

Don't Mess with Joha

A Joha Story Retold



One day Joha went to his favorite café. He took off his jacket. He put it on the back of his chair. He ordered a coffee. Then went to wash his hands.

Joha had many friends in town. Two of them were there that day. They were cousins. Their names were Big David and Little David. Big David was rather wide and Little David was thin. The Davids waved to Joha on his way to the bathroom.

Big David was a joker. He had an idea. He told it to Little David: "Let's play a trick on Joha. I want to see what he will do."

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Joha soon came back. He saw that his jacket was gone. It was nowhere to be seen.

“Has anyone seen my jacket,” Joha asked. No one said a word.

“Ahem,” Joha said. He spoke more loudly: “I said, has anyone seen my jacket? If you took it, please return it.”

Still nothing.

“Excuse me,” said Joha. His voice was even louder this time. “If you don’t give it back, I’m going to have to do what my father did!”

“What did his father do?” Little David whispered to Big David. Both Davids began to worry.

Big David’s eyes grew wide with fear. “I don’t know,” Big David whispered back. “Do you think he beat someone up?”

“Or maybe Joha’s father killed someone. Give Joha back his jacket. Hurry, before he does something terrible to us,” urged Little David.

Big David gave the jacket back to Joha. His hand shook as he handed it to him.

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"We're so sorry, we're so sorry," they said. "We were only joking around. Please don't be mad at us."

"I'm not mad," said Joha. "I just wanted my jacket back."

Little David was relieved. He had to ask: "Joha, do you mind telling us what it was that your father did?"

Joha responded, "Oh, nothing much. He just went and bought a new jacket. I didn't want to have to do that."



SOURCE:

Koen-Sarano, M., Herman, D., & Masch, E. (2003). Folktales of Joha: Jewish trickster (p. 164). Philadelphia, PA: Jewish publication Society.