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READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

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Once upon a time, there was an old beggar. He had made many debts. One day, before he would go to prison for a very, very long time he called his two sons to him. 'You know that I own nothing', he said, 'but still I want to give you something.' He gave his eldest son Oraziello a sieve, with which he could earn money. The youngest son Gagliuso got his cat.

Oraziello knew exactly what to do with the sieve. The more he used to sieve, the more money he made. Gagliuso was less pleased. 'Why did I get the cat? I'm already struggling! I can hardly take care of myself!'

The cat heard Gagliuso and started to get annoyed by him. 'Stop your complaining', the cat purred. 'You have no idea what I could mean to you. I could make you very rich!' Gagliuso was entertained by what the cat had told him.



From that day on the cat went to the fish market every day early in the morning to pilfer a delicious fish. Every day she brought her 'catch' to the king. Every time she addressed the king with the following: 'Your majesty, I bring you a small gift from my master Gagliuso. It is only a small gift for a great man like yourself, I hope you like it.' 'I sure do', said the king again and again, 'tell your master, who I do not know, that I am very thankful!'

The cat also chased a group of hunters. Often the cat managed to get to the shot animal faster than them. Again and again the cat brought the loot as a gift in the name of Gagliuso. One day the king said to the cat: 'It is time that I meet your master. Maybe I can do something for him?' As an exchange for his kindness.' The cat answered: 'It would be an honour for Gagliuso to meet you. Tomorrow morning he will make your acquaintance.'

The next morning the cat knocked on the door at the king's palace. 'My lord, with much regret I have to inform you that Gagliuso can't make it today. Last night servants robbed him and escaped, without leaving him a shirt to wear!'

The king immediately sent Gagliuso clothes from his wardrobe. An hour later Gagliuso arrived at the king in beautiful attire. The king welcomed him with a

delicious feast. After eating a lovely meal, Gagliuso went home.

The cat stayed for a chat. They spoke about the riches that Gagliuso had in the region of Lombardy. The cat went on to tell, that it was impossible to calculate how much its master owned. If the king wanted to know, he would have to send servants with the cat to Lombardy.

The king sent his most loyal servants. The cat had a little head start. Everybody it met on its way, the cat told that a ruthless gang of robbers was on their way! The wrath of this gang would be spared if they would tell the gang that everything they owned belonged to Gagliuso.

The men of the king were told time and time again that the land, the stock, the farms and whole villages belonged to Gagliuso. For days on end that's what they were told. One day they decided to return to the king to report about the immeasurable wealth of Gagliuso.

The king promised the cat a big bag of money if the cat could arrange a wedding between his daughter and Gagliuso. Because the cat managed to do so, the king not only paid for the royal wedding, but also gave Gagliuso a big dowry. With that money Gagliuso bought land in Lombardy (on advice of the cat) and left to go there with his wife.

And they lived happily ever after.

At least...that's how the ending should be.

But the cat discovered that Gagliuso quickly forgot who made him go from beggar to a wealthy man. So the cat departs with the words: 'You will always be a loser who expects everything from others. You try to fend for yourself.' And no matter how hard Gagliuso tried to persuade the cat to stay with him, the cat turned its back on him and never returned.

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