



Learn English Through Stories

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A long time ago a Man met a Satyr in the forest and succeeded in making friends with him. The two soon became the best of comrades, living together in the Man's hut. But one cold winter evening, as they were walking homeward, the Satyr saw the Man blow on his fingers.

"Why do you do that?" asked the Satyr.

"To warm my hands," the Man replied.

When they reached home the Man prepared two bowls of porridge. These he placed steaming hot on the table, and the comrades sat down very cheerfully to enjoy the meal. But much to the Satyr's surprise, the Man began to blow into his bowl of porridge.

"Why do you do that?" he asked.

"To cool my porridge," replied the Man.

The Satyr sprang hurriedly to his feet and made for the door.

"Goodbye," he said, "I've seen enough. A fellow that blows hot and cold in the same breath cannot be friends with me!"

The man who talks for both sides is not to be trusted by either.

The Man and the Satyr: Version 2

Jagga's life was a tapestry woven with threads of every hue—some vibrant, others frayed and faded. As a child, he lived in the shadow of his parents' ceaseless quarrels. His mother, a fiery woman with a quick temper, toiled tirelessly at a bakery, her hands kneading dough long after the sun dipped below the horizon. His father, a bartender, stumbled home each night reeking of whiskey, his slurred words trailing him like a ghost. Jagga rarely saw him sober; the man slept through mornings and returned long after Jagga had drifted into uneasy dreams.

The weekend rows—sharp and bitter—left scars on Jagga's young heart. At school, he was a solitary figure, unable to forge lasting friendships. Nightmares jolted him awake, and even the mildest colds clung to him like damp fog. But when he entered secondary school, a spark ignited: Jagga discovered his gift for football. With every match, he danced across the field, scoring a hundred goals for his team, each one a fleeting triumph. He dreamed of stadiums and roaring crowds—until a cruel twist of fate snapped his leg and his ambitions in one brutal fall.

His parents' marriage unravelled soon after, and Jagga stayed with his mother. Adrift, he drifted through odd jobs—delivery boy, shop clerk, dishwasher—until he found his footing in a catering business for Indian weddings. His lamb curries were symphonies of spice, his naans golden and crisp. Success followed, and with it, wealth. But money, like a fickle muse, turned his head. Jagga began to fling cash about as if it were confetti, squandering his fortune on fleeting pleasures until nothing remained but echoes of his former glory.

Broken but not defeated, Jagga turned his back on the world. He sought solace as a hermit, retreating to a forest where the air was clean and a burbling stream offered fresh water. With roughened hands and quiet determination, he built a modest hut, its front adorned with a small garden that bloomed with wildflowers. There, amid the rustling leaves, he found a fragile peace.

One crisp morning, as the sun cast a silver smile across the treetops and the wind sang through the branches, Jagga set out for a stroll. The forest hummed with life, and soon he encountered a Satyr—a creature of myth with hooves and horns, yet a warm glint in its eyes. They traded greetings, then stories, and a bond blossomed. The Satyr moved into Jagga's hut, and for a time, their days were filled with companionship.

On a chilly dawn, the pair wandered by the stream. Jagga's hands, numb from the cold, prompted him to cup them and blow warm breath onto his fingers.

“Why do you do that?” the Satyr asked, tilting its head.

“To warm my hands,” Jagga answered with a shrug.

Later, they returned to the hut, where Jagga’s culinary past came alive. He crafted two steaming bowls of vegetable curry, the aroma of cumin and turmeric curling through the air. As he set the dishes on the table, he leaned over his bowl and blew gently across its surface.

“Why do you do that?” the Satyr asked again, its voice edged with curiosity.

“To cool my curry,” Jagga replied, smiling faintly.

The Satyr froze. Then, with a sudden scrape of its chair, it rose and strode toward the door, not sparing a glance at the untouched meal.

“Goodbye,” it said, its tone sharp as frost. “I’ve seen enough. A man who blows hot and cold from the same breath cannot be trusted.” And with that, it vanished into the forest.

Jagga sat alone, the curry cooling in its bowl, the silence heavy. He understood the Satyr’s parting words: a true friend speaks with one heart, not two faces. Those who offer warmth to your face and venom behind your back are no companions at all.

The Man and the Satyr: Version 3

Jagga's life was a mix of bright moments and tough times. Growing up, he lived with his parents' constant arguments. His mother, a hardworking baker with a fiery temper, spent long hours shaping dough, while his father, a bartender, came home late, smelling of whiskey and mumbling through his drunken haze. Their weekend fights left Jagga with a heavy heart. At school, he kept to himself, struggling to connect with others, and he often fell ill or woke from restless nightmares. But in secondary school, he found his talent: football. He shone on the field, scoring countless goals and dreaming of a future in the sport—until a bad fall broke his leg and shattered his hopes.

After his parents' marriage fell apart, Jagga stayed with his mother. He drifted through small jobs—delivering packages, stocking shelves, scrubbing dishes—before landing work in a catering business for Indian weddings. His rich lamb curries and perfectly baked sheesh kebabs won people over, bringing him success and money. For a time, he enjoyed his wealth, spending it freely on whatever caught his eye. But his reckless habits drained his savings, leaving him with nothing.

Worn out and humbled, Jagga turned away from the world. He moved to a quiet forest, where he built a simple hut beside a clear stream and planted a small garden of wildflowers. There, surrounded by nature, he found a sense of calm. One morning, while walking through the trees, he met a Satyr—a mythical Greek creature with hooves, horns, and a friendly gaze. They struck up a conversation, then a friendship, and soon the Satyr joined Jagga in his hut. One cold day, as they stood by the stream, Jagga rubbed his chilled hands and blew on them to warm up.

"Why do you do that?" the Satyr asked, curious.

"To warm my hands," Jagga replied simply.

Later, back at the hut, Jagga cooked two bowls of steaming vegetable curry filled with fried cumin, fresh coriander and many more home grown spices, filling the air with the scent of multiple flavours. Before eating, he blew on his bowl to cool it.

"Why do you do that?" the Satyr asked again.

"To cool the curry," Jagga said with a small smile.

The Satyr paused, then stood abruptly, pushing its chair back. “Goodbye,” it said coldly. “You blow hot and cold from the same mouth—I can’t trust someone like that.” Without another word, it walked out into the forest.

Jagga sat alone, staring at his cooling curry, the silence pressing in. He realized the Satyr’s point: a true friend is steady and honest.

Not the one who utters warm words in front of you and biting cold words behind your back!

29. The Hare and his Ears



The Lion had been badly hurt by the horns of a Goat, which he was eating. He was very angry to think that any animal that he chose for a meal, should be so brazen as to wear such dangerous things as horns to scratch him while he ate. So he commanded that all animals with horns should leave his domains within twenty-four hours.

The command struck terror among the beasts. All those who were so unfortunate as to have horns, began to pack up and move out. Even the Hare, who, as you know, has no horns and so had nothing to fear, passed a very restless night, dreaming awful dreams about the fearful Lion.

And when he came out of the warren in the early morning sunshine, and there saw the shadow cast by his long and pointed ears, a terrible fright seized him.

"Goodbye, neighbour Cricket," he called. "I'm off. He will certainly make out that my ears are horns, no matter what I say."

Do not give your enemies the slightest reason to attack your reputation. Your enemies will seize any excuse to attack you.

The Hare and his Ears: Version 2



There was once a hare who was very proud of his long ears. He thought they made him look handsome and distinguished. He liked to show them off to the other animals, and often boasted about how much he could hear with them.

One day, he met a fox who had very short ears. The hare decided to make fun of him, and said, “Hey, fox, what’s wrong with your ears? They are so tiny and stubby. How can you hear anything with them?”

The fox felt insulted, but he did not lose his temper. He replied calmly, “My ears are just right for me. They are not too big and not too small. They suit me well, and I can hear everything I need to hear.”

The hare was not satisfied with this answer. He wanted to prove that his ears were better than the fox’s. He challenged the fox to a hearing contest. He said, “Let’s see who can hear better. We’ll go to the edge of the forest, and listen for the sounds of the hunters. Whoever hears them first, wins.”

The fox agreed to the contest, and they went to the edge of the forest. They sat down and listened carefully. The hare was confident that he would hear the hunters before the fox, because of his long ears.

But he was wrong. The fox heard the hunters first, and warned the hare. He said, “Hare, I hear the hunters coming. We should run away.”

The hare was surprised, and asked, “How can you hear them? I don’t hear anything.”

The fox said, “That’s because your ears are too long. They block your hearing. You should fold them down, like mine.”

The hare realized that the fox was right. His long ears were not an advantage, but a disadvantage. They prevented him from hearing the danger. He quickly folded his ears down, and followed the fox to a safe place.

The hare learned a valuable lesson that day. He learned that it is not wise to be proud of something that is not useful, and to mock others for something that is not their fault. He learned to appreciate his ears, and to respect the ears of others.

We should not be proud of something that is not useful, and we should not mock others for something that is not their fault.

The Hare and His Ears: Version 3

Once upon a time, in a sun-dappled forest, there lived a hare who was exceedingly proud of his long, elegant ears. He considered them his crowning glory—sleek, tall, and velvety—setting him apart as the most distinguished creature among the trees. He loved to flaunt them, twitching them this way and that, and often bragged to anyone who'd listen about their unmatched sensitivity. "With these ears," he'd say, "I can hear a leaf fall a mile away!"

One crisp afternoon, as the hare hopped along a winding path, he crossed paths with a fox. The fox was lean and clever, with ears that were short, sharp, and neatly tucked against his head. The hare, feeling particularly smug, couldn't resist a jab. "Well, well, fox," he sneered, "what's the matter with those pitiful ears? So small and stumpy—how do you hear anything at all?"

The fox's amber eyes narrowed, but he kept his cool. With a flick of his bushy tail, he replied, "My ears suit me perfectly, hare. Not too grand, not too slight—just right for catching what matters. I hear all I need to, thank you very much."

The hare scoffed, his pride stung by the fox's calm confidence. Determined to prove his superiority, he puffed out his chest and declared, "A contest, then! Let's test whose ears are truly better. We'll sit at the forest's edge and listen for the hunters. Whoever hears them first wins."

The fox tilted his head, considering, then nodded. "Very well, hare. Let's see what your fancy ears can do."

Together, they padded to the forest's fringe, where the trees thinned and the wind carried whispers from the world beyond. They settled on a mossy knoll, the hare sitting tall with his ears thrust skyward, the fox crouching low, his compact ears twitching faintly. The hare smirked, certain his victory was assured.

Minutes passed in silence, broken only by the rustle of leaves and the distant chirp of a bird. The hare strained, his long ears quivering with effort, but he heard nothing unusual. Then, suddenly, the fox's head snapped up. "Hare," he said urgently, "I hear them—the hunters. Their boots crunch on the gravel, their voices murmur. We need to go, now."

The hare blinked, bewildered. "Hunters? I don't hear a thing! How could you—?"

The fox gave him a sidelong glance. “Your ears, hare—they’re too long, too proud. They catch the wind and the chatter of the forest, but they muddle what’s faint and far. Fold them down, like mine, and listen again.”

Doubt gnawed at the hare, but the fox’s steady gaze convinced him to try. He bent his ears downward, tucking them close. At once, the muffled world sharpened—there it was: the rhythmic thud of boots, the low hum of voices, growing nearer. His heart raced. Without a word, he bolted after the fox, who led them to a thicket where the shadows swallowed them whole.

Safe at last, the hare caught his breath, his pride deflated like a punctured balloon. He turned to the fox, ears still drooping. “You were right,” he admitted, his voice small. “My ears... they’re not as grand as I thought. I was a fool to mock you.”

The fox shrugged, a faint smile tugging at his muzzle. “It’s not the size of the ears that matters, hare, but what you do with them. Yours are fine enough—once you learned to use them.”

From that day on, the hare carried himself with less swagger. He stopped boasting about his ears and ceased judging others for what they lacked. Instead, he listened—truly listened—and found the forest a wiser, kinder place for it.

And so, the hare learned a timeless truth: pride in what’s useless is a hollow crown, and mocking others for what they cannot change is a fool’s errand. Better to value what works, in ourselves and in those around us.