



CHAPTER 2

A New Job

The next morning, Isobel greeted him by the Duke's stables and told him he could start work immediately.

Every day he fed and brushed the horses and cleaned their stalls. He made friends with the other workers and grew to love his work.

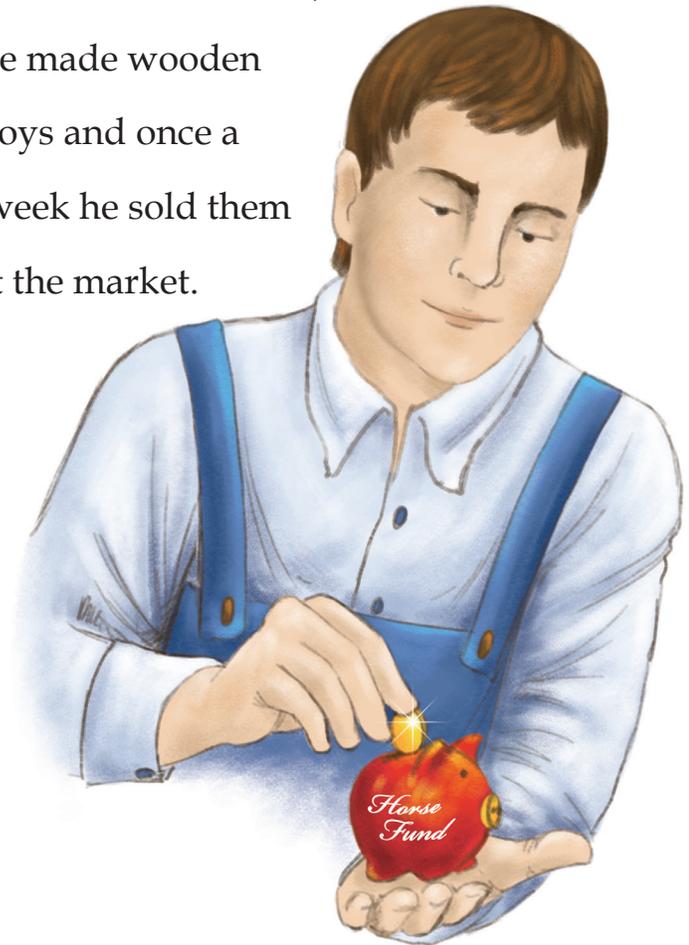
And every day, because he did so well, the Duke let him ride a horse out in the fields.

THE FINANCIAL FAIRY TALES



He loved the feel of the wind in the air even more than he had imagined. This made him even more determined to buy a horse of his own, so he took his uncle's advice. Every night after he had finished work, he made wooden toys and once a week he sold them at the market.

He gave some of the money to his mother to help pay for food and put everything else he earned into a piggybank by his bed.



Dreams Can Come True

Isobel came to the stables every day to groom her mare. Tom began to look forward to her visits. He talked to her about horses and told her about his wooden toys. She told him about her riding lessons and how she loved to play the flute. The two quickly became close friends. The Duke approved of Tom's hard work but not of his friendship with Isobel. After observing the two together one day, he drew his daughter aside.

"I don't want you spending any more time with Tom," he said. "You are the daughter of a Duke and shouldn't be seen with a poor stable boy."

"But father, I love him!" Isobel protested.

"I absolutely forbid it!" the Duke shouted angrily.

Isobel spent the next three days crying in her room. Tom was concerned, and wondered what had happened. That evening, after he finished work, he went to the main part of the house to look for her. He was met by the Duke.

"Good evening my Lord" Tom bowed respectfully. "I was worried about Isobel. Is she alright?"

THE FINANCIAL FAIRY TALES

The Duke answered, "I think you are a fine young man and I am pleased with the work you do at the stables."

"Thank you, My Lord."

"But I don't want you spending time with my daughter. She will soon marry a nobleman who is worthy of her."

"I see." Tom frowned. What was he going to do? "What if I were rich, then would I be worthy of her?"

"I know your heart is in the right place, but you are not rich Tom. Let that be the end of it."

But Tom wasn't going to give up easily. "My Lord" Tom continued, "If I can prove to you that I am worthy, will you then let me marry your daughter?"

The Duke laughed. "Alright Tom, if you can bring me five bags of gold one year from today then I will let Isobel decide who she marries. I will promise no more than that."

"Thank you, My Lord. All I need is a chance to prove myself."

Dreams Can Come True

The Duke went back inside, confident that Tom had no chance of earning that much gold working in the stables, not even if he had ten years instead of one.

Tom ran home, desperate to find a way to earn the money.

He sought out his uncle. Tom knew that Solomon was the only one who could help him now. The two sat by the pond while Tom told his story.

“So you see, Uncle, I need your help. It’s a lot of money!”

“Are your toys still selling well?” his uncle asked.

“Yes. I sell them as quickly as I can make them, but there isn’t much time to carve because I work at the stables all day.”

“I see” Solomon paused, stroking his chin. “I think I may have a plan.”

“What is it?” Tom was prepared to do whatever it took.

“You’ll see. Tomorrow, come straight home after you finish your work in the stables.”