

LEVELED BOOK • K

The Squire's Bride



A Norwegian Folktale Retold by Vera Ogden Bakker
Illustrated by Joel Snyder

The Squire's Bride



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Written by Vera Ogden Bakker
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Feeling Lonely

Long ago and far away, a rich **squire** rode out to look over his land. He watched his field workers **harvesting** hay.

The squire smiled, for he would soon be able to sell the hay for gold.

A red leaf landed on the squire's nose. Then, more and more leaves floated on the air. He frowned, remembering how long and lonely winter was.



The squire spotted a lovely girl in the field. *I shall make her my wife,* he thought.

“Will you marry me?” he asked.

“You will have a big house and wear beautiful clothes,” he said, but the girl refused his offer.





A Promise Made

The squire was angry. He promised to pay her father's **debt** if the father could get his daughter to marry the squire.

"Arrange the wedding," said her father, "and when you are ready, send for my daughter."

The squire's cooks spent days making a feast, and the maids cleaned his big house to a shine.

He invited all the neighbors and hired the **parson**.

When everything was ready, he sent a boy to the girl's father.

"Tell him to send what he promised," the squire ordered, "and be quick."





A Promise Fulfilled

The boy hurried to the farmer's house. "My master said to send what you promised, and hurry."

"Yes, yes," said the man, "she's in the field. Take her with you."



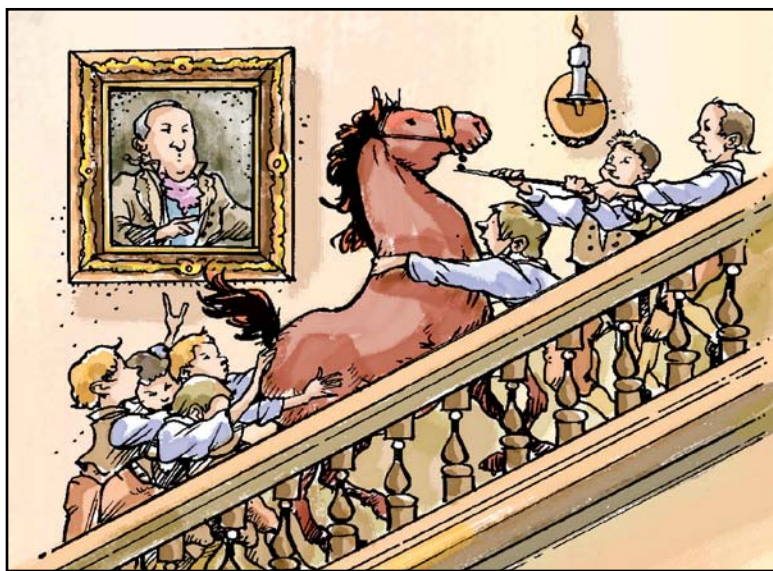
The boy found the girl raking hay.
He said, "I'm here to fetch what
your father promised my master."

"Oh, yes," she said, with a smile,
"He means the little **bay mare**.
She's at the edge of the field."

The boy jumped on the mare's back and rode fast to the squire's home. "She's outside by the door," he told the squire.

"Take her upstairs to her room," the squire said.

The lad shook his head, but he knew better than to argue with the squire. He got seven men to push and pull the mare up the stairs.

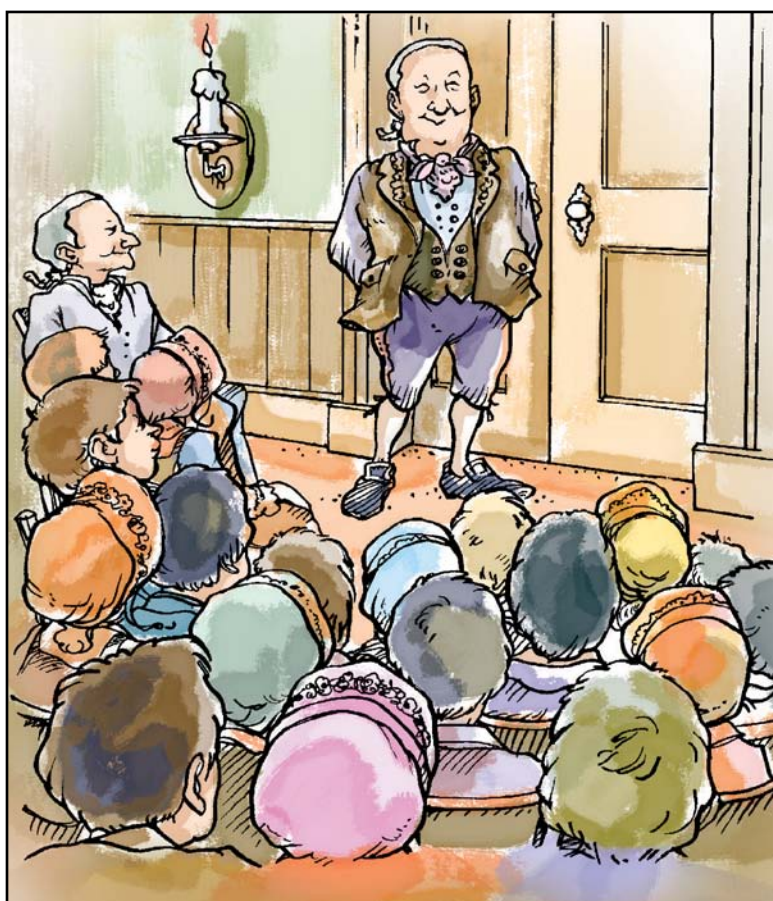




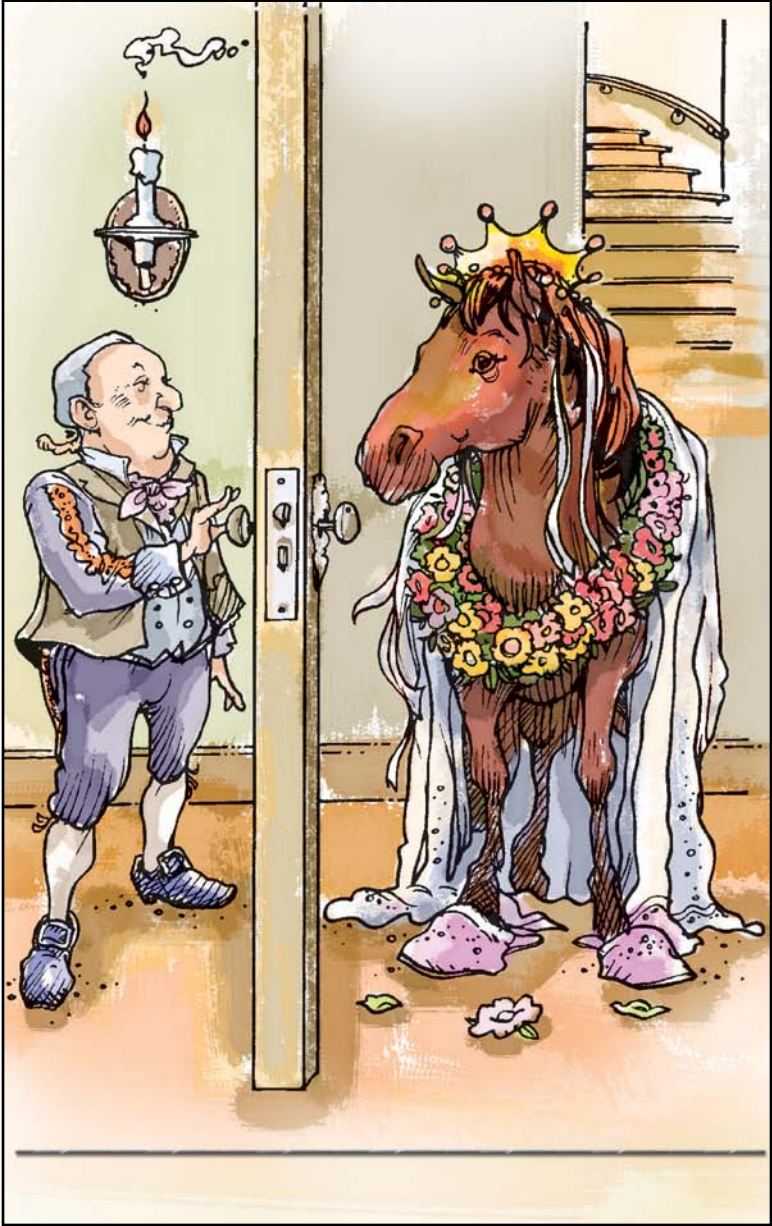
The Big Event

When the women came to dress the bride, they stretched and tugged on the gown. They put flowers around her neck and a crown on her head. They pulled satin slippers on her front hooves.

The music began to play. The guests turned to watch the door where the squire waited for his bride. There was a great **clatter** on the stairs, for the bride had only two satin slippers.



The door opened.





The squire never went **courting** again.

Glossary

bay	a reddish-brown horse with black legs (p. 10)
clatter	a rattling noise (p. 13)
courting	looking for a mate (p. 15)
debt	money owed to someone else (p. 7)
harvesting	cutting or picking a crop (p. 4)
mare	a female horse (p. 10)
parson	a minister or preacher (p. 8)
squire	the richest landowner in a village; a low-ranking nobleman (p. 4)

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Correlation

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