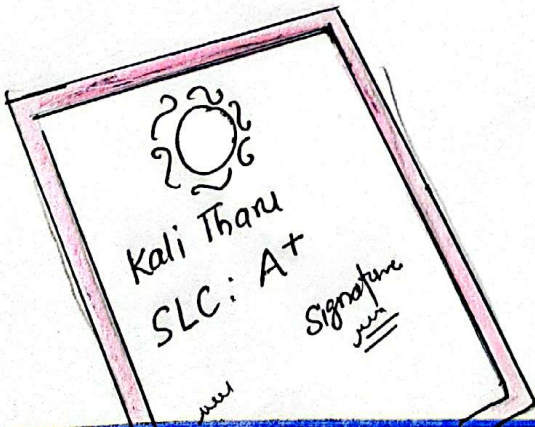
I will study about rabies in future as vet & I will help prevent it.



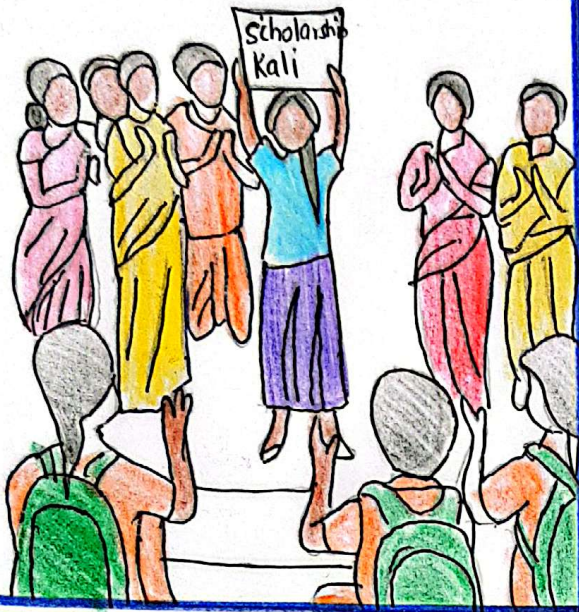
I will study hard to achieve my dream.



Through education & by preventing superstitious beliefs, I will help raise awareness in my community.



Komen supported Kali



But mens criticized her



Against all odds.

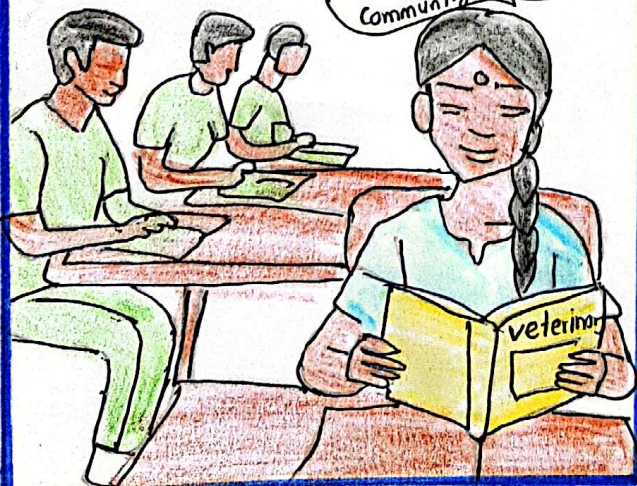


Selection Notice  
 Veterinary School  
 Kali Thoru

Veterinary School

Veterinary library

I will help my community



Free Rabies vaccine

vaccinating dogs can greatly help prevent rabies.

Rabies vaccine



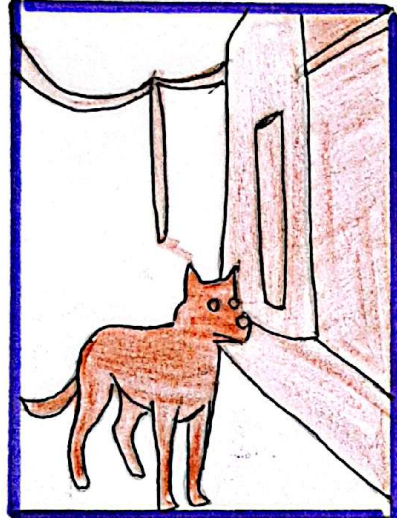
Rabies is 100% preventable through vaccination

No more sanju's

virus?



I chose education

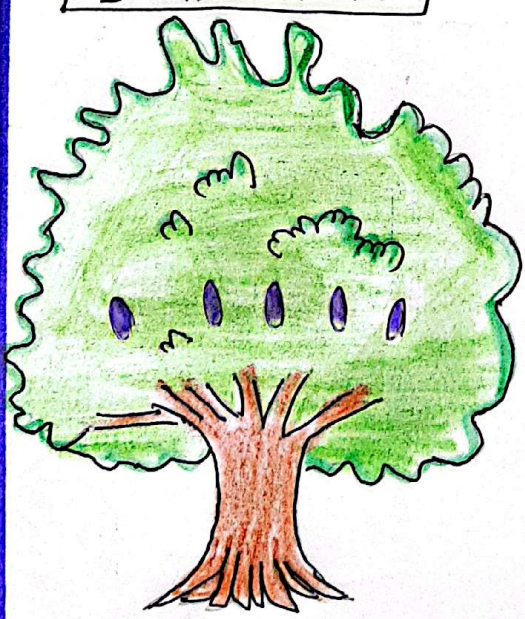


Hurray! I became a veterinarian, Mom and Dad!

We are always proud of you, daughter.

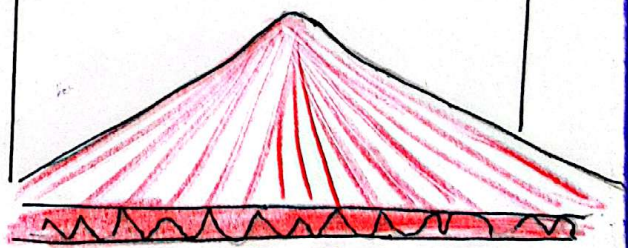


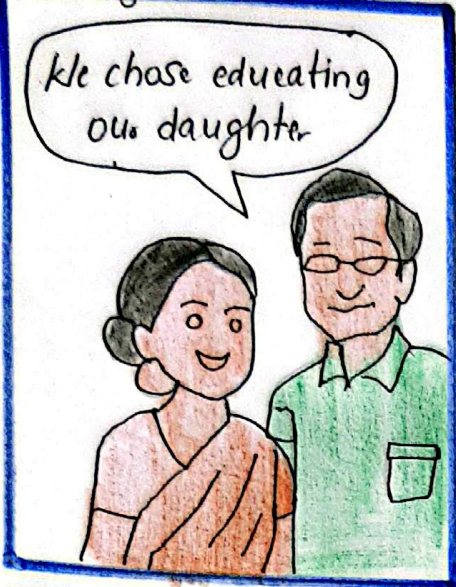
I chose evidence.



No more superstitious beliefs.

Free Animal Health camp - By Dr. Kali Tharu





Kali says: I am the daughter of the Silence,  
the student of truth, and proof that even  
from deepest mud, a future  
can bloom.

The end!

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

## Ashok Chaudhary

My name is Ashok Chaudhary, and I am currently an 8th-semester student pursuing a Bachelor in Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry at the Agriculture and Forestry University, Chitwan, Nepal. I am 22 years old. I belong to the Tharu Indigenous community from Dang district, where I grew up witnessing both the strength and the struggles of my people. From a young age, I saw up close the hardships faced by girls in my community, especially those affected by the Kamlari practice, where childhood, education, and dreams were often taken away. These experiences shaped how I see the world and deepened my belief that education, science, and awareness can change lives. I believe that art has powerful storytelling strength, and it can reach hearts where facts alone cannot. Through this comic, I created the character Dr Kali as a representative of women from marginalised communities like mine. Kali carries the voices, pain, courage, and dreams of many girls who were told to stay silent but dared to rise.

### **Kali's Journey: from Fear to Knowledge**

Kali Tharu is a young girl from the Tharu Indigenous community of Dang, Nepal, where traditional beliefs and superstitions are deeply rooted and people often turn to rituals instead of hospitals when illness strikes. When Kali was just seven years old, her childhood was taken from her; she was bonded as a Kamlari, a traditional practice in which young girls are sent to work in wealthier households. She cooked, cleaned, babysat, and labored from dawn to night, often facing harsh treatment. Life was difficult, and even small mistakes were met with punishment. Yet, deep inside, Kali carried a quiet dream of a better life.

After many strikes against Kamlari practice, she was rescued by the SWAN (Stop Women Abuse Nepal) organisation and it provided her opportunity to go to school. In the Tharu community, she was not allowed to go to school because she was a girl, but she went against all odds. One day while playing, Kali and her friend Sanju had eaten blackberries that were believed to be haunted. But at that time, Sanju had also been bitten by a dog. Five days later, tragedy shook her village. Kali's close friend suddenly felt ill, and fear spread quickly among the people. Whispers of ghosts filled the air. Rituals were performed, animals were sacrificed, and superstition replaced reason. Sadly, her friend passed away. Kali become so sad and started to search for reasons. Unfortunately, after a month Kali herself became ill, and panic grew. Many believed she would meet the same fate. But this time, help arrived. A madam from the SWAN organization took Kali to the hospital, where doctors discovered she had sickle cell anemia, a hereditary condition common in the Tharu community.

For Kali, that moment changed everything. She began to understand the power of science, education, and proper medical care. She learned that rabies, which had taken her friend's life, is fatal but completely preventable through vaccination. She realised that illness and death are not caused by ghosts, but by real, explainable medical reasons and that knowledge can save lives. Motivated by this awakening, Kali studied with determination and courage and thought of becoming a veterinary doctor. Step by step, she rose from a painful past to become a veterinarian, driven by a promise to protect both people and animals. Although men in the community criticised her and said that veterinary science required men's strength, she did not stop dreaming of raising awareness about rabies. She returned to her community not just as a professional, but as a voice for change raising awareness about vaccination, hereditary diseases, and the dangers of superstition, while encouraging education, especially for girls.




Her journey did not stop there. Kali's hard work and passion earned her a scholarship to pursue a Master's degree in zoonoses at the University of California. Standing at the crossroads of her past and future, she carried her community's stories with her, determined to ensure that no child would suffer or die due to fear, ignorance, or preventable disease. Kali's story is one of courage, resilience, and hope. It shows how education can break chains, how science can replace fear, and how one girl's determination can transform an entire community.

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