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| The Man, the Boy, and the Donkey |
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| A MAN and his son were once going with their Donkey to market. As they were walking along by its side a countryman passed them and said: “You fools, what is a Donkey for but to ride upon?” |  |
| So the Man put the Boy on the Donkey and they went on their way. But soon they passed a group of men, one of whom said: “See that lazy youngster, he lets his father walk while he rides.” |  |
| So the Man ordered his Boy to get off, and got on himself. But they hadn’t gone far when they passed two women, one of whom said to the other: “Shame on that lazy lout to let his poor little son trudge along.” |  |
| Well, the Man didn’t know what to do, but at last he took his Boy up before him on the Donkey. By this time they had come to the town, and the passers-by began to jeer and point at them. The Man stopped and asked what they were scoffing at. The men said: “Aren’t you ashamed of yourself for overloading that poor Donkey of yours—you and your hulking son?” |  |
| The Man and Boy got off and tried to think what to do. They thought and they thought, till at last they cut down a pole, tied the Donkey’s feet to it, and raised the pole and the Donkey to their shoulders. They went along amid the laughter of all who met them till they came to Market Bridge, when the Donkey, getting one of his feet loose, kicked out and caused the Boy to drop his end of the pole. In the struggle the Donkey fell over the bridge, and his fore-feet being tied together he was drowned. |  |
| “That will teach you,” said an old man who had followed them:   |  |  | | --- | --- | |  | “PLEASE ALL, AND YOU WILL PLEASE NONE.” | |  |

The Fox & the Grapes

A Fox one day spied a beautiful bunch of ripe grapes hanging from a vine trained along the branches of a tree. The grapes seemed ready to burst with juice, and the Fox's mouth watered as he gazed longingly at them.

The bunch hung from a high branch, and the Fox had to jump for it. The first time he jumped he missed it by a long way. So he walked off a short distance and took a running leap at it, only to fall short once more. Again and again he tried, but in vain.

Now he sat down and looked at the grapes in disgust.

"What a fool I am," he said. "Here I am wearing myself out to get a bunch of sour grapes that are not worth gaping for."

And off he walked very, very scornfully.

*There are many who pretend to despise and belittle that which is beyond their reach.*

The Cat and the Mouse

There was once a Cat who was so watchful, that a Mouse hardly dared show the tip of his whiskers for fear of being eaten alive. That Cat seemed to be everywhere at once with his claws all ready for a pounce. At last the Mice kept so closely to their dens, that the Cat saw he would have to use his wits well to catch one. So one day he climbed up on a shelf and hung from it, head downward, as if he were dead, holding himself up by clinging to some ropes with one paw.

When the Mice peeped out and saw him in that position, they thought he had been hung up there in punishment for some misdeed. Very timidly at first they stuck out their heads and sniffed about carefully. But as nothing stirred, all trooped joyfully out to celebrate the death of the Cat.

Just then the Cat let go his hold, and before the Mice recovered from their surprise, he had made an end of three or four.

Now the Mice kept more strictly at home than ever. But the Cat, who was still hungry for Mice, knew more tricks than one. Rolling himself in flour until he was covered completely, he lay down in the flour bin, with one eye open for the Mice.

Sure enough, the Mice soon began to come out. To the Cat it was almost as if he already had a plump young Mouse under his claws, when an old Rat, who had had much experience with Cats and traps, and had even lost a part of his tail to pay for it, sat up at a safe distance from a hole in the wall where he lived.

“Take care!” he cried. “That may be a heap of meal, but it looks to me very much like the Cat. Whatever it is, it is wisest to keep at a safe distance.”

**Moral**

*The wise do not let themselves be tricked a second time.*

The Goose & the Golden Egg

There was once a Countryman who possessed the most wonderful Goose you can imagine, for every day when he visited the nest, the Goose had laid a beautiful, glittering, golden egg.

The Countryman took the eggs to market and soon began to get rich. But it was not long before he grew impatient with the Goose because she gave him only a single golden egg a day. He was not getting rich fast enough.

Then one day, after he had finished counting his money, the idea came to him that he could get all the golden eggs at once by killing the Goose and cutting it open. But when the deed was done, not a single golden egg did he find, and his precious Goose was dead.

*Those who have plenty want more and so lose all they have.*