

Peter-of-the-Pigs

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Portuguese

Easy
3 min read

The Story of a Sharp Lad and a Sharper Lad

Long ago there lived a man who employed a boy to take care of his pigs. The lad's name was Peter and he was commonly called by every one in the countryside Peter-of-the-pigs.

One day a man came up to him and said:

“Sell me these seven pigs.”

“I can't sell but six of them,” said Peter. “I must keep one, but you may buy the other six if you will cut off their tails and ears and leave them for me.”

The man promised to do this, and the boy pocketed the money. The six pigs looked sad enough without their tails and ears as they were driven away by their new master.

Peter led his one remaining pig down to the sand pit. He buried it halfway in the sand. He buried the tails and ears of the other six pigs, too, so that part of them stuck out. Then he ran with all speed for his master.

“Come and help me get the pigs out of the sand pit!” he called out.

His master ran as fast as he could to the sand pit. There he saw one of the pigs halfway out of the sand. He and Peter together soon pulled it out completely. Then he took hold of the tail nearby. To his horror it appeared to break off in his hand.

“Run to the house and ask my wife to give you two shovels!” cried the owner of the pigs. “With the shovels we can dig out the rest of the pigs.”

The boy ran to the house. He knew that his master kept his money in two big bags.

“My master says that you shall give me his two money bags,” said Peter to his mistress.

The woman did not approve of doing this. “Are you sure he said both of them?” she asked.

“Yes, both of them,” said Peter. “Go ask him yourself.”

Accordingly, the woman ran out of the house.

“Did you say both of them?” she called to her husband.

“Yes, both of them,” he replied. “Be quick about it, too.”

Of course the poor man thought that she was asking about the two shovels which he had sent Peter to get.

Thus Peter received his master’s two bags of money, and set out into the world with the bags on his shoulder and his pockets full of the money he had obtained from the sale of the six pigs.

After a time Peter-of-the-pigs met a robber. The robber stole one of his money bags and ran away with it. Peter ran after him.

Now it happened that the robber had just killed a deer. He was carrying the liver inside his blouse. As he ran he threw it back so that he could run faster. Peter saw what he had done.

“If you want to catch me, you’ll have to throw away your liver, too,” called out the robber over his shoulder.

Peter-of-the-pigs pulled out his knife and cut out his liver. Of course he dropped dead at once.

When at last Peter's master found out that he had been deceived he ran after the lad. As he found him lying dead there by the wayside, he said:

"Oh, Peter-of-the-pigs! You were sharp, but you found some one who was sharper."

Thus it is in life.

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