It was a dark night with just a thin slice of moon in the sky. Jai's house was decorated with mango leaves and twinkling lights. Diwali was coming.

Inside, busy hands dusted and tidied and sorted old clothes into charity bags.

Paper lanterns rustled as they opened up into bright pinks, greens and blues.

Hanging bells and clay diyas tumbled out of a box. Jai unwrapped them very carefully. "This Diwali is going to be EPIC," he said.

DAY 1: DHANTERAS

When morning
arrived, so did the
first day of Diwali
and Jai's aunties,
uncles, and cousins too!
And that meant . . .





sharing sweets
made of dates and
nuts and milk and sugar . . .

cooking delicious daal
and rice and rainbow
vegetables . . .





making rangoli patterns
with flowers,



and decorating
the house to
welcome
Lakshmi, the
goddess of
fortune.



It also meant . . .

DIWALI SHOPPING!

For sweets, sparklers,
and a thick, bristly broom.
"It's good luck to buy a broom today,"
said Baba. "It brushes away negativity."

"Like bad dreams and sad thoughts?" asked Jai.
"Yes," said Baba. "And all kinds of worries."



As they left, Baba gave Jai some money to put in the collection jar for the food bank. Jai smiled as the coins fell into the jar with a clink.