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### **The Farmer and the Fairy**

Once upon a time, there was a little farm boy who lived by the woods. He lived with his mother, his father, his brother, and three little sisters. And though they had no money they were as happy as could be.

One day, the little farm boy was sent out to collect water from the spring in the woods. He took his jar and headed off into the woods. As he walked through the woods the little farm boy saw a beautiful blue butterfly unlike anything he had ever seen.

“I will catch that butterfly,” the little farm boy thought to himself, “and show it to everyone back home.”

So, the little farm boy took his jar and in one fluid motion caught the butterfly.

“Hey,” shouted the butterfly, “Let me out!”

The little farm boy, not wanting to further upset the strange butterfly released the butterfly from the jar.

“Thank you,” said the strange butterfly that, on closer inspection was actually a tiny person with wings attached to her back dressed in the fine clothes and jewelry of a princess or queen.

“I am the Fairy Queen,” said the fairy, “Take me to my spring in the woods and I shall grant you any wish you desire.”

The little farm boy, feeling sorry for catching the fairy in the jar and wanting to be helpful said, "I will take you to the spring. I was heading there anyway so it won't be any trouble at all."

Upon reaching the spring the fairy flew to the center, hovering a few inches above the water.

"Well," said the fairy seating herself regally upon a stone in the center of the spring, "What do you wish for?"

Now the little farm boy did not know this, but fairies are tricksters and their wishes are often curses or pranks in disguise. One little boy wished he could jump high and was turned into a frog. Another child wished that she could breathe under water and was turned into a fish.

"I don't know," said the little farm boy, "Can I think about it for a while?"

"Of course," said the fairy sweetly, "Come back tomorrow. You can make your wish then."

The little farm boy thanked the fairy, promising to return.

The next day, the little farm boy had to milk all the cows by himself. No one would help him, not even when he said "please".

"I wish I were a king," said the little farm boy, "then everyone would have to do what I say."

After the cows were milked, the little farm boy walked into the woods to make his wish. As he walked through the woods he thought about what it would be like to be a king. He

dreamed of the banquets, the parades, and the castle he would live in. He was happy with his fantasy until a thought hit him.

“I can’t be a king,” said the little farm boy to himself, “I don’t know the first thing about ruling a country, and I do not think I would enjoy holding court and listening to people’s complaints and such all-day long.”

When the little farm boy reached the spring, the fairy was sitting there just like she would be.

“So, have you decided what you wish to be?” the fairy asked in a soothing voice.

“I’m sorry,” the little farm boy replied, “I wanted to be a king, but I know I would be bad at it and make people unhappy.”

“That’s okay dear,” said the fairy, hiding her disappointment with a smile, “I will be here tomorrow. You can make your wish then.”

The little farm boy waved the fairy goodbye and headed home.

The next day, the little farm boy and his family headed into town to sell their crops and milk, and to buy tools for the farm. In the town there was a toy shop the little farm boy loved to visit, even though he had no money to buy anything with.

“I wish I were rich,” thought the little farm boy, “then I could buy all the toys in the world.”

That evening, the little farm boy headed for the spring, thoughts of mansions and fancy parties floating through his head.

“It will be nice to be rich,” the little boy said. But, as he said these words he thought of Mr. Banker from town. Mr. Banker was very rich, but he never seemed happy. He always argued with his wife and children, and was always being asked for money by those around him.

“If being rich causes my family and friends to stop loving me, then I do not want to be rich,” said the little farm boy.

When the little farm boy arrived at the spring the fairy was sitting in her usual spot on the rock.

“So, have you decided what you wish to be?” the fairy asked in her singsong voice.

“I’m sorry Miss Fairy,” the little farm boy apologized, “I wanted to be very rich, but then I realized that no one would really love me, only the money I had.”

The fairy, hiding her indignation at being called “Miss Fairy” sighed, “That’s okay dear, I will be here tomorrow. You can make your wish then.”

The little farm boy apologized again and then returned home.

The next day, the little farm boy’s mother read the children a story while they were doing their chores. In the story a knight fought a dragon to save a captured princess.

“I want to be a heroic knight,” thought the little farm boy, “I will go on adventures, fight monsters and save princesses. People everywhere will tell stories and sing songs about my adventures.”

After his chores were finished, the little farm boy headed off to see the fairy with thoughts of heroics in his mind. Halfway to the spring a thought popped into the little farm boy’s head.

“I do not like fighting,” thought the little farm boy, “All a knight does is fight. For every princess he saves there is always another waiting to be rescued.”

When the little farm boy arrived at the spring, the fairy was sitting on her stone, but for some reason looked sad.

“So, have you decided what you wish to be?” the fairy sighed.

“No,” said the little farm boy apologetically, “I wanted to be a knight like in the stories, but I do not like fighting.”

“Well, what do you want,” cried the fairy, her last drop of patience spent.

“I do not know what I want to wish for,” replied the little farm boy.

As he said this the fairy burst out into tears. The little farm boy wondered what was wrong. She looked lonely out on her rock in the spring, perhaps that was why she was sad.

“Miss Fairy,” the little boy gently asked, “would you like a friend?”

The fairy, hearing this stopped crying.

“Would I like a friend?” thought the fairy. She never had a friend before, no one had ever asked. Everyone avoided her because of her mean pranks. Perhaps she was indeed a bit lonely, out there on her rock. Maybe a friend would do her some good.

“Yes,” she finally answered, “I would like that very much.”

“Well then,” replied the little farm boy, “I wish that you would be my friend.”