



The Fair Merchants

by

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In the year 1750, when whispers of the world's secrets were still heard by those who listened, Mehmet and his 12-year-old son, Ali, embarked on their nomadic journey as merchants. Their caravan, laden with vibrant carpets, exotic spices, and carefully cured meat products, traversed deserts, crossed mountain ranges, and followed the winding trails of forgotten civilizations.

One morning, as the sun stretched its golden fingers across the horizon, a weary traveler approached their camp. His face etched with lines of hardship, he spoke of a perilous journey ahead—a path through shadowed valleys and ancient forests where danger lurked in every whisper of the wind.

"I seek sustenance," the traveler pleaded. "Food that will withstand time and trials."

Mehmet and Ali, understanding the value of provisions that defy decay, faced a dilemma. Their coffers were thin, and coins scarce. The traveler proposed a barter: a massive barrel of lamp oil in exchange for their dried meat products.

Ali hesitated, concerned about the practicalities of carrying such weight across shifting sands. However, Mehmet, guided by compassion, saw beyond the immediate challenges. "Not every decision revolves around profit, my son. Sometimes, it dances to the tune of humanity."

They loaded the barrel onto their carriage, and with the traveler's gratitude warming their souls, they set off toward the next city.

Upon reaching the city's edge, they discovered something amiss—the streets shrouded in darkness. The city's lamp oil storage had burned

down, leaving its inhabitants groping in the blackness. The nomad merchant's journey now seemed more perilous than ever.

In the market square, merchants hawked their wares, but it was the lamp oil that drew desperate gazes. Ali, noticing an opportunity for profit, suggested they could be rich. However, Mehmet's gaze swept over the crowd—the weary mothers, the old men squinting into the void. "Riches," he said, "are not always measured in gold."

They set up a humble stall, offering the lamp oil at a fair price. The barrel, now half-empty, still exuded its alabaster radiance. Mehmet and Ali, standing in the heart of the market square, became surrounded by curious faces. The barrel, a sentinel of light, drew customers with gratitude in their eyes.

As the day unfolded, the barrel stood empty, and the last customer departed with a smile. The sun dipped low, and their coin pouch bulged. Mehmet and Ali, beneath a star-studded sky, slept with hearts alight and dreams woven with threads of compassion.

The city, once shrouded in darkness, now glowed like a constellation of earthly stars. Every home harbored the warm embrace of light. The lamp oil had become more than a commodity; it was a beacon of hope, a testament to the power of fair dealings.

That night, by their campfire, Ali questioned why they didn't charge more. Mehmet explained that profit, like a river, can flood. Their duty as merchants extended beyond coins and barrels—it reached into the hearts of those they served.

The following morning, as they left the city, grateful residents bid them farewell with gifts. Ali marveled at the abundance, but Mehmet reminded him that being a merchant is about weaving kindness into the fabric of their lives.

As they left the city's border, the sun peeked over the horizon. Their carriage groaned under the weight of gratitude, and at the bottom of the treasures lay the filled coin bag—a tangible reminder that integrity was its own reward.

Mehmet smiled. "Our lamp of alabaster burns brighter than any flame. And Ali, my son, that light will guide us through every trade, every desert, and every star-studded night."

With hearts full and lanterns aglow, they set forth—a nomad caravan bound not only by the trails of forgotten civilizations but by the luminous legacy of fair dealings. In the dance of lamp oil and stars, Mehmet and Ali had found riches beyond measure.

