

# THE UNTRODDEN ROAD

## Intent of the story

- ✓ *Daring is the secret of success.*
- ✓ *Don't be satisfied with what you have, try for better things,*
- ✓ *Walk new paths in life*
- ✓ *Risk failure to secure success.*

## The Story

There was a village in a far away country lost in the mountains. Outside that village there were three roads. At the forking of the roads there were three boards that read:

"To the sea".

"To the city". "

"To nowhere".

From ages past, people walked only the on two first roads. No one ever dared enter the path that led "Nowhere". It was a deserted road.

James, a young village lad, James, for ever, kept asking the villagers: "Where does the road that leads nowhere go?" Invariably, he received the same answer: "Nowhere!".

Fearing for the inquisitive James, the good villagers went on telling him: "Darling, for God's sake, never, never dare enter that road! It's very dangerous. No one ever had the courage to enter it"

Yet, daring James kept saying to himself: "If there is a road at all, it has to lead somewhere!" One day, unnoticed by all, stealthily, James slipped off into the forbidden, road.

He walked briskly over maintain and dale, through forest and dry land. He kept pressing onwards and onwards. It really looked as if that road would lead nowhere. James, however, undauntedly went on and on.... Finally, he spotted a dog. Gleefully, James muttered to himself: "If there is a dog there has to be a house, or at least a hut somewhere."

Full of hope, daringly, James followed the dog. The little pet led him to a cozy beautiful house hidden in a grove. The house was inhabited only by an old, charming lady. Was she a fairy? No one will ever know.

She was very glad to see the lad. "Come in, my little boy!" She said to James" Come to my house. It's a is very old and beautiful house, full of treasures. I am so happy you came. For many years I have been waiting for some one to visit me to share my treasures before I would die. "

Then, she showed James the treasures concealed in her palatial house and said to James: "Darling, take from my house all my gold and jewelry, my diamonds, pearls and precious gems. They are yours without asking. I wish to reward you for your courage to enter the road that leads "Nowhere. No one ever dared do that before you"

Daring James, loaded with gold and precious stones, bid farewell to the old, loving lady and led by the little dog went back to his village.

The villagers who noticed the absence of James for such a long time, were searching for him , anxious and worried They suspected he had disobeyed them and had gotten into the dangerous road.

Then all of a sudden, James made his appearance with his precious loot. In all simplicity, he told the villagers the whole truth. They were wonderstruck. They could not believe their eyes and their ears.'

Very soon there was a rush of greedy villagers entering the road that led "nowhere" in search of the little dog, the cozy bungalow and the old lady. But, all in vain! They reached nowhere.

Limp with exhaustion they came back to the village. In anger and disappointment, they cursed little James and accused him of being a liar and a cheat.

Shrugging his little shoulders, James remarked: "There are always treasures waiting for those who dare enter a road that leads "nowhere!"

*An adaptation of a fable of Gianni Rodari*

### **Points for Reflection and Discussion**

1. What sort of people does James signify"?
2. What do the treasures found by James stand for?
3. Why only James got the treasures, and not the villagers?
4. Who do the villagers rushing after James into the forbidden road signify? Who are they in real life?
5. Would there be any progress in the world if no one ever dared enter a road that "led nowhere"? Why?
6. Why pioneers seeking for new things and unknown places are branded as rash and crazy visionaries?
7. Why pioneers, when they succeed, all of a sudden become discoverers, inventors and heroes?
8. Why pioneers who failed to succeed in their daring searches, are considered failures and rash fools?
9. Can you mention the names of people like young James in the history of the world? Explorers, scientists, saints, reformers, etc.
10. What sort of treasures they discovered. Mention some of them.

11. In your attitudes towards life, are you like James or rather like the villagers? In what way? How much? Explain.
12. Are you afraid of trying new things for fear of failure? Like what? Explain.

**Explain the following sentences:**

- No risks, no gains.
- Fortune favors the daring.
- No one daring to enter a road that leads "nowhere" will ever be a failure.
- The greatest failure is failing to try'
- There is no short-cut for a long journey
- There are no easy ways to hard accomplishments.
- A daring step of a man may become a long leap for mankind.
- A long journey begins with a small step
- When the winds of change blow, some people build walls, others windmills
- When people criticize you don't be bothered: in any game, it is the spectators who make most noise
- Small and steady steps reach farther than erratic long jumps.
- For a determined person failures are spring boards to success
- He who doesn't dare try has already failed
- To enjoy a landscape, climb the mountain.
- If you do not begin, you will never finish.