

The Woodcutter's Story

A woodcutter got a job to fell eight trees per day. He purchased a sharp axe, and set off into the woods. With his axe, he started chopping the first large tree, and it fell quickly. By early afternoon, he had cut eight trees, and set off for the tavern. There he met a friend, and said, 'I've got an easy job. I can fell eight trees by early afternoon, and then take it easy for the rest of the day.' And so it went for the next few days, with afternoons spent drinking and telling



tall tales. But then the friend noticed that the woodcutter started showing up a little later, looking more tired. He started to complain of the hard work, and the long days. One day, the friend waited until it was dark, but still, the woodcutter didn't show up at the tavern. He got a lantern and set out for the woods, where he found his friend still chopping away at a tree. Looking around, he saw that only five trees had been felled that day. Turning to the woodcutter he asked, 'What is the matter - why don't you come to the tavern any more?' The woodcutter didn't stop to answer, but just kept on chopping. His friend noticed that very few chips were flying, and those that did, were

small. So he said, 'Why don't you stop, and sharpen your axe? It has gotten dull, and isn't doing a good job any more. Take it into town, and have the blacksmith sharpen it.' The woodcutter snarled at him, 'Can't you see that I am way behind. I still need to cut three more trees today, and it's already late. I don't have time to get my axe sharpened!' He turned, and started chopping again. The friend shook his head sadly, and set off for the tavern.

