

Please Everyone, Please No One

A man had a donkey for sale. He and his young son walked the donkey to a market in a remote town. One villager asked him, "Why do you have to walk a donkey? A donkey is meant for riding." "Yes, that's right. Why should I walk the donkey?" the man thought. So he put his son on the donkey, and he kept on walking.

An old countryman saw the man, his son, and the donkey, waving to them to stop. "Are you father and son?" asked the old countryman. "Yes, he is my father," replied the son. "How can you let you father walk along while you ride on the donkey? Your father should be the one riding, and you should be walking," said the old countryman. The man thought for a while. "Yes, he is right. The old man cannot bear to see me walk while my son rides the donkey. I should make my son walk, and I should ride the donkey," he thought.

As they passed another village, a group of women saw the man, the boy, and the donkey. They were angry to see the boy walking and the man riding on a donkey. "Is this boy your son?" one of the women asked the man. "Yes, he is my son," said the man. "How can a father ride on a donkey, but have his son travel on foot?" another woman loudly blamed the man. The man thought for a moment. "Yes, they are right. The woman cannot bear to see a young child travel on foot. I should let my son ride the donkey, too." So both the man and the boy rode on the donkey and kept going on their way.

By the time they got to the town, a group of men saw the man, the boy, and the donkey. They cried out, "Poor donkey! Look how tired you are! You have carried these two guys all the way here. What an overloaded donkey!" The man felt uneasy about their crying. So the man and the son got off the donkey. They looked for a long bamboo pole and tied the donkey, upside down to the pole. Now the man and his son were carrying the donkey to the market. The crowd in the market saw the man, the boy, and the donkey, and they could not stop laughing at them. "What nonsense to carry a donkey! A donkey has four legs and hooves to walk and run!" Suddenly the man realized how stupid it was to do what others said. He had tried to please everyone, but he had pleased no one in the end!

Word Count: 455

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