

International Conversation Cafe

Folk Tales From Around the World

China: The Golden Nugget

Topic: Friendship

Once upon a time, there lived in China two friends named Ki-wu and Pao-shu. The two young men loved each other, and their friendship was never marred by unkindness or selfishness. One day, the two friends set out for a stroll together through a pine forest to get away from the city and its noises. They made their way through the forest talking and laughing merrily when suddenly, they saw shining in the pathway directly in front of them a lump of gold.

"Look!" said both, speaking at the same time, and pointing toward the treasure.

Ki-wu picked up the nugget. It was nearly as large as a lemon and was very pretty. "It is yours, my dear friend," said he, at the same time handing it to Pao-shu; "yours because you saw it first."

"No, no," answered Pao-shu, "you are wrong, my brother, for you were first to speak. Now, you can never say hereafter that the good fairies have not rewarded you for all your faithful hours of study."

"Repaid me for my study! Why that is impossible. Are not the wise men always saying that study brings its own reward? No, the gold is yours: I insist upon it. Think of your weeks of hard labor—of the masters that have ground you to the bone! Take it," laughed Ki-wu.

They joked for some time, each refusing to take the treasure for himself. At last, the chunk of gold was dropped in the very spot where they had first found it, and the two comrades went away, each happy because he loved his friend better than anything else in the world.

They continued walking and came upon a spring where they found a countryman lying about. The two friends told the stranger about the golden nugget and bid him find it and keep it for himself. The man eagerly set off to find the treasure but came back very angry. Instead of the gold nugget, the man found a monster snake in its place, which he cut in two with his blade.

Intrigued, Ki-wu and Pao-shu left the countryman and turned back in search of the nugget. Arriving at the spot where they had left the shining treasure, what was their surprise to see, not the lump of gold, not the dead snake, but instead, two beautiful golden nuggets, each larger than the one they had seen at first.

Each friend picked up one of these treasures and handed it joyfully to his companion.

"At last the fairies have rewarded you for your unselfishness!" said Ki-wu.

"Yes," answered Pao-shu, "by granting me a chance to give you your rewards."

https://www.worldoftales.com/Asian_folktales/Chinese_Folktale_13.html

Discussion

1. Define unknown words and retell the story in your own words.
2. Tell about a friend that you value and why you like them.
3. Choose a. or b.
 - a. Khalil Gibran said, "Friendship is always a sweet responsibility, never an opportunity."
What do you think he meant by that?
How do you think this thought relates to the story?
 - b. St. Paul met and worked with many people during his lifetime. Some people he trusted and some, he warns Timothy about. "Do your best to come to me quickly, for Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me and has gone to Thessalonica.... Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry. At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength..." (2 Timothy 4:9, 10a, 11, 16a, 17a).
Describe Paul's experience with friends and the Lord. Is there anything we can learn from his experience?
4. In the story, both friends refused to take the golden nugget. In fact, it was only when two nuggets appeared that they each took one.
Why do you think this was so?
Retell the story making up a different ending.

