

The phrase "honesty is the best policy" is a great motto.

It has been used in countless fables and parables including the story where a woodcutter accidentally drops his axe into a river and, because this was his only means of livelihood, sat down and wept. Taking pity on him a water sprite appears and returns with a golden axe. "Was this what you had lost?", it asks, but the woodcutter says it is not. The same answer is given for a silver and bronze axe. It is when his own tool is produced that he claims it. Impressed by his honesty, the woodcutter is allowed to keep all three precious axes plus his own. Hearing of the man's good fortune, an envious neighbour throws his own axe into the river and pretends to wail for its return. When the sprite appears and offers him a golden axe, the man tries to greedily claims it but is denied both the gold axe and the return of his own axe.

Use the phrase "**honesty is the best policy**" as a story starter for your own short story.