

Dear Reader,

We are pleased to bring you this book, *Happily Ever After*, in the ***Discovering the Real Me*** book series. As the title says, we want you to be happy and we want to help show you how to live happily for a long, long time!

This book is full of fairy tales and wise stories. These stories have been told in many ways and in many countries around the world. Most of them were made up long, long ago. Some of them you may already know. Some may be brand new to you. We think you will enjoy them, as well as the activities your teacher has planned for you to go along with the stories.

Have you ever wondered why many fairy tales and folk tales end with the words, "And they lived happily ever after"? Why do you suppose that is? We think it is because these stories are supposed to teach us how to be good, and being good makes us happy. Fairy and folk tales show us the bad actions of evil people, witches, and sorcerers, and they show us the good actions of kind people, good fairies, wise rulers, and noble princesses. The results of bad actions are defeat, bad fortune, and unhappiness. The results of good actions are success, good fortune, and happiness. People who are good live "happily ever after"!

We hope you will learn the lessons about being a good boy or girl contained in these fairy and folk tales. We hope you will choose to do good deeds, like the heroes and heroines in this book. We think that good boys and girls grow up to be princes and princesses in their hearts—and they do live happily ever after.

Happy reading—and happy being good!

Chapter 1: The Little Red Hen - Hard Work Is Rewarded

A farmer and his daughter were sitting by the fireside on a cold winter night. The farmer asked the daughter to go fetch some more wood for the fire.

"I'm too tired, Father," she replied. "You do it."

The father said, "Are you enjoying this fire?"

The daughter smiled, "Yes, I am!"

"Then, if you want to continue enjoying the fire, you need to go fetch the wood. But first, I will tell you a story about the Little Red Hen and her friends who didn't want to help her.

It was spring, and the Little Red Hen was looking for her friends in the farmyard.

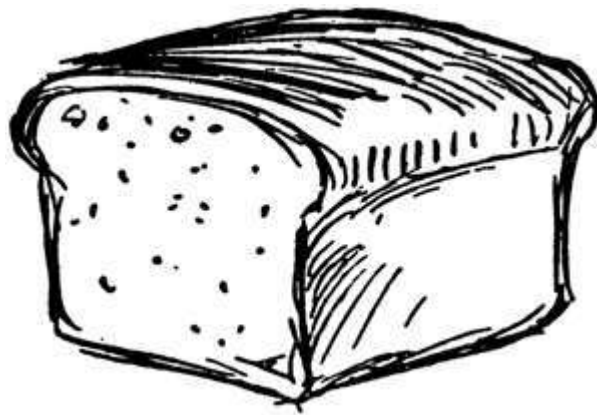
"Who would like to help me plant the wheat, so we can enjoy some bread in the summer?" she asked.

"That's so far away," replied the duck.

The pig agreed, "I just want to relax. It's spring, after all."

The cow added, "I like fresh-baked bread, but I want to enjoy this beautiful day."

"Not I, not now," said the dog.



So the Little Red Hen planted the wheat all by herself.

Many weeks passed, and the wheat had grown so tall, it was ready to be cut. The little Red Hen walked busily around the yard, looking for help. It was a warm summer day, and the animals were on their way to the pond to cool off.

"It's too hot," they said to her. "Come, get cool with us. Forget about the wheat."

The wheat needed to be harvested right away, so the Little Red Hen couldn't join them. Instead, she did all the work herself.

A few days later, the Little Red Hen wanted to thresh the wheat to prepare it to be made into flour. Once again, she asked her barnyard friends, and all they did was make excuses. She threshed the wheat herself, and put it into bags to be taken to the mill where it would be made into flour.

"I need some help to carry these heavy bags to the mill. Who can help me?" she asked.

What do you think they said?

They said, "We're too busy having fun. We can't help you."

The Little Red Hen put the bags in a wheelbarrow and went off to the mill all by herself. When she returned, she turned on the oven and announced that it was time to bake the bread.

"Come one, come all, it's time to bake the bread!"

Did anyone come to help her bake the bread? No, no one came. So she did it all by herself. She mixed the ingredients and put the loaves into the oven.

The sweet smell of the baking bread filled the yard. The duck, the pig, the cow, and the dog greeted the Little Red Hen gleefully.

"Looks like the bread is ready. We can't wait to taste it. It smells so good!"

What do you think the Little Red Hen said?

"I'm sorry for you," she said, "None of you were willing to help with the work to make this bread, so I did it all myself. Now I will eat this all by myself, too!"

And she did!

The farmer's daughter enjoyed the story. She jumped out of her father's lap and fetched the wood for the fire.

She said, "Whenever you need help, dear Father, remind me of the story of the Little Red Hen! You work so hard, I want to do things for you!"



QUESTIONS

1. Why did the father decide to tell his daughter a story by the fireside?

2. What did the Little Red Hen plan to make in the beginning of the story?

3. The animals didn't help her. They always had an excuse. What is an excuse? and what are some excuses the animals used in the story?

4. There were a lot of steps to take to make the bread. What were they?

5. Do you think the Little Red Hen should have let the animals eat the bread? Why or why not?

EXERCISE: Sometime today or tonight, offer to help your mother, father, or teacher. You will make him or her very happy!

Chapter 2: Cat in the Corner - Hard Work is Rewarded (2)

This is a story that first came from Africa.

The rainy season was coming. A man wanted to build a house to protect him from the rain. He needed help to build his house. He went around to the various animals and asked for help.

First, the man asked the cow to help him.

The cow said, "Oh, I am far too busy for that. I have to brush flies off with my tail, make milk, drink water, chew my cud, and moo. I simply can't help. I am far too busy with important cow business to help build a house."

"Hmm," said the man.

Second, the man asked the wart hog to help him.

The wart hog said, "Oh, I am far too busy for that. I have to grunt, roll around in the mud, graze, and run with my tail held high. I am far too busy with important wart hog business to help build a house."



"Hmm," said the man.

Third, the man asked the dog to help him.

The dog said, "Oh, I am far too busy for that. I have to wag my tail, run around, shake off water, bark, hunt, sleep, scratch fleas, and put my paws up on people. I simply can't help. I am far too busy with important dog business to help build a house."

"Hmm," said the man.

Fourth, the man asked the cat to help him build his house.

The cat said, "Oh, I am far too busy for that. I have to get a lot of sleep, smell every new smell, lick myself from top to toe, lap up water, catch mice, purr, and rub against people's legs. I am far too busy with important cat business to help build a house."

The cat thought about it a little bit.

"Still," she said. "I can find time to do those things later. I will help you build your house."

The cat helped the man, and soon the house was built.

When they were all done, and the house was built, the man was very pleased.

He invited the cat inside.

"Come," he said. "There is a cozy spot here by the fire. It is always warm and snug here, in the chimney corner. This can be your special place to sleep."

The cat happily rubbed against the man's legs. She lay down in the chimney corner by the fire, licked herself all over, purred, and went into a deep, contented sleep.

When the rains came, the other animals came to the door and begged to be let inside.

The man said, "I don't think so. You wouldn't help build the house. Now you have to sleep outside."



QUESTIONS

1. How is this story like the story of the Little Red Hen?

2. Did the cat get a nice reward for her hard work?

3. Do you think the man should have let the other animals in too? Why or why not?

4. Do you think if you work hard at something you should get some part of it to share, or some kind of reward?

5. Have you ever worked hard and gotten a reward? (A good grade is a reward for studying hard!)

EXERCISE

This week, keep a little notebook or notes to yourself about the hard work you do. Next to the hard work, write down the reward you received.

For example:

Hard Work Reward

Did the dishes -- Mother thanked me

Studied hard -- Got an A

Helped Daddy clean yard -- Ice cream cone

Chapter 3: A Piece of Straw - Gratitude

Long ago, a very poor young man lived in Japan. He begged a wise old man to help him make his fortune.

The wise man said, "I will give you a gift. If you take good care of it, you will be rich."

The wise man put a piece of straw into the young man's hand.

The young man thought of saying, "Is that all you have to give me?" Instead, he put the piece of straw carefully inside his jacket. He bowed to the wise old man.

"Thank you," the young man said.

The young man went on his way. As he was passing a rice field, a bee flew up to him and buzzed around his ears. He tried to swat it, but the bee kept coming back. At last, the young man caught the bee, tied it up with the straw, and put it in his pocket.

"I am so grateful I had that straw to tie up the bee!" he cried.

Soon, a fancy carriage came along the road. Inside the carriage was a lady and her son. They stopped to talk.

"What is that buzzing?" asked the little boy, and the young man took the bee out of his pocket, all tied up in the straw.

The little boy begged to have the bee. The mother offered the young man three beautiful oranges in exchange for it.



The poor young man made the trade. He felt very good about it. A simple piece of straw had turned into three beautiful, juicy oranges! He felt grateful to the wise old man for giving him the piece of straw.

It was very hot, and soon another group of men guarding a rich lady came along the road.

"Young man," they asked him. "Do you know of any water near here? Our lady is dying of thirst."

The poor young man said sadly that he knew of no water nearby.

"I do have three oranges, though," he offered. "They are full of sweet water!"

The rich lady ate all three. Then she repaid the young man for his kindness with beautiful silks.

The young man was very happy. A piece of straw had turned into three oranges, which had turned into beautiful silks! Again, he felt very grateful to the wise old man for giving him the piece of straw.

Going on, the young man met a fierce warrior on a horse. The horse was the most beautiful and fastest anyone had ever seen! As the young man stared at it, the horse fell down and looked like he died.

"Oh, no!" said the warrior. "Where can I bury my horse in this town?"

The young man offered to trade his silk for the dead horse.

"Fine," said the warrior, thinking that the young man must be crazy.

When the warrior left, the young man gently stroked the horse. With some kind words, the horse got to his feet. He was as strong and beautiful as ever.

"Ah, to think a piece of straw could turn into three oranges, then some beautiful silks, and now a wonderful horse!" cried the young man. Yet again, he was grateful to the wise old man for giving him the piece of straw.

As he entered the town, the young man saw a wealthy family getting ready to travel.

"We are moving," said the father of the family. "I could use a horse like yours. I will trade you my rice fields for this horse."

So now the young man owned a lot of land.

He said, "To think a piece of straw could turn into three oranges, silks, a horse, and fields! I am so grateful to the wise old man for giving me the piece of straw!"

The rice fields produced much rice, and the young man became one of the richest men in town. He married, had children, and lived happily.

Whenever his children thought something small and simple was of no value, the rich man smiled and told them about the piece of straw.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the young man's problem at the beginning of the story?

2. What would have happened if he had thrown away the straw in anger at the wise old man for giving him so little?

3. Everyone along the road seemed to like the young man and wanted to trade things with him. Why do you think they liked him?

4. Do you think the young man would have been so lucky if he had been ungrateful and complaining?

5. There is an old saying, "Little things mean a lot." Do you think this old saying is true? How did it come true in the story?

EXERCISE

Make a list of ten things you are grateful for. They can be big things or little things. Next time you are feeling sad or unlucky, think about these ten things and be thankful for them. You might find you start feeling happy and lucky!

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Chapter 4: The Crane's Gratitude - Gratitude (2)

A crane is a lovely bird—long-legged and graceful, with long white wings. One day in Japan, a crane got her leg caught in a trap. Crying with pain, flapping her wings, she attracted the attention of a farmer.

"Oh!" he thought. "Those traps were not meant to catch lovely cranes!"

The farmer was an old man, but he was very strong. He sprung the trap open, and the crane limped, then flew away without a backward glance.

"Hmph!" the farmer snorted. "That's gratitude!"

That night, as the old farmer and his wife sat drinking hot tea in the evening, there was a knock at the door. The old woman answered it.

Oh! A beautiful young woman stood there!

"I am poor and hungry," the young woman said. "I have no parents or home. Please, may I just come in and stay the night until I can continue my journey?"



The old folks were kind-hearted, so they allowed the young woman in. They gave her food and a place to sleep. When they awakened in the morning, she had cleaned the whole house and had a delicious, piping hot breakfast ready for them.

"Thank you," they said, and they sat down to the meal.

Throughout the day, the young woman showed no signs of leaving. But she did all the housework and helped with the farm work and filled the house with her singing, smiles, and laughter. The old couple begged her to stay on for a few more days.

The few more days turned into weeks and then months. The old couple felt she was like their own daughter. Never had they felt so rested, well-fed, or happy. They wondered how they had ever gotten along without her.

One day, the young woman said, "I am an excellent weaver. If you bring me some silk thread, I can make some lovely cloth for you to sell at the market. It will bring you profit and more comforts for your old age."

The old farmer bought some silk thread at the market and brought it home.

"This is perfect," said the young woman. "I can make something very fine out of this. But I need to be alone. Allow me to close myself off in one of the rooms for a few days. Please don't peek into the room. In three days, you will have lovely silk to sell at the market."

She was as good as her word. After three days of closing herself away from them (they didn't peek), the young woman came out with yards of the most exquisite cloth they had ever seen. It shimmered and shone, with beautiful white gleaming between the silk threads.

"This will fetch a very high price at market!" exclaimed the old farmer.

And it did.

The young woman seemed very tired after all this labor. She rested a day or two and then went back to her housework.

Every time the farmer brought silk thread back from the market, the young woman retired to a small room, was not seen for three days, and produced more exquisite cloth that fetched a very high price at the market. Soon, the old farmer and his wife were rich. But the young woman was very tired, almost all the time now.

"What tires her so?" the farmer and his wife asked one another. "And how can we help? It is wonderful that we are so rich, but what does she do in that little room? Can weaving really tire her so?"

Curiosity got the better of them, so one day they opened the door just a crack and peeped.

What a wondrous sight! A beautiful white crane was working at the loom! Now they saw how the shimmering white came into the material—the crane was plucking her own feathers to weave along with the silk thread. That was why the cloth was so exquisite. However, all this plucking and pain was wearing her out.

"Oh!" she said, spotting the farmer and his wife. "Oh, no—you peeked!"

She explained that she was a magical crane, capable of turning herself into a human being. But now that they knew her secret, she would have to return to nature.

The old couple wept and begged her to stay, but she could not. That was the way the magic worked.

She embraced them one last time.

"You were so kind to me," she said. "You saved my life when my leg was caught in the trap; you gave me a place to stay when I was hungry and tired."

You have been like parents to me. You will always prosper now. Thank you for all you've done for me."

"Thank you for all you've done for us!" they said. And they watched her take wing and fly away.

Sometimes the old farmer saw her, as a crane, on the corner of his property where he had first found her caught in the trap. She was lovely and free. And though she never spoke to him again, he knew she was grateful.



QUESTIONS

1. Why did the farmer think the crane was ungrateful at first?

2. Can animals show their gratitude to people who feed or help them? How has an animal shown gratitude to you?

3. Did the old couple know the beautiful young woman was the crane?

4. What did the young woman do to show the old couple she was grateful to them?

5. Was the old couple grateful to the crane?

EXERCISE:

Do you believe that if you are kind to others, they will be kind to you? Try it! You will find that even animals respond to kindness. They are showing their gratitude when they lick, purr, rub against you, or want to play.

Chapter 5: The Lost Ax - Think Kindly of Others

Long ago in China, a farmer was going outside to do his morning chores. He needed to chop some wood for the fire. He reached for his ax, behind the door where he always kept it. It was not there.

He called to his wife, "Did you see my ax?"

"No," she answered. "I did not see it."

He called to his oldest son, "Did you see my ax?"

"No, I did not see it," said his son.

Someone has stolen it, the farmer thought.

He went outside. There was his neighbor, standing near the farmer's property. Right away, the farmer felt suspicious. His neighbor kept his back to him.

The farmer thought, "He stole my ax. That is why he will not face me."

He went inside and complained to his wife, "Our neighbor stole my ax! I am sure of it!"

His wife said, "I don't think he would do that. It's possible, of course. But why don't you look around a bit?"

The farmer didn't want to look around. He wanted to go over and shout at his neighbor. But he did look around the yard, watching his neighbor out of the corner of his eye.

Oh! There was his ax! He had left it stuck in a tree stump the day before. "Hello!" he said to his neighbor. His neighbor, who was very busy at work, turned around and waved to him in a friendly way.

I am lucky to have such a hard-working, honest neighbor, thought the farmer.

"Have a good day!" he called to his neighbor.

"You too!" called his neighbor, and both men went off to finish their morning chores.



QUESTIONS

1. Did the neighbor steal the ax?

2. The neighbor was facing the other way when the farmer first came out.
What did the farmer think this meant?

3. The farmer was still facing the other way after the farmer found his ax.
What did the farmer think of this once he had found his ax?

4. First, the farmer thought his wife was responsible for the missing ax.
Then he thought his son was responsible. After that, he thought his
neighbor was responsible. Who was really responsible for the missing
ax?

5. Do people tend to blame others first before they take responsibility themselves?

6. Have you ever thought something had been stolen from you, only to find it and realize the people around you were innocent?

EXERCISE

Repeat each good thought about others five times:

1. Most people are good.
2. Most people are honest.
3. Most people mean no harm.
4. My family loves me.
5. I have many good friends.

Chapter 6: Try, Try, Again - A Good Attitude in Bad Fortune

An announcement was made throughout a small village that the rich Mayor wanted his lovely and smart young daughter to marry. However, he wanted whoever married her to be a great hunter—if possible, the greatest hunter in the world.

His daughter, Gretchen, had other ideas.

"As long he is kind, gentle, and hard-working, I don't care if he can hunt or not!" she said to herself.

Now, in the village, a very poor widow lived with her stepson, Jacob. Jacob was kind, gentle, and hard-working. But he definitely wasn't a good hunter.



His stepmother, who wanted the Mayor's money, demanded that he attempt to win the hand of Gretchen.

Jacob said, "I would truly love to marry such a good and clever girl. But, alas, I am no hunter."

His stepmother was so determined, she went to a local sorcerer and asked how her poor stepson could marry rich Gretchen.

"Oh, I can easily make him the best hunter in the world," said the sorcerer. "But as payment, after seven years of marriage, he must come away with me and be my servant."

The anxious stepmother told Jacob these terms, and he got very upset with her.

"Be a servant to a sorcerer? What kind of a life is that?"

"Well, at least with Gretchen's riches, I would be provided for in my old age."

"And what of my old age—the servant of a sorcerer!"

Jacob protested so much that the stepmother went back to the sorcerer.

"Jacob refuses these terms," she said. "And I cannot accept them for him."

"Oh, all right," said the sorcerer. "I'll give him one way out. If, at the time I come for him, he asks me a question I can't answer, I will let him go free."

Jacob thought it might be possible, in seven years, to think of a very hard question to put to the sorcerer in order to go free. And he very much wanted to marry Gretchen. So he agreed to the terms.

The sorcerer tapped Jacob's gun with his wand and said that would make him the greatest hunter in the world.

Jacob went up to the Mayor's big mansion and knocked on the door.

"I am the best hunter in the world," he called. "And I want to marry Gretchen!"

Gretchen and her father looked out the window.

"He looks nice," said Gretchen. "Let him in."

Her father didn't like the idea. Jacob was too poor to marry his daughter! But he let Jacob in.

"If you are such a great hunter, can you shoot the feather out of the tail of a magpie?" he asked Jacob.

"I can try," said Jacob. He went outside and shot at the next magpie that flew by. A feather fell to the ground.

"Oh, that was very good!" applauded Gretchen.

Her father was angry. He could see that Jacob had somehow turned into a masterful hunter. So he cheated a little.



He said, "I want a son-in-law who will be a fine farmer as well as a huntsman. A farmer as fine as I want would have to have a plow that runs by itself, or he can't marry Gretchen."

"No fair!" said Gretchen.

Jacob said gently to her. "I can at least try it."

Jacob visited the sorcerer, who tapped an old plow with his wand, and it ran by itself.

"See you in seven years," the sorcerer said, as Jacob went running after the plow. It headed straight for the Mayor's mansion.

"Now you cannot deny Jacob," said Gretchen, when Jacob had shown them the plow.

"But my child," said the Mayor. "You are used to fine silks and satins. Hunting and farming are all very well, but you need a man with money in his purse."

Another visit to the sorcerer brought Jacob back to the Mayor's mansion carrying a purse that always filled up with gold coins, no matter how many times you emptied it.

Jacob and Gretchen were married, and they were very happy together. Gretchen was clever, loving, and lovely, and Jacob was kind, gentle, and hard-working. They loved each other very much.

When you love someone very much, seven years is not such a long time to spend together at all. The years melted away. Jacob realized that soon he would have to leave Gretchen and their children. He told her about his promise to the sorcerer.

"Oh, no!" she said. "No, you must not go! He is an evil person! He will make you evil too!" She burst into tears. "Is there no way out?"

Jacob held her tenderly. "He did say that if I asked him a question he could not answer, he would let me go free."

Gretchen and Jacob pored over all the books in the house that night. They looked for the hardest questions they could find.

"I don't think this is any use," said Jacob. "I have heard that sorcerers know everything there is to know, Gretchen. They are very clever."

"We can at least try! I am clever too," cried Gretchen. "And I love you so much, I will be even more clever and outwit the sorcerer!"

That night Gretchen had an idea, which she told to Jacob. Jacob listened.

"Oh, my smart Gretchen!" he said. "It just might work!"

The next morning, Gretchen came out of the bathtub and poured honey all over herself. Then she ripped open her feather mattress and rolled in the feathers. She went out like that, covered in feathers, and hid in one of her father's fields.

Jacob met the sorcerer at front door.

"Are you ready, Jacob?" asked the sorcerer.

"I am," said Jacob. "Since you have made me a such a fine hunter, may I hunt along the way?"

"Certainly," said the sorcerer. "In fact, there is a magpie. Why don't you shoot that?"

"Too small," said Jacob.

They walked farther, and came upon a cotton tail rabbit.

"Shoot that," said the sorcerer.

"Too small," said Jacob.

They walked farther, and walked past one of Gretchen's father's fields.

There was something big and feathery in the meadow, jumping, hopping, and flapping around. It was Gretchen, covered with honey and feathers.

"Shoot that," said the sorcerer. "You want to shoot something big, so shoot that."

"What is that?" asked Jacob, squinting.

"I don't know," said the sorcerer.

"Then I am free!" said Jacob. "I asked you a question you could not answer!"

The sorcerer blinked, gulped, yelled, stamped his feet, told Jacob he was not fair, and then ran away.

Jacob and Gretchen went home together and lived happily ever after.

QUESTIONS

1. Was the Mayor fair to Jacob?

2. Did Jacob keep trying, even though the Mayor was not fair to him?

3. Was Jacob happy he kept trying? How do you know?

4. How did Gretchen help Jacob outwit the sorcerer?

5. Why is this story entitled, "Try, Try Again"?

EXERCISE: Jacob and Gretchen faced a lot of difficulties before they could be happy together forever. Yet they kept trying and trying, and they did not give up. Write this sentence five times in your notebook or on a special paper that you decorate: "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again."

Chapter 7: The Lost Horse-A Good Attitude in Bad Fortune(2)

A man walked out to the pasture one day to feed his horse. The man lived in the northern part of the vast country of China. In this region, if you owned a horse, you were fortunate. He was very grateful for his beautiful, strong stallion.

He looked out into the field for his treasure, but the horse did not come. Usually, the horse would gallop over to his owner to greet him, but not today. He was nowhere to be seen.



A neighbor came running over with some bad news: “Your horse ran away with a herd of wild horses. See, they broke the fence over there with their hooves. You’ll never catch him, for they are running north very fast.”

The owner was sad to lose his horse, but he thought to himself, “Maybe some good will come out of this misfortune. You never know.”

It wasn’t long before the horse did return, and with him was a fine mare. The whole village congratulated the man and wished him well.

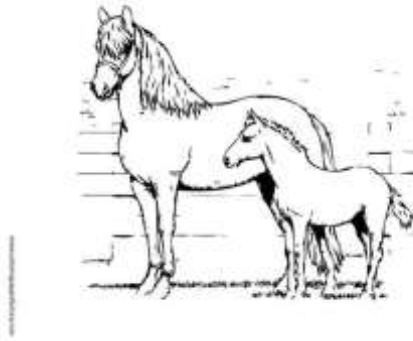
This horse owner had a son who loved to ride. The son decided to train the mare. One day as the young man was trying to ride the mare, he fell off, and she rolled on top of him, breaking his leg.

“It looks bad,” the father told his son. “But maybe something good will come from your misfortune.”

Soon afterwards, all the young men of the village were ordered to join the army to defend the northern border of China against invaders. It would be a dangerous mission because the attackers were ferocious. Indeed, it was expected that many of the young men would lose their lives in this battle.

The commander came to all the farms, looking for young men. When he saw the young man with the broken leg, the commander told him he could not come with the army. He would be useless because of his broken leg.

“You see,” said the father to his son, as the young men of the village marched away to the north. “We are lucky indeed. Out of a miserable situation came good fortune. Even when we have problems, we should try to believe that something good might come out of our difficulties.”



QUESTIONS

1. What happened to the man's horse in the beginning of the story?

2. Was he worried about never seeing his horse again? What did he have to say about it?

3. Did the man's fortune increase after the horse went away? Why?

4. What happened to the man's son? Did something good happen after the son was injured?

5. Do you think the man in the story has a good way of dealing with problems? Why or why not?

EXERCISE: Repeat after your parent the old saying, "Every cloud has a silver lining." Discuss what you think this old saying means. Draw a picture of a cloud with a silver lining or a storm cloud moving away as the sun comes through.

Chapter 8: Be Careful What You Wish For—You May Get It! A Good Attitude in Bad Fortune (3)

Once upon a time, there was a man who was rather poor. He had a pretty wife whom he loved, and she loved him. They were happy together, but they never had any money to spare.

"I wish we had more money," the wife said.

"How often we have wished that," said the husband. "But our wishes never seem to come true!"

The next day the man was out chopping wood (he was a woodcutter by trade). Suddenly, a woodland fairy appeared to him



She said, "Are you the man whose wishes never come true?"

"I—I am," said the frightened man. "But I didn't mean to complain..."

"Well, just to prove to you that the universe is fair, I will grant you three wishes. But, mind, I will grant three wishes and no more. Be careful what you wish for!"

The husband was thrilled! He ran home to tell his wife of their good fortune.

"Fanchon! Fanchon!" he called, for this was his wife's name. And he told her all about the woodland fairy's promise to grant them three wishes.

Excitedly, they talked over what wishes they would want.

The husband said, "Let us think about this and not rush into it. The fairy said to be careful what we wish for, Fanchon, my dear."

The wife agreed. "Let us draw close to the fire as we think about it," she said. "It is cold."

They stirred the fire and, seeing that it burned very well, the wife said, "I wish we had a big juicy sausage to heat on this good fire."

A large sausage appeared on the fire!

"Oh, Fanchon!" cried the husband. "You have wasted one of our wishes! Why did you wish for such a foolish thing? I wish it would stick to your nose as punishment!"

Sure enough, the sausage stuck to the wife's nose. She could not pull it off, no matter what she did. She looked very foolish with that sausage hanging from her nose! However, it did block her mouth, which her husband quite liked.

"Let's see," he said. "For my next wish..."

"Next wish!" blustered his wife from behind the sausage. "Isn't it obvious what you should wish for? Wish this sausage away from my nose!"

Her husband loved her, and he knew it was his fault that the sausage was stuck to her nose. So he wished for it to drop off her nose. It did.

Husband and wife stood very quietly, looking at one another.

"Maybe we wouldn't have been happy with riches," said the wife. "Or good looks. Or fame. Or even with health and a long life."

"Let's wish for nothing then," said the husband. "Let's just accept things as they are and be happy for every bit of good luck and not be too unhappy for every bit of bad. We have each other—we have love—and that is really all anyone could wish for!"

The husband and wife sat down in front of their warm fire and ate all the sausage—it was very tasty! They laughed the evening away, forgetting any wish but to be together.



QUESTIONS

1. If you had three wishes, what would you wish for?

2. Would three wishes be enough or would you need more?

3. Think of ways in which your three wishes might not make you happy after all.

4. The husband says, "We have love—and that is really all anyone can wish for!" Do you agree with him? Why or why not?

5. Do you think it is better to be happy with what you have rather than always wishing for more?

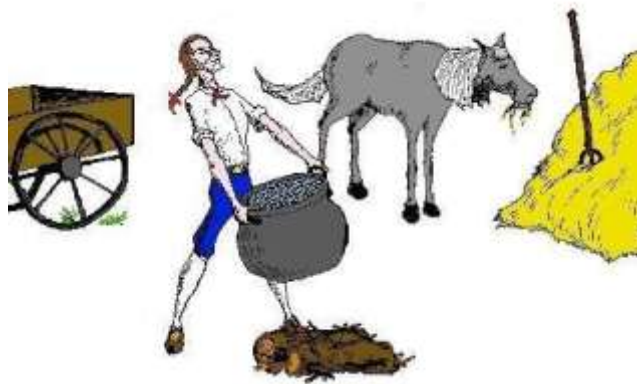
EXERCISE : Close your eyes and imagine a glass. Now imagine water being poured into it just to the halfway point. Do you see this glass as being half-empty? Or half-full? There is a happy way and a sad way to look at the same thing. If you see the glass as half-full, you feel happy you have some water at all. If you see the glass as half-empty, you are just thinking of what you don't have, and you might not feel so happy.

We all want more than we have. Let's practice the happy, positive way of looking at things and be grateful for what we do have. Let's look at the half-full glass rather than the half-empty one!

Chapter 9: Stone Soup - In Unity, There Is Strength

It was a miserable time for all the citizens of France. Food was scarce. Everyone was hungry, and people quarreled more than usual. (Do you ever quarrel more with your brothers and sisters when you are hungry or tired?) When people did manage to get food, they hid it all away, for they did not want to share with their neighbors. But that was about to change.

One day, a hungry soldier entered a country village. He went from door to door, asking for a little food. Do you think anyone gave him anything? No, he did not get a bite to eat. He was told that no one had any food, and he should keep going on to the next village. But instead of moving on, he sat down in the village square and started to make a fire with wood he had gathered.



The villagers became curious, and they came out of their houses to watch.

“What are you doing?” asked a little girl, as the soldier set up a large iron pot he had found over the fire.

The soldier filled the pot with water from the public well, then answered her: “Well, I’m about to make some famous stone soup to share with all of you, since you have nothing to eat.”

“Stone soup? What is that?” questioned the crowd, as the soldier drew out an ordinary-looking stone from his knapsack.

“You’ll see,” he answered. He carefully placed the stone inside the pot of water on the fire. When the water boiled, he stuck his spoon in and tasted the broth.

“Delicious!” he exclaimed, while the villagers smelled the air for a whiff of the famous soup. “How I love stone soup,” said the soldier. “Especially stone soup with cabbage,” he added. “That’s the way the King liked it.”

An observer remarked, "The King? With cabbage? Okay, I'll go get some." He ran home and brought back a head of cabbage.

"Here, put this in," he said hungrily. So the soldier did, as everyone watched and sniffed.

"It's even better with potatoes and carrots," added the soldier. A woman who had a little garden brought some to add to the mixture.



"If there's a little bit of meat, it really tastes good," continued the soldier, stirring, and he gave a nod to the butcher. "Even a bone adds some flavor."

"That's probably true," said the butcher, who went back to get a meaty bone he had hidden away.

Other villagers brought onions, greens, and tomatoes, too, and they watched as the soldier added them to the stone soup. Finally, the soup was done. The soldier told everyone to get a bowl. Then he dished out soup for all to enjoy.

"Delicious!"

"Can't be beat!"

"Never had anything this tasty!" remarked the villagers.

Everyone ate his or her fill and was happy. They all rubbed their bellies and rolled their eyes.

"Can we buy this stone from you so we can make our very own stone soup?" they asked the soldier.

"I'll give you the stone," he said. "And I hope that you make stone soup and have supper together many times!"

They did. And that village never went hungry again.

QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think the soldier stayed after everyone told him they didn't have food to give him?

2. What happened as the soldier started to make the soup?

3. Do you think the soldier expected that the villagers would bring the food they were hiding?

4. Do you think the villagers were able to share, after the soldier left?
Why or why not?

5. Do you think the stone really made the soup? Or was it just a way to get the people to start sharing?

EXERCISE

Draw pictures of cabbages, carrots, onions, tomatoes, and a stone. Your parent will make a big circle in the room to be the pot for stone soup. Act out the story.

Work with your parents to attend or put on a potluck. The food always tastes better when everyone shares.

Chapter 10: The Giant Turnip - In unity, there is strength (2)

Once upon a time, on a farm in Russia, there lived an old grandfather with his wife, their four children, and their sixteen grandchildren. The smallest grandchild was just a baby.

The old grandfather and his wife had worked hard all their lives. Now their grown-up children and their spouses did most of the work, with the grandchildren helping out with chores. The old grandfather and his wife were in charge of the vegetable garden just outside the kitchen.

Now in this garden, the turnips were ready to be pulled out of the ground. The old grandfather was having a hard time getting a big stubborn one out of the ground.

"Dear wife," he called to the old grandmother. "Can you help me get this turnip out of the ground?"

The old grandmother came to the garden and put her arms around the old grandfather's waist. They pulled and pulled, but they could not get the turnip out of the ground.



"Sons! Daughters!" they called to their grown-up children. "Can you help us get this turnip out of the ground?"

The sons and daughters came to the garden. They all lined up, tallest to shortest (the grandfather was the tallest), and they all pulled and pulled. But they could not get the turnip out of the ground.

"Husbands! Wives!" The sons and daughters called. "Can you help us get this turnip out of the ground?"

Even with all these in-laws pulling, they could not get the turnip out of the ground!

"Grandchildren! Grandchildren!" the grandfather called. The sixteen grandchildren lined up, tallest to shortest, and the whole family pulled and pulled. But they could not get the turnip out of the ground.

"It must be a giant turnip!" they said. "Shall we dig it out?"

"Nonsense!" said the old grandfather. "The day a whole family cannot beat an old turnip is a day I hope never to see! Wait a minute!" he said. "The whole family isn't pulling!"

He went over to the baby grandchild, who was lying on a blanket, and gently removed the rattle from the baby's hand. He tied a rope around the smallest grandchild's waist and put the other end of the rope in the infant's tiny fist.

"Now, pull, Baby," he said, giving the baby grandchild a kiss on the forehead.

The whole family lined up again by height. They pulled and pulled, but they could not get the turnip out of the ground.

"One more time," said the grandfather. "Pull!"

They pulled and pulled. To see them, the baby laughed out loud, and tugged on the rope.

The turnip came out of the ground! It popped out so fast, the whole family fell down like a row of dominoes. The smallest grandchild just missed falling down on the baby!

"That is one strong baby!" they all laughed.

"No, that's the strength of a family," said the grandfather.

QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever tried to do something that took physical strength alone and then asked other people for help?

2. Have you ever tried to do something that took mental strength (like math) alone and then asked other people for help?

3. Do you need other people's help in your life?

4. Who helps you the most and what do they do for you?

5. The story shows that even a baby can help in a family. What can you do in your family to help other family members?

EXERCISE

Your parent will guide you in this exercise. The whole family is to line up by height, just like the family in the story. The only thing is—you can't talk! You have to work together—cooperate—in order to do something in the house, yard, or community. Maybe your family can visit the grandparents and do a project for them. Your parent will decide if you did a good job working together or cooperating. This should be a fun and enjoyable exercise.

Chapter 11: The Place of Brotherhood

In Unity, There Is Strength (3)

Long ago, two brothers lived on a farm they had inherited from their father. They divided it in perfect halves, and that way they became neighbors.

The older brother had seven children. The younger brother was married, and he and his wife were expecting their first child. These two brothers had always loved and respected each other, so it wasn't really a surprise when one night, something curious happened.

It was dark, and there was a crescent moon that barely lit the sky. The younger brother stood in front of his farmhouse and looked towards his older brother's property. Before him were several sheaves of wheat that he had harvested earlier that day. His faithful dog sat nearby, ready for action.

The younger brother said to his dog, "Tonight, it's dark enough. Let's go quietly over to my brother's barn and give him these sheaves of wheat."

The man and his dog walked over to the barn, and he placed the wheat inside.



Then he said, "My brother has seven children to feed, yet I receive an equal amount of wheat from our divided land. He needs this more than I do."

And he went back to his house and fell asleep.

Later that night, the older brother stepped outside his house.

"Yes, it's dark enough tonight. He won't see me," he said, as he loaded up his cart with several sheaves of his wheat that he had harvested earlier that day. He walked over to his brother's barn and placed them inside.

"My brother is expecting his first child. He will need some extra income," said the older brother.

In the morning, both brothers went to their barns as usual and were surprised to find the extra wheat. They wondered where it had come from and who had put it there.

The next night, it was very dark again, and the two brothers secretly brought more gifts of wheat to each other's barns. The third night, the brothers gathered sheaves of wheat to deliver to each other again, and this night they both left their homes at midnight.

It was even darker than before, and there was a fog that made it impossible to see anything. As the brothers crossed the fields, they bumped into each other.

"Ouch! What's this?" exclaimed the older brother as he fell backwards onto the ground.

"It's me!" replied the younger brother as he stumbled and fell on top of his brother. "I was bringing you extra wheat!"

"I was bringing you extra wheat!"

The brothers then laughed and cried together, hugging, when they realized how kind the other one was.

When the king of that region, King Solomon, was told the story of the two brothers, he was deeply moved in his heart.

"We will erect a temple on this very spot where the two brothers secretly delivered wheat to one another. In this way, we will always be reminded of their example of brotherly love and service."

That temple still stands in the famous city of Jerusalem.



QUESTIONS

1. Why did the younger brother want to help his older brother?

2. Why did the older brother want to help his younger brother?

3. How did they discover who was delivering the sheaves of wheat at night?

4. Would you like to have brothers like the ones in the story? Why?

EXERCISE

What do you do to show your family members that you love them? What do they do for you? Make a list of additional things you can do to show your family you love them, and try to do one extra nice thing every day.

Chapter 12: The Tiger's Whisker - Love Conquers All

It was getting close to the day of the wedding. The young Korean bride was worried. The Korean groom was a good man, but sometimes he would get angry and lose his temper, and then she didn't know what to do. Her mother told her to just serve and care for him, then he would be a happier man, and more peaceable.

The young bride-to-be was still worried. She finally decided to get some advice from the Village Elder, who was known for his wisdom.

"Please give me some potion that will make my husband loving and kind all the time," she pleaded.



The Village Elder replied, "I will help you, but in order for me to make the potion, I will need you to get one whisker from a living tiger."

The young bride was so determined to get the potion that she agreed to try, even though it was a dangerous thing to do. That night, she left her safe home, carrying a bowl of meat. She climbed up to a cave on the mountainside where a tiger was said to live. Near the cave, she heard the tiger growl, which frightened her. She put down the bowl and quickly went home.

She did the same thing the next night, but this time she crept closer to the cave where she could see the tiger standing inside. After placing the bowl near the cave, she returned home.

This became a routine for her and the tiger, who ate up the meat she brought every night. Finally, after weeks of leaving the bowl of meat outside the cave, she decided to take a chance. She entered the cave with the meat, set it down, and then left.

The next night she did the same thing, but this time she stayed while the tiger came up to the bowl, glanced at her, then ate his meal. Looking into his eyes, she could see that the tiger was becoming friendly, which gave her the courage to do something even more daring the next night.

The next night, she brought the bowl into the cave, set it down, then sat down next to it, and waited for the tiger to approach. The tiger came as usual and ate his meal, while she watched him. Then he brushed up close to her, and she could hear him purring. She reached out and petted the beast. He did not seem to mind; in fact, he closed his eyes and went to sleep, still purring.

She took a small pair of scissors from her pocket and gently clipped off a whisker. She was amazed that she was no longer afraid. She even felt love for the tiger.

The next day, the young bride brought the whisker to the Village Elder, who took it in his hands, examined it, then threw it in the fire!

“Why did you do that? I thought you were going to use it to make a potion,” inquired the startled woman. “It’s taken me months to win the tiger’s trust!”

The Elder responded, “If you can win the trust and friendship of a wild tiger, surely you can do the same with a husband.”

These wise words inspired the young bride to begin her marriage with confidence.

She thought to herself, “I will do with my husband as I did with the tiger. Day by day, I will win his heart with love until he is always gentle to me.” And she did!



QUESTIONS

1. What was the young bride worried about in the beginning of the story?

2. What did she want from the Village Elder?

3. What did the Elder tell her to do?

4. How did the young woman get the tiger's whisker?

5. What did the Elder do with the whisker and why?

6. Do you think the woman learned something in the story? What was it?

EXERCISE : Think about a time when it was difficult to be nice to someone. Did you do anything to make the relationship better? Now that you've read the story, can you think of something you could have done to make it better?

Chapter 13: Taro, Son of the Dragon - Love Conquers All (2)

In a poor village in the mountains of Japan, the people had to help each other, because there were frequently times when food was hard to get.

During harvest time, especially, all the neighbors worked together. All the crops were ripe at the same time, so all the neighbors worked hard together to get in all the food.

Taro was a very small boy, who was helping his mother. Because she was ill and weak, the villagers had asked her to stay behind and cook lunch for all the harvesters. A quantity of fish had been given to her to cook for everyone.

She was so hungry! They were so very poor! The smell of the grilling fish was too much for her. She had to eat one!

"I'll just eat my share of the lunch now," she told herself. But after just one fish, she was still so hungry!

"Surely, an extra one could be spared for the cook," she thought, and she ate another fish. Her hunger was so great, soon she had eaten all the fish—everyone's lunch!

She felt guilty, but she was also very thirsty, for it was very salty fish. She drank all the tea she had made for the villagers' lunch. In fact, she was so thirsty, she ran to the river and drank it dry!



As Taro watched his mother being so greedy, he was shocked. He was even more shocked when, as punishment, she turned into a dragon! Nature turned her into this wild beast because she had taken food and drink from the mouths of her friends, the hungry and hard-working villagers.

When she saw the shocked look on Taro's face, the mother wailed in sorrow.

"My shame is so great, I must leave this village," she said to him. She handed him some of her scales. "Don't forget me, please! Even though I was

bad and selfish!" And the dragon ran away to live in the forest near a large mountain lake.

Taro couldn't help but miss his mother, even if she was a dragon of selfishness. He went to sleep each night with her scales in the palm of his hand, weeping and weeping. He missed her, and he wanted her back. At the same time, he could tell that she had done something very bad. Everyone in the village was mean to him, remembering his mother, who stole all their food and water.

Still, a boy can't help but love his mother. And sometimes he felt as if the dragon's heart was calling to him, from the lake in the forest, telling him how much she loved him too. He would dream and dream of a dragon, who was weeping in sorrow and saying that she was sorry.



Now a drought came upon the village. That means, there was no rain for a long, long time, and all the rivers and lakes and streams got lower and lower. The people had a hard time getting enough water to drink.

As he watched the villagers suffer, Taro thought of his mother, the dragon, living at the mountain lake. All the waters of the lake were held in by mountainsides. There was no river or stream coming from the mountain lake to refresh the villagers, and it was too far to go to get water. People would die of thirst along the way!

Taro determined to go see his dragon mother about the drought. Along the way, he sucked on leaves in the forest to get a little moisture.

At last, he saw her, a great dragon, sitting on the shore of the lake.

"Mother!" he cried. He ran to her and, as well as they could, mother and son embraced.

He explained to her about the drought, and he told her maybe this was her chance to save the village from which she had once stolen. As a dragon, she knew that she needed water to live. If she gave the lake water to the villagers, her own life might end. Taro knew this too. Still, they both knew what the right thing to do was.

"Taro," she said. "I would do it. But I have grown so blind over the years, I can hardly see. I would need to be able to see well to knock down a mountainside and let the water flow down to the village."

"I'll ride on your neck and guide you," promised the brave boy. Mother and son looked deeply into one another's eyes. Even in her blindness, the mother could see that the boy was willing to sacrifice his own life for the sake of the villagers. Mother and son resolved together that they would die to save the village the mother had once betrayed. The boy climbed onto his mother's neck and guided her.

The mountainside was stubborn; it took all the mother's strength to break it down. With one last cry, she threw her body against the mountain and broke all her bones. But the mountain broke too, and the water rushed in great gushes down the mountainside, to the village.

Crying with grief as he saw his mother sink forever, the boy grabbed a log and floated down the mountainside in the cool, clear water.

When he floated into the village, all the people were gathering water from the new river to bring into their houses.

"My mother, the dragon, gave her life that you might have this water," he explained. "I hope you will forgive her for what she did long ago."

"We have forgiven her," they said. "We are thankful for this water."

Taro threw himself down on the ground and wept for his mother. He thought his tears were enough to make a river!

Suddenly he heard the villagers saying, "Ooh," and "Ahhh!", and "What a marvel!", and "What a wondrous sight!"

Floating down the mountain on a raft was a beautiful lady. It was Taro's mother, returned to the form of a woman.

"Mommy!" Taro cried and ran to her.

From then on, Taro and his mother had no shame in the village. In fact, they were honored.

QUESTIONS

1. Why was what Taro's mother did at the beginning of the story bad?

2. What was Taro's mother's punishment?

3. How did Taro suffer for her deeds?

4. What did Taro do to try to make up for what his mother had done?

5. Did Taro and his mother love each other very much?

6. Because of their love for each other, Taro's mother returned to a human form. Do you think the love between a parent and child is powerful?

EXERCISE

Doing something kind and loving can often make up for having made a mistake or having done something bad. Have you made a mistake or hurt someone's feelings or done something bad lately? What can you do to make up for it? Choose the best answer in the following situations:

1. Shauna got mad when her friend interrupted her and told her friend to "Shut up." What can Shauna do to make up for these cruel words?

a. Say, "I'm sorry. You interrupted me, and I got a little mad, but I shouldn't have said 'Shut up.'"

b. Hit her friend to show her how serious Shauna is about not being interrupted.

c. Interrupt her friend every time she speaks just to show her how it feels.

2. Jimmy got mad when his friend's toy airplane wouldn't fly right and he threw it on the ground. Now it's broken. What can Jimmy do to make up for his destructive act?

a. Stamp on the plane to really make sure it's broken and say, "You shouldn't have such a cheap, stupid toy anyway!"

b. Offer to buy his friend an ice cream.

c. Apologize, tell their parents, and offer to save up to buy the friend a brand new airplane, just as good as the old one.

3. Krista's older sister had a birthday recently and there is one piece of cake left. Krista eats it. Her sister comes home and says, "I wanted that last piece to remember my birthday by! It was my cake!" What could Krista do?

a. Say, "I thought you were on a diet anyway!"

b. Apologize and offer to buy or bake a special cake to replace it.

c. Say, "It was getting spoiled. I had to eat it, or it would go to waste."

Chapter 14: The Owl - Be Kind and Polite to Everyone

A baker had two daughters who were as different as night and day. Oh, they looked alike, all right. In fact, they were twins. You could hardly tell one from the other, except for the expressions on their faces.

Mindy was almost always smiling. Her forehead was clear, her eyebrows were uplifted, and her eyes danced. Mindy was a kind and generous girl. Her laughter was like pretty little bells that tinkled gently on the listener's ear.

Mandy, on the other hand, was always frowning. The only time she smiled was when something bad happened to someone she was jealous of or, for a minute, when she got a gift she especially liked. Mandy's eyebrows were often arched over her eyes, looking like dark wings, and her eyes snapped with bad temper. Mandy was stingy and mean. Her laughter was sharp—and it was usually directed at someone else.

One winter evening, Mindy was working in her father's bakery. She was enjoying the warmth that the ovens gave off and the warm, happy smells of breads, cakes, and pies baking.

The door blew open, and a raggedy old woman wrapped up in a dark cloak entered the bakery.

"May I come in out of the wind?" she asked. "It is so warm in here."

"Yes, of course," said Mindy. She couldn't imagine saying no on a wintry night like this.



"Why, look at this," said Mindy after the old woman had settled herself on a stool. "There's some dough left over from the last loaf I baked. Shall I bake it up for you so you may have a bite to eat?"

"Why, thank you," said the raggedy old woman, closing her eyes. The old lady fell asleep because of the warmth of the ovens.

When Mindy opened the oven, the dough had doubled in size to make a big loaf of bread. Mindy was happy for the old lady. She gently woke her up and handed the bread to her on a brightly checked, clean napkin.

Beneath the dark hood of the cloak, Mindy saw that the old woman had a warm and kindly face, shining with gratitude and good cheer for her. In fact, in spite of all the wrinkles, her face seemed to be full of light.

The old woman said, "Because you are generous, life will be generous with you."

And it seemed to be so. Whenever the baker left Mindy to run the bakery, the baked goods multiplied, and so did their customers.



Then one night, still in winter, Mandy, the baker's mean daughter, was working in the bakery. The wind blew the door open, and the same raggedy old woman, wrapped in the same dark cloak, came in.

"May I come in out of the wind?" she asked. "It is so warm in here."

"I guess so," snarled the baker's mean daughter. "If you must." She thought to herself, "It's not that cold outside!"

After a few minutes of smelling all the wonderful smells of the bakery, the old woman asked, "Would there be a morsel of leftover dough to bake in the oven that I might eat?"

"I suppose so," said Mandy. "But, mind, there isn't much!"

She tore off a little bit of dough and put it in the oven. The old lady fell asleep because of the warmth.

When Mandy opened the oven, the dough had doubled in size to make a big loaf of bread. What was more, it was full of sugar, plump raisins, and other berries.

"It's too much and too good for her," muttered Mandy, and she took it out and hid it while the old woman appeared to sleep.

The old woman opened her eyes. "Did my little bit of bread dough bake?" she asked.

To hide what she'd done, Mandy decided to turn it into a joke.

"Hoo-hoo!" laughed Mandy. "Hoo-hoo on you! It burned up, and I've no more to spare."

The old woman let a little bit of her face show under the dark cloak's hood. Mandy could not be sure, but she thought she saw light shining from the old woman's face.

"Because you are not generous, life will not be generous with you," she said. "You have dark thoughts about other people, so you shall live in darkness. And, from now on, you won't be able to say anything but 'Hoo-hoo!'"

Mandy's dark, angry eyebrows turned into long, dark wings. Then her whole body turned into that of an owl.

Screeching, "Hoo! Hoo! Hoo!" she flew out into the cold, windy night and was never heard from again.



QUESTIONS

1. Mindy and Mandy were very different. Can you name five different ways they were different from one another?

2. Which would you rather run into on a cold, wintry night? Mindy or Mandy?

3. If you are a girl, which one would you like to be: Mindy or Mandy? If you are a boy, which one would you like to marry: Mindy or Mandy?

4. Of course, we know no person is going to turn into an owl. But do you think a person's future might be changed—for good or bad—depending on how nice he or she is to other people?

5. Is it right to laugh at other people's bad luck and not want to help them when they are in need?

EXERCISE: The old woman in the story seemed to have magical powers. She changed the bread dough into a larger loaf of bread, she seemed to bless Mindy with the ability to multiply baked goods and customers, and she turned Mandy into an owl. Try this: whenever you meet someone, imagine that person has magical powers. Try treating everyone kindly, the way Mindy treated the old woman.

Chapter 15: Roses and Diamonds, Snakes and Toads Be Kind and Polite to Everyone (2)

Once upon a time there was a widow, who had one daughter and one step-daughter. The oldest daughter was her full daughter. She looked and acted exactly like her mother: that is, she was proud, vain, and very sharp-tongued.

The youngest daughter was the widow's stepdaughter; her father had been married before, and now both her mother and father were dead. This girl looked and acted exactly like her dead father and mother: that is, she was humble, modest, and gently spoken.



The widow favored her own daughter, so she made the youngest daughter do all the housework while she and her older daughter rested all day long.

One of the youngest daughter's chores was to fetch water each day. She had to walk a mile to get to the village fountain, and then she had to carry a heavy pitcher of water back home, walking the mile again.

One day as she was filling a pitcher of water at the fountain, a poor, old, raggedy woman came up to her and asked if she could drink.

"Yes, of course," said the youngest daughter. "It is very hot today, isn't it? How thirsty you must be! Let me help you." She held the heavy pitcher up for the old lady so that she could drink more easily.

Now, this old lady was a fairy in disguise, with the power to give wonderful gifts.

"You are so kind and have spoken to me so gently, I want to give you a gift," she said to the young girl. "From now on, whenever you speak, a diamond or rose will come out of your mouth."

"Oh, my goodness!" said the young girl, and sure enough, a diamond came out of her mouth.

When she got home, her stepmother yelled at her for taking so long at the fountain.

"I am so sorry," said the young girl. "There was an old lady who wanted help..."

The stepmother was about to beat her for making excuses, when she saw roses and diamonds falling from the girl's lips.



"What is this?" asked the stepmother, speaking softly to the girl for the first time in her life as she held the diamond in her hand.

The girl told her about the old woman at the fountain and her gift. As she spoke, diamonds and roses poured out of her mouth.

The old woman was very happy, as it was clear they were going to be very rich now. But she wanted the same gift for her own daughter, so she told her to go and fetch water at the village fountain.

"Me? Go and fetch water?" said the daughter. "That will be the day!"

She grumbled so much that her mother said, "Stop croaking like a frog and go! Your fortune awaits you! And be sure to be kind to any old ladies who come and ask for water."

The older daughter did not like to walk or work, so she swung the pitcher hard as she walked and complained all the way to the fountain.

Filling the pitcher, she said, "This is so heavy! And now I have to carry it all the way back home."

A very richly dressed and lovely lady came up to the fountain. She looked like a queen.



This is not the fairy, the oldest daughter thought. (She was wrong about that, though. It was the fairy, in another disguise.)

And because the oldest daughter was proud and thought she would soon have a dress as fine as the lady's, bought with diamonds, she said rudely, "You can just wait your turn. I was here first. Don't think all your finery means you get to butt in line."

"I don't recall asking to go first," said the richly dressed lady calmly.

"Your kind always thinks they are better than everyone else," said the rude, oldest daughter. "Well, you're not!"

The richly dressed lady (the fairy) said, "Because of your manners, I think you need a gift."

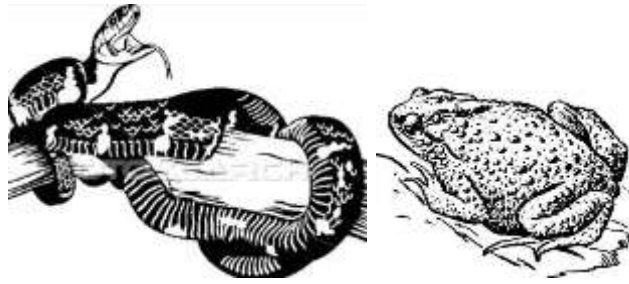
"A gift would cheer me up," said the rude girl. "What is it?"

"You'll see when you get home," promised the rich lady, and she walked away from the fountain.

The girl walked home, groaning all the way with the weight of the pitcher. When she entered her mother's yard and saw her mother coming, she put the pitcher on the ground.

"There!" she said. "I carried it all that way and all I met was a rich lady who lorded it over me. Pick it up and carry it yourself. I'll not carry it anymore."

The mother, who was looking for jewels to come out of her daughter's mouth, instead saw snakes and toads pour out.



The kindly daughter knew she would be blamed for this somehow, so she ran away into the forest. The prince, who was coming back from a hunt, saw her and was worried that such a gentle maiden was out in the woods alone.

When he asked her what was wrong, she poured out diamonds and roses as well as the words, "My stepmother blames me for everything, so I ran away."

The prince took her up on his horse and brought her to the castle. Besides her great gift, which would make any kingdom rich, he thought she was the loveliest and gentlest girl he had ever met. The more he talked to her, the more he thought of her good nature.

When he brought her to the king, the king agreed that the two could marry, and they did. The castle they lived in came to be known as "The Rose Castle", for its hallways and rooms were always filled with vases and vases of fresh roses.

Tired of living with snakes and toads that constantly came out of her daughter's mouth, as well as the girl's selfishness and bad temper (so like her own!) the mother sent the oldest daughter to live alone in the woods, where she was never heard from again.

QUESTIONS

1. Why was the mean daughter favored by the mother?

2. Was this fair? Why or why not?

3. How did the younger daughter treat the old woman at the fountain?

4. What came out of her mouth after that?

5. How did the older daughter treat the old woman at the fountain?

6. Who was happier—the mean, selfish daughter or the kind, unselfish daughter?

EXERCISE: It's easy to see who is good and who is bad in a story like this. Yet sometimes we don't realize when we are being selfish. We may not be as bad as the older daughter was, but still, we may refuse to do chores or to help others, even when they ask.

Try doing whatever someone asks you to help with without complaining. If you can keep doing this, you will have a happy life, just like the younger daughter.

Chapter 16: The Princess and the Pea - Royalty Is in the Heart

A king and queen were looking for a wife for their son, the prince. The new princess would have to be very special, and they were trying to decide how to find such a young lady.

The king said to his wife, “The new princess must be a compassionate person. She must be aware of others' feelings, even when they don't talk about them. How can we ever find such a sensitive person?”



The queen was very wise, and she came up with a plan.

“Let's do this,” she said, “Let's make up a test. We will invite young ladies to come stay overnight at the palace, one at a time. Each will sleep on a bed with fifteen mattresses. Underneath the bottom mattress, we'll put a single pea.”

The king continued, “Yes, and the most sensitive lady will be able to feel that pea!”

They sent out an announcement, and ladies lined up at the door. Who wouldn't want to be a princess? The first lady was invited in for the night. She slept on the bed with the fifteen mattresses, but didn't feel the pea.

This was obvious in the morning when she was asked by the attendant, “How did you sleep?”

She replied, “How dare you—a serving girl—ask me something so personal about myself? I am to be a princess, and you are nothing but a servant! Still, to answer your question, I slept like a baby!”

The king and queen shook their heads. A person like this simply was not sensitive enough in any way to be one of the main leaders of their kingdom.

Many young ladies came to sleep at the palace and not one felt the pea. Most of them acted like they were better than the serving girls, too.

Finally, a different kind of young woman came. She was very plain and simple, with a beautiful smile. When she slept in the bed that night, she tossed and turned and couldn't sleep. The next morning she arrived at the breakfast table. She tried to smile as she sat down to eat. She was especially kind to all the serving girls. But she had circles under her pretty eyes and was yawning. She took a few bites of the breakfast, then her eyes closed, and her head went down on the table. She was fast asleep on her plate!

The queen's attendant shook her awake.

The young lady apologized.

"I'm so sorry. I couldn't sleep last night. There was something round and hard underneath the mattresses, and it kept me awake all night." Then she put her head down and went back to sleep.

The attendant left her there and went to report to the king and queen, who rejoiced.



"She's the one! Because she is so sensitive, she will make a fine princess. Our search is over," they exclaimed.

The prince was very happy to have such a sensitive wife. She was sensitive to the feelings of all around her. The young lady became a fine princess, and was loved by everyone in the kingdom because she had such a sensitive, caring heart.

QUESTIONS

1. What kind of princess were the king and queen looking for?

2. What was the test to choose the new princess?

3. What do you think a princess does? Why would a princess need to be sensitive?

4. Do you think you would like to be a prince or princess? Why or why not?

EXERCISE

Think about whether or not you are sensitive to others. Can you tell when someone is sad? Do you help that person? Can you tell when someone is mad? Do you know what to do to help such a person? Can you think of a time when you were sensitive to someone else and you helped him or her? You were being a true prince or princess then!

Chapter 17: Out of the Ashes - Royalty Is in the Heart (2)

It was a cold day on the shores of the North Atlantic Ocean. The little tent near the beach provided shelter for Strong Wind and his sister. Strong Wind was a great Indian warrior, who had special powers. He had the ability to make himself invisible, which was useful for listening in on his enemies' plots against him.

Strong Wind was ready now for marriage, and he was looking for a virtuous wife. More important to him than anything else, was that she had to be an honest woman. So he made up a test to discover the most honest woman in the tribe, for his wife would be an Indian princess.

This was the test: Any woman interested in marrying him was asked to walk on the beach with Strong Wind's sister. Strong Wind would come also, but he would be invisible. After the walk, the sister would ask the woman if she had seen her brother walking with them.



“Did you see my brother? If so, what was he using to pull his sled?” she’d say.

Every night a new candidate would come, hoping to be chosen as Strong Wind’s bride. But so far, each woman had lied.

One would say, “Yes I saw him, He was pulling the sled with a rope.”

Another would say, “Yes he was there, and he was pulling the sled with a leather strap.” It was impossible for them to see Strong Wind, but they pretended that they could, thinking that this would help them to be chosen as the new bride.

The chief of the tribe had three daughters, and the elder girls wanted to be put to the test. The youngest daughter did, too, for she was old enough to become a bride. This youngest daughter was especially beautiful, and she had a heart to match her beauty. She was known for her compassionate and caring behavior, and was well-liked by her tribe.

The two elder sisters were envious of her, and they did mean things to their little sister. They cut off her shiny, long, black hair. They ripped her clothes, so she looked like she was wearing rags. They put hot coals on her face, which covered her face with ashes, burned her skin, and gave her blisters. They ordered her to do their chores so that she was always working hard, while they rested and played.

The chief didn't know that his elder daughters were doing these things, because the youngest never complained.

When he asked about the ashes and blisters on her face, the elder sisters said, "She is so careless, she fell into the fire and burned herself."

Because they were liars, the elder sisters failed the test when it was their turn. Now, it was the night that the youngest sister would walk with Strong Wind's sister on the beach. To prepare herself, she patched her ragged clothing and washed the ashes off her face. Her hair was still very short, and there were blisters on her face, but she was still determined to try. Even though she did not look beautiful on the outside, she was beautiful on the inside.

She walked down to the beach to meet the sister and Strong Wind, who was invisible. As they walked, the sister asked if she saw Strong Wind.

She replied honestly, "I see him not."

They walked a little further, and the sister asked again, "Do you see my brother now?"

The girl replied, "Yes, and he is very wonderful." Strong Wind had appeared to her as a reward for her honesty.

She was asked the next question, "What is he using to pull the sled?"

The girl replied, "He is using a rainbow to pull the sled."

The next question was about his bowstring.

"What is it made of?" said Strong Wind's sister.

The girl said confidently, "It is made of the stars of the Milky Way."

The honest girl could see Strong Wind, whereas none of the others had been able to. Strong Wind was very happy to find an honest woman, and he instructed his sister to prepare her for the wedding.

The sister took the girl to her tent, and washed her face with herbs. All the soot disappeared and the blisters closed up. The more Strong Wind's sister combed her hair, the smoother and longer it grew. Strong Wind's sister

clothed her in the finest dress and took her to sit beside Strong Wind, who rejoiced to find his bride! And now she looked as beautiful on the outside as her clean and honest heart was inside.

The chief conducted the wedding ceremony, and everyone was happy except the elder sisters. What happened to them? For punishment, they were turned into birch trees by Strong Wind's magical powers. They were firmly rooted in the soil. The only part that moved were the leaves that trembled with fear and guilt over the way they had treated their sister—every single time the strong wind blew!



QUESTIONS

1. Who was Strong Wind and what kind of bride was he looking for?

2. What was the test that the women of the tribe had to pass if they wanted to be Strong Wind's bride?

3. Why were the elder sisters mean to their younger sister?

4. Why do you think the younger sister was able to pass the test and become the new wife of Strong Wind?

5. What happened to the elder sisters in the end?

EXERCISE

Draw a mirror on a piece of paper and write inside the outline of it what you would like to see in yourself when you look inside. Would you like to be honest? Brave? Kind? Hard-working? Grateful? Cooperative? Loving? Generous? Respectful? These virtues are the beauties of the heart this book has told about.

Sources and Origins of the Stories

1. "The Little Red Hen" has multiple sources in literature. This version is based on English sources.
2. There are several African folktales about how the cat came to live in the human house. One delightful one appears in Nelson Mandela's Favorite African Folktales (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2002). In it, the cat ends up curled up by the fire in a human house—there to stay forever—much like "Cat in the Corner."

"Cat in the Corner" is a retelling of an African folktale based upon Malachi McCormick's retelling, called "Chimney Corner" in *Cat Tales, Folk Tales Collected and Retold* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc./Publishers, 1989). "Cat in the Corner" is embroidered to fit more perfectly with the theme of "The Little Red Hen."

3. This famous story from Japan originally involves Buddhist monks and their wise leader. It is so famous that there are many sources, but the primary source for this retelling was "A Piece of Straw", *Legends of Japan*, retold by Hiroshi Naito, (Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1972).

Naito reports in the Introduction to his book that most of the stories in the book contain material from *Konjaku Monogatari*, written between 794-1185. He further traces their origins to Japanese, Chinese, and Indian legends.

4. Thanks to Izumi Zaccaro for her retelling of "The Crane's Gratitude". This folktale is so famous most Japanese people know it by heart. Depending upon the area in Japan where the tale is told, there are variations. One variation is that the crane comes to live with a young man who takes her as his wife.

Stories about kindness to others and to animals abound in Japanese folklore. One's fortune is made or broken by the way one treats others and the creatures of the natural world.

5. "The Lost Ax" or "The Stolen Ax" is a famous Chinese tale, retold many times and in many places. This retelling of it is based upon Elisa Davy Pearmain's telling of it in *Once Upon a Time* (Greensboro, NC: Character Development Group, Inc., 2006).

Pearmain, in turn, credits Heather Forest's "The Stolen Ax" in *Wisdom Tales from Around the World* (Little Rock, Arkansas: August House Publishers, Inc., 1996) and "The Missing Ax," in *Favorite Folktales from Around the World*, edited by Jane Yolen (New York: Pantheon Press, 1986).

It is our understanding that this story is Taoist in origin.

6. This is a European fairy tale, drawing on many famous fairy tale motifs: three tasks to be accomplished, a fair maiden to be won, evil to be outwitted (preferably through disguise), a wicked stepmother, etcetera.

Our retelling of this tale owes thanks to Howard Pyle's "The Skillful Huntsman", Pepper and Salt, written in 1887, published by Harper & Row in 1913, and available electronically at www.Gutenberg.org/etext/15664.

A charming and simplified version of it appears in *Clever Gretchen and Other Forgotten Folktales*, retold by Alison Lurie (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1980), which the authors of this book also referred to.

The discerning reader will also notice echoes of the biblical story of Jacob winning his bride Rachel: winning a bride through three trials, waiting for seven years, and the use of trickery and subterfuge.

7. "The Lost Horse" is another famous Taoist tale designed to help people deal equably with good fortune and bad.

8. "Be Careful What You Wish For—You Might Get It!" This story has multiple origins. It is told in Sweden, England, and France. Storytellers Martha Hamilton and Mitch Weiss in their book *More Ready-to-Tell Tales from Around the World* (Little Rock, Arkansas: August House Publishers, 2000) say they have heard versions of it from Puerto Rico to Korea. They note that Joseph Jacobs, who wrote it down in English, claimed it probably came from India originally.

In some versions, the wish for food is for a sausage; in some it is for pudding. In all versions, the couple returns to their original status and is content with that.

Making three ultimately useless wishes and returning to one's original state also has echoes of a Persian folktale from the Thousand and One Nights.

Charles Perrault's "The Three Wishes" appears on the internet and in Iona and Peter Opie's *Fairy Tales* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974). Our retelling relies heavily on Charles Perrault's story. It is sometimes called "The Ludicrous Wishes" or "The Ridiculous Wishes."

Perrault (1628-1703) is one of the most famous names in fairy tales. He codified many European folk tales and legends, all but inventing the literary form.

9. "Stone Soup" is a famous French folktale of multiple sources.

10. "The Turnip" is a Russian folktale of multiple sources.

11. "The Place of Brotherhood" is a Jewish legend, originally written in the Talmud.

12. "The Tiger's Whisker" is a well-known Korean folktale.

13. Thanks to Izumi Zaccaro for her spirited retelling of the famous Japanese folktale, "Taro, Son of the Dragon."

14. "The Owl" is based on an English folktale. This folktale is older than Shakespeare, who had Ophelia refer to it in *Hamlet* (Act 4, Scene 5) "They say the owl was a baker's daughter...."

Scholar Andrew Lang (1844-1912) in Volume 1 of his work *Myth, Ritual, and Religion* refers to this story as a bit of Christian mythology. In the story, the mean baker's daughter is rude to the Lord, who is in disguise, and therefore is changed into an animal who cannot face the light.

A rare fairy tale, it appears in *The Penguin Book of English Folktales* and *Halliwel's Nursery Rhymes of England*. Margery Williams Bianco, author of *The Velveteen Rabbit*, wrote a version of it for Doubleday Books. It also appears in *Clever Gretchen and Other Forgotten Folktales*, retold by Alison Lurie (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1980) as "The Baker's Daughter". Our retelling of it follows the basic story line of this latter source.

The fairy tale also has been used in both feminist and Jungian analysis.

15. "Diamonds and Roses, Snakes and Toads" is based upon Charles Perrault's "The Fairy", published in 1695 and translated into English in 1729. "The Fairy" by Perrault appears in Iona and Peter Opie's *He/sheic Fairy Tales* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974).

Our retelling of he/sheic tale also is based upon Andrew Lang's close retelling of Perrault's story, "Toads and Diamonds", which appeared in his *Blue Fairy Book*, published in 1889. The *Blue Fairy Book* is available at Project Gutenberg and on numerous e-texts websites containing works within the public domain.

16. Hans Christian Andersen is the author of this famous fairy tale.

17. This is known as a Canadian Indian tale. Cyrus Macmillan is credited with the retelling in both William Bennett's *The Children's Book of Virtues* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995) and on the website www.surlalunefairytales.com. Cyrus Macmillan's retelling of the story originally appeared in the book *Canadian Wonder Tales* (Toronto, Canada: John Lane, 1920).

More specifically, this story is told among the Mi'kmaq storytellers of Nova Scotia and among the Passamaquoddies of Maine. It is theorized, however, that these Indian storytellers were adapting Charles Perrault's famous Cinderella story, which they heard from French fur traders, who passed it down to the French Acadians (children of French and Indian ancestry). In the middle of the 19th century, Silas T. Rand codified the story and other Mik'maq stories at Hants Port, Nova Scotia.

A Cinderella story appears in a dizzying amount of cultures around the world. The story of a virtuous, downtrodden woman who rises up from the ashes to win the heart of a prince has universal appeal.