



#83 *The Pack Mule and the Pheasant*



A pack mule was nearing the end of a long, long journey. His packs were heavily laden, his legs were weary, and he had not had a drink of water in quite some time. Alas, there appeared a division in the trail he was following. One side led uphill around a hillside on an increasingly narrow ledge. The other led downhill to a valley. Suddenly a pheasant was seen passing by, repeating the words, “No desire to run, no desire to run.” He noticed the mule and said, “My friend, you look uncertain as to which path to take. May I be of assistance?” The mule was glad for the help and told the pheasant that he was seeking a land of great promise. He had been told that this place not only had great beauty, but also food and water in abundance. “Well, I always say, ‘no desire to run,’ so, if you want the land you describe, then you need to take the high road and have no desire to run,” began the pheasant, “but make no mistake, it will require some sacrifice.” “What does that mean?” asked the mule. “Well,” replied the pheasant, “it means to have no desire to run away from your next steps - which for you, seem to be to cross that narrow threshold. But be clear, to cross such a narrow

place, you will have to unburden yourself of these packs, and resist the temptation to turn back and run away.” “All of my life

I have wanted to become free of these burdens, yet my whole life’s belongings are in these packs,” protested the mule. “You asked for my advice,” returned the pheasant, “so, I say, take the first step, let your fears die, and become free - have no desire to run!” And so, the mule found the courage within himself to let go of the load he had carried so long, and he crossed the threshold. Where the path led, I do not know, but he looked like a new mule as he skipped - with no desire to run - over the mountain.

*CROSS THE THRESHOLD ...
WITH NO DESIRE TO RUN*