



27 London Road, Tonbridge, Kent TN10 3AB Tel/fax 01732 362356 E-mail:
info@imaginaryjourneys.co.uk Web site: www.imaginaryjourneys.co.uk

SPECIAL PRIZE WINNER
in the 2009 Imaginary Journeys 'Fabulous Fables'
story competition for writers under 12 years old

Isaac's story won the special prize for younger writers under 8 in the year's competition. He was in Year 2 at Virgo Fidelis school in South London when he wrote this story.

TROUBLE AT GRASSHOPPER FARM

A Fable by Isaac Owen Hilsley

One misty autumn evening down on Grasshopper Farm, the owl was hooting happily while the humans prepared to go to bed. Marvin Mole was busy explaining to the chickens the news he had overheard.... "I heard the farmer say that the farm isn't earning enough money and if it carries on like this, developers are going to turn our farm into a Tesco express shop. The ONLY way to stop this is if we get more money!!!!"

"I have been thinking that we all need to help the Farmer out of this problem. We love living here and Farmer Brown and Mrs Brown are the nicest owners ever! If the sheep pick the grain, the horse ploughs the field, the ducks harvest the crops and Mr and Mrs Owl milk the cows we could just about do it". Rooster said "You had better go quickly to spread the news". "No" said Marvin, "I will call a general

meeting to spread the news". "Erm, that's kind of what I just said" said the Rooster crossly.

Early next morning, Marvin got out his strongest glasses, (his eyesight was fading) and ran quickly around the farm to call a general meeting at Midnight in the big barn.

During the day Mr and Mrs Brown were struggling to earn money and struggling with their chores. They were in the kitchen having a simple breakfast (bread and butter). When a shiny, black, four wheel drive jeep screeched into their drive. An important looking man came out and walked straight into the kitchen without any invitation! The important looking man shouted at Mr Brown and glared at Mrs Brown. He croaked in a sly voice "in about three week's time the bulldozers will come and knock down everything and anything they want, so good luck and good riddance!". "I've got a bad feeling about this" said Mr Brown.

Meanwhile, the animals were all gathered together. In came Bob the sheep dog and he told them everything that had happened. "A big black car parked in Mr Brown's drive and an important looking man came out and shouted at Mr Brown and said that bulldozers were going to knock the farm down and turn it into a Tesco Express shop!" All the animals gasped. Marvin Mole said "OK everyone, I am going to tell you what you have to do....sheep you pick the grain, horse you plough the fields, ducks you make the harvest and owl, owl, hey WAKE UP owl! As I was saying owl, you milk the cows with your wife. BUT we have to do this at midnight, so nobody knows.

All the animals got to work, picking, ploughing, harvesting and milking. By the time it was 3 o'clock all the animals had done a great

job. The ducks had bags of potatoes, carrots, tomatoes, beans, beetroot, apples, pears and blackberries. The horse had the field ploughed amazingly and there was so much milk it couldn't fit in the barrels.

Marvin mole said to all the animals, "we have to tidy up now." The animals instantly tidied up (because they didn't want the humans to see them and they knew Mole had a temper).

After tidying up the fruit, veg and milk the animals all pretended to be asleep. The animals got 2 minutes and 35 seconds of sleep before the humans came and woke them up and made them do their jobs. While they were working they noticed that the market truck was already loading the fruit, veg and milk that they had collected the night before.

Meanwhile, the important looking man, who was called Paul P Sherman, was watching Grasshopper Farm's money ratings. Just before he left to go out the ratings shot up! And you know why don't you?

Back down on the farm, Mr Brown was also watching the money ratings shooting up. He called his wife in. "Darling, come and see our ratings, they have shot up and I have NO idea how".

That evening the animals were going to bed. They all knew that they had work to do again so they weren't really trying to sleep. Suddenly Bob appeared in the horse barn. Horse jumped because he didn't think Bob would come in so quickly and quietly! Horse said "what do you want?" Bob replied, "I don't want anything, I have just come to tell you that you have to start your work immediately".

“Now?” asked horse. “Now” said Bob. The horse trotted out of his stable and started his work in the sunsets glowing light. While horse was ploughing, Bob told the ducks and owls to get to work. “Oh what a busy Bob I am” he sang cheerfully as he ran back to his kennel ready for his dinner.

The animals worked harder than ever, picking, pulling and squeezing all night long. Once again, at 3o'clock the animals had to tidy up, it took longer than before because they had done so much! After tidying, the animals were very sleepy indeed. They only got two minutes and 22 seconds of sleep, which was very frustrating indeed!

Meanwhile, Paul P Sherman was staring at Grasshopper farm's money ratings. He had been looking at them since yesterday. Every time he thought he would leave the computer and do something else, the ratings would shoot up even higher than last time. Paul's mouth dropped. He thought “Mr Brown is doing extra work, of course, of course! I will go down to the farm tonight in my new tank and see exactly what they are doing.”

So the next night, just as the animals had started to work Paul P Sherman drove his ridiculous tank up to the farm, making sure nobody saw him. It was tough getting to the farm quietly because he had lots of things inside the tank which shook about when he drove.

When he arrived at the farm, he hid behind some nearby trees and waited. He waited and waited and just when he thought that there really was nothing going on, the animals came out of the barn. Paul thought that it was Mr Brown taking them, but when all the animals had left the barn he realised that there was no Mr Brown and

no Mrs Brown....there were no human at all! Paul nearly fell out of his tank!

Paul realised that the animals liked Mr Brown so much that they were prepared to do extra work for him. He was FURIOUS. He said out loud "pathetic Mr Brown, pathetic animals, I am going to stay up all night and see how much work these little animals can do". And so he did. Luckily a tiny snail had overheard all that Paul was saying and thought to himself "what a silly man, shouting about whatever it is you are shouting about wont get you anywhere will it." He decided to tell the animals that they were being watched. So the little snail slid on his one foot all the way back to the barn. The snail told Marvin mole what Paul had been doing. "Mmmmmmmm, I know what we could do. Tomorrow, instead of working, we shall all stay indoors."

Little did they know, but the animals would never have to work as hard again. When Paul went back home to try and sleep, he could not stop thinking about the hard work he had seen. He thought and thought about how much the animals must love Mr and Mrs Brown to make themselves so tired out by working day and night. "Nobody loves me that much" he cried.

Later the next day Paul P Sherman took the bus to Grasshopper farm. This time he knocked on the door to farmhouse. Mrs Brown invited him in for a cup of tea. Paul entered Mr and Mrs Browns house, drunk a sip of tea and then whispered "I am sorry for all the trouble I have caused; I have been a total bully, a frog, a toad, a newt and just to make sure a fish." "Oh that's ok" said the kind-hearted Mr Brown. "I can see how much love there is on your farm and to make up for the trouble I have caused I am going to spend some money on making a

farm shop for you." Before Mr Brown could respond Paul said "Can I go and see your animals?" "Erm, yes" said Mr Brown all confused.

So Paul went to the barn and saw the animals and while he was there he said, "I know what you have all been up to, working at night secretly to save your farm and I have just one thing to say....WELL DONE!!"

"Moo, Baaaa, cluck, quack and tweet!!!!!!!" they cheered

THE END.

The Moral of my story is that hard work and love will always win over greed and money.

© Isaac Owen Hilsley 2009