

## The Elves and the Shoemaker

Once upon a time, there lived a very poor shoemaker and his wife.

“This is all the leather I have left,” said the shoemaker.

“I can make just one pair of shoes.”



That night, the shoemaker cut the leather.

“I’ll make these shoes in the morning,” he said. So he cut the leather and went to bed.

The next morning, the shoemaker came downstairs.

To his amazement, the leather had been made into a pairs of beautiful shoes. The shoemaker called his wife.

“Did you make these shoes?” “No,” said his wife, “I did not make those shoes!”

At that moment, a rich lady came into the shop. She picked up the shoes. “These are the most beautiful shoes I have ever seen,” she said. She gave the shoemaker three gold coins. With the money, the shoemaker bought enough leather to make two pairs of shoes. That night, he cut the leather and left it on the table. Then he went to bed.

The next morning, the shoemaker came downstairs. To his amazement, the leather had been made into two pairs of beautiful shoes. The shoemaker called his wife. “Did you make these shoes?” “No,” said his wife, “I did not make those shoes!”

At that moment, a rich man came into the shop. He looked at the shoes. “These are the most beautiful shoes I have ever seen,” said the man. “I must have them. I will pay you six gold coins.”

After that the shoemaker bought more some more leather. “Now I can make three pairs of shoes,” he said. He worked late into the night cutting the leather. Then he went to bed.

The next morning, the shoemaker came downstairs. To his amazement, the leather had been made into three pairs of beautiful shoes. The shoemaker called his wife.

“We must find out who is making these beautiful shoes for us,” said the shoemaker.

The next night, the shoemaker worked very hard. He cut the leather for four pairs of shoes. But this time, the shoemaker and his wife hid in the shop. They waited and waited and waited. Then, suddenly, two little elves appeared in the shop dressed only in rags. They climbed up onto the table and set to work. Those little elves stitched and sewed and hammered all night long. By morning, they had made four pairs of beautiful shoes.

Then, in a flash they were gone!

The shoemaker said to his wife, “The elves have helped us, but how can we help them?” “I know what we can do!” replied his wife. “We will make the elves some smart new clothes!” The shoemaker and his wife set to work and before long, they had made two pairs of little red shoes, two little red jackets, two pairs of trousers and two little red hats.

That night, they left the little outfits in the shop and hid again. They waited and waited and waited. Then, suddenly, the two little elves appeared again. When they climbed up onto the table and saw the clothes they were overjoyed! They put them on at once.

Now, from that day to this, those two little elves have helped the shoemaker and his wife to make beautiful shoes. In return, the shoemaker and his wife have made beautiful clothes for the little elves.

And the shoemaker and his wife, and the two little elves all lived happily ever after.