A merchant had done well at the fair. He had sold all his wares, and filled his moneybag with gold and silver. He now wanted to make his way toward home, and to be in his own house before nightfall. So he loaded his duffel bag with the money onto his horse, and rode away.

At noon made a rest stop in a town. When he was about to continue on his way, a servant brought him his horse and said, "Sir, a nail is missing from the shoe on his left hind hoof."

"Let it be," answered the merchant. "The shoe will certainly stay on for the six hours that I still have to ride. I am in a hurry."

That afternoon, when he dismounted once again and had his horse fed, a servant came into the inn and said, "Sir, a shoe is missing from your horse's left hind hoof. Shall I take him to the blacksmith?"

He rode on, but before long the horse began to limp. It did not limp long before it began to stumble, and it did not stumble long before it fell down and broke a leg. The merchant had to leave the horse where it was, and unbuckle the duffel bag, load it onto his shoulder, and walk home on foot, not arriving there until very late that night. "All this bad luck," he said to himself, "was caused by that cursed nail."

"Let it be," answered the man. "The horse can manage for the few hours that I still have to ride. I am in a hurry."

Haste makes waste.