

## Story 6 The farmer and the Flute Player

Once upon a time, there was a farmer. He worked hard but his crops didn't grow well, his sheep didn't have lambs, his hens laid only a few eggs, his cows and goats gave only a little milk, and his bees didn't make any honey.

'What can I do?' the farmer complained to his neighbour. 'I can help you', replied his neighbour. 'Everyday, when you work, I will play my flute'.

'How much shall I pay you?' asked the farmer.  
'It's up to you', said the neighbour.

The farmer agreed.  
That spring, while the farmer worked, his neighbour played happy tune after happy tune on his flute.

In the summer, the corn grew tall in the fields. Hundreds of apples grew on the trees. The bees made lots of golden honey. The sheep had lots of little lambs. The hens laid lots of brown eggs. The cows and goats gave hundreds of litres of milk.

In autumn, the farmer sold everything. He was very happy. His pockets were full of coins. *Ching, Ching* ... the coins sang.

'One evening, the neighbour knocked at the farmer's door. Can you pay me now, please?', he asked.

The farmer replied, 'Why should I pay you? I worked hard. You sat and played music while I worked'.

'But you promised', said the neighbour.

The farmer said: 'Listen to the music of the coins in my pocket', and he shook the coins and shut the door – with a bang!

The next spring, while the farmer worked in the fields, his neighbour, played sad tune after sad tune on his flute.

In the summer, there was no corn in the fields. There were no apples on the trees. There was no milk from the cows and goats. The bees didn't make any honey and the hens didn't lay any eggs. And there was only 1 new lamb in the field!

The farmer visited his neighbour. He knocked on the door and shouted. 'Please help me. I promise I will pay you double this time.'

But there was no reply. The house was empty and he never saw the flute player again.