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**The Shoemaker and the Brat**

**By Patricia Gatto**

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At seventeen years old, I was a brat. A mixture of innocence, immaturity and righteousness. And I carried that attitude with me everywhere, including my trip to the shoemaker.

Now, to understand why something as simple as a trip to the shoemaker would stay with me all these years later, I have to explain. I came from the most loving and nurturing parents a child could ever want. Even back then, I knew I was blessed with a wonderful family, but this realization also made me a little arrogant. My fierce devotion to family could be blinding at times.

When my dad asked me to pick up his shoes from the shoemaker, I eagerly obliged. Although he rarely asked, I loved doing favors for him and this was an easy request. Or so I thought. This simple errand proved more daunting than I originally anticipated, but it also provided me with a valuable lesson in life.

On my first attempt to pick up the shoes, I was informed they weren't ready. "Please, come back," the shoemaker said. However, although he said "please", his response was curt.

As far as I was concerned, my dad never made mistakes, so I looked at the ticket and confirmed that I had the right date. "The ticket said they would be ready today," I responded in an indignant tone.

"Tomorrow," was all he said. Then he turned to his next customer. I'm sure he didn't need a teenager lecturing him about his business obligations.

Prone to the dramatics of my youth, I rolled my eyes and left in a huff, complaining about his lack of responsibility under my breath.

When I returned the next day, ready to forgive him for the inconvenience, I was informed the shoes were not ready. Oh, you would think tragedy struck my perfect little world. My daddy needs his shoes, I thought. How could the shoemaker be so inconsiderate? I stormed out of the shop without a word, but

## The Shoemaker and the Brat

my body language spoke volumes.

My third trip (in three days) yielded the same results, and now I was furious at the shoemaker. Who did he think he was? What kind of a business was he running?

Without thinking, I demanded the shoes back. He complied with my request, grabbed the shoes from a large pile on his workbench and shoved them into a bag. "Here you go, young lady," he said with a smirk.

I was fuming. I took the bag, bid him a sarcastic "thank you" and slammed the door on my way out.

When I got home, I explained everything to my dad. As usual, my dialog was animated. I clutched the bag, imitated the shoemaker and walked around the living room acting out my dramatic exit from the

shop. Then I handed my dad the bag. He looked in it and smiled.

"Honey, I love you. I'm so happy that you care so much about my shoes, but what am I going to do with them now?"

That's when he pulled the shoes out. The heels were removed and the soles were cobbled out. They were useless, like a patient pulled out of surgery before the doctor finished the operation.

"Patience, honey," he said gently. "There is no point in working yourself up over something that you have no control over."

I tried to argue with his logic. I told him the shoemaker had a job to do and he didn't live up to his obligation. My dad smiled again.

"Honey, think about it. It's just a pair of shoes. I have others. Choose your battles wisely and always deliver them with respect. Tomorrow you will bring the shoes back to the shoemaker and apologize. Explain that you understand he is busy and I am certain you will get positive results."

That's how my dad conducts his life, with patience and respect, no matter what is handed to him. It's one of the many reasons I love him so much.

My father's response was not belittling or disrespectful. He reminded me that we can't always have what we want when we want it. He showed me that our responses to a difficult situation show our true character. Acceptance, forgiveness and understanding are key elements to a healthy outlook on life.

Even to this day, whenever I am in a difficult situation, I remind myself not to be a heel, and always show sole.

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Patricia Gatto and John De Angelis are the authors of MILTON'S DILEMMA, the tale of a lonely boy's

## The Shoemaker and the Brat

magical journey to friendship and self-acceptance. As advocates for literacy and children's rights, the authors speak at schools and community events to foster awareness and provide children with a safe and healthy learning environment. For more information, please visit Joyful Productions at

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### **The Shoemaker And The Elves**

**By John Colanzi**

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Remember the story of the Shoemaker and The Elves?

The shoemaker would go to sleep and the elves would finish any shoes he hadn't gotten around to.

Our minds function in much the same way, Our conscious, logical mind is the shoemaker. Our subconscious is the elves.

Give your conscious mind a goal, gather all the facts and let the elves do their work.

Many of our greatest inventions and discoveries have come after the scientist or researcher had given up and the elves took over.

The structure of DNA had baffled researchers for years. Finally, the double helix was revealed in a dream about intertwined snakes.

## The Shoemaker and the Brat

Around two years ago, I gave my little friends the task of providing me with an ezine article a week. I gathered the ideas and they wrote the articles.

They've written around 100 articles.

It makes my life so easy.

They do the work.

I get the credit.

When I sit down at the keyboard, the articles write themselves.

The next time you're stumped for an answer, gather the facts and move out of the way. The elves will be more than happy to do the work.

They're tireless.

Wishing You Success,  
John Colanzi  
Street Smart Marketing  
<http://www.internet-profits4u.com>

John publishes the "Street Smart Marketing" newsletter. To subscribe <mailto:streetsmart@rapidreply.net> Don't forget to get your free email course. "7 Days ToTurbo Charged Mind!" <mailto:johncolanzi@freeautobot.com>

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