

# Storytime with Dad

## The Great Tractor Rodeo

Welcome to Storytime with Dad! Today we will be reading The Great Tractor Rodeo.

Once upon a time, in the small town of Tumbleweed Valley, the annual rodeo was the biggest event of the year. Cowboys and cowgirls came from all over to show off their skills with horses, bulls, and lasso tricks. But this year, it turned out that things were going to be different.

Rusty, a bright red tractor, lived on Farmer Joe's ranch. He spent his days plowing fields, hauling hay, and making sure all the farm animals were well-fed. Rusty loved his job, but he often dreamed of adventure. Sometimes, late at night, he imagined himself doing something exciting - just like the cowboys at the rodeo.

One sunny morning, as Farmer Joe loaded up the truck to head to the rodeo, Rusty watched from the barn. He let out a wistful sigh.

"I wish I could be in the rodeo," Rusty murmured to himself.

Just then, a mischievous goat named Pepper trotted over. Pepper had a knack for stirring up trouble and sparking big ideas.

"Hey Rusty."

"Yeah?"

"...Why don't you go?" Pepper suggested, her eyes twinkling with excitement.

Rusty's engine sputtered in surprise. "Me? A tractor? Rodeos are for cowboys and horses!"

"That's what they think," Pepper said slyly. "But you're strong, fast, and reliable. Why not give it a shot?"

Rusty hesitated, his gears turning over the idea. It was a silly thought, wasn't it? But then again, the idea of trying something so different made his engine rev a little faster.

"If I'm going to the rodeo," Rusty said at last, "I'd better practice first."

Over the next few days, Rusty and Pepper prepared tirelessly. Pepper set up barrels in the field, and Rusty practiced weaving through them. At first, he knocked over barrels left and right, his movements clunky and awkward. But with each attempt, he got smoother and faster, until he could zip through the barrels with ease.

"You're a natural!" Pepper cheered.

Next, Pepper found an old rope for lasso practice. Rusty struggled to swing the rope with his mechanical arm, and the lasso flopped to the ground over and over. Pepper encouraged him to keep trying, and eventually, Rusty managed to loop the rope around a post. The little goat leapt in the air with excitement.

"You did it!" Pepper exclaimed.

Finally, Rusty practiced using his bucket arm to scoop hay bales. Pepper pretended to be a runaway bull, darting around the field as Rusty carefully chased her. By the time the weekend arrived, Rusty felt ready - nervous, but ready.

When the big day came, Rusty rolled into town, his engine humming with anticipation. The rodeo grounds were bustling with cowboys, cowgirls, and excited spectators. As Rusty made his way to the arena, the crowd began to murmur. A tractor at the rodeo? What was going on?

The announcer, a jolly man with a booming voice, spotted Rusty and chuckled. "Well, folks, it looks like we've got ourselves an unusual contestant today. Let's see what this little red tractor can do!"

Rusty's tires trembled with nerves, but Pepper perched on his hood and whispered, "You've practiced for this. Show them what you're made of."

The first event was the barrel race. Rusty rolled to the starting line, surrounded by sleek horses and confident riders. The buzzer sounded, and Rusty surged forward, weaving around the barrels with surprising agility. The crowd gasped in amazement as he crossed the finish line!

The lasso competition came next, and Rusty carefully hooked a rope onto his mechanical arm. This was a little tricky for Rusty. The other competitors twirled their lassos with practiced ease, catching their targets quickly. Rusty's turn came, and the crowd fell silent, curious to see what he would do. With a flick of his arm, the lasso soared through the air and... his lasso missed the target. The crowd was disappointed, everyone hoped that the underdog Rusty could still take first place and win the last event.

Finally, it was time for the bull-riding event. Rusty hung back, not really sure what he should do. Was he supposed to ride the bull? He was a tractor! That would look a little strange, but maybe he could... just then a feisty young bull named Bucky broke free, charging wildly around the arena. He jumped the fence and started running towards the crowd. The audience screamed as the cowboys tried unsuccessfully to corral him.

Rusty didn't hesitate though. He revved his engine and rolled up to the bull. Using his bucket arm, he scooped up Bucky and carried him back to the pen. The crowd erupted in cheers louder than Rusty had ever heard.

When the dust settled, the announcer stepped forward with a grin. "Ladies and gentlemen, we've seen a lot of surprises at the rodeo tonight, but this takes the cake. Let's hear it for Rusty the tractor!"

The audience roared with applause, and Rusty's engine purred with pride. He couldn't believe it. All his hard work had paid off, and he had shown everyone that even a tractor could rise to the occasion. Now, Rusty had given it his all but he didn't win first place. I mean, he was a tractor after all. But, you know what, he didn't really care. Rusty was thrilled, he had wanted something exciting to do and boy did he find it!

From that day on, Rusty had a lot of confidence. He learned that he didn't need to win a rodeo to know he could do some really cool things if he just put his mind to it. And every year after at

the rodeo, Rusty's incredible debut was remembered as one of the greatest surprises in Tumbleweed history.

The end.



Well yeehaw, that story threw me for a loop! I thought for sure Rusty was going to win first place, but it's great to see that he had fun along the way and winning wasn't the most important thing to him that night.

Now, before I say more, this episode was for Faith and Lucas. You asked for a story about a rodeo, and a story about a tractor, and I immediately thought of Rusty and his rodeo adventure. I hope you enjoyed the wacky story I came up with based on your ideas, it was really a lot of fun to put it together.

I probably thought of it because of the book *Rosie: Stronger than Steel*. It's a book about a tractor, and one of the things they say over and over again is "This is our Rosie, stronger than steel. She'll plow all the land with a turn of her wheel." If you haven't read it, it is a very interesting book! My daughter is named Rosie, which is why we got the book, but we also loved the story.

Now, back to Rusty. Sometimes life turns out like this story. You try super hard to do a thing, but the thing may just be too hard to do. Like a tractor riding a bull, it just wasn't meant to be. It's important not to get stuck on wishing things to be a certain way. People like to say: enjoy the journey! And when they say that, they mean to enjoy the process of getting to that big win.

To take this back to our story, what if Rusty just didn't like rodeos but he wanted to win one anyways? Well, maybe it's not about the rodeo at all, maybe he just wanted to be seen as important. And you know what? That would still be OK. You can find things to do that make you feel like a winner as you're doing them. And then it's not about winning at all! It's just about doing something you love. Because you are going to have a lot of wins in life, but if you're also doing something you love, then all those wins are just an extra bonus you get to enjoy!

Thank you for listening and I'll see you again next time.

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