



## THE LAWYER FROM THE VILLAGE

Michael was a handy craftsman and he knew how to make many different things out of wood. Spoons, bowls, ladles, and many other useful things. His workshop was always very busy. Everything he made, he sold at the market in town. People were very happy to have such a skilful craftsman around, because he knew how to make very pretty things.

In the pub which stood in the middle of town, they also knew Michael very well. Each morning, he stopped by to have a bite, so he would be strong enough to stand at the market all day.

However, one day he left his money at home, and so he asked the innkeeper to give him two hardboiled eggs, and promised to pay when he came back from the market.

The innkeeper knew the craftsman very well, and so he prepared his breakfast without hesitation. Michael ate and he went to the town to sell his goods at the market. There was always a crowd in front of his stall creating a pleasant mood. He always met friends and strangers and in the evening they would go have fun around town. This is why he completely forgot about his debt at the pub.

Months went by, even years, since Michael had his breakfast for borrowed money, and the innkeeper never reminded him of his debt.

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But after five years, the innkeeper spoke to the craftsmen and asked: “Michael, when will you pay for those two eggs you ate without paying?”

Michael thought and thought, but he could not remember his debt. After a while, he smacked his forehead, finally remembering that a long time ago he forgot his money and he ate breakfast in the pub as a loan, and he stayed out late and forgot about his debt at the pub for good.

“Indeed, you’re right. I completely forgot about that. Here are three silver coins for the misunderstanding ” said Michael as he went to pay.

But the innkeeper was shaking his head and didn’t want to take the coins from Michael.

“The debt has grown during all that time,” said the innkeeper and he started to count. “The two eggs would be two hens by now. They would have given me a hundred eggs. And a hundred new hens would have hatched and they would have laid more eggs...”

The innkeeper was counting until Michael’s head was spinning, because he could never pay off such a high debt in a hundred years.

When the innkeeper saw that Michael thought that this was too much, he proposed a discount: “If you pay me a hundred gold coins right now, we will be even and we will stay friends.”

Michael went all red in the face from anger. “I will give you a hundred beans, not a hundred gold coins. You take these three silver coins or you get nothing,” he slammed the door and left.

But the innkeeper did not want to give up on his hundred golden coins, so he went to the mayor to bring Michael to the court. The day of the trial was getting close and Michael was roaming around the village in despair thinking what to do. Luckily however he met an old man from the village and when he told him his story, the man said: “Take me to court with you and the innkeeper will get nothing. He will even beg you for forgiveness.”

So they agreed, and on the day of the trial, the mayor banged his gavel on the table to start the proceedings. In his judge’s robes, he listened to the innkeepers moaning. He complained about the damages that Michael caused him, and how

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he would only accept one hundred gold coins.

“Michael, and what can you say in your defence?” asked the mayor.

“Wait a moment, Mr. Mayor. It would be hard to explain this on my own, but my lawyer will be here in a while,” said Michael.

And so they waited and waited, but the lawyer was nowhere to be seen. Only after about an hour, the door swung open and the old man ran in all sweaty and out of breath and said: “Please, excuse my delay. I had to boil some peas, because I need to sow my fields tomorrow.” All the people in the room couldn’t believe their eyes, they had never heard such a thing.

“Oh, stop it with this nonsense. No one has ever heard using boiled peas for sowing! They would never grow in a hundred years,” the mayor objected angrily. But that was exactly what the man was waiting for and he answered with a smile: “Well, if my boiled peas will never sprout, the innkeeper’s boiled egg would never hatch”

The mayor nodded his head in agreement and then he banged his gavel on the table again to end the trial. He sentenced the greedy innkeeper to pay for Michael’s defence lawyer and apologize in front of everyone.

And since then, the town was only ruled by justice and honour. The end