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| http://www.storyarts.org/images/dot_clear.gif | **The Honest Woodcutter**letter h"Woe is me!" a poor woodcutter cried when he dropped his ax into a deep pond. A friendly water spirit appeared before him with a silver ax and asked, "Is this yours?" "No," the woodcutter said. The spirit returned with a golden ax. "Is this yours?" she asked. "No," said the woodcutter. Then the spirit appeared with his plain wooden ax. "That one is mine!" said the woodcutter happily. "You've been so honest," said the spirit, "take the gold and silver ax too!" On the way home the woodcutter met a rich merchant. When the merchant heard the woodcutter's tale, he ran to the pond and dropped HIS wooden ax in. "Woe is me!" he cried. The spirit appeared with a silver ax. "That one is mine!" the merchant said quickly. "You know it is not," said the spirit, and disappeared. The rich man's wooden ax stayed on the bottom of the deep pond.

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