

Contentment

Once upon a time in a far away country, there lived a farmer with his wife and son. They all worked together, taking care of their land and animals. Their farm was near the border with another country, which, unfortunately, was constantly at war with theirs.

One day the family's mare did not return to the stable, and it was soon discovered that it had strayed into enemy territory. Some of the villagers came to the farmer, gave him the bad news and tried to console him. But the farmer did not seem to mind what had happened to his mare. He simply told them, "This could be a blessing."

Several months later, the mare returned, not alone but with a fine steed of the breed for which the neighboring country was famous. On hearing the news, the villagers came to see the farmer and congratulate him for becoming the owner of such a wonderful horse. But the farmer was not excited; he observed, "This could be a misfortune."

The farmer's son wanted to ride the new steed, and so he did. But the animal turned out to be wild and threw the young man violently to the ground. His hipbone was broken and for a long time he was unable to walk.

Visitors came again to console the family for this tragic accident. But the farmer, as usual, remained calm and repeated the remark, "This could be a blessing."

A few months went by. The enemy tribes invaded the country and the government recruited all the young able-bodied men into the army.

By the end of the war, many of the young men in the village had been killed. The young man of our story, because of his broken hip, was not taken into the army, so he survived.

A misfortune had turned into a blessing, then into a misfortune, and finally into a blessing again.