



Once upon a time in a faraway land, a small village lay nestled in a green valley. Tucked into the corner of a narrow street was a remarkable tailor's shop. The usual things were inside: bolts of fabric in every color, bristling pincushions and baskets full of bright thread lining the shelves. But this shop had something else as well. Proudly displayed over the hearth was an ancient sword. The story of this sword was why eager children often crowded into the small shop to sit at his feet as he sewed. He had inherited the story as well as the sword from his father, who fought with it in a great battle long ago.



In the same village there also lived the daughter of a jovial baker. Every morning this maiden pushed her bread cart past the tailor's shop, making her deliveries. He often heard the rattling wheels on the cobblestones pause, and if he peered out the door in time he would see her slip a loaf into the hands of a beggar boy. One day he lingered in the doorway and she saw him.



Taking a breath, he stepped out into the street. “A loaf of bread, p-please.” As he fumbled for his coins, the maiden gracefully stepped his way, carrying the warm bread in her hands and sunshine in her smile. He smiled back.



Following a spring filled with laughter and cocoa by the warm fire, the tailor and the maiden went on a summer's walk after the day's work was done. The tailor stopped and knelt. When he reached for the maiden's hand, her eyes opened wide.

“Will you marry me?” he asked.

And what do you think? She gave him that glorious smile and said, “Yes.”



News of a wedding travels with very good speed, and soon everyone knew of it for miles around. Everyone, including the dragon.

If anyone had reason to wish the tailor ill, it was this dragon. He still remembered the flash of that sword and the sting of its bite as the tailor's father fiercely defended his bride a generation ago. The wound to his flesh had healed, but the wound to his pride had only festered. And now the son was preparing to take himself a bride! This time, the dragon decided, there would be no happy wedding. And with a little magic, perhaps he would not have to confront that sword again after all.

