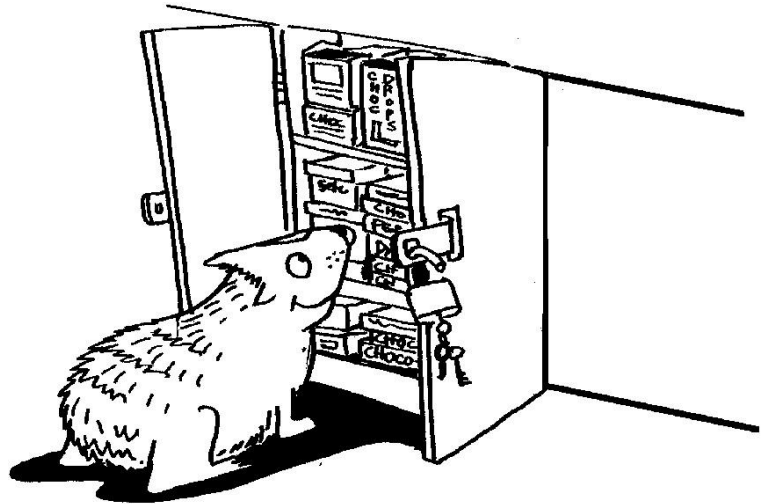


Story 5. Foolish Wombrat

Wombrat was sitting with Happypotamus at the table eating chocolate cup-cakes and drinking hot chocolate. He had been at her house for five minutes but there were only two cakes left - he had already eaten ten.

“Did you know,” asked Happypotamus, “that the Supermarket is having a sale tomorrow? They’ll be selling all their chocolate at half price. Every piece – Mars-Bars, Kit-Kats, boxes and blocks – everything. All half price.”



Wombrat didn’t reply. He jumped to his feet knocking Happypotamus’ best Royal Doulton cup and saucer onto the floor. They shattered into a hundred pieces. He ran towards the door but suddenly turned back, grabbed the two remaining cakes, stuffed them in his pouch and then headed off to his house. He didn’t say ‘thankyou’ or ‘goodbye.’ Happypotamus was left to gather up the broken pieces of her precious cup and saucer. It was one of her favourite pieces.

In no time at all, Wombrat was home. He went to his secret food cupboards. He undid the locks and looked in each one. They were all full of chocolate. There was no room for any more.

“Tomorrow I’ll buy lots of chocolate. I can’t miss such a bargain – it’s half price,” he said to himself. “But there is nowhere to keep them.” For a few minutes he walked around in circles thinking. Suddenly he stopped and said, “I know what I will do. I will pull down my secret food cupboards and build bigger ones. I’ll have the biggest food cupboards on Hannimal.”

For the rest of the day Wombrat worked very hard. First he took out all the chocolate and stored it on his kitchen table. But before that he made sure that his doors were locked so that the other animals could not come in and eat his chocolate.

Then he took his hammer and saw and built three very very large food cupboards. They reached right up to the roof. Next he found three massive brass locks, each with a huge key. As the sun was setting, Wombrat took the chocolate from the kitchen table and stacked it in his new cupboards. They were so large the chocolate filled just one of them. He locked the door and a big smile crossed his face.

Wombrat was awake early next morning and rushed down to the Supermarket before the doors opened. He pushed past Cupine who was also waiting, grabbed a trolley and stood with his nose pressed against the door.

“What are you going to buy?” asked Cupine. But just then the door opened and Wombrat rushed into the supermarket. Wombrat did not bother to answer.

In a flash Wombrat was in the chocolate aisle pushing all the chocolate off the shelf into his trolley. Cupine came by and took the last block of chocolate from the shelf. Wombrat snatched it out of his paw, threw it in his trolley and raced to the check out.

Cupine said to himself, “Looks as though I’ll have to buy liquorice allsorts instead.”



Wombrat hurried up the hill, puffing as he pushed the heavy trolley.

Crocsmile drove past on her motorbike and called out, “What have you bought? What’s the hurry?”

Wombrat ignored Crocsmile and pushed the trolley even faster. Soon he was at his front door. He unlocked it and pushed the trolley inside. As he entered, he looked down the road to make sure he hadn’t dropped any. Then he locked the door.

The phone rang. It was Dog checking to see if Wombrat knew that chocolate was half price today. “Yes and I’ve bought it all. Now don’t bother me, I’m busy.” shouted Wombrat as he slammed down the phone.

Then he sat down for a rest. He looked at the trolley full of chocolates. Then he looked at the two empty secret food cupboards. After a short rest, Wombrat started to stack the chocolate carefully into the new cupboards. Once one was filled, he locked it securely with a big brass padlock. A broad smile creased his face. Then it turned to a scowl as the doorbell rang.

It was Happypotamus carrying a bottle of lemonade. “The supermarket has sold out of chocolate. I need a block for a recipe. Cupine said you had lots. Can I swap this lemonade for a bar of chocolate?”

“None to spare. Can’t talk, in a hurry,” replied Wombrat as he snatched the lemonade, slammed the door and went back to work.

At last he was finished. All the chocolate was stacked neatly in the new cupboards. All three doors were padlocked securely closed. He hid the keys where they would never be found. He was tired but very happy. He went outside, sat in his rocking chair, and said to himself, “Wombrat, you have done very well, you have enough chocolate to last for many years; from now on you can rest, eat chocolate, drink lemonade and be merry for the rest of my life.”

Soon he was asleep dreaming of cream-filled milk chocolate. He didn’t notice the smell of smoke creeping under the door. It was his secret food cupboards – they were all on fire. They were burning fiercely – the chocolate was melting. But Wombrat was lucky. The melting chocolate flowed out of the food cupboards and put out the fire. His house did not burn. But all the chocolate was ruined. It was filled with smoke, ash and dirt from the floor. Wombrat would not be able to eat any.

Wombrat’s friends saw the smoke and rushed to his house. Wombrat was still sleeping soundly, dreaming of chocolate. Cupine woke him and told him what had happened. At first Wombrat was

angry, and shouted “ruined? All of it? None left to eat? What am I to do?” Then he became very sad. After a few moments he started to cry.

Then sadly he said “I have been foolish. I had everything in life I could possibly want but now I have nothing. No chocolate. Nothing at all. No chocolate”

Putting her paw gently around his neck, Happypotamus said “You don’t have nothing – you still have us. There are some things more important than chocolate. We will always be your friends.”

Then she handed Wombrat a large plate of chocolate cupcakes.

Wombrat was sad but he managed a small smile at his friends.

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Source Notes and Discussion

Story 5. Foolish Wombrat

Parable of the Rich Fool: Luke 12: 16 - 21

The story closely mirrors the Bible narrative except for the ending. The Bible parable ends with the death of the Rich Fool. The requirement that the stories end happily precluded Wombrat’s demise (and he is needed for other stories!). Instead he loses everything – death to treasures rather than self. The ending is made happy by Wombrat’s repentance and love shown by his friends. The story may also be linked to Matthew 6:19-20 “Lay not up for yourself treasures on earth ---”