

Once there was a king who had two servants who worked so well and so honestly that he made them captains in his army. The day after they had become captains, the king saw them and said, 'What is the reason for your becoming captains, do you think?'

The first captain answered, 'It is because I am a lucky man'; but the second said, 'It is because you are kind and generous.'

The king said that he liked both the captains' answers. "To show you that I am pleased with you, I am going to give each of you a present," he said. 'Both presents have the same value, and both are from my own gardens.' He then gave the first captain a coconut, and the second captain a bunch of ripe bananas - but when he was giving the bananas to the second captain, he secretly took a very valuable ring off his finger and pushed it into one of the bananas.

While the two captains were walking home, the second captain told the first that his wife did not like bananas, and asked him whether he was willing to give him the coconut and take the bananas.

The first captain knew that his own wife did not like bananas either, but as he was an unselfish man, he said that he would do as the second captain wanted because he was his friend.

That evening, the first captain began to eat the bananas and found the ring in them. At once, he hurried to the king with it. When the king saw it and heard what had happened, he sent for the second captain and said to him, 'I wanted to give you the ring because you said that I was kind and generous; but it seems that your friend really is a lucky man, as he said!'