

“Mommyyy, JP Morgan says he’s worth more than me!”

“Well it’s true!”

“That’s enough from both of you! You’re worth exactly the same to me.

Wachovia, go play outside. JP Morgan, go to your room and do your homework!”

Wells Fargo wheeled on her husband.

“How did they find out their values? I’ve done everything I could to keep their spirits up!”

“I know, Honey, I know. These are hard times on everyone’s self esteem. This time last year I was worth nearly fifty dollars, and look at me now!” A tear shone in the usually stoic Citigroup’s left eye. Only a few short months ago the entire Stock family was worth some two hundred dollars, but once the humans began doling out subprime mortgages and defaulting on their loans it was all the poor Stocks could do to get out of bed in the morning. But they trudged forward, went to work each day from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and even stayed after hours when required. Every spare moment was spent hoping and praying that their owners would not forsake them, that their value might increase if only by a few hundredths of a point.

Little Wachovia crept quietly into the living room and stood next to her father’s chair until he looked up from his paper.

“Daddy, what happens if my value never goes up? What if I get sold?” she whimpered.

“There there, dear,” Citigroup said as he sat her down on his lap. “It’ll be okay. Just think about Grandpa RCA in 1929! It took him over a decade to pick himself back up, but he pulled through and so can you.”

“Daddy, Grandpa RCA is dead!” Wachovia sobbed.

Wells Fargo shot her husband a look. “Come here sweetheart. Remember what you learned at DOW School? The human leaders have been meeting for days now trying to figure out how to get us out of this miserable situation. Don’t you worry, any day now their government will agree to back us and everything will turn out fine.” Wachovia looked at her mother doubtfully.

“JP Morgan said I’m only worth three dollars and ninety-one cents,” she whispered mournfully. “Is that true?”

Citigroup’s and Wells Fargo’s eyes met. “Well, uh...yes, that’s true for the moment. But don’t worry honey, I’m sure it will go up tomorrow.”

Much encouraged by her parents’ words, Wachovia skipped off to inform her brother that she was on the verge of a tremendous increase in value. Wells Fargo put her head in her hands.

“I need some Prozac.”

The next day, the Stocks went to work and school as usual and continued to hold their heads up despite their disintegrating self-confidence. They tried their best to believe that the humans would come to a consensus and bail them out of the state of worthlessness in which they had found themselves. Eventually, JP Morgan and Wachovia grew up and went to work at the New York Stock Exchange, were bought and sold several times, and made their parents very proud as successful Class A’s. With the market back on track and their children safely in the business, Wells Fargo and Citigroup moved to the neighborhood retirement home and spent the remainder of their lives recounting to their friends the horrors of their 2008 experience and lecturing them on the

importance of remaining calm and being patient when it comes to those crazy, indecisive humans.

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