The Donkey and the Abandoned Well



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One day, a donkey was grazing in the darkness when it accidentally fell into an abandoned, unprotected well. As soon as it fell, it began braying loudly and crying for help. Hearing the donkey's cries, its owner came to the well.

The well was extremely deep. It was not possible to pull the donkey out simply by throwing down a rope. Someone would have to get down into the abandoned well, wrap a thick blanket or sack underneath the donkey's belly, pass a rope beneath its body between its legs, and have four or five people pull it out together. Thinking about this, the owner decided to gather the villagers early the next morning. After hearing the story, one of the villagers said, "Are you crazy, my friend? Are you really planning to pull that old donkey out? Why rescue an animal that is no longer useful, and why rescue a worthless animal just to feed it? Let it die. If it dies, you will have the additional expense of digging a pit and burying it anyway. You also need to close this abandoned well so that no one else falls in and gets hurt. So, do one thing: fill the well right now. That way, the donkey will be buried, and the well will be closed at the same time."

The donkey's owner thought this made sense and agreed. Four or five men came to the well carrying spades, pickaxes, and baskets. They peered down into the well. The donkey, which had been waiting for its owner to return with people and ropes to rescue it, was surprised to see the tools instead.

When the men began digging up soil and throwing it into the well onto the donkey, it realized, "They are burying me alive!"

The donkey became terrified. It cried out desperately and struggled in panic.

"I worked so hard for this man," it cried. "During difficult times, he would give me only a few handfuls of dry grass. The rest of the time, I survived by grazing on wild leaves and drinking water from streams. I carried every heavy load he placed on my back. He tied me to the oil mill and made me run all day. He even rode on my back while traveling from village to village. O God, why have You given me such a difficult life?" it cried out. But it was no use. The cruel, heartless men continued throwing soil into the well.

When the donkey was nearly three-quarters buried in the soil, the terrifying thought of death appeared before its eyes. "Soon I will be completely buried. Soil will enter my mouth, throat, and nose. I will be unable to breathe. I will struggle and struggle until I die," it thought.

"No! I must not give up so easily. I must do something. As long as I am alive, I must never stop trying."

With that determination, the donkey shook the soil off its body and emerged above it. Then it began stamping the soil down with its hooves, flattening it beneath its feet.

As the men continued throwing soil into the well, the donkey kept shaking the soil off, stamping it down, and climbing higher and higher. As the well gradually filled with soil, the donkey rose along with it.
Finally, when the soil reached the edge of the well, the donkey gathered all its strength, leaped out in a single bound, and ran toward the hills and forest.
The villagers stood watching in utter astonishment.
Just as the Kannada proverb says, "Divine help favors human effort," we must never lose hope and should keep striving until the very end.