



The Rightest of All

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Age: 5+

In a faraway land lives a people who are the politest of any people anywhere. They are ruled by a king who knows the very best way to live a proper life. When the king wants to marry, he knows the rightest way to go about it is to search for her in a distant land, just like his father and grandfather and their ancestors did before him. Yet when he arrives, he observes that the way things are done there is totally different. The king doesn't keep his wisdom to himself, but boldly informs everyone how they should really be doing things. However, the locals can't seem to appreciate his advice, and neither is the right woman anywhere to be seen. But when he decides to return home, something incredible happens.



In a faraway land where the trees had pink leaves and the sky was particularly yellow, there lived a people who were very polite and well-mannered. They never picked their noses, much less ate any of the boogers. They said “please” and “thank you” so many times each day that no one even noticed the words any longer. Every time they rode the bus, they offered one another their seats, so in the end, no one sat down anymore—they all just stood there politely.

The people were ruled by a king who was also very well-mannered and knew exactly what the very rightest way to live was.

One day, that well-mannered king decided to take a wife. It goes without saying that no king ever simply marries the girl next door. No, he had to search the whole wide world for a proper queen. He’d been taught that by his father, who had learned it from Grandfather in turn. Grandfather learned it from Great-Grandfather, Great-Grandfather from Great-Great-Grandfather, and so on and so forth.

The king told his people of his plan. Then, he packed a bag. In addition to his smart phone, toothbrush, and tissues, he took along a book titled Modern Manners from A to Z.

Good manners
will never
fail you

Waving politely to the crowd that had gathered to bid him farewell, the king got into his golden plane and took off.

First of all, the king came to a place where people walked on their hands. The king checked his book on manners to see if that was allowed. He couldn’t find a word about it. So, the king loudly declared that walking on one’s hands is impolite and they should all be ashamed of themselves. Then, he flew away in his golden plane.

What the king never came to realize was that those people only acted that way every Thursday from twelve until twelve-ten in the afternoon. If he’d waited just five minutes longer, then he’d certainly have noticed what a wonderful effect hand-walking had on the complexions of that land’s princesses.

In the next country, the king wanted to buy a cup of hot cocoa before finding his future queen. He’d flown a long way already and deserved a nice little break.

Once he entered the café, the king pulled out his impressive wallet. He waited for the other customers to glance at it in admiration, for the wallet was indeed big and was embroidered with a golden crown that glistened in the sunlight. However, the king was disappointed to discover that the people of that land didn’t use money. They simply shared things with one another! This seemed absolutely unbelievable. The king sullenly stuck his wallet back into his pocket while declaring that that was no way to live and the people of that country were undoubtedly stupid and should be ashamed of themselves.

Next, the king came to a land where people slept during the day. The sun shone high in the sky, but the streets were all empty. Only a couple of cat burglars and one slinking tabby could be seen. A sign on a nearby shop read that opening hours were from nine o’clock p.m. till eight o’clock a.m.

The king sat down on the stoop and fell deep into thought.

If he were to wait for night to fall and go about choosing a wife in the dark, then nothing good could come of it. Who knows what that princess might look like in the daylight! He decided it’d be best to just leave. The people of that land were stupid and should be ashamed of themselves. Feeling annoyed, he boarded his golden plane to fly onward.

After he regained his calm, the king landed in a place where the sound of singing echoed all the way up to the clouds. The king reckoned a great national festival must be underway. Yet after taking a closer look, it turned out that the people who lived there communicated through song. The king didn’t like that. Even so, he tried to talk to a pretty princess by singing:

“Oh, how much I do admire your lovely little scarf!

Does it keep your neck all nice and warm from sunrise until dark?”

The king was talented at all sorts of things, but he couldn't hold a tune to save his life. And alas, the princess only stared at him in surprise. He felt stupid and ashamed.

By now, the king was exhausted from all his trials and tribulations, so he decided to return home. Yet on the way, his plane suddenly started making strange noises. "Sput, tut, put," it went, and a red light started flashing. The plane was out of fuel, forcing the king to make an emergency landing in a town so small that no matter how closely he inspected the map, he simply couldn't find it. Since he was already there, however, the king decided to get to know the place, as it would be extremely impolite not to show any interest.

He stepped out of the plane and onto the wintery town square.

The residents of that town were all blue. Without a second's delay, the king checked his wise book and searched on his smart phone. Nowhere could he find that people could be blue. The king decided that it was weird and tried climbing up onto a dumpster to proclaim the fact to everyone around. But he slipped and fell—headfirst into a bucket!

The king was shocked, angry, and stuck. Try as he may, he couldn't pull the bucket off his head. "I can't see a thing!" he yelled.

Suddenly, the king felt a soft hand take his and a girl's kind voice saying: "Come with me! I know someone who can help."

What a nice person, the king thought. There's no way she can be blue.

All throughout their long walk, the girl told the king funny stories so he'd feel better in the uncomfortable situation.

Finally, they arrived at a place where there was lots of loud banging and rumbling noises. It smelled a little like the king's airplane engine.

The king stopped, not daring to take another step. It seemed dangerous. Yet the girl encouraged him to keep going, so he had no choice but to politely follow.

Without warning, someone tugged at the pail on his head and asked the king in a friendly voice to please stand nice and still.

A moment later, there was a big POP!

The workers flew in one direction and the king in another. After dusting themselves off, they shook hands and patted one another on the back.

"Thank you!" the king said, wiping a tear of joy from the corner of his eye.

"Would you like to have a piece of cake with me as a thank you?" the king asked the princess.

"Gladly!" she replied.

The king stayed in the princess' country for a whole year, learning all the local ways and customs. By the time the king flew home with his beloved, he'd learned that if you travel the world, you'll find many more right ways to live than just one.

And now, the king understood why his ancestors, stretching as far back as his great-great-grandfather, had gone off searching high and low for just the right wife: a king must be a wise and worldly person.