

The Horse Trader

Krishnadevaraya was very fond of horses. He never spared any thought or money when it came to buying well bred horses. He was known for owning some of the country's best horses.

One day a horse trader, a foreigner from an Arabian Country, came to his court and announced, "I have some fine horses for sale . They are the best Arabian steeds you can get in the whole world. I have brought one horse to show you. If you like him I can send in for the others ". The Emperor was very excited by the offer, as the only breed he didn't have in his stables were the Arabian steeds. He saw the majestic horse standing outside his palace and immediately offered to buy the whole lot of them. The man took an advance of 5000 gold coins and promised to return with the whole set of horses in 2 days and went away.

2 weeks passed and the King saw no sign of the trader. He was growing a little impatient and went out into his garden for a stroll to take his mind off the trader. He saw Raman sitting in the corner of his gardens, feverishly writing something on a sheet of paper.

"What are you writing Raman?" he asked. Raman continued to write without looking up. The King was very curious and demanded "I command that you show me what you are writing immediately." "Well sir, you may not like it, but I'm making a list of greatest fools in the empire", said Raman.

The Emperor was astonished at the reply. "Hand over the paper to me" he said. "I need to see the names in there. I am sure that the list you have written must be quite sensible and true. Raman handed over the paper and within a moment he heard the Kings voice thundering, "How dare you write my name on top of the list Raman? Isn't this the height of impudence to your King? I demand an explanation. You think I am a fool indeed!"

"Any man who would give 5000 gold coins to a complete stranger and expect him to return, is a fool!" replied Raman.

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"Oh! so that's what is troubling you" said the Emperor. "You think the man won't return. What if he does? You are wrong then"

"In that case", said Ramana with a twinkle in his eye," I'll scratch out your name and put his there" The King understood the wise words behind Raman's wit and never again made any major decisions without consulting his beloved courtier.

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