

# The Little Engine That Shouldn't (a political metaphor)

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The Little Engine That Shouldn't  
(a political metaphor)

Listen my children  
And gather around  
As I tell you a story  
Of a dipstick I found

This story I tell you  
In sight and in sound  
Is quite similar in substance  
To one long around

The message, I fear  
Long familiar to some  
Is one long neglected  
To some others, new-come

A dipstick, I'll tell you  
Is a useful device  
Meant for use as a measure  
Of some lubricant's heights

Our dipstick, our measure  
One time did reside  
In it's proper position  
Of an engine's inside

This little old engine  
Was quite useful indeed  
As a part of an auto  
Used for transport, not speed

It was not meant for racing  
Or for hauling big loads  
It was not meant for towing  
Or the paving of roads

The engine's main purpose  
Was for movement, you see  
Of a small group of people  
From point A to point B

On a day that was fateful  
And for reasons unclear  
Our poor little engine  
Felt a change was quite near

So, our dear little engine  
One so useful, but old  
Made an awful decision  
All at once, that was bold

"I am tired of my smallness  
I will no more be slow  
I despise all my weakness  
To the track I will go"

"I will gather up pieces  
From afar, and from near  
I will attach them at random  
To my front and my rear"

“This will make me look bigger  
It will add stature and weight  
This will give me more length  
And make me first out the gate”

“As for the power that's needed  
To the speed shop I'll wander  
There'll be bolt-ons I wager  
All this strength I'll not squander”

To the speed shop our engine  
With alacrity retired  
A pit crew was needed  
A crew quickly was hired

The crew had no experience  
In fast auto repair  
The crew had not even  
Tried changing a spare

They were all experts, it seemed  
Of one sort or another  
But of auto repair  
No-one was to bother

These experts, they tinkered  
They welded, they molded  
Until every last piece  
That was purchased was bolted

Not a person it seemed  
Had a thought or a clue  
Of what truly was needed  
What they really should do

No thought had been given  
To the chassis, suspension  
To transmission, to seals  
No thought given to engine

No rebuild was done  
To any component  
Just new parts tacked on  
Where they fit at the moment

Our old engine, once useful  
So gleaming, so proud  
Found himself at the racetrack  
He was stunning the crowd

With new body all gleaming  
With new chrome, shining bright  
Our old engine sat idling  
At the gate, at the light

His opponent sat rumbling  
He had been here before  
He was shorter and lighter  
He had power galore

Our old engine was boastful  
He was confident, proud  
He was certain to win  
His exhaust was quite loud

As the signal descended  
The lights lit on the tree  
The contestants took off  
Amid a shower of debris

Our old useful engine  
Not designed for a load  
With old parts all worn out  
Did quite quickly explode

The rings on the engine  
Not designed for race gas  
Did allow for some seepage  
Did allow fuel to pass

The fumes were quite powerful  
To the pan they did charge  
The spark was quite forceful  
The explosion was large

The dipstick was tiny  
The tube like a gun  
The mass was too small  
For the force of a ton

All the pieces were scattered  
And while most were around  
The dipstick was launched  
And not easily found

The moral of our story  
While not easy to see  
Do not waste an engine  
On a wild racing spree

If you must go out racing  
Use parts and a crew  
That are designed for the purpose  
And who know what to do

Or like our useless old engine  
And our dipstick ejected  
You will find your parts scattered  
And your measure rejected

