

Example 1

Once upon a time in a land that doesn't exist called Andelland, there lived a princess. Her name was Elle. She had everything she could ever ask for, except freedom. She had every dress she could want, every piece of jewelry she could imagine, and everyone loved her. Normally her lack of freedom did not bother her and life was basically a fairytale.

One day, Princess Elle was trying to decide which ball she would attend the following Saturday night. Because she was so loved, she had many invitations, but only so many hours. Much as she would love to go to three balls on the same day, there are a limited number of hours for her to divide amongst her friends. She could go to Prince Flynn's ball, which she really wanted to because she had had a crush on him for years and she thinks he might like her. The only problem is her best friends would probably be attending the birthday ball of Princess Annalena. This would be a very fun ball, especially because her best friends would be there. The third ball she could attend wasn't really in the competition, because it was the ball of her sister's boyfriend's second cousin and she wouldn't know many people. This left her with a very difficult decision, but ultimately Elle chose to go to her friend's birthday party. She is very excited for the ball, but has her fingers cross that Flynn doesn't fall in love and forget her forever.

Since Princess Elle has decided to go to Annalena's ball, she is on a mission to find the perfect dress to wear for the festivities. She would need a gown for the actual ball, but she also needed her seamstress, Marta, to make a dress to give to Annalena as a present. Elle has the best seamstress in all of Andelland, and while Marta would do a better job of making both dresses than anyone else, she would simply be unable to complete both dresses in time for Saturday night.

In town, Marta knew of another seamstress whom she trusted. She didn't work nearly as quickly, but together they could get more done than Elle's seamstress could have managed on her own. Princess Elle's gown would be more complicated than the gift gown and as a result, the difference in quality would be less significant if she asked the other seamstress to make the gift gown.

Marta forged a deal with the seamstress in town where the Princess' seamstress would keep 65% of the profit from the gowns and the other

seamstress would keep 35%. Marta will make more gold than if she only presented Elle with one gown and the seamstress in town also benefits from the profit she makes off of Annalena's gown. Even though they do not make the same amount of gold everyone was happy.

Everything was going exactly according to plan, when on the morning of the birthday ball, her parents tell her that she cannot go. Elle is so upset. It isn't fair that she can't go to the birthday ball; she had been wanting to all week and everyone else was allowed to go. Her parents did not give her freedom to make **choices** and this is just one time that she noticed it.

Her parents would not allow her to go because there was official kingdom business that had to be attended to. That morning, Farlandon, a competing kingdom, decided to double the cost of glass slippers. There had been a simmering conflict between the two kingdoms as they were the two strongest kingdoms in the land. It wouldn't matter very much, except that Farlandon normally provided all of the glass slippers and everyone wanted glass slippers during ball season.

The king thought it was very important for the Elle to learn the workings of the kingdom and so she watched them discuss and debate how many more jade and ruby shoes to sell and for how much gold. (they couldn't make glass slippers because a key ingredient for making them could only be found in Farlandon) She heard someone say that they needed to find a sweet spot where everyone wins, where they couldn't have the slippers cost more gold or they would start losing. It was very interesting, and now they just had to see how the people react and if they made the right **choice**.

Just as the king, queen, princess, and all of the shoe makers were about to leave, in waltzed someone nobody had seen before. He introduced himself as Franz, the shoemaker. He had a smug expression on his face as he announced that he knew the secret for how to make perfect glass slippers and that he was the only one with the ability to make them in Andelland. Princess Elle heard this and was thrilled. There were many people who wanted glass slippers, especially since it was the most popular time to host balls. She spoke up to her parents to say how happy she was, but they were worried. Since so many people would want glass slippers and there were only going to be so many glass slippers the price could potentially be astronomical.

The king and queen dismissed all of the shoe makers and they began to debate. The queen argued that they should implement a law that would dictate the maximum amount of gold that each pair of glass slippers could cost, and this seemed fair to Elle. However, her father explained the danger of this is that if the cost of each glass slipper is lower than it naturally should be, there wouldn't be very much motivation for Franz to make very many shoes because of course he wanted to make gold. Elle thought that wasn't very fair to Franz since he would have earned more if the king and queen didn't interfere, and it seems silly to make a law that would cause more problems.

The king and queen had a difficult decision to make, but Princess Elle couldn't help but wish that she were at the ball instead. She also really wasn't sure how she felt about Franz...why had nobody met him before? The more she thought about it the more she became uneasy.

The king and queen ultimately decided to stay out of determining the price of glass slippers, trusting that it would take care of itself. Franz was thrilled. Princess Elle overheard him gleefully laughing and singing to himself about how much gold he would be able to make by charging massive amounts for each shoe. She knew she didn't like him, and this was just one new reason. In the days following Franz's announcement of the price increase, he was disappointed to find that the number of people buying his slippers went down dramatically. He couldn't figure out why this was. He was the only person selling glass slippers and so while they were more expensive, he wasn't selling enough to make much money.

Princess Elle, who was now thoroughly invested in watching how the slipper scenario played out, noticed that while Franz was the only one selling glass slippers, the other shoemakers in town were making different varieties of slippers. Due to the difference in price and the fact that most people really were looking for shoes to wear to balls, most people opted to buy slippers made of other precious stones instead.

Of course, Franz caught on and decided to experiment with a price change. He decreased the price of slippers by $\frac{1}{3}$, and watched to see how this would impact the amount of gold that he would make. Since the total slippers that he sold reacted so quickly to the increase in price he was hoping that this decrease would cause many more people to buy his slippers. Princess Elle couldn't help but root against Franz, but also had learned that since the shoes

seemed to react to the price changes so much, by bringing the price down Franz would surely make more gold.

Her parents told her that she was being silly to dislike Franz; everything was working out as they had hoped. Of course, she knew this was true and only fair, but she still had a sinking suspicion that something about Franz was fishy. She didn't know why, but she absolutely did not trust him and from now on, she would have her eye on him.

A week went by and there were no new developments on the Franz front, but Elle did receive an invitation to Flynn's birthday. She needed to get him the perfect present. Perfect, of course, is so relative, but for Flynn's gift, it had to say "I was thinking about you" but not "I'm obsessed with you" and "I'm fun and know what you will like" but not "I was stalking you." So basically, Elle had her work cut out for her and needed to start narrowing it down and deciding what would be the perfect combination.

Even as a princess, Elle had a finite amount of gold to spend on this present, and she planned on spending it all so she needed to find the present that would meet her qualification for perfection most per piece of gold. She started to think about what Prince Flynn enjoyed. He liked to be outside and was adventurous. He also liked to hang out with his friends.

Elle found a few items that she was considering. First, she found a bow and arrow that were made by the same smith who crafted the bow and arrow set that Prince Flynn's hero used in competitions. This was a good option, especially because it showed that she knew his interests. Also, she could combine it with something else. She also could buy him a rock climbing wall to be built on the grounds of his castle. While this would be very fun and he could use it with his friends, there were downsides. This was the most expensive gift and a little over the top. It probably wouldn't be as perfect per piece of gold since it was so expensive. She could also get him a craft beer making set, which would be extremely fun and not as expensive. If Elle combined the beer making set with the bow and arrow, she could create the perfect present. She would spend all of the gold while hitting as many qualifications per piece of gold as possible. This seemed like the best combination and would allow her to reach the optimal level of perfection. It was still a week or so until Flynn's birthday, and while this consumed a lot of Elle's energy, she was still keeping an eye on Franz from afar both during the day as she went through town and also from her window at night. Elle

noted that nobody is allowed into his store to watch as he creates the glass slippers because he refuses to give away his secrets. She can't figure out why he doesn't hire more people to work for him. He has one other man who works with him to make the shoes, but it seems as though the more people who would work for him the more he would be able to produce. Shouldn't this be beneficial to him since he is so focused on making money? Princess Elle talked to her parents about this at dinner. They explained that while nobody knows what machinery Franz is using to make the glass slippers, he only has a certain amount. Therefore, at some point, if he hired an additional worker, the worker would help to produce overall more, but he would not create enough glass slippers to be worth his wage to Franz. He would make the number of glass slippers that everyone created individually be less even though the total number of slippers made would increase. Elle said that she hopes he decides to order additional machinery soon so that he hires more people. The king and queen were pleased that Elle seemingly understood, but really she only hoped he would order more so that she could catch a glimpse of what the machinery even is.

Elle sat in her window that night and peered through her looking glass. To her surprise, there was a shadowy figure getting off of a horse right outside of Franz's shop. He was tall but she couldn't make out his face. He looked around, clearly making sure nobody saw him, before entering the shop. Who was this man? Why did he not want to be seen?

This bothered Elle grateful, but Flynn's birthday party is coming up, so the next day Elle visits Marta. Elle has no idea what to wear because it isn't a ball, just a birthday party. There weren't many of these in Andelland. Marta said that maybe if they went into town together to look at fabrics Elle would have a better time deciding what she wanted.

When the two got to town and entered the first store, Elle was overwhelmed by the number of spools of thread that looked exactly the same. It was the same in each store. Elle had no idea how anyone could decide which spool of thread to buy, considering each was nearly identical to the next. Marta explained that the wonderful thing about this, as someone who buys a lot of thread, is that the price of each spool of thread tends to be low since so many people sell thread. Since there isn't much variety each seller of thread tends to sell some so there is a lot of motivation for people to sell thread.

Elle asked her if it was possible for anyone to make much gold this way,

because there were so many people selling thread and there wasn't really anything special about each spool and costs were low, probably as low as they possibly could be. The shopkeeper, who started joining their conversation, explained that sometimes it costs too much for someone to continue making and selling thread. At that point that particular thread seller would go out of business.

This seemed like a pretty sweet deal to Princess Elle, at least for the people buying thread. She couldn't help but think about Franz and how different it is to be selling thread, where so many other people make it as well, and being the only person to sell glass slippers. However, her attention was quickly drawn back to shopping where she was happy to find that unlike with the thread, there were many variations to the fabric and she had [choices](#).

As Elle looked through the fabrics, her mind kept returning to Franz and just how strikingly different it must be for him to sell his glass slippers in comparison to the thread earlier. Unlike with the countless suppliers of thread in the kingdom, Franz was the only one who could sell slippers. This made Elle so angry. Her only comfort was the at least this was not mandated by law. Franz simply happened to have the secret for how to make glass slippers and this fact alone was keeping others from also making and selling glass slippers.

Princess Elle is convinced that he is doing something suspicious, and once she figured out exactly what he is up to, and hopefully also the key for how to make the slippers, others could make them as well and Franz would no longer be the only one.

Ella smiled to remember that Franz wasn't all powerful. He may be the only one selling glass slippers, but he still could not force anyone to buy them. As she continued to browse through the store, her smile got even bigger as she recalled when Franz made the price of his glass slippers too high, hardly anyone decided to buy them. Just because he was considerably powerful and certainly was able to make the price higher than he could if there were as many glass slipper makers as thread makers, he couldn't logistically sell them at ridiculously high prices and hope to make any gold. Comforted by these thoughts, Elle's hand landed on the perfect roll of fabric.

Elle ran her hand over the fabric, and it was the smoothest piece of cloth she

had ever touched. It felt almost like water and she could just imagine how amazing it would feel to spin round and round in the dress at Flynn's party. She marveled at how nice it was to be able to choose between so many different fabrics, because even though to her father they all would have looked the same, they absolutely were not. And she found the best one in the store.

The shopkeeper was delighted when she saw Elle's selection. shopkeeper expressed her pleasure to Marta and asked to see the dress when it was completed. Marta, of course, agreed but asked why she was so happy. The shopkeeper explained that she personally knew the artisan who made this particular fabric and she was concerned that the amount of gold her friend made in total off of fabric simply was not enough to cover the amount of gold it cost to make the fabric. She had also noticed that other artisans were beginning to copy her technique and the shopkeeper, from experience, knew that this would drive the price down of her friend's fabric and ultimately, her friend might not end up making any profit at all.

Elle was so happy as she skipped out of the shop that she didn't notice the figure skulking out of Franz's shop, trying to avoid being seen even though it was broad daylight. Elle and Marta chatted as they made their way toward the carriage. They weren't really looking where they were going and Elle crashed into someone and fell backwards. At first she was shocked, but then started to laugh. As she looked up, she saw it was Flynn! He looked so nervous and uncomfortable, so Elle rushed to assure him that she wasn't hurt.

After Elle reassured Flynn that she really was okay, he continued to seem jittery and nervous. He quickly made an excuse to run off and Elle watched him disappear down the road with faint curiosity. However, this curiosity and confusion only grew later that night.

Elle was sitting at her watch in her room and once again saw the shadowy figure outside of Franz's shop. She quickly focused in and was absolutely shocked to see that it was Prince Flynn! What was he doing there? What role did he play in Franz's schemes? Elle didn't have answers but she sure was going to find some.

She shuffled down the stairs of her tower and sneaked out of the castle, stopping only to borrow a horse. Elle quickly rode into town and within 20

minutes was outside of Franz's shop with her ear pressed up against the window. She couldn't hear everything, but it was clear that Flynn was mad. All that she could hear was "we had a deal" and something about how they, whoever they was, had set a price so that everyone would make the most money. Elle had to assume that they were talking about glass slippers and for whatever reason, Flynn's people had been working with Franz to set prices on glass slippers and Franz must have cheated and set a lower price. Flynn was angry, saying that there were only a few people making glass slippers in the surrounding kingdom, and Franz was ruining their system for controlling the prices. They picked a price where everyone could benefit at the same time and Franz was cheating the group. He was so angry that he grabbed one of the glass slippers off of the shelf and threw it. Elle shuddered and turned away, expecting it to shatter. Elle was relieved when she didn't see glass splatter and that the shoe remained intact. For some reason this pissed Flynn off even more and he charged at Franz. This was too much for Elle and she charged in.

Luckily for Elle who brashly crashed in with no real plan, someone in the castle noticed that she had sneaked out and informed the king and queen. The king and queen had quickly raced after Elle, and guessed correctly that she was heading for Franz' shop.

Elle found herself in the middle of the room and started in on reaming Flynn. She had trusted him and was so surprised and betrayed that he had been working with Franz the whole time.

Flynn started laughing and jeering at her saying how stupid she was. While laughing, he bragged that he wasn't working with Franz, he orchestrated the entire glass slipper situation. Elle was so upset, but asked how he could possibly do this to his kingdom. Flynn was just claiming that his true allegiance was with Farlondon when the king and queen walked calmly into the shop. They had heard everything and Flynn knew that it was over. His laughing turned immediately to a look of fear as he tried to run out. Most unfortunately for Flynn, the king and queen brought guards with them who quickly captured him.

The king and queen hugged Elle and told her how proud they were of her for trusting her intuition on Franz, and that they were so sorry to not have really listened. Elle, finally feeling safe, hugged her parents and laughed and said

in a mock serious voice, that the real pity was that she now had nowhere to wear who new gown!