



Learn English Through Stories

A1 Stories

Elementary Level

**Adapted and modified by
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The King
of the
WIZARDS

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The King of the Wizards

By Deborah Meyers

CHAPTER ONE

The Juggler

A long time ago, a man called Hamish lived in a town by the sea in Scotland. He and his wife, Catriona, lived happily in a small white house. Hamish was a fisherman and he went out to sea in his boat every day. He usually caught a lot of fish and Catriona sold them at the fish market.

One day Hamish was out at sea. It was late in the afternoon and it was time to go home. He started pulling his net out of the water.

'The net is very heavy today,' he thought happily. 'Lots of fish...'

When he pulled the net onto his boat, he saw a wooden box. He was very surprised. He opened the wooden box and found a little baby boy inside!"

"Oh, a baby boy!' he cried. 'This is wonderful! We don't have any children and Catriona will be very happy! She loves babies.'

He went back home and showed Catriona the baby boy.

'Oh, Hamish, what good luck!' said Catriona happily. 'What a good-looking baby! We must keep this child and look after him. Let's call him Calum.'

'Yes,' said Hamish, 'I like the name Calum. He's our son now. We'll look after him and give him all our love and teach him to fish!'

Calum grew up and was a kind, friendly boy. He loved Hamish and Catriona and they loved him a lot, too. Hamish taught him to fish and he learnt quickly. They went out in the boat together every day but not on Sundays. On Sundays, Hamish worked in the garden and Calum went to the port to look at the sailing ships.

When Calum was seventeen, a big sailing ship arrived in the port of the town. It was a beautiful sailing ship. The sails were new and white, and the masts were golden.

A tall, good-looking man stood on the deck. He had dark hair and dark eyes, and he was wearing a beautiful black suit. He had balls with spikes in his hands. He was juggling the balls very fast, without hurting his hands on the spikes. Calum watched the juggler with great interest. Then the juggler got off the ship and continued juggling the balls in the air.

'Do you like juggling, Calum?' asked the juggler.

Calum was surprised that the juggler knew his name.

'Oh, yes!' Calum said. 'It's wonderful!'

'Do you want to become a juggler too?'

'Yes, I do!' said Calum, smiling at the juggler. 'I want to learn how to juggle those balls. It must be difficult.'

'Very well,' said the juggler, 'take me to your parents. I want to talk to them.'

Calum took the juggler to his little house by the sea.

'Father, mother,' said Calum, 'this man wants to talk to you.'

Hamish and Catriona were happy to meet the juggler.

'We love Calum dearly,' said Hamish. 'I found him at sea when he was a baby.'

'At sea?' asked the juggler. He was suddenly very interested in Calum.

'If Hamish found him at sea, then Calum is a fairy child — a magical child,' thought the juggler.

'Give me your son for a year and a day,' said the clever wizard, 'and I will teach him how to juggle. Then when he comes back home he can be a juggler. Jugglers make more money than fishermen.'

Hamish and Catriona looked at each other. They did not know what to do.

'We must do what is best for our son,' said Catriona, looking at Calum.

'Do you want to be a juggler, a good juggler, Calum?' asked Hamish.

'Yes, father, I do,' said Calum.

'Very well,' said Hamish, 'You can go away for a year and a day. And when you come back you will be a good juggler. Is that right, sir?' He looked at the juggler's dark eyes.

'That's right, Hamish,' said the wizard. 'Your son will become a great juggler and he'll make a lot of money. I'll teach him a lot of things.'

Calum said good-bye to his parents and left his home with the juggler. For a year and a day, Calum sailed everywhere on the beautiful sailing ship. He saw a lot of new and interesting places. And he learned all about juggling.

CHAPTER TWO

The Fourteen Pigeons

After a year and a day, the juggler brought Calum back to his home in Scotland. Calum was now an excellent juggler. He could juggle seven spiked balls and he never hurt his hands with the spikes.

Hamish and Catriona were very happy when Calum arrived. They thanked the juggler.

'Now your son is a good juggler,' said the man. 'If he stays with me for another year and a day he will become the best juggler in the world.'

'How wonderful!' said Hamish. 'Yes, Calum can go with you again.'

"Calum left for another year and a day, but at the end of that time, he did not return to his home. Hamish and Catriona were worried. They went to the port to look for the beautiful sailing ship but it was not there. They asked a lot of people but no one knew anything about Calum or the juggler.

'Catriona,' said Hamish sadly, 'I must go and find Calum.'

"Please be careful, Hamish,' said his wife, 'and bring Calum home quickly.'

'Don't worry, dear,' said Hamish, kissing his wife on the cheek.

Poor Hamish did not know where to look for his son. He walked through the forests, up the hills and mountains and crossed a lot of rivers — but he did not find Calum. One night Hamish was very tired and hungry. He saw a little old house in the forest. There was a light in the window.

'Perhaps the person in this house can help me,' thought Hamish.

'Hello!' said Hamish. 'Is anyone home?'

A very old, kind wizard opened the door. He had bright blue eyes and a kind smile.

'Welcome to my home! Please come in,' said the friendly old man. 'You must be very tired. Sit down and rest.'

Hamish sat down near the fire. The old man gave him some hot tea, bread and butter. Hamish ate the bread and butter, and drank the hot tea. After eating, he felt better and told the old man about his long journey.

The old man listened carefully and was suddenly sad.

'Your son's in the hands of the evil King of the Wizards!' he said. 'Everyone here knows about the wizard and his terrible magic. But don't worry; I'll help you. You must rest now and we'll talk about it tomorrow morning.'

He gave Hamish a warm red blanket and he fell asleep near the fire.

Early the next morning the old man gave Hamish some breakfast. Then he said, 'Today you must go to the King of the Wizards. He lives in a dark castle on a high hill. When you get there, you must talk to the king immediately. Tell him you want your son. The king will take you to his tower where there are fourteen pigeons. The king has magic powers and can change a person into a pigeon! If you recognise your son, you can take him home with you.'

'But how will I recognise my son?' asked poor Hamish. 'Pigeons all look the same.'

'Remember this: Calum is the pigeon with a tiny black feather on its head,' said the old man. 'Look at all the pigeons slowly and carefully. Then choose that one and you'll have your son again!'

'You're a good friend,' said Hamish to the kind old man. 'Thank you for your help. I'll always remember you.'

'Good luck to you, Hamish!' said the old man.

Hamish followed the old man's instructions. He crossed a dark forest and a big river and then started walking up a high hill. The wizard's dark castle was on top of the hill. There were a lot of towers all around it. The sky was dark and cloudy, and suddenly the wind started blowing.

'What an ugly place!' thought Hamish, looking at the castle and its towers. 'My son is in one of those towers.'

He got to a black wooden door. He rang a big bell and waited. After a few minutes, a man opened the door.

'I want to see the King of the Wizards,' said Hamish.

In a moment, the juggler in the black suit was standing at the door of the castle. Hamish was scared when he saw the evil wizard.

CHAPTER THREE

In the Tower

The king of Wizards immediately recognised Hamish, and he was not happy to see him.

'What do you want?' the wizard asked angrily.

'I want my son, Calum,' said Hamish. 'You promised to bring him to us after a year and a day.'

The wizard was silent for a moment.

'I can give you anything you want: beautiful clothes, a fast horse, a new fishing boat, a big house, a jewel for your wife — but let me keep your son,' said the wizard.

'All these presents are nothing to me and my wife,' said Hamish. 'We want our son, Calum!'

'You're foolish!' said the clever wizard. 'You can do a lot of things with a new boat or a fast horse. And your wife will be happy with a big diamond.'

'I don't want your presents,' said Hamish angrily. 'I want my son, now!'

'You're very foolish, Hamish,' said the wizard. 'Take all the presents you want but leave your son here with me!'

'Never!' cried Hamish. 'I want my son immediately!'

The wizard looked at Hamish with his cold, evil eyes and started laughing.

'Follow me to the tower!' he said laughing. They climbed the steps up to a dark tower. In the tower, there were fourteen pigeons.

'Now Hamish,' said the wizard, 'choose the right pigeon and you can have your son, Calum.'

'This fisherman will never choose the right pigeon,' thought the wizard, 'and his son will always be mine!'

Hamish walked around the tower and looked at all the pigeons carefully. Then he saw one with a tiny black feather on its head.

'I'll choose this pigeon with the tiny black feather on its head,' Hamish said.

Suddenly Calum was standing in front of his father.

'Father!' said Calum happily.

The wizard was very angry and cried, 'Get out of here! One day I'll come back!'

Hamish and Calum ran down the dark stairs and out of the castle. Then they ran down the hill and into the forest. They stopped at the old man's house in the forest and thanked him. Then they went home.

Catriona was very happy when she saw Hamish and Calum. She could not believe her eyes.

'Calum, my dear boy!' she said. 'I'm very happy to see you. Thank you for bringing him home, Hamish.'

'Oh, mother,' said Calum, 'I don't want to go away anymore. I want to work here, in my town. Now I'm the best juggler in the world. The King of the Wizards taught me a lot of magic tricks. People will come to see me.'

Calum became the town juggler and magician. The people in town always enjoyed his tricks and his juggling. His hands moved very fast and everyone was surprised. People from his town and other towns came to see him. The children liked Calum a lot. He became famous and made a lot of money. Now Calum and Hamish went fishing for fun

The beautiful sailing ship with the big white sails and the golden masts never came to the port again. But on stormy nights the people of the town told scary stories about the King of the Wizards, who lived in the dark castle on the hill...

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