

THE TYRANT PRIME MINISTER'S SON AND THE RAT

(1) Once upon a time in a Middle East nation, there was a boy named Nicholas Rhype, whose adoptive father, Hans Rouhoney, was very rich and powerful. The tyrant prime minister adopted him after his godfather, *Yougo Keyz*, died because of cancer. Nicky, as the prime minister called **him**¹, had very expensive toys with remote control that his godfather imported for him from exclusive toy manufacturers in *Theywillgo* and *Bylia*. He lived with his adoptive father in a very big castle amidst an impenetrable dessert and thick oases. **They**² were protected by an official army, a private army, and heavily trained bodyguards. Every day, Nicky played with his favorite car in dunes and wells around the palace and the petroleum refineries and oil extracting pumps that surrounded **it**³. This car was his favorite because he could load it with miniature explosive methane cylinders which were propelled into the air and exploded as **they**⁴ landed on small-scale towns with tiny plastic soldiers wearing green uniforms.

(2) At the bottom of one of the dunes, there was a very deep and dark dry well. Nicky loved playing near that well using it as an obstacle for his car to jump or to launch his miniature explosive cylinders inside. Unfortunately, one day his unloaded car fell into the dry well. He was very unhappy, he sat at the border and started crying.

(3) Suddenly he heard a tiny voice: "Don't cry, little boy." He was surprised, opened his eyes and saw a large gray rat. The big rat said again: "What's your name, boy?" "Nicky," the boy replied. "Nicky what?" the rat asked again. And the boy answered: "Nicholas Rhype... But now I am Nicky Rouhoney because my father died during a chemotherapy treatment in the Caribbean island of Vat." He was silent for a few seconds and then he said: "Oh, please help me! I can't get my car out from the well."

"I'll help you," the rat replied, "if I can come and live with you in the palace!"

"Yes, yes, of course. I promise," little Nicky answered.

Then, the rat jumped into the sewer system and came back with the car. The boy laughed happily and took his car. He ran quickly back to the palace and forgot all about the promise he made to the rat.

The rat was very angry and followed little Nicky into the palace and told the story to the prime minister Rouhoney.

"A promise is a promise," said the rat. "Yes," said the prime minister and called his son. "A promise is a promise, my son. Take this rat to your room and lock it carefully with the snakes in our serpentarium."

(4) Nicky smiled, winked an eye to his father, and took the rat and put *it*⁵ in the serpentarium. The rat looked at him and said loudly, "Please let me out!" Nicky started to close the serpentarium cover and laughed at the rat with an evil expression on his face. Immediately, the rat broke the glass as it jumped into Nicky's face, and it bit his nose. Nicky became an ugly old rat. Some minutes later, the rat ran to prime minister Rouhoney's office and bit his father, his bodyguards, all the ministers and private soldiers. Of course, all of them became old ugly rats too, and they had to abandon the palace because they had very big domesticated desert lions to keep away rats and undesirable opposition members. Many soldiers and ministers couldn't escape from the lions and died helplessly.

(5) One week later, the people from that country were immensely happy because all the corrupt ministers and the tyrant had disappeared. They could have democratic elections again after 20 years of tyranny and with a new democratic president, they lived happily ever after without the rats and the terrible economic conditions. The treasures and wealth were redistributed among the poorest people of the country and everyone could have a stable job.

Task I. Are the following statements about the story **(T)rue** or **(F)alse**?

- 1.(TRUE - FALSE) Nicholas Rhype was a prime minister of an oil-rich country in the Middle East.
- 2.(TRUE - FALSE) Their castle was built on a petroleum reserve with an oases area.
- 3.(TRUE - FALSE) Little Nicky played filling small cistern tank trunks with the crude oil extracted around his castle.
- 4.(TRUE - FALSE) Nicky had snakes as pets in his house.
- 5.(TRUE - FALSE) One snake helped him recover his favorite toy car from a very deep dry well.

Task II. What /Who do the pronouns from the text refer to?
Select an appropriate option.

1. *Him*¹ in the first paragraph of the story refers to (...)

- A) President of *Theywillgo*.
- B) Prime minister Rouhoney.
- C) Nicky Rhype.
- D) Bylian ex-president and general Pinechest.

2. *They*² in the 1st paragraph refers to (...)

- A) Hans Rouhoney and Nicky
- B) the soldiers
- C) Nicholas Rhype and his godfather Yougo Keyz
- D) the bodyguards

3. *It*³ in the 1st paragraph refers to (...)

- A) the oil refineries that surrounded his palace.
- B) Nicky's favorite toy car.
- C) the street where he always played.
- D) Nicky's father's castle.

4. **They**⁴ in the 1st paragraph refers to:

- A) Nicky's favorite toy cars
- B) the small toy houses Nicky destroyed.
- C) the toy gas cylinders Nicky played with.
- D) the toy soldiers Tim killed in his games.

5. **It**⁵ in the 4th paragraph refers to:

- A) Nicky's biggest snake in his serpentarium.
- B) Prime minister Rouhoney converted into a rat.
- C) the promise Nicky made to the rat.
- D) the old rat that helped Nicky.

Task III. Match the following topics or subtitles with their corresponding paragraphs in the story.

- () A broken promise
- () Divine justice for a rat and a nation.
- () From orphan to oil sheik prince
- () The rebirth a free nation.
- () The oil prince's playground