It Shouldn’t Happen to a Vet – James Herriot

Vet: They’re in a nice spot, Mr Skipton.

Farmer: Aye, they can keep cool in t’ hot weather and they’ve got t’barn when the winter comes. They can come and go as they please.

*The horses nuzzle the farmer playfully*

Get by, leave off! Daft awd beggars.

Vet: When did they last do any work?

Farmer: Oh, about twelve year ago, I reckon.

Vet: Twelve years! And have they been down here all that time?

Farmer: Aye, just lakin’ ‘bout down here, retired like. They’ve earned it an’ all.

Vet: But twelve years! How old are they, anyway?

Farmer: Well you’re t’vet. You tell me.

*Vet examines the teeth of the mare.*

Vet: Good god! I’ve never seen anything like these! They’re so long! It’s no good, i’d only be guessing her age. You’ll have to tell me.

Farmer: Well, she’s about two-and-thirty and gelding’s a year or two younger. She’s had fifteen grand foals and never ailed owt except a bit of teeth trouble. We’ve had them rasped a time or two and its time they were done again, I reckon. They’re both losing ground and dropping bits of half chewed hay from their mouths. Gelding’s the worst – has a right job champing his grub.

Vet: I’ll soon make her more comfortable, Mr Skipton. With those sharp edges rubbed off she’ll be as good as new.

*Vet finishes working in the mare’s mouth.*

That’s about right. I don’t want to make them too smooth or she won’t be able to grind her food.

Farmer: Tha’s good enough. Now have a look at t’other. There’s summat far wrong with him.

*Vet starts work on the gelding.*

Vet: Just the same as the mare. Soon put him right too.

Farmer: Well, poor awd beggar. Good job I got you along, young man. Reckon he’ll feel a lot better after that.