

TRUST

Based on a Chinese tale by Han Fei
Adapted by Carole L. Cooney

Setting: Houses in the Village -- A Shoe Shop

Characters:

Narrator

Pham: an *ordinary* man

Bo: the *elder brother* of Pham

Tun: a *sincere* shoe maker

(The above italicized words give the meaning of the Chinese name.)

Narrator: After a scorching day working in the fields, Pham sat at home rubbing his tired and very sore feet. He dreamed of new comfortable shoes.

Pham: Ahhh... it would give me great pleasure to slip my aching feet into a *new* pair of shoes. But what kind would I choose? And what color? I must think about this carefully.

Narrator: Pham walked outside of his little house into the shade of a large tree. Slowly, he lowered himself to the soft grass and stretched out gazing up at the clear blue sky. He thought and thought about a new pair of shoes and then, he quickly jumped up and raced into his house.

Pham: I know what I must do first! I must measure my feet perfectly. Let's see, where did I put my plain paper and pencil? It must be somewhere in these drawers.

Narrator: Searching in every drawer without any luck, Pham decided to ask his brother, Bo, for some paper and a sharp pencil. He walked across the dusty, narrow road to his brother's house and stepped inside the cool living room.

Bo: Welcome brother! What brings you to my house so early in the evening?

Pham: I need paper and a pencil, Bo.

Bo: Why are you going to draw now? It is almost dusk and soon it will be dark.

Pham: No, no. I don't want to draw. I want to measure my feet.

Bo: Measure your feet! What a silly thing to do.

Pham: I want to buy a new pair of shoes and I want them to fit perfectly. The only way to do that is to measure my feet. Will you help me?

Narrator: Pham sat in a chair and rested his feet on the paper Bo laid on the floor. On his knees, Bo began to trace Pham's feet from toes to heels. Then Pham measured the drawing in every direction and wrote the measurements around the picture of each foot.

Bo: What do you think of my tracing?

Pham: It's perfect just like my measurements. Everything is perfect!

Narrator: Knowing it would soon get dark, Pham raced through the streets toward the shoe shop. He reached into his pocket for the paper and realized he left it on his brother's table. Pham turned around and hurried back to Bo's house.

Pham: Oh! How stupid of me to do such a thing! Why wasn't I more careful?

Bo: Back so soon! You must have bought the first pair of shoes you tried on.

Pham: No! no, no. I forgot the pattern of my feet. Ahhh... here it is! Now I must go back before the store closes.

Narrator: Clutching the paper tightly in his fist, Pham ran all the way to the shoe store just as the owner was about to close shop for the day.

Pham: No! Please do not close your shop!

Tun: What is it, sir?

Pham: I want to buy a pair of your splendid shoes. In order that they are a perfect fit, my brother helped trace my foot onto this paper and then I wrote the exact measurements on it. Please take this paper and find the shoes that will be a perfect fit for me!

Tun: (laughing) I have been making shoes for over 30 years. I have never heard of such a thing as bringing a pattern of your feet to buy a pair of shoes. And then you say, you forgot to bring it and ran home to get it. What a waste of your time! Don't you realize you have your feet with you? You could have tried on *many* shoes in my shop until you found the perfect fit.

Pham: You are right! I never thought of just trying on shoes in your shop. I guess I *trusted my way* of finding the perfect shoes more. How silly of me!

Think about this: Have you ever trusted *your way* of doing something more than another person's? Why? What happened?