



The Hopscotch Champion



Fien and Teun are busy drawing a hopscotch board on the farmyard patio with a piece of blue chalk.

"Five... six... seven..." Fien counts as she writes the numbers in the boxes.

"C'mon hurry up!" Teun says.

"Give me a minute, I'm almost done."

Teun lets out a deep sigh. "Waiting is so boring!"

"Go find two stones, then we can get started right away."

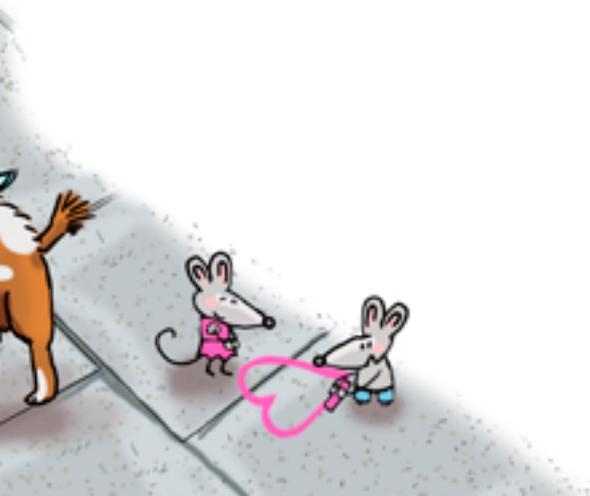
"Okay," Teun says, and he goes to search the ground.

"Ten!" Fien calls moments later, writing the last number in the box.

Teun comes running. "I've got two stones." He unfolds his hand and shows them to Fien.

"Great. Let's begin!"

"Finally!" Teun exclaims, leaping in the air. "You go first!"



“Okay,” says Fien, drawing a starting line on the tiles with a piece of red chalk. “The idea is to throw the stone from behind this line. First to one, then to two, then to three. Until we get to ten. And after each throw, we hop, but we’re not allowed to land on the square where the stone is lying.”

“Got it,” Teun says.

Fien stands behind the red line and concentrates so hard her tongue sticks out of her mouth. She throws the stone through the air with a slight curve. Plunk! The stone lands right on box number one. “Hooray! I did it!”

She pulls up her left knee and hops forward on her right leg. “I’m going to skip box number one, watch! Two.” Clunk!

“Three!” Click!

Fien’s wooden shoes clatter on the ground. “Did you hear that? I’m making music!”

“It’s like a clog dance.”



As she reaches the fourth box on the hopscotch board, Fien hops even higher.

"Four!" Clack! CRACK!

"Oh no, my clog!" Fien cries. "It's broken!"

Teun takes a closer look. "Oh, dear, you can't wear that anymore."

"Now what?" Fien asks.

"You need new wooden shoes. Because you can't hop around all day on one clog."

"Well," Fien says proudly. "If I did that, I'd be a real hopscotch champion."

"C'mon, time for a new pair of wooden shoes."

Along with their mom, Fien and Teun go to the clog maker in the village.





"I can tell from here. You need a new pair of wooden shoes," says the clog maker the moment Fien enters his shop.

Fien laughs. "I broke one of my wooden shoes, because I'm a real hopscotch champion. Right, Teun?"

Teun nods.

“Come over here, hopscotch champion.” The clog maker smiles. “Then I’ll see what size your new clogs should be.”

The clog maker carves two beautiful new clogs for Fien out of two large blocks of wood. And while their mom does the grocery shopping, Fien and Teun help the clog maker with his work. When a shoe is almost finished Fien and Teun sand the wood surface smooth with sandpaper, which is hard to do. And once they’ve done that, they both grab a brush and paint the shoes yellow. Lastly, they put them in a drying cabinet, so the paint will dry very quickly. The time goes fast; they don’t even notice that their mom has returned.

“And are your new clogs ready?”

Fien proudly hops from behind the counter. Click! Clack! Click! Clack! “Yes, look!”

“New wooden shoes for the hopscotch champion!” the clog maker says. “So you can go back to playing when you get home.”

Fien hops outside. “Now, it’s your turn, Teun! C’mon, let’s see if you’re as good a hopscotch champion as I am!”

