



The Tale of the Water Carrier and the Cracked Jar

(Based on a folktale from India)

A water carrier had two large jars suspended from the two ends of a piece of wood, which he carried on his shoulders. While the container on the left perfectly stored all its spring water up to the master's house, the jar on the right—slightly cracked—lost almost half of its precious cargo along the way. Thus, the water carrier only delivered one and a half jars of water on his route each day.

The perfect jar was proud of itself: not a drop wasted! But the cracked jar felt sad because it only managed to accomplish half of its mission.

One day when the water carrier was filling it, the cracked jar said to him: "I feel guilty; please forgive me."

"Why?" asked the water carrier. "What are you ashamed of?"

"I can only carry half the amount of water to our master, because of this

crack. It's my fault; you work so hard, and, in the end, you deliver "only half the water to our master."

The water carrier was touched by this confession and, full of compassion, he replied: "When we return to the master's house, I want you to look by the side of the road." As they climbed up the path, the cracked jar saw beautiful, sun-drenched flowers on the sides of the path, and it made her heart feel better.

The water-carrier said, "Did you realize that there were only beautiful flowers on your side, and almost none on the side of the perfect jar? I always knew you were losing water, so I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day you watered them along the way. Thanks to you, I was able to pick magnificent flowers which decorated the master's table."