



# Learn English Through Stories

A1 Stories

Elementary Level

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# The Legend of the Unicorn

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## CHAPTER ONE

### Sir Brangwyn

Rhiannon lived in the days of King Arthur and his knights in the part of Britain, which is now England. She was twelve years old and had long red hair and green eyes. She lived with her mother and father in a small village near Sir Brangwyn's castle.

Sir Brangwyn was the lord of the castle and the village, and everyone was afraid of him. He was a big, fat man with black hair and cold, black eyes. He was bad and greedy. He always wanted more taxes from the poor people of the village.

Simon Grimstone was Rhiannon's father, and he was brave and kind. He was a tall, thin man with blond hair and kind brown eyes. The people of the village liked Simon because he always helped them. He was not afraid of Sir Brangwyn.

One day Sir Brangwyn and his knights rode to the village and stopped in front of Simon's house.

'Simon Grimstone!' cried Sir Brangwyn. 'You killed a deer in my forest! No one can go into my forest! My men are taking you to prison.'

'That's not true!' said Simon. 'I didn't go into your forest and I didn't kill a deer.'

'Take him to prison!' said Sir Brangwyn to his men.

'You want to put me in prison because I'm not afraid of you!' said Simon. 'You're a greedy man. The people of this village are hungry because you take all their money.'

'Be quiet!' cried Sir Brangwyn angrily. 'You'll be quiet in prison, Simon Grimstone!'

Simon's wife, Marian, was standing behind her husband and started crying.

'Take his wife too,' said Sir Brangwyn. 'She can work in the castle kitchen and pay for the food her husband eats.'

'Oh, please don't take me away from my daughter,' said Marian, crying. 'There's no one who can look after her. She'll be alone!'

'Please, don't take my mother away!' cried Rhiannon.

But the Lord's men didn't listen to Rhiannon and took her parents away.

'When can I see my parents again?' she asked, crying.

The Lord's men laughed and rode away. The villagers were angry but they could do nothing. After that day, they called Rhiannon 'Sir Brangwyn's orphan'.

Rhiannon went inside her house and sat by the small fire in the cold room. She was very sad and lonely. 'What will I do without my parents?' she thought. 'I must find a job.'

Sir Brangwyn liked eating all kinds of food, but truffles were his favourite. It was very hard to find them because they grew under the ground, on the roots of trees.

Rhiannon decided to look for truffles for Sir Brangwyn. Now she had a job.

Every morning Rhiannon went to the forest with a big basket. She looked for truffles all day long. At the end of the day, she looked in her basket but she saw very few truffles.

'I only found three truffles today,' she thought sadly. 'And Sir Brangwyn wants lots of them for his dinners! He'll be angry. How can I find more truffles?'

At night, she always thought about her poor father and mother.

Sir Brangwyn liked hunting in the forest with his knights. He often rode through the forest when Rhiannon was looking for truffles. He and his men always made a lot of noise and scared the animals.

The villagers said there were strange animals in Sir Brangwyn's forest... like unicorns and dragons.

## CHAPTER TWO

### The Little White horse

Rhiannon continued looking for truffles in the forest every day for a year.

One afternoon she heard a noise behind her. She turned around and... what did she see? A beautiful little horse! It was white, and it had a lovely mane and tail.

One of the villagers saw the beautiful little horse that evening and he told his friends.

'I saw a young white horse in the forest and it was following Rhiannon,' he said. 'It was a very beautiful animal. Perhaps we can catch it and give it to Sir Brangwyn.'

'And pay less taxes!' said a young man.

'That's a good idea!' said an old woman.

The next day the men from the village tried to catch the little white horse but it ran away into the dark forest. That evening Rhiannon came home with a basket full of big truffles.

'Where did you find those big truffles?' asked one of the men of the village.

'A friendly little horse helped me find them,' said Rhiannon happily.

'Did you hear that, Richard?' said the man to his friend. 'The little horse helped her find the truffles!'

The next morning everyone in the village went to the forest to look for it.

'If we find lots of truffles we can use them to pay our taxes to Sir Brangwyn,' said a young man.

'Yes, and we'll have money to buy food!' said a thin young woman with two hungry children.

They looked everywhere in the forest but they could not find the beautiful little horse. It was hiding in a secret place. When they went back to the village the little horse came to see Rhiannon. She followed him and found a lot of truffles for her basket. The beautiful little horse liked Rhiannon and wanted to help her.

Day after day, Rhiannon's basket was always full of truffles for Sir Brangwyn.

Soon the servants at the castle started talking about the baskets of truffles and the strange little horse.

One of Sir Brangwyn's knights heard them and decided to follow Rhiannon into the forest. He hid behind a big tree and waited for the little white horse.

That evening he returned to the castle and talked to Sir Brangwyn.

'Now I know why Rhiannon finds lots of truffles!' said the knight happily.

'Oh, really?' said Sir Brangwyn. 'Tell me!'

'I was in the forest today and hid behind a big tree,' said the knight. 'Then suddenly I saw...'

'What did you see?' said Sir Brangwyn. 'Tell me, quickly!'

'There's a strange little horse that lives in the forest and Rhiannon follows him. Then he stops and smells the ground. That's where Rhiannon looks for truffles - and she finds them!'

'What!' said Sir Brangwyn, surprised. 'A little horse that finds truffles?'

'Yes,' said the knight. 'And when the girl's basket is full she sits under a tree and rests. The little horse sits next to her and she sings sweet songs to him. But there's one strange thing about him.'

'What?' asked Sir Brangwyn.

'He has a lump between his eyes,' said the knight.

'A lump... then it's a young unicorn!' cried Sir Brangwyn. 'Soon that lump will grow and become a horn! It's a unicorn - a magic creature!'

'A unicorn!' said the knight, surprised. 'I didn't know there were unicorns in the forest.'

Sir Brangwyn called the best hunters in the village to his castle.

'You are the best hunters in the village,' said Sir Brangwyn. 'Now listen carefully. You must go to the forest and find the little white horse,' said Sir Brangwyn. 'Then bring him to me. There's a prize for the hunter who finds him - a big prize. Now go!'

The hunters went to the forest and looked for the beautiful white unicorn. They looked for days but no one could find him. Sir Brangwyn was angry and the hunters were afraid of him.

One afternoon an old knight who lived in the castle went to see Sir Brangwyn.

'Do you want to find the unicorn, Sir?' asked the old knight.

'Of course I do!' said Sir Brangwyn.

'Then you must send the young girl into the forest alone,' said the old knight.

'Alone? But why?' asked Sir Brangwyn. 'When the unicorn sees her he'll go and sit next to her. She'll sing to him and he'll fall asleep. Then the hunters can catch it.'

'That's a very good idea,' said Sir Brangwyn. He called his knights and said, 'Go to the village and get Rhiannon. I want to see her immediately!'

The knights went to the village and looked for Rhiannon everywhere. When she saw them, she was afraid.

'What do they want?' she thought.

'You must come with us to the castle immediately,' said one of the knights.

'Why must I come with you?' asked Rhiannon.

'Sir Brangwyn wants to talk to you,' said another knight. 'Get on this horse, quickly!'

Rhiannon got on the horse and went to the castle with the knights.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Rhiannon's Secret

The knights took Rhiannon to the castle. Sir Brangwyn was sitting at a long table with his friends. They were laughing and eating all kinds of food.

'Young Rhiannon,' he said smiling, 'you must help me catch the beautiful white unicorn of the forest.'

'The white unicorn?' asked Rhiannon, surprised.

'Yes, that little white horse is a young unicorn,' said Sir Brangwyn.

'Then it's a magic creature!' said Rhiannon.

'When you are in the forest, you must call him,' said Sir Brangwyn. 'He will come to you.'

'Oh, no!' said Rhiannon, 'The little unicorn is my friend. He loves me - I can't do what you ask.'

'You must do what I ask!' cried Sir Brangwyn. 'I'm your Lord! If you don't listen to me I'll kill your father and mother!'

Rhiannon started crying and couldn't stop. What could she do? She felt terrible.

'Tomorrow morning we're going to the forest to catch the unicorn!' said Sir Brangwyn angrily.

He looked at one of his knights and said, 'Take this girl away. She can sleep in the hall. I want to finish my meal now - bring in the roast chicken and the truffles, quickly.'

Poor Rhiannon did not sleep all night. Early the next morning Sir Brangwyn and his knights took her to the forest. Sir Brangwyn and his men hid behind some trees and Rhiannon sat on the grass. They waited all day and all night. When the moon was high in the sky, the young unicorn came and sat next to Rhiannon. He looked at her with his big eyes and put his nose next to her cheek. He was happy when he was with his friend.

But Rhiannon could not sing, because she was afraid and unhappy. Suddenly Sir Brangwyn came riding through the forest on his big black horse. Rhiannon jumped onto the unicorn, put her arms around his neck and quickly rode away. Sir Brangwyn followed them.

The knights and the hunters waited for their lord to return with the unicorn. It was very dark in the forest and they couldn't see anything. But they heard



the sound of horses and then a loud cry. They waited a long time but their lord did not return.

Very early the next morning the knights and hunters started looking for Sir Brangwyn. After many hours, they found him in the forest. There was blood everywhere.

The blood came from his heart.

'He's... dead!' said one knight.

'But who killed him?' asked another knight.

'I don't know,' said a young hunter.

Everyone looked at Sir Brangwyn's body, but no one was sad. His son Sir Ivor was the new Lord. He was a kind, friendly young man and everyone liked him. He helped the villagers and the men in prison were all free.

Rhiannon's parents finally went back to their home and she was very happy.

'Rhiannon,' her father asked, 'who killed Sir Brangwyn? You were in the forest that night.'

'It's a secret, father - it's my secret,' said Rhiannon, smiling. 'All I can say is this: unicorns have parents too.'

-The End-