

The Story of The Chinese Farmer

Long ago, there was a widowed Chinese farmer. The farmer and his only son labored through the cold winds of winter



and scorching rays of summer with their last remaining horse. One day, the son didn't lock the gate of the stable properly, and the horse bolted away.

When neighbors learned what happened, they came to the farmer and said, "What a sadness this is! Without your horse, you'll be unable to maintain the farm. What a failure that your son did not lock the gate properly! This is a great tragedy!"

The farmer replied, "Maybe yes, maybe no."

The next day, the missing horse returned to the farmer's stable, bringing along with it six wild horses. The farmer's son locked the gate of the stable firmly behind all seven horses.

When neighbors learned what happened, they came to the farmer and said, "What happiness this brings! With seven horses, you'll be able to maintain the farm with three of them and sell the rest for huge profits. What a blessing!"

The farmer replied, "Maybe yes, maybe no."

The next day the farmer's son was breaking in one of the wild horses. The son got thrown from the horse, fell hard on rocks, and broke his leg.

When neighbors learned what happened, they came to the farmer and said, "What a great sadness this is! Now, you'll be unable to count on your son's help. What a failure to break in the horse properly! What a tragedy!"

The farmer replied, "Maybe yes, maybe no."

The next day, a general from the Imperial Chinese Army arrived to conscript all the young men of the village into the army. Their assignment was to fight on the front lines of a battle against a terrifying enemy of overwhelming force. The farmer's son, because of his broken leg, was not taken.

When neighbors learned what happened, they came to the farmer and said, "What a great joy! Your son avoided facing certain death on the front lines of the battle. What a blessing!"

The farmer replied, "Maybe yes, maybe no."