

WALKING THE STRAIGHT PATH

The Badi Foundation, Macau

IV

There are times when we all need something that we do not have. To work for that which we desire is worthy of praise. However, if it is not controlled, desire can become greed, and greed can become our master.



A dog found a nice juicy bone lying in the trash. He quickly grabbed it and headed home, imagining all the time the pleasure of eating the bone in peace. On the way, he had to cross a small river that ran through the village. As he stepped on the plank used for crossing, his eyes fell on a delightful sight. There in the calm waters of the river was another dog, just like himself, with a delicious looking bone in his mouth.

“This is really my lucky day,” he thought. “Surely I can take away that bone from this silly dog. By the time he gets out of the water, I will have reached home.” But the moment he opened his mouth, his own bone fell into the water and disappeared. All he could see, then, was the other dog staring back at him with a sad look on his face. It was the face of a disappointed dog who had lost not one but two delicious meals.



COMPREHENSION

Answer the questions below in complete sentences.

1. What did the dog find lying in the trash? _____

2. What was the dog imagining while he headed home with the bone? _____

3. What delightful sight did the dog see while crossing the river?

4. What do you think he really saw? _____

5. What do you think kept the dog from seeing what was really there? _____

6. Why did he think he would be able to take the second bone and get away? _____

7. What happened when he tried to take the other bone? _____

8. How did the dog feel after losing both bones? _____

VOCABULARY

Complete each of the sentences on the next page using one of the following words:

delightful, delicious, pleasure,
plank, greed, desire, disappeared,
controlled, disappointed, worthy

1. It is always a _____ to meet people with a smile on their face.
2. She was _____ in herself when she realized that she could have studied harder and done better on the exam.
3. The mango was so _____ that he bought five more.
4. One bench was made with a flat _____, while the others were made with round logs.
5. The four friends spent the afternoon together and had a _____ time.
6. Because of her strong _____ to help people, she decided to become a doctor.
7. Because of his _____, he kept raising the prices in his store until, one by one, he lost his customers.
8. The moon _____ behind the cloud.
9. Although he was very upset, he _____ his anger.
10. He was very humble and did not think he was _____ of all the praise he received for being first in his class.

DISCUSSION

Is it a sign of greed to want to improve our lives?

MEMORIZATION

“Concern yourselves with the things that benefit mankind, and not with your corrupt and selfish desires.”

XVI

Too often we underestimate things because of their appearance. If we learn to look carefully, we see that even God's smallest creation has much to offer. Here is the story of how a lion came to understand this truth.



Mouse was trembling. Almost everything frightened him. Almost everything was bigger than he was. Not only was Mouse small but he also felt small and insignificant.

Lion was not afraid of anything. He was strong and fierce. Convinced that nothing could harm him, he walked around full of confidence. And he seemed to be amused that little animals were frightened of him. That is why when he saw Mouse gathering seeds in the shadow of a small tree, he decided to strike. His big paw came down on Mouse and trapped him.

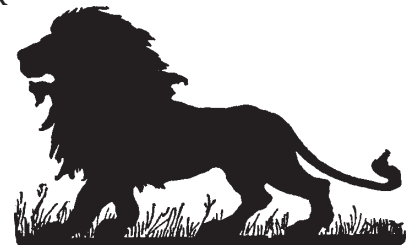
Mouse trembled. "O Great One, don't eat me," he said in fear.

"Why not?" asked Lion. "Surely, that is all you are good for!"

"But I am so small that I cannot be of any use to you as a meal," said Mouse. "Let me go and I will be your friend forever."

"A friend!" said Lion. "Of what use is your friendship to me?" he roared with laughter. "You make me laugh. It is good to laugh. For that I will let you go this time."

A few days later, while walking proudly through his territory, Lion noticed that several traps had been laid out by hunters. "Foolish hunters," he thought to himself. "They think they can catch me!" He walked carefully and avoided every one of the traps—every one, that is, but a net hanging in a tree. "Arrrr," roared Lion as the net crashed down on him. He struggled to free himself but, no matter how hard he tried, he could not.



Mouse, hearing all the noise, went over to find out what was happening. When he saw Lion caught in the net, he approached and said, “O Great One, I have come to help you.”

“It is not a good laugh I need now,” said Lion, “but strength and force!”

Mouse did not allow himself to be discouraged. He went to work. Thread by thread, he chewed through the ropes until there was a hole in the net and Lion was free!

Lion learned a good lesson that day, and he was noble enough to admit it. “I have misjudged you, my little friend,” he said. “Your friendship turned out to be more valuable than all my power and strength.”

COMPREHENSION

Answer the questions below in complete sentences.

1. How would you describe Mouse? _____

2. How would you describe Lion? _____

3. Why did Lion decide to attack Mouse? _____

4. With what did Lion trap Mouse? _____

5. What did Mouse ask Lion? _____

6. What did Lion answer? _____

7. Why did Lion let Mouse go? _____

8. What did Lion think of the hunters? _____

9. Once trapped, what did Lion think was necessary to free himself? _____

10. What did Mouse do? _____

11. What lesson did Lion learn that day? _____

VOCABULARY

Complete each of the sentences below using one of the following words:

amused, underestimate, misjudged,
noble, avoid, discouraged, admitted,
insignificant, appearance, confidence

1. Ramses was _____ by the way the kittens played with each other.
2. After climbing for a while, Xi Zhao realized that he had _____ how long it would take to reach the top of the hill.
3. We should never _____ the power of friendship.

4. She had such a youthful _____ that it was hard to believe she was a university professor.
5. It is best to _____ planting the same crop in the same field year after year.
6. The amount of money it took to fix the old tractor was _____ compared with the cost of buying a new one.
7. Instead of being _____ by the difficulty of his homework, David decided to look up in the dictionary the words that he did not understand.
8. Alison was always truthful, courageous, and willing to help; her _____ character was admired by all of her friends.
9. He _____ to having many shortcomings, but said that dishonesty was not one of them.
10. She is shy, and it is difficult for her to speak in public, but she gains more and more _____ every time she tries.

DISCUSSION

How can we avoid being fooled by appearances?

MEMORIZATION

“One must see in every human being only that which is worthy of praise. When this is done, one can be a friend to the whole human race.”