

Tinker Frank

Take a good look at this boy!
He's known far and wide,
and in the village they just call him
Tinker Frank,
because if he's got free time
he's not afraid of work,
and he whittles and wheels
like some famous craftsman.

At the bottom of their garden
in a shed is where you'll find him,
making all sorts of fine goods
in his little factory.
Bits of wood, rusty iron,
without number and type,
he's got a hammer, saw and chisel,
and lots of other tools.

He's a great master, that's sure!
Sometimes he decides
he'll make a sled - but when he's done,
he's gone and made a box.
At the moment he's making nails
with great toil and trouble
and he hits his finger so hard,
that he sees stars.

His buddies tease him,
"Is that a motor you're making,
or is it a swing?"
"Come with us to the creek
and splash around instead!"
"I can't go, got lot's to do,"
he answers without looking.
The gang of kids
laughingly all rush away.

The great creator wonders now
and scratches his head,
because this broken wheel
terribly excites him.
It's a worn out, lousy thing,
nobody needs it.
He found it in the dust of the road,
next to the ditch.

What can he do with the wheel?
That's the assignment for today.
"My dad needs a new
wheelbarrow, I believe."
And he's already begun to hammer,
as if he's breaking rocks,
and again he misses his mark,
and his fingernail nearly breaks apart.

The child stumbles and bumbles,
but does it with good heart...
His father's been watching

unnoticed for some time now.
His heart is full of warmth,
but still it's time to stop!
And he says severely,
"What are you doing here, you
little good-for-nothing?!"

Frank, the boy, jerks back in fear,
but finally blurts out:
"You know what, dad,
I'm making a wheelbarrow."
"I've got wood, and iron and nails,
but," he mumbles-bumbles,
"...just one wheel is missing
from this wheelbarrow."

"Uhum," says the old carpenter,
as he swallows his laughter.
"I can see that a wheel is missing,
but I'm afraid it's from your head!
'Cause you won't get much
out of this pile of junk,
no matter what you do.
You'll never make a wheelbarrow
even if you turn cartwheels!"

Frank sadly looks at his treasure:
"Well, then what can I do?"
His father answers: "You know what this junk
will be? A tractor!"
Frank says in shock:
"It's more than I can figure out!
If there's not enough here for a wheelbarrow
how COULD there be for a tractor?"

The old carpenter just smiles:
"There's not enough, that's true!
But you've just got to find as much
scrap iron as you can.
Because junk is useful, yes it is,
nothing will be wasted.
New products will be made of junk
in a lot of factories!"

"I'll just give you an example,
let's take things one by one.
Two tons of scrap iron is enough
for 4 Hoffher tractors.
And out of the same two tons,
and it's the truth little buddy,
you know how many ploughs are made?
Exactly 83!"

"Exactly 80 harrows,
and if you're interested,
8,000 ten-liter buckets can be made
from that amount of iron!
Watering cans? Kiddo!
Now open up your mouth in wonder,
you know how many we can make?"

Six-thousand and five-hundred!”

“Or lead! Out of a hundred kilos
– just guess ahead of time! –
72 meters of pipe can be made,
and a 100 pounds of red copper?
Every expert knows,
is enough to make
3,600 meters of electric line!”

“Dear daddy,” shouts Frank,
“Can you tell me off the top of your head,
out of 100 kilos of yellow copper, what can be made?”
“Of course I know!” said the man,
“That’s a real treasure!
It’s enough for 1,400 spigots,
or 700 new doorknobs!”

“But it’s not just scrap metal,
that we need to collect!
You need to pay as much respect,
to old rags!
Because rugs are made of rags!
Now what do you say to that?
100 kilograms of rags
are enough for 65 meters of rug.”

“And a 100 pounds of waste paper
– these are facts, not miracles –
more than 1,000 workbooks are made,
now say something boyo!
And out of that same 100 kilo,”
Frank is getting dizzy,
“more than 1,000
children’s books are printed!”

And why hide it? The great numbers
have Frank in their grip.
“Now I know, daddy-o,
that trash is nothing cheap,
and I even know what I’ll do!
I’ll collect it by the heap!”

“Now that’s the way to talk!”
His father’s happier now.
“That’s how to help the country,
and you’ll be doing good work too.
You don’t need to fool around with this,
instead become a good old factory apprentice,
and then you’ll be a master!”

A few days later a big surprise
is waiting for the people.
All the kids in the village
are scouring the country.
They’re scrounging around the houses,
who has ever seen anything like it?!
Well Frank has created
a junk collecting brigade!

There's no end to junk collection,
and nobody's left alone,
since the kids have started to lay siege
to all the adults in the town.
They bother everyone
for their worn out things,
'cause even rags are valuable!

There's a huge pile of junk,
with iron and rags, broken pots and pans,
horseshoes and bones too.
Glass, and paper, maybe a ton.
And all guarded by the kids
as if they were on sentry.

This is what came of good advice,
which became even better in deed,
they finally took the whole pile
in to the collective.
And then they saw, one and all,
how clever the kids had been.
The agricultural collective
bought it for a good price.

And Frank, for his pains
was well rewarded.
He's been given such a good fountain pen,
that everyone wonders!
And the first thing he does with it
is to write a letter,
inviting the youth of the neighboring village
to join in a competition.

And who would deny it,
his little friends
are just a little bit jealous
as they watch how the fountain pen
so beautifully crosses the paper.
But then they all sleep well,
for they know that if they also work hard,
they'll also eventually be rewarded.

The End.