

The Donkey and the Rat Race

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A donkey was walking round and round a well.
“Ho-hum,” he said as he turned the waterwheel. “I hate working. It’s nothing but a rat race—and for what?—a measly drink of water and a wisp of hay.”



A fat rat came out from under the wall that surrounded the well. He looked at the donkey going round and round. “What’s that about a rat race?” he asked.

“Work,” said the donkey. “Work is a rat race.”

The rat disappeared underground. “Hey, ratty-mates,” he cried, calling his pack. “We’re going to have a race to see what work is like.”

So the rats joined the donkey. They lined up and ran off like lightning around the well, their tails streaming behind them.



“I won! I won!” cried the fat rat, coming in first. “That was fun! Is that what work is?”

“No,” said the donkey. “You have to run and run until you’re tired.”

So off the rats ran round and round the well until they were tired. They huffed and puffed and fell on their sides or rolled on their backs.

“Now get up and keep going round and round,” said the donkey. “Fast or slow, it does not matter—then you’ll know what the real rat race is all about.”



“Ach, no,” said the rats, “we’ve had enough. The rat race is not for us,” and off they scampered and left the donkey to turn the wheel.