

An orchard with rows of apple trees. The trees are covered in green leaves and many red apples. A wooden crate is visible in the distance between the rows of trees. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

REIGN OF
ZOULVISIA

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MISSING APPLES

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Once upon a time, in the kingdom of Zoulvisia, some farmers came out to see their orchard when a horrifying sight met their eyes— all the apples had vanished!

There had been crates and crates of apples, and bright red fruit on the trees, yet now there was nothing. Green leaves were all that could be seen, and the farmers did not know what could have happened. How could an entire crop go missing during the night?

There would be no cider or apple sauce in the kingdom, and no crisp juicy fruit to munch on at picnics. The farmers had no money to buy supplies for the winter and feed their families and needed the apples.

Only one orchard was left, and the owner hastened to call in the heroes Isabel and Unicorn Bob to help with the problem. For Bob it was especially important for he was rather fond of apples.



The two heroes hid in some bushes by the apple orchard and waited. Dusk turned to ashen grey and soon the shadows covered each tree. The moon was nearly full, and Isabel could still make out the forms of the trees and spot any movement near them.

Around midnight, Bob pricked up his ears, for he heard hooves. A group of horses approached and they saw riders dismount—knights.

“What could Zoulvisia’s knights be doing here?” Isabel wondered, “perhaps they have been sent to protect the apples also.”

“I don’t think so,” Bob whinnied quietly.

Sure enough, the men began stripping the apples and loading crates onto a wagon.

“How could knights be thieves?” Isabel couldn’t understand it. The nefarious men finished as it began growing light.





Isabel and Unicorn Bob stealthily followed the evil knights, running to keep up with the wagon of stolen property.

It soon became clear where they were bound for— the fortress of the Duke of Northmorland, the queen’s younger brother who sought her throne.

Isabel crept close enough to overhear the knights as they waited for the drawbridge to lower and allow them entry.

“Is it wise to be taking the crops of farmers to feed our army? Will not the people of the kingdom turn against us?”

“Pah! Those peasants live to serve us!”

Furious at such cruel words, Isabel could stand it no longer. She burst from her hiding place and with a flurry of kicks and blows knocked out both knights.



“You know what to do, Bob,” she called, then turned the wagon back toward the orchard and urged the horses on. As she disappeared, Bob galloped boldly up to the castle walls, “help!” he called, “the farmers have taken back the apples, they must be pursued immediately!”

Sure enough the huge metal gate blocking the way ground up and the portcullis wound up to reveal a door big enough to take a wagon through. A group of knights charged out after Isabel’s wagon while Bob conveniently made his way inside the keep.

He found another large wagon of apples in the yard, and though he normally never lowered himself to such manual labour, he grabbed the harness in his teeth and after a lot of fiddling, getting slobber everywhere, he managed to hitch himself up. The castle was still in chaos and he set off at a canter. Soon another batch of knights came after his wagon as well, but he kept going.





The knights had never encountered a unicorn before, and it didn't take long for Bob to take them out using horn, hooves and teeth— even harnessed as he was.

Most of the knights had been sent after Isabel, but she fought them off with her razor-edged sword, keeping her wagon careening on the entire time while standing on the driver's platform.

As dawn broke, the farmers looked up to see two heavily laden wagons full of apples. They cheered and danced, for though they had still lost much of the harvest, at least it was not everything that they had. Word was sent to Zoulvisia of the Duke's terrible act, and she ordered her brother to turn over the rest of the apples or face her armies. He was not ready with his men and decided the easiest thing to do would be to restore the farmers' property.

THE END (for now)



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ZOULVISA

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