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Рыцарь, который боялся
темноты, и Принцесса
изобретательница

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Динамичная, смешная приключенческая комедия для изучающих английский на уровне В1. Принц, который боится темноты. Принцесса, которая взрывает собственную лабораторию. Дракон, которому нужен только шоколад. Принцу Тео десять лет и скоро ему предстоит стать рыцарем — но у него аллергия на лошадей и настоящий ужас перед тёмными подвалами. Его старшая сестра, принцесса Лея, двенадцати лет, в очках и вечно в чернилах, изобретает роботов-пауков и катапульты вместо того, чтобы вести себя как настоящая принцесса. Когда король-отец объявляет, что тот, кто победит дракона Западного леса, получит трон, Тео в ужасе — пока Лея не напоминает ему, что дракон — это просто старый Гурман, который не ел людей уже десятилетиями (люди вызывают у него страшное несварение). Но у Гурмана есть настоящая проблема: больной зуб, и ни одного стоматолога, который решится ему помочь. Чтобы вылечить зуб дракона, Тео придётся столкнуться с тем, чего он боится больше всего на свете — самой тёмной пещерой королевства.

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The Knight Who Was Afraid of the Dark, and the Inventor Princess

A story for English learners (Level B1)

Written for young English learners

Main Characters

Prince Theo

10 years old. He must become a knight one day, but he is allergic to horses and absolutely terrified of dark basements, caves, and shadows of any kind.

Princess Lea

12 years old. Theo's older sister. She wears glasses, always has ink on her fingers, and would much rather invent robot spiders and catapults than act 'like a real princess'.

Gourmand the Dragon

Extremely old and extremely fat. He stopped eating people decades ago — they give him terrible indigestion. His one true love in life is chocolate truffles.

The King

Theo and Lea's father. He loves his children very much, even when one is scared of shields and the other keeps setting the laboratory on fire.

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Chapter 1. The Castle on the Cliff

High on a rocky cliff, above a forest full of birds and a sea full of storms, stood Castle Bramblewood. It had tall towers, a hundred narrow staircases, and one extremely nervous ten-year-old prince.

Prince Theo lay awake in his bed, staring at the shadows on his bedroom wall. A coat hanging on the door looked exactly like a monster. A branch outside the window scratched against the glass like long, bony fingers.

"It's just a coat," Theo whispered to himself. "It's just a branch. Nothing is going to eat me tonight."

He said this every single night, and every single night, he still slept with three candles burning and his blanket pulled up to his nose.

Down the hall, in a room that smelled of smoke and metal, his sister Lea was having a very different kind of night.

"Almost... almost..." she muttered, turning a small screwdriver inside a metal spider the size of a cat. "Just one more wire, and—"

BANG!

A glass test tube on her desk exploded with a loud pop, sending a cloud of purple smoke across the room and turning Lea's eyebrows a surprising shade of green.

"Excellent," said Lea calmly, wiping smoke from her glasses. "Not what I wanted, but still excellent. Note to self: purple liquid plus loud noises equals green eyebrows."

She wrote this down in a large notebook titled THINGS THAT EXPLODE (AND WHY), which was already nearly full.

Theo appeared in her doorway, wrapped in his blanket like a small, frightened burrito.

"Did something just explode?" he asked.

"Only a little," said Lea. "Come in, come in. I want to show you my newest invention before it definitely, absolutely does not explode again."

She pointed proudly at the small metal spider on her desk. It had eight thin legs, two glowing eyes, and a strange, ticking sound coming from somewhere inside it.

"Meet Spider Number Seven," said Lea. "Spiders One through Six had... small problems. But Seven can climb walls, carry small tools, and light up dark rooms. Watch."

She pressed a tiny button on the spider's back. Its eyes glowed bright yellow, lighting up the whole dark corner of the laboratory.

Theo took one look at the glowing metal spider, made a small, high-pitched noise, and stepped backwards very quickly.

"Sorry," he said, embarrassed. "I know it's just a machine. It just... surprised me. Everything surprises me lately."

"Theo," said Lea gently, putting down her screwdriver, "you're going to become a knight next year. Knights are supposed to be brave."

"I know," said Theo quietly, pulling his blanket tighter. "I really wish somebody had told that to my brain."

Vocabulary

cliff

a very high, steep rock, often next to the sea

staircase

a set of stairs, usually inside a building

muttered

spoke quietly, often to yourself

screwdriver

a tool used to turn screws

burrito

food made of a soft flat bread rolled around a filling — here, used as a joke about a blanket

embarrassed

feeling a little ashamed or shy, usually after a small mistake

Comprehension Questions

1. Where do Theo and Lea live, and what is it like?
2. What is Theo afraid of, and how does he try to deal with it every night?
3. What happens in Lea's laboratory at the start of the chapter?
4. What is special about Spider Number Seven?

Exercise

Are these sentences True or False? Correct the false sentences.

1. Theo is twelve years old and Lea is ten. ____ True ____ False
2. Theo sleeps with candles burning because he is afraid of the dark. ____ True ____ False
3. Lea's notebook is called THINGS THAT EXPLODE (AND WHY). ____ True ____ False
4. Spider Number Seven is Lea's very first invention. ____ True ____ False

Chapter 2. The King's Announcement

The next morning, a loud trumpet call echoed through Castle Bramblewood, calling everyone to the Great Hall. Theo and Lea hurried down the stairs, Lea still wiping green paint from her eyebrows.

Their father, the King, stood at the front of the hall, wearing his second-best crown (his best one was, at that moment, being used by Lea for an experiment involving magnets).

"Good people of Bramblewood!" announced the King, his voice booming across the hall. "I have important news."

Everyone leaned forward, curious.

"For many years," continued the King, "a dragon has lived in the West Forest. It is time for a brave knight to face this dragon once and for all. Whoever defeats the dragon of the West Forest will inherit my throne!"

The whole hall gasped. Theo's face went completely white.

"A... a dragon?" he whispered. "Nobody said anything about an actual, real, fire-breathing DRAGON."

Lea, standing beside him, rolled her eyes so hard it was almost audible.

"Father," she said, raising her hand, "do you mean Gourmand? The dragon who lives near the old oak trees?"

"That is the one," said the King proudly. "A fearsome, legendary beast."

"Father," said Lea patiently, "Gourmand is approximately four hundred years old. Last spring, he got stuck trying to fit through his own front door. The blacksmith had to help pull him out."

A few nervous laughs came from the crowd.

"He also," Lea continued, counting on her fingers, "hasn't eaten a person since Great-Grandfather's time, because people give him terrible indigestion. His absolute favourite food in the whole world is chocolate truffles. I brought him a box last month, and he cried actual dragon tears of happiness."

The King cleared his throat, looking slightly less impressive than a moment ago.

"Legendary or not," he said, "the rule remains: whoever defeats the dragon becomes the next ruler of Bramblewood. It is tradition."

"Wonderful," said Theo weakly. "A four-hundred-year-old, chocolate-loving dragon, and I still have to 'defeat' him. Somehow, this does not make me feel better."

"Don't worry," whispered Lea, putting an arm around her brother. "I have a feeling 'defeating' Gourmand isn't going to involve any actual defeating."

"Then what is it going to involve?" asked Theo nervously.

Lea smiled a very particular smile — the smile she always had right before one of her plans.

"I have absolutely no idea yet," she admitted cheerfully. "But I promise you, it's going to be interesting."

Vocabulary

trumpet

a musical instrument, often used to announce important news

boom (a voice)

to sound very loud and deep

gasp

to breathe in suddenly because of surprise or shock

audible

loud enough to be heard

fearsome

frightening, causing fear

indigestion

an uncomfortable feeling in the stomach after eating

Comprehension Questions

1. What does the King announce in the Great Hall?
2. How does Theo react to the news about the dragon?
3. What does Lea tell everyone about Gourmand?
4. Why does the King still insist that someone must 'defeat' the dragon?

Exercise

Complete the sentences with the correct word from the box: throne, indigestion, truffles, tradition, defeat.

1. The King says that whoever ____ the dragon will get the throne.
2. Gourmand doesn't eat people because they give him ____.
3. Gourmand's favourite food is chocolate ____.
4. The King says the rule about the dragon is an old ____.
5. Whoever wins will inherit the ____.

Chapter 3. Shield Fright

That afternoon, Theo's knight training began in the castle courtyard. Sir Reginald, the castle's oldest and most patient knight trainer, handed Theo a shiny silver shield.

"Every knight needs a good shield," said Sir Reginald. "Hold it up, like this, and—"

Theo lifted the shield in front of his face. In the polished silver surface, he saw a pale, wide-eyed face staring back at him.

He screamed and dropped the shield with a loud clang.

"What? What is it?" shouted Sir Reginald, spinning around, sword ready.

"There's... there's someone in the shield!" said Theo, pointing with a shaking finger.

Sir Reginald picked up the shield and looked at it carefully.

"Your Highness," he said slowly, "that is your own reflection."

Theo looked again, closer this time. The pale, wide-eyed face was, in fact, his own.

"Right," he said, turning bright red. "Of course. I knew that."

They tried again. Sir Reginald showed Theo how to hold the shield, how to block a wooden practice sword, and how to stand like a proper knight. Everything went well — until a cloud passed in front of the sun, and Theo's shadow suddenly stretched long and thin across the courtyard stones.

Theo yelped and jumped sideways, right into a bucket of water, which fell over with a loud crash.

"That was... my shadow," he admitted, sitting in a puddle. "I know it was my shadow. I just... reacted before I remembered that."

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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