**The Clever Farmer– Short Story**

Long ago in a village in Russia there was an inn where all the farmers would gather in the evening. After a hard day’s work they would sit down relaxing and taking among themselves. One evening a trader entered in the inn. Immediately he started boasting to the farmers. “I am a very close friend of the village chieftain. He likes me so much that he makes me sit next to him every day for lunch.” The farmers did not like his boasting.

Amongst the farmers gathered there that evening, was a very poor farmer. He stood up and challenged the trader. “What is so great about having a lunch with the chieftain? Even I can do that”. Hearing this the trader became very angry.

“What did you say? Our chieftain does not speak to ordinary people like you. Let alone have lunch with them. Moreover you are a poor farmer. Do you think it is possible?” asked the trader. The farmer did not hesitate at all. He immediately replied “You just wait and see and I shall show you. In case I fail to do so, I shall serve you as a bonded labourer for three years.” The other farmers cheered him loudly. The trader then said “Alright, if you do have lunch with the chieftain, I shall give you two horses and a bullock. All those present here today shall be our witnesses.”

The next day the poor farmer went to the chieftain’s house.Before the chieftain could ask his reason for coming the farmer began to speak. “Sir, I wish to ask you something. Please tell me softly. How much would it cost me to have my cap embroidered in gold?”

Hearing the word gold, the chieftain pricked up his ears. He thought that this stranger must be very rich. If looked after well, he would probably rewarded with some gold. So he called out to his servants. When they came running he told them “One of you go and bring a cold drink for my friend here. The rest of you make arrangements to prepare a meal fit for a king.” The chieftain bade the farmer to sit next to him.He offered him a cold drink and then they sat down side by side for lunch together. After a splendid meal, the chieftain plied him with fruits and asked the farmer. “Now my good man, how much of gold do you have? Let me see. If you give me a bar, I shall give you two bars of silver in return.”

The farmer said with a puzzled look. “But sir, I do not have any gold with me. I only asked you how much money I would need to get a gold lace on my cap.”

On hearing this the chieftain became very angry .He had spent his time and entertained a fool for nothing at all. “You idiot! Get out of my sight.” The farmer only laughed and replied “I am not a fool my lord. I have not only had a grand feast but have also earned two horses and a bullock for it.”

The trader gave the poor farmer two horses and a bullock as he had promised and from that day onwards stopped his boasting.