Tom Thumb

man and a woman lived in a cottage on the edge of a small village. They had a good life and they loved each other, but one thing was missing to complete their happiness. They both wished for a baby very much, and as time went on, they became sadder and sadder.



But one day their wish was fulfilled. While the man was ploughing the field, a son was born to his wife. He cried non-stop, but there was nothing strange in that – children often cry. But their little son was so tiny that you wouldn't find such a small boy for many miles around. Just imagine, he wasn't bigger than a thumb, and that's why he got the name Tom Thumb. However, that wasn't the end of all the strangeness. Right after he was born, the little boy jumped up on his tiny legs, ran around the house, and called to his mother: "Mum, make some lunch for Dad. I'll go to the field and take it to him."

The surprised woman placed some food for her husband in a basket and wanted to go to the field with her son – after all, such a small boy wouldn't be able to even lift a basket. But believe it or not, Tom Thumb stood underneath the basket and with a swift jerk upwards, he got it onto his shoulders and he bravely crawled along to the field to take it to his dad. It looked as if the basket was moving along on its own, as you could hardly see Tom Thumb under it. On his way, the little boy bravely overcame all the small obstacles, and even had

O Palečkovi

chaloupce na kraji malé vesnice žili muž a žena. Dařilo se jim dobře, měli rádi jeden druhého, ale přesto jim k úplnému štěstí a radosti něco chybělo. Oba si moc přáli děťátko, a jak čas běžel, byli stále smutnější a zasmušilejší.

Jednoho dne se jejich přání splnilo. Zatímco muž oral na poli, narodil se jeho ženě synáček. Byl ukřičený až hrůza, ale na tom by nebylo nic divného, děti přece často pláčou. Jejich synáček však byl tak maličký, že široko daleko by tak malého chlapce člověk nenašel. Představte si, nebyl větší než palec u ruky, a proto také dostal jméno Paleček. Tím však ještě všechny podivnosti nekončily. Paleček hned po narození vyskočil na nožky, běhal po domě a volal na maminku: "Mámo, nachystej oběd pro tatínka, donesu mu jej na pole."

Překvapená žena vyrovnala do košíku jídlo pro manžela k obědu a chtěla se na pole vypravit se synkem, vždyť tak maličký hošíček určitě koš ani neuzvedne. Ale světe div se, Paleček se postavil pod koš a hej rup, už ho měl na ramenou a statečně kráčel na pole za tatínkem. Vypadalo to, že se po cestě šine košík sám, protože Palečka pod ním skoro nebylo vidět. Paleček po cestě odvážně překonával všechny drobné nástrahy, a dokonce měl tolik důvtipu,





the ingenuity to swim across the creek, where there was no footbridge. He took out a wooden spoon from the basket, sat on it as if it were a boat, and safely reached the other side with the basket. And then Tom Thumb saw the field where his dad worked.

"Dad, stop working, I am bringing you your lunch," Tom Thumb called out with all his might, but his voice wasn't strong enough for his dad to hear. Tom Thumb had to place the basket right in front of his father, otherwise his father wouldn't have noticed it.

"Where did this food basket come from?" the father wondered, shaking his head thoughtfully and looking all around to see who could have brought him the food. After a little while he heard a voice by his feet, so he looked down and stared in wonder at the tiny creature.

"I am your son, Tom Thumb! I was born this morning."

The father was amazed: today his son had been born and he was so tiny that he would be afraid of crushing him in his hands. He had come into the world that morning and by lunchtime he could walk and talk. What next?

Tom Thumb laid the food on the ground, invited his dad to eat and offered to go on ploughing instead of him.

že bez větších potíží přeplaval potok, přes který nevedla lávka. Vyjmul z košíku dřevěnou lžíci, posadil se do ní jako do lodičky a bezpečně se dostal na druhý břeh i s košíkem. A pak už Paleček spatřil pole, na kterém pracoval tatínek.

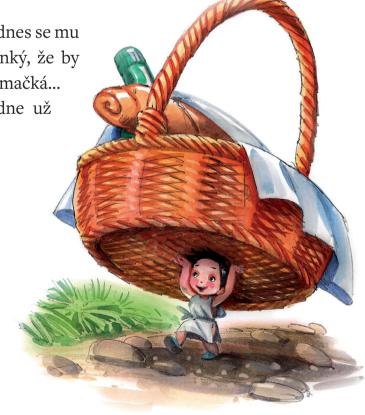
"Tatínku, zastav se, nesu ti oběd!" volal Paleček ze všech sil, ale tatínek jeho slabý hlásek neslyšel. Palečkovi nezbývalo nic jiného než postavit košík přímo před tatínka, jinak by si ho tatínek stěží povšiml.

"Kdepak se tu vzal košík s jídlem?" divil se otec, zamyšleně kroutil hlavou a rozhlížel se na všechny strany, zda neuvidí, kdo mu jídlo přinesl. Až po chvíli zaslechl nějaký hlásek u svých nohou, sklopil tedy zrak a s údivem hleděl na malinké stvoření.

"Já jsem tvůj syn Paleček! Narodil jsem se dnes zrána."

Tatínek nevycházel z údivu: dnes se mu narodil synek a je tak drobounký, že by měl strach, že ho v dlaních rozmačká... Přišel na svět ráno a v poledne už chodí a mluví. To jsou věci...

Paleček tatínkovi prostřel na mezi, pozval ho k jídlu a nabídl se, že zatím místo něho půjde orat.





"Son, how are you going to drive the oxen when you won't even be able to hold up the whip?"

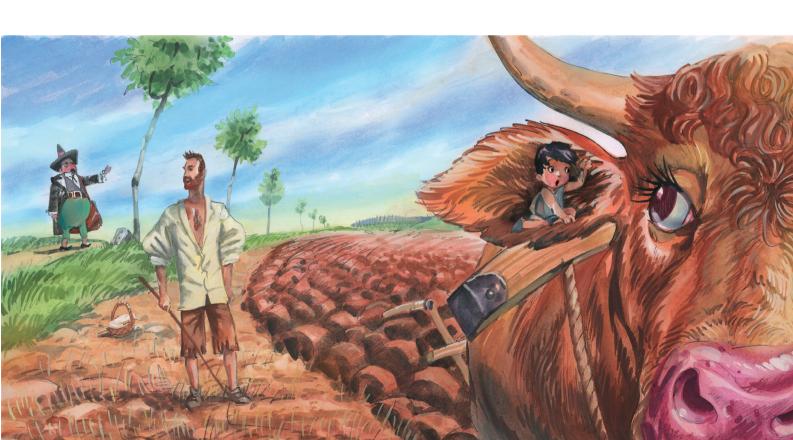
"Don't worry, Dad, I can make do without a whip," Tom Thumb called, crawling swiftly up the ox's ear, settling comfortably in it, and shouting with all his might: "Hey, ho, hey!" Tom Thumb's voice was very soft, but it echoed around the ox's ear like an unpleasant mosquito. The ox ran quickly to get rid of the unpleasant screeching. And he ran and ran, and in a while Tom Thumb had ploughed more than his father had done all morning.

Along the field was a path where a stingy merchant was walking to the market. Though he was in a hurry to do business, he stopped and watched the fast ploughing admiringly. It is an unusual sight: a bull running on its own in a field up and down and ploughing without being driven by a ploughman. So he stepped closer to get to the bottom of it, and then he heard a soft call: "Hey, ho, hey!" He wondered where the little voice was coming from.

"Chlapče, jak chceš volky pohánět, vždyť ani bič neuneseš."

"Neboj se, tatínku, já si poradím i bez biče," volal Paleček a mrštně vylezl volovi až do ucha, pohodlně se v něm usadil a ze všech sil halekal: "Hoj, hejsa, hej!" Palečkův hlásek byl sice slaboučký, ale ozýval se volovi přímo v uchu jako pištění nepříjemného komára. Vůl hbitě vyběhl, aby se nelibého pištění zbavil. A běhal a běhal a za chvíli měli s Palečkem zoráno víc než tatínek za celé dopoledne.

Podél pole vedla cesta, po níž kráčel na trh lakomý kupec. Přestože spěchal za svými obchody, zastavil se a obdivně sledoval hbitou orbu. To se jen tak nevidí: volek sám střelhbitě běhá po poli vzhůru dolů a orá sám, aniž ho pohání oráč. Přistoupil tedy blíž, aby přišel věcem na kloub, a vtom zaslechne tiché volání: "Hoj, hejsa, hej!" Přemítal, odkudpak se ten hlásek asi ozývá.



"I'm here," said Tom Thumb as he watched the puzzled merchant's expression, "here – in the ox's ear!" Then he poked his head out and laughed cheerfully at the merchant. The merchant liked the lively boy at first sight – he quickly calculated how much money a clever boy like that could make for him. So he asked him: "Listen, little one, would you like to come and work for me?"

"Why not, sir," Tom Thumb said cheerfully, "but first I need to check with my dad." Tom Thumb ran quickly to his dad and whispered in his ear: "Don't worry, Daddy, let me go to work for the merchant, I'll be back soon. And don't sell me cheaply," he added, with a roguish gleam in his eyes.

The father was reluctant to sell his son, but when he saw that his son insisted, he finally agreed with a heavy heart. Tom Thumb whispered: "Daddy, go behind us at a distance. I have a plan – I know what I'm doing."

The surprised father did what Tom Thumb asked him. Who knew what the boy was up to – what his son was capable of left him baffled.



The greedy merchant squirmed a bit, but in the end he paid well for Tom Thumb. He pushed him into his backpack and hurried into the city. The father followed slowly. After a while something flashed in the dust on the road. The father bent down to look and what was this? A gold coin on the ground! And then a second, and a third... In the end, he collected a full pocket of coins and he wondered where so much money had suddenly come from – it definitely hadn't come out of the sky.

"Tady jsem přece," bavil se Paleček, když sledoval nechápavý kupcův výraz, "tady – ve volově uchu!" Nakonec vystrčil hlavu a vesele se na kupce zasmál. Čiperný hošíček se kupci zalíbil na první pohled – rychle si spočítal, kolik by mu takový šikulka mohl vydělat peněz. Zeptal se ho: "Poslyš, maličký, nechtěl bys ke mně do služby?"

"Proč ne, pane," spustil zvesela Paleček. "Ale nejprve musí svolit tatínek." Paleček rychle zaběhl k tatínkovi a zašeptal mu do ucha: "Neboj se, tatínku, pusť mě ke kupci do služby, brzy se ti vrátím. A neprodávej mě lacino," dodal ještě se šibalskými jiskřičkami v očích.

Tatínek se zdráhal sotva nalezeného synka prodat do služby, ale když viděl, že synek trvá na svém rozhodnutí, nakonec s těžkým srdcem svolil. Paleček mu ještě šeptem upřesnil: "Tatínku, běž zpovzdálí za námi. Já už mám plán, dobře vím, co udělám."

Překvapený tatínek udělal, oč ho Paleček žádal. Kdo ví, co má ten klučina ještě za lubem, vždyť dokáže dělat věci, že člověku zůstává rozum stát.

Lakotný kupec se ošíval, ale nakonec za Palečka dobře zaplatil. Strčil ho do tlumoku a spěchal do města. Otec ho pomalu následoval. Po chvíli se v prachu cesty něco zablýsklo. Otec se sklonil a ejhle – na zemi leží zlaťák. A pak druhý, třetí, … Nakonec jich nasbíral plnou kapsu a divil se, kde se najednou vzalo tolik peněz, přece nenapršely z nebe.