

Story 1210 (1990 Tape 12)

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A Tomb for a Donkey

There was once a poor fellow who had only one valuable possession, and that was his donkey. Everywhere he went, he rode on this donkey, and he was very fond of the animal.

One day while this man was on a journey, his donkey died. I do not know what caused its death--whether it was illness or hunger or just old age. But whatever the trouble was, the donkey died along the road. The man was left there alone with all of the things that the donkey had been carrying, and now he was going to have to carry all that on his own back. He was, however, more concerned about the donkey than about himself. He thought, "I cannot simply leave my good old donkey lying here along the roadside, for if I do, its body will be torn apart by wolves and scavenger birds. It would be unjust to allow that disgrace to befall such a faithful servant as this donkey has been. I had better bury it." Accordingly, he dug and dug until he had opened up a hole in the ground large enough to contain the body of the donkey. Then he dragged the carcass into the hole and covered it with earth.

It is a common thing for people to become attached to their domestic animals, especially if they have had them for a long

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period of time. They may seem to be almost members of the family after a while. After this poor fellow had buried his donkey, he grew so very sad that he began to cry. He spoke to the dead donkey, saying, "Why did you depart and leave me alone in this world?"

As he was mourning in this way, some people passed along the road and observed his distress. Stopping, they asked "What is the matter? Have you lost someone?"

"Yes."

"Was this someone important?" they asked.

"He was extremely important to me! He had so many good qualities!"

"Is that so?" one of the strangers said. "What was name?"

"His name was Long Ears," said the mourner. Then he picked up his belongings from the ground and proceeded on his journey on foot.

Weary with having carried all that the donkey had borne before it died, the traveler finally reached his destination. He remained there for a few days and then set out on his return trip. When he reached the place where Long Ears was buried, he was amazed to discover that someone had constructed a sort of tomb over the grave. Some candles were burning there, and there were some strips of cloth inside the tomb to decorate the walls.

This kind of incident is not at all unusual. People have

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wi ngness believe what they hear fact they often  
go farther than that and make legends out of the ightest  
things they may hear about