

Оце тобі маєш! Першого вересня Василькового братика Петруся тато й мама виряджали до школи, а Василька – ні. Малий ще, кажуть. Підрости треба. Наче то легко так – взяв і підріс. То тільки гриби швидко ростуть.

А братик Петрусь раденький, сяє, як нова копійка. Усе на ньому магазином пахне. Он тільки портфелик чого вартий! На ньому рожевий слоник усміхається аж до вух. Через те й Петрусь задоволений, як слон, і вже на Василька згори дивиться, наче на моську. Школяр же!

Вийшов Петрусь із татом та мамою на вулицю, і Василько за ними.

Он іще дітвора до школи поспішає. Та всі чепурні такі, вирядилися, що й не впізнати, чії вони. У кожного в руках айстри, жоржини – пахнуть на всеньке село.



Here you are! On the first day of September, Vasylko's mother and father were busy getting his brother Petrus ready for school, but not Vasylko of course. He was too little – that is what they said. He needed to grow up. As if it were that easy – hey presto, and you have grown up! It's only mushrooms that grow that quickly.

On this the first day of school, brother Petrus was in high spirits and shining like a new kopeck. Everything he was wearing was bathed with the aroma of things newly-bought from the shop. Out of all these it should be sufficient, though, just to mention his bag alone! A pink elephant on his bag possessed a huge smile stretching right past his ears. Therefore Petrus was also tickled pink! Now he was even looking down his nose at Vasylko – why – because he was a schoolboy now!

Vasylko, together with his mother and father, went out into the street, and Vasylko followed them.

There were lots of other children also hurrying on their way to school. All of them were so neat, all spruced up, and full of excitement – and among the crowd it was hard to determine whose children they were. Each of them was clutching asters or dahlias – wafting a scent that was spreading all over the village.

Заздрісно стало Василькові. Закортіло і йому до школи. Забіг у хату, швиденько відшукав татового портфеля, напхав туди книжечок, які під руку потрапили: «Котигорошко», «Червона шапочка», «Солом'яний бичок», «Золотий ключик»...

Потім причепурився, вихрика на голові примочив водою, пригладив і, не гаючи часу, подався до школи.

Коли це на вулиці зустрічає свого товариша Славка. Той теж іще малий, щоб до школи йти. Дуже любить у пісочку гратися. От і зараз заспівав своєї:

– Ходімо, – просить Василька, – допоможеш мені печеру збудувати. Бо моя розвалилася.

Василько хотів було відмовитися, але хай, думає. Скільки там того діла!

За п'ять хвилин впораюся. І справді, сіли вони в пісочку, раз-два – і печера готова.



Vasylo couldn't help but feel a great deal of envy. He so wanted to be going off to school like the others. So, without any further thought, he rushed into the house, quickly found his Dad's bag and filled it with books, grabbing the first ones that came into his hands: *Kotyhoroshko*, *Little Red Riding-Hood*, *The Straw Bull-Calf*, *Pinocchio*...

After this, he dressed himself smartly, dampened and smoothed down a lock of hair on his head and, wasting no more time, set off for school.

Out there, in the street, he met his pal Slavko. Slavko was also too young to go to school. He loved to play in the sand. Now he started his usual chatter....

'Come on,' he begged Vasylo, 'please will you help me build a cave, because mine has collapsed.'

Vasylo was about to refuse this request, but then changed his mind. It's no big deal, he thought. I will have it finished in no time at all, maybe five minutes.

So they sat together in the sand, and in the twinkling of an eye, the cave was ready.

– Ну, я пішов! – обтрусив Василько пісок на колінах. – Мені до школи треба!

– Куди-и-и? – витріщив на нього здивовані очі Славко.

– До школи! – гордо сказав Василько.

Задер носа і рушив вулицею далі.

А тут назустріч їде підводою дядько Микола. Та добрий такий.

– Сідай, прокатаю! – каже.

Ну хто б це відмовився на конях покататися. Сідає Василько. «Трішки-трішки проїду, – міркує, – та й побіжу до школи». А дядько Микола так роздобрився, що навіть дав потриматися за віжки. То Василько виїхав аж за село. А тоді таки скочив із воза й побіг назад.

– Мені до школи треба! – похвалився.

– Куди-и-и? – дядько Микола від здивування ледве не випустив віжки з рук.



'OK, I'll go now,' Vasylko brushed the sand off his knees. 'I need to be on my way to school.'

'Whe-e-ere?' Slavko became wide-eyed with amazement.

'To school!' replied Vasylko proudly.

With his nose up in the air, he merrily continued his way along the street.

And there it just so happened that Uncle Mykola, in his cart, came up alongside Vasylko, clearly in a very good mood.

'Get in and sit down, I'll give you a ride,' he said.

Now who can refuse a ride in a horse and cart? Vasylko took his seat in the cart. Now it would only be a very short ride, he thought, and I will then run to school.

Then, in a fit of generosity, Mykola climbed down to allow Vasylko to take the reins. In this manner, they drove right past the village, but then suddenly Vasylko halted the cart, jumped down, and ran back.

'I need to get to school!' he boasted.

'Where?' In complete amazement, Mykola almost dropped the reins.

