

The Wise Choice



"You have rescued my horse," Queen Olivia told the young boy standing before her. "Now you shall have a reward." Peter nervously ran his fingers through his brown hair. The frightened horse had run past him as he worked in the field that morning. He would have helped it whether it belonged to the queen or not. But he had to admit that getting a reward was nice.

Two of the queen's pages appeared. One carried a small pillow with a mirror sitting on top. Red jewels sparkled on top of the mirror's silver frame. The other page carried a wood cage with a clucking chicken inside it.

"Only one reward can be yours," the queen said. "Choose wisely." "That's easy," Peter said. "I'll take the chicken." Some of the people in the court laughed. It was clear they thought he had made a foolish choice.

"And why did you choose the chicken?" the queen asked. "Well, I don't know much about jewels and things," Peter answered. "But I do know about chickens. The chicken will provide eggs for my family for a long while."

Queen Olivia smiled. "Then you did make a wise choice," she said. "That mirror may look fancy. But the jewels you see are only colored glass, and the frame is painted silver. The chicken is much more valuable." Peter took the chicken from the page. Then he bowed. "Thank you, your majesty."

"You are a smart child," the queen said. "I could use a smart boy to help take care of my horses. Would you like a job?" Peter grinned. "Thank you!" he said. A job at the castle paid well. Now his family would eat well for the rest of their lives—all because he had chosen a chicken!