

The Man who Sought to Find a Man Who had no Worry in his Life

There was a certain ungrateful man who regretted that he had been born into this world:

"This is a stinking life I lead. There is not a day that goes by that I'm not insulted or made angry. Lucky are those who live in peace without misfortunes coming to them as they do to me..."

Thinking thus to himself, the man took to complaining to his friends that he couldn't live without misfortunes and insults coming to him every day. Listening to these words, the friends and enemies of the ungrateful man were amazed at his thoughts.

"Come on now, friend," they said to him, "do you really think that we don't have any troubles? Don't you believe such a thing! Everyone has problems, some smaller, some greater, but no one lives without troubles like you think. Haven't you heard the old people say that without worries the pumpkin won't grow on the vine, or haven't you heard that every mountain bears its own weight? And from this you must know that we, and all people in this world have troubles. Now do you understand? Now that you know, friend, don't get angry when some sort of trouble comes your way."

Hearing this, the ungrateful man was convinced up to a point, but he still wanted to live without misfortune, and decided to go to other cities to seek people who lived without worry. He went to one town and asked the people; he set off for another town and asked, but didn't find any such people. When he came to the third town, he was walking along a street and heard *zurlas* and drums playing. He turned around, and he saw great joy and celebration taking place in a house. The head of the house ran about cheerful and happy to honor his guests, who already could not be happier.

He asked someone why there was a celebration. They told him that the master of the

house was most righteous man, and that he gave out food and drink three or four times a week.

"Aha, here is the type of man of I'm looking for," he said to himself, " Let me ask him how he lives without worries." He went up to him and asked:

"Do you know, friend, what I'd like to ask you?"

"No, I don't know, friend," he answered him.

"Indeed you don't know. Only listen and let me tell you what I want to ask you. Since you are having these great feasts and celebrations, and since you are so joyful and happy, you must not have any misfortune in you life, like I and all other people have. Is this why you're so joyful? Can you tell me, please?"

"Well, so that's what you want to know? Come over to the side, wait a while until I send off the guests and then I'll tell you."

He waited a little while until the other guests had gone, and then the two sat down to talk.

"Well now, friend, you have set off to find a man who has not met with misfortune and who lives without worries. You won't find him," the rich man who had made feasts told him, "because this world was made so that everyone lives with torments and distress, and not with pleasure, like you want. You know, I have these festivities because of my great distress, which even my enemy shouldn't have. I don't have them because I am free of worry."

"Come on, for heaven's sake, tell me why you have worries?"

"Ok, friend, I will tell you the source of my distress. A year ago my wife became ill, came close to dying, and she said to me when she was so ill, that if she were to die, I would marry someone else. 'There's no point, little wife, in my marrying another', I told her, 'because I took you for love, that's really how it was. Now you know absolutely that if you die I won't remarry,' I said, 'I won't remarry.' 'It's fine if you say you're not going to remarry,' she said to

me, 'but if you do a little something for me, then I will be certain that you won't remarry and I shall lie in my grave in peace.' 'Well, tell me, tell me, wife,' I said to her, 'what shall I do?' 'Here's what to do, husband. If you would just cut a little off your tool then I'll believe you. Otherwise, even if you should sit on hot coals I wouldn't believe you.' Friend, when I heard these words from my wife, I acted without a second thought, blinded by the damned love I had for her. I deprived myself of my tool and convinced her that I wouldn't remarry. But damn the Devil, as they say, she didn't die but got better, healthier than she had been before. And now the Devil, damn him, drives her to seek another man, since I'm not fit to be a man for her. 'Well, husband,' she said to me, 'now I am healthy and better than ever, and now I want a man. Since you won't do for a man, I've decided to take another man two or three times a week. You can still stay with me.' There wasn't a thing I could say since I am a *domazet*. If I left her, where would I go, the property is hers. So today, the man whom she invited to lie with her just came, and I, out of shame and great torment at seeing this before my very eyes, don't know what else to do but entertain with flutes and drums in order to forget that my wife is with another man. And that, friend, is the reason for my feast. Now you understand how it is: when you look upon a field from a high mountain it looks as flat as a plate to you, but if you go near to it you see the terrible valleys, the ditches, the bogs and the puddles. So it is with people's torments, friend. Take my advice, go home, and when something bad comes to you, endure it with gratitude, and when good comes your way, receive it with joy."

When he heard this from the rich man, the ungrateful man was amazed. He went home convinced that all people have misfortunes in their lives. From an ungrateful man he changed into a grateful one, and he lived as all other people live.