



## Monster shopping trip

Hairy Henry is a handsome green monster. He lives in a small house in the forest. All his friends live nearby.

Soon it is Hairy Henry's birthday. Loony Lou and Gorgonzola decide to buy him a present.

'What shall we buy him?' they ask.

'What about a camera?'

'No, he's got a camera.'

'How about a big box of chocolates?'

'No.'

'Let's buy him a new pair of shorts.'

'No, he's got some new shorts.'

Loony Lou and Gorgonzola just don't know what to buy him.

'I know!' said Loony Lou. 'Let's go shopping in London. We can visit Hairy Henry's cousin, Big Ben, and ask him what to buy.'

'Good idea!'

So they got the train to London. Big Ben waited for them at the station. 'Hello!' he said.

'We want to buy a present for Hairy Henry,' they told him. 'I know just the place,' said Big Ben, and they went shopping.

First they went into a computer shop. 'Wow! What a lot of computers and games!' said Big Ben, who loves computer games. They bought a very special monster computer game for catching horrible humans. 'Hairy Henry will love it!'

Next they went to a very smart shop called Harrods. They went to the special floor for monsters and looked at the very smart clothes. Everything was monstrously monstrous!

Because Hairy Henry is quite a smart monster, Gorgonzola bought him a tie which lights up and sings a monster 'Happy Birthday' song.

## Short story





Finally, they went to an amazing cake shop. They bought the biggest, most monster cake they could find. They put it in a box to take it to Hairy Henry's birthday party.

The next day, Loony Lou, Gorgonzola and Big Ben collected all the presents together and took the train back home. They were so excited about Hairy Henry's birthday party. What a surprise it would be. But then Hairy Henry deserves it, as he is such a nice monster.

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## Robin Hood

People have told stories about Robin Hood for more than 700 years. Nobody knows if he was a real person or an invented character. In the legends, Robin was extremely intelligent and had a playful sense of humour. He loved playing tricks on people.

'Pick a card, any card!'

The stories say that Robin Hood was a skilled archer and he always carried a bow and arrow.

'Ha ha, too easy!'

He wore green clothes and a hat with a green feather. He lived in Sherwood Forest with a group of outlaws, or criminals, known as his 'Merry Men'. The group included Friar Tuck, 'Mmm, yummy!', Little John, who was unusually tall, 'Little is just my nickname!', and Robin's true love, Maid Marian. 'Take that!'

Sherwood Forest was a royal hunting forest near Nottingham in England. Most people thought that forests were dangerous places to go. People travelling through the forests were often robbed by outlaws.

'Your money, please, my Lord!'

'Oh no, it's Robin Hood!'

The stories say that Robin Hood only took money from rich people so that he could give it to people who needed it. So he became famous for 'robbing from the rich and giving to the poor'.

'Here you are, my dear.'

'Oh, thank you, Robin!'

The Sheriff of Nottingham was Robin's arch-enemy. It was the sheriff's job to keep the woods safe and to make sure that nobody stole the king's deer.

'What's that? Is that Robin Hood?'

The Sheriff of Nottingham tried to catch Robin Hood, but never succeeded.

'Oh no, not again!'

Centuries ago people loved to tell each other stories of Robin Hood. Later he became a famous character in books, and nowadays Robin is still a well-loved hero in literature, theatre, TV and films.

## British tales



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## The magic paintbrush

Rose loved drawing. She was very poor and didn't have pens or pencils. She drew pictures in the sand with sticks. One day, an old woman saw Rose and said, 'Hello! Here's a paintbrush and some paper for you.'

'Thank you!' smiled Rose. She was so happy. 'Hmmm, what can I paint?' she thought. She looked around and saw a duck on the pond. 'I know! I'll paint a duck!'

So she did. Suddenly, the duck flew off the paper and onto the pond. 'Wow!' she said. 'A magic paintbrush!'

Rose was a very kind girl and she painted pictures for everyone in her village. She painted a cow for the farmer, pencils for the teacher and toys for all the children.

The king heard about the magic paintbrush and sent a soldier to find Rose. 'Come with me,' said the soldier. 'The king wants you to paint some money for him.'

'But he's already rich,' said Rose. 'I only paint to help poor people.'

But the nasty soldier took Rose to the king. 'Paint me a tree with lots of money on it,' he shouted.

Rose was brave and said, 'No!' So the king sent her to prison. But Rose painted a key for the door and a horse to help her escape. The king chased after her. So she painted a big hole, and splat! The king fell in.

Today, Rose only uses her magic paintbrush to help people who really, really need help.

## Story Time



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## George and the dragon

Once upon a time there was a brave knight called George. George had lots of adventures as he travelled by horse across many lands.

One day he came to a small village and met a man who lived in a cave next to the village.

The hermit told the knight about the awful things that were happening there. A terrible dragon had come to live in the lake and attacked the village every day.

The villagers didn't know what to do. First, they gave the dragon all their food, but the dragon just took the food and still attacked the village.

So then the villagers gave the dragon all the animals from their farms. The dragon took all the animals, but continued to attack the villagers.

So then they gave the dragon all their gold and jewels. The dragon took all their money, but still was not satisfied.

The king sent his army to try and capture the dragon, but the dragon was too strong and the knights of the army were too scared and they ran away.

With nothing left to give, the king could only think of one thing to help protect his people. He sent his only daughter, the princess, to the lake to wait for the dragon.

When George heard this he rode as fast as he could to the lake. Just then the dragon jumped out from the lake and was going to eat the princess.

George attacked the dragon. He fought very bravely, won the fight and killed the dragon. George and the princess returned to the village and everyone was very pleased that they would have no more problems with the dragon.

Today, the story of George's bravery is remembered and George is known as the patron saint of many countries.

## British tales



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## The magic fish

Every day, Robert's grandfather went fishing. One day, Robert asked to go too.

'Well, I want to catch the magic fish. The first person to eat it will become the cleverest person in the world. Can you help me?'

'Yes!' said Robert, and they went fishing.

First, they caught a yellow fish with purple spots. 'Wow! Is that the magic fish?' asked Robert.

'No,' said his grandfather.

Then they caught a blue fish with red stripes. 'Is that the magic fish?' asked Robert.

'No,' said his grandfather.

Suddenly, they caught a big, beautiful silver fish with pink and green diamonds. Robert's grandfather jumped for joy. It was the magic fish! They started to cook the fish, and his grandfather went to get some more wood. He asked Robert to watch the fish, but not to eat any of it.

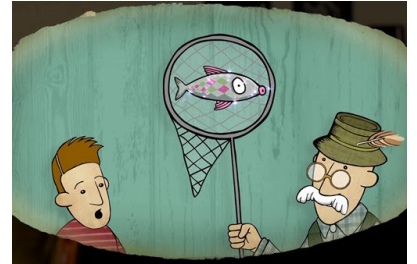
Robert watched the fish very carefully. He saw a tiny bubble on its tail. He touched it with his finger. Pop! The bubble burst. The fish was very hot and burnt his finger. Ouch! He put his finger in his mouth.

When his grandfather came back, he saw that something was different. 'Did you touch the fish?' asked his grandfather.

'Yes, I'm sorry,' said Robert.

His grandfather sighed a happy sigh and gave Robert a big hug. 'The magic fish chose you. You are the cleverest boy in the world, and I am the proudest grandfather ever!'

## Story Time



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## Eric the engine

## Short story

One day there was a big storm. Lightning struck a mountain and a huge rock rolled onto the train line.

Seagull saw what happened. He called his friends: Rabbit, Fox and Mouse.

'We must move it. The 10:15 London train will be here in one hour,' said Rabbit.

The animals tried to move it. They pushed and pushed but it would not move.

'I know,' said Fox. 'Let's get Eric the Engine. He's stronger than all of us.'

'There's no time,' said Mouse.

'I'll get him,' shouted Seagull. 'Help! There is a rock on the train line and the London train is coming very soon.'

Eric tooted his whistle and called his friends. All the engines gathered around. Eric was big and strong but not very fast. He asked the express trains to go ahead. 'You go first. Then you,' said Eric, and he sent his friends ahead. 'I'll follow you.'

The engines raced along, but the London train was getting closer.

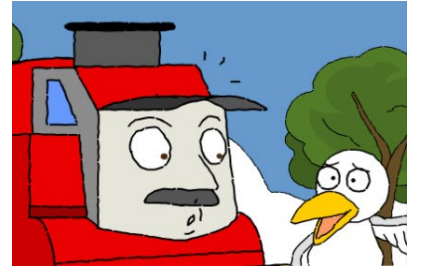
The trains arrived. The two express trains pushed, but the rock wouldn't move. The London train was coming over the hill.

Two more engines arrived and they pushed too. The rock moved a little but the London train was coming round the corner.

'They can't do it!' said Mouse.

Then Eric arrived. He tooted his whistle and pushed with all his strength. He pushed the four engines and the four engines pushed the rock. Slowly the rock moved. Then it rolled faster and faster until it fell over the cliff.

The London train arrived. It raced past the engines and the animals, who were waiting on the other line. The train blew its horn, 'Thaaaaank yooooou!'



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