



# Learn English Through Stories

A Series

A14

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## 1. Ching the Brave Girl

Many years ago, there was a great war in China. The army did not have enough soldiers to fight the war. The emperor announced an order: one man from each Chinese family must leave his family and join the army...

In a remote village, there is a family of three members: a father, a young son, and a daughter. The name of the daughter is Ching.

One day Ching asks her dad, "Father, have you heard the news? The emperor ordered that each family has to send one man to the army." Ching had heard this news when she was outside washing clothes.



Father says, "I know all about this news. That is why I have been collecting food and string in the house. When I am gone you will have enough grains in the house. I am packing my stuff today. And I will leave for the army tomorrow..."

"Father, wait," says Ching, "Father, you have not been well. If you go, how will you keep up with all those young me?"

"What else can be done?" says her father. "Your brother is a child. He cannot go."

"Of course that's true," says Ching. "He is too little. But I have an idea." She pours her father a cup of tea and gives it to him. "Father, have some tea. Please sit for a minute. I will be right back."

"Very well, dear," says the father.

Ching goes into her room. With her sword, she cuts off her long, black hair. She puts on her father's clothes. Going back to her father, Ching says, "Father, look at me. I am your son now. I will go in your place. I will do my part for China."



"No, my daughter!" says the old man. "You cannot do this!"

“Father, listen please,” says Ching. “For years, you trained me in Kung Fu. You showed me how to use a sword.”



Ching swings the sword back and forth with a lot of power.

“Only so that you could stay safe!” says her father. “I never meant for you to go to war. If they find out you are a woman, you know as well as I do that you will die!”

“No one will find out, Father,” said Mulan. She picked up her sword.

“Ching!” says the Father. He tries to get up but has to hold on to his chair.

The daughter kisses him goodbye. “I love you, Father,” she says. “Take care of yourself. Tell my brother I said goodbye.” She climbs on a family horse. And off she goes to join the Emperor’s army.

In the army, Ching proves to be a brave soldier. In time, she is put in charge of other soldiers.



Her battles are going so well that she is put in charge of more soldiers. Her battles keep on going well. After a few years, Ching is given the top job - she is the General of the entire army.

Not long after that, a very bad fever sweeps through the army. Many soldiers are sick. And Ching becomes sick, too, the General of the army.

When the doctor comes out of Ching's tent, he knows the truth.

“The General is a woman?” yell the soldiers.

“How can this be?” Some call out, “She tricked us!” and “We will not fight for a woman!” They say, “Punish her! Make her pay! The cost is for her to die!”

But others call out, in voices just as loud, “With Ching, we win every battle!” They say, “Stay away from our General!”

Just then, a soldier runs up. “Everyone!” he calls. “A surprise attack is coming!”

Ching hears this from inside her tent. She gets dressed and goes outside. She was not yet strong but stood tall.



She tells the soldiers where they must go to hide so they can attack when the enemies come. But they must get there fast! The soldiers, even those who did not like that their General was a woman, can tell that Ching knows what she is talking about.

It has worked! The battle is won. It is such a big victory that the enemy gives up, at last. The war is over, and China is saved! You can be sure that after that last battle, no one cares anymore that Ching is a woman.

The Emperor is so glad that Ching has ended the long war, he sets aside the rule about being a woman. “Ching, stay with me in the palace,” he says. “Someone as smart as you would be a fine royal adviser.”



Ching bows deeply. “You are too kind, Sir,” she says. “But if you please. What I wish most of all is to return home to my family.”

“Then at least take these fine gifts,” says the Emperor. “So everyone in your home village will know how much the Emperor of China thinks of you.”

Ching returns to her village with six fine horses and six fine swords. Everyone cheers that she is safe. The person who saved China is their very own Ching!

## 2. A Lion in Love



A woodcutter and his daughter live in a village close to a forest. Although the woodcutter is a half-wit (a stupid person who has little intelligence), he is a hard worker. He goes to the forest every day. He brings home good-quality wood. Then he sells this wood in a town nearby. This is how, he makes a living.

However, his daughter is not only good-looking, but also very intelligent. She knows her time tables up to 20. She can also say them in reverse order: 190; 171; 152, 133, etc.

One day, her school is closed. India has won the T20 Cricket World Cup. She goes to the forest with her dad. On the way, they meet a lion. Daughter and Father get scared. They climb on a tree. The lion keeps looking at the daughter and says, "Please don't be afraid of me. I will not harm you."

The lion is smitten by the girl's beauty. I mean the lion falls in love with her. He wants to marry her. He goes to the woodcutter and asks for his daughter's hand in marriage. Before the woodcutter could say anything, his daughter speaks. She says to the lion, "Dear King, the king of the forest, I would love to marry you. Once I marry you, I will be the queen of the forest. But marriage is a serious matter. We should rush into it. And there are some problems..."

The lion is very happy. He says to the girl, "What are the problems?"

The girl says, "I am scared of your paws. I am terribly afraid of your teeth..."

The lion thinks for a moment and says, "That is nothing. I will get rid of paws. And also, I will get rid my teeth..."

The next day, the lion goes to a pedicure parlour and gets his paws removed.

A pedicure is a beauty treatment for the feet that involves cutting and sometimes painting the nails.

Now, the lion has no paws. In the afternoon, he goes a dentist and gets all his teeth removed.

The lion comes back to his den. He gets ready and goes to the woodcutter's house. He says to the woodcutter, "Dear my father-in-law, look at me. I have no teeth and no paws. Please tell this news to your daughter..."

Daughter comes out with a hockey stick. She is not afraid of the lion anymore. She starts hitting the lion and says, "You think I was really going to marry you? You half-wit animal, go away and get lost..."

Now, the foolish lion cannot even hunt without his teeth and paws.

As they say: love is blind and takes over your mind.

### 3. The Creaking Wheels



There is a small village called Nangla. It is near Kartarpur – not very far away from national highway 3 (NH3).



National Highway

In the village, lives a farmer. His name is Shajju. We don't know his real name. Everybody calls him by this name. There is a tale (story) about why people call him Shajju. He is a skilled winnower. Nowadays, in the grain market, workers use a winnowing machine. Before, people used a winnower (Shajj) to blow the chaff from the grain.



A Winnower

One day, Shajju is going to go to a town. He yokes his white oxen to his cart. His load is not very heavy. They are empty pitchers. His oxen are young and strong. Around their necks, tinkle bells. They are pulling the cart steadily. They don't moan or groan. The cart is old and has wooden wheels. The bulls use all their strength to pull it, but they don't complain.

Whenever Shajju makes a turn, the wheels creak and groan.

Hearing all these creaks, Shajju gets annoyed. He stops and says to the wheels, "Why do you make so much noise? Can't you see, the oxen are quietly doing their job?"

One of the bulls says to the farmer, "Dear Master, those who cry the loudest may not be the ones who are hurt most..."

Shajju was only 13 when he got married. When he turned 20, he went to his in-laws to bring his wife. But she refused to go with him.



She sings a Punjabi song:

ਗੱਡੀ ਜੋੜ ਕੇ ਲੈਣ ਆ ਗਿਆ  
ਕਰਦਾ ਜੋਰ ਚਿੰਗਾੜਾ ।  
ਮਰਦੀ ਮਰਜੂ ਸੌਣ ਮਹੀਨੇ  
ਮੈਂ ਸੌਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣਾ ...

To take me, he comes in his cart with oxen;  
And he is screaming (trumpeting) like an elephant;  
Even if I die in the month of September;  
I am not going to my in-laws...

## 4. The Ugly Sister

Rani grows up in a huge family. She has six older sisters and three younger brothers. All of them are very beautiful, handsome kids. This makes Rani feel very bad. She knows she looks nothing like them. Rani has even heard people say she is the ugly sister in the world. As teens, the girls spend every week end out meeting their friends. The boys stay at home happily playing with their toys.

Rani stays at home as well. But she does not play with any toys.

Her sisters spend their days combing their hair and putting on makeup. They stand in front of the mirror, admiring themselves.

Rani spent her days reading and studying. She reads books by many authors: Charles Dickens, Leo Tolstoy, Roald Dahl, J.K. Rowling, R.K. Narayan, and many more. Her sisters laugh at her a lot. As adults, all her sisters get married at a young age.

They all had handsome husbands. But all of the husbands are good-for-nothing husbands. They are lazy and idle. They do nothing. They are a waste of time on this planet. All of them are arrogant. They show off. But they have nothing in their brains. Their brains are just empty boxes. They have nothing to talk about other than branded clothes. One says, "Adidas is better than Nike."

Other says, "I love my 'Champion Tea Shirt', it's much better than 'Puma'..."

Rani wears simple clothes and eats simple food. She goes to college and concentrates on her studies. She has a natural talent for maths.

Differentiation and Integration, for Rani, is fun. She loves solving equations. She is a natural problem solver. When she is helping her mum in the kitchen, her brain doesn't stop solving problems. Sometimes she washes the same plate three times, but solves her equation.

She gets four A Stars in her A Levels: Mathematics, English, Physics and Further Mathematics.

She goes to the University – Kings College of London. She earns her degree in Economics. She gets a scholarship to do her master's...

Today, she is working for a big international company and is earning a handsome wage. Is she ugly?

## 5. Dialogues

### Driving Very Slowly

A: Why is the driver behind me honking?

B: You are going so slowly.

A: I am driving at the speed limit!

B: Everyone drives fast in this town.

A: No one follows the rule?

B: You're the only one.

A: I should yell at him.

B: No, he'll just be even madder.

A: Good! He deserves to be mad.

B: You don't know if he's dangerous.

A: I'll just go even slower.

B: That would really annoy him.

### Driving Too Fast

A: Why are you driving so fast?

B: I have to be at work on time.

A: Do you really have to?

B: Yes, I will be fired if I'm late.

A: I don't want to die.

B: Relax, I am a good driver.

A: A good driver doesn't drive extremely fast.

B: We haven't even hit anything yet.

A: I bet you're going to get a ticket.

B: How much do you want to bet?

A: If I win, you're never driving me.

B: If I win, you have to shut up whenever I drive.

## 6. Picture Dictionary Page



**cork** A thing to put in the top of bottles to stop the liquid running out. बोटल को ढाट या काग.  
(कार्क)



**corn** The seeds of plants like wheat, barley and oats. Corn is made into food. अन्न; अनाज.  
(कार्न)



**cowboy** A man who looks after cattle on a ranch. चरवाहा; जानवरों को चराने वाला.  
(काउबॉय)



**cot** A small bed with sides. A baby sleeps in a cot. पलंग; बच्चे का पालना.  
(काट)



**cowslip** A small wild yellow flower. पीले रंग का छोटा सा फूल.  
(काउस्लिप)



**cottage** A small house in the country. कुटिया; क़टार; छोटा घर.  
(काटेज)



**crab** An animal which lives in the sea. It has a hard shell and ten legs. केकड़ा.  
(क्रैब)



**cow** The animal which gives us milk. गाय; गऊ.  
(काउ)



**cracker** You pull this and it goes bang. A small present is inside. कागज़ से गोल लपेटा हुआ उपहार जो क्रिसमस के अवसर पर दिया जाता है.  
(क्रैकर)