

Transcript

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[introduction music]

Welcome to Easy Stories in English, the podcast that will take your English from OK to Good, and from Good to Great.

I am Ariel Goodbody, your host for this show. Today's story is for beginners. The name of the story is *The Turnip Princess*. You can find a transcript of the episode at [EasyStoriesInEnglish.com/Turnip](https://www.EasyStoriesInEnglish.com/Turnip). That's [EasyStoriesInEnglish.com/Turnip](https://www.EasyStoriesInEnglish.com/Turnip). There, you can also download the episode as a PDF.

OK, I'll just explain some words that are in today's story.

A **turnip** is a big white vegetable that grows in the ground. Turnips are mostly white but have purple bits as well. Turnips are like carrots or potatoes—they are hard and you have to cook them for a long time.

The son of a king is the **prince**. It is very important who a prince gets married to. The daughter of a king is the **princess**. It is also very important who a princess gets married to.

Your **chest** is the part of your body between your neck and your legs. You wear a shirt to cover your chest. Some people have hairs on their chest.

When you **lock someone out**, you lock a door so that they cannot get inside. For example, if you are very angry at your friend, you might wait until they are outside and then lock the door. You put your key in the door so that they cannot open the door. But if they have a key as well, then they can **unlock** the door and come inside. If you get **locked in** your car, it means that you are inside and the door is locked, but the keys are outside. Getting locked out or locked in is not fun!

A **witch** is a very bad woman who does magic. Witches go [cackle]. They have black cats as pets, they wear big black hats and they fly on broomsticks. In *Harry Potter*, Hermione is a very successful witch. The musical *Wicked* is about witches.

A **curse** is bad magic. When you curse something, you change it. To make the thing normal again you have to **break the curse**. For example, a prince might get cursed and he will die on his eighteenth birthday. To break the curse, he has to kiss a woman he loves.

When someone is **familiar**, you think that you know them but you can't remember where you met. For example, maybe you see someone on the street and think, 'That person looks familiar.' But you can't remember: did you go to school with them? Are they a friend of your brother? You don't know, but they're familiar—you know you met them somewhere.

Collapse means to fall over and break. When a house falls over, it collapses. Usually, houses collapse because of storms or hurricanes. When a society or a country collapses, it is very bad.

Bite, and the past tense is **bit**, and the past participle is **bitten**, is when you put your teeth in something and hurt it. When you eat food, you bite it first. Dogs might bite someone if they are dangerous. Insects also bite people and they can be very annoying.

Carve means to use a knife in wood to make shapes out of it. So you might carve a bird or a toy out of wood. You can also carve your name into a tree, for example. Some couples carve their names into a tree and carve a heart around it. On Halloween, people carve faces into pumpkins, and on Thanksgiving or at Christmas, people carve turkeys and eat them.

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A big thank-you to my new patrons, as well as patrons who have increased their pledge. I'm recording this episode in advance, and I haven't had time to mention the new patrons here, but I will in the next episode.

And a special thank-you to my Teacher's Pet patrons: Vera Kaufmann and Rüdiger Richter.

OK, so listen and enjoy!

The Turnip Princess

Once, there was a young man called Arran who hated eating vegetables. Every night, his mother gave him a big plate of carrots, potatoes, onions and turnips, but Arran never ate it.

'Eat your vegetables,' his mother would say. 'It will put hairs on your chest.'

'I don't need hairs on my chest!' said Arran.

One day, his mother got angry.

'If you won't eat your vegetables, then you can sleep outside!'

And she locked him out of the house.

'I can't believe it!' he said. 'What mother locks her son outside of the house?'

Arran didn't want to sleep outside, so he started walking. He walked and walked, and got very lost. In the morning, he saw a house on a hill, and he went to it.

'Hello?' he said.

But nobody answered.

He opened the door and went inside, and there was a *click*. He tried to open the door again, but it was locked.

'Not again! Why does everyone lock me in and lock me out?'

Inside the house, it was very quiet. Arran went upstairs. In a bedroom, he found a woman sleeping in a bed. She was very old, and looked like a witch.

'Hello.'

'Ahh!' cried Arran. He turned around and saw a dog. 'Who said that?'

'I did,' said the dog.

'But you're a dog! Dogs can't talk!'

'Ah, but I'm a magic dog,' said the dog.

'Huh,' said Arran. Was he dreaming? 'Well, I want to go home, but I'm locked in. How do I get out?'

'This house is cursed,' said the dog. 'There is only one way to get out. You must marry this woman.'

'Marry *her*?' He looked at the old woman. She really wasn't very pretty. 'Sorry, but I can't marry an old witch. Tell me more about this curse. There must be another way.'

'I cannot,' said the dog. 'I am cursed as well, and I cannot tell you many things. If you marry her, though, you can **break the curse**...'

'I told you, I'm not marrying an old witch!'

'Fine,' said the dog. 'Then go downstairs and find a painting on the wall. If you take the painting off the wall and put it under the biggest turnip in the world, you will find a beautiful wife.'

'See, *that's* what I want!' said Arran. 'But eww, turnips. I hate turnips.'

He went downstairs and found the painting. In the painting was a young woman, who was very beautiful. There was something **familiar** about her. Had Arran seen the woman before? But no, he had never been to this part of the country before.

He pulled the painting off the wall, and the house started moving. There was a *click*, and the door was **unlocked**. Arran ran outside, and the house **collapsed**!

'Oh no,' said Arran. 'I made the house collapse, and I killed that little dog and that old witch...'

He looked for them, but he couldn't find them. Then he saw a man on the other side of the hill.

'Uh-oh!' said Arran. 'If that man sees me, he'll think *I* made the house collapse and killed the two of them. Well, I *did* do that. But I don't want him to know that!'

So he ran away with the painting.

He ran for many days, and found a big vegetable field.

'Perfect! I mean, I hate vegetables, but there's probably some big turnips here. Maybe not the biggest turnip in the world, but I'm sure any big turnip can break the curse. I just need to find it.'

So he walked into the vegetable field. But these weren't normal vegetables. They were magic vegetables! As he walked, the vegetables started walking, too, and they were very big. An onion, a carrot and a potato all started walking behind him.

Arran heard something, and turned around and saw the vegetables.

'Ahh!'

He ran, and the vegetables ran, too. The onion **bit** him in the leg. Arran started to cry. The carrot bit him on the arm. Arran's hair turned orange. The potato bit him in the chest, and Arran fell over and started to sleep...

Arran woke up, and he didn't know how long he had been sleeping. But when he looked at his chest, he saw that there were lots of hairs on it.

'Well, Mother always said that eating vegetables would put hairs on my chest, but actually, it was the vegetables eating *me* that put hair on my chest!'

He ran away from the vegetable field. He still had the painting. When he was far away from the field, he looked at it. The girl still looked familiar, but he didn't know why.

So Arran looked for the biggest turnip. He walked for many months, but he could not find it. But one day, he walked up a big hill, because he thought there was a house on top. Actually, it was a big, white turnip!

'Aha! This must be the biggest turnip in the world.'

So he put the painting under the turnip and waited. Nothing happened, so he decided to sleep.

The next day, he woke up and the painting was gone. But more importantly, the turnip had changed. A picture was **carved** into it.

'Who carved this?!' said Arran.

He looked, but he saw no other people. The carving was of a familiar face... Ah! It was the old witch. And next to the old witch in the carving was a house.

'I think this turnip is telling me to go back to the old woman's house. But why? It collapsed, and she's dead now.'

But Arran went back and found the house. And actually, it *wasn't* collapsed. It looked normal again.

He went inside, and the door locked again. The painting was back on the wall like before.

'There you are!' said the dog. 'You found the biggest turnip in the world, then?'

'Yes, but I don't understand. Why did it tell me to go back here? And I thought you died! Didn't the house collapse on you?'

'No, I got out. But the curse changed everything again. Oh, it was so nice to be...'

The dog wanted to say something, but he couldn't. The curse stopped him from speaking.

Then Arran understood.

'That man I saw after the house collapsed... That was you!'

'Yes!' said the dog.

'I understand now. And I know what to do!'

The boy ran upstairs, and he took the old woman out of her bed. He carried her downstairs, and then he took the painting off the wall. Quickly, before the house collapsed, he carried her outside.

The dog changed into a man, and the old woman changed into a beautiful young girl. She was the girl from the painting!

'So *that* was why she looked familiar!' said Arran.

But the girl didn't wake up.

'I don't understand,' said Arran. 'What do I do now?'

'You have to marry her to break the curse,' said the dog—well, the man. 'I told you that.'

'Of course!'

So Arran held the girl and said, 'I'm going to marry you!'

And the girl woke up.

'Oh!' she said. 'Someone has broken the curse. And who are you?'

So Arran explained everything. When she heard that he came back to the house and understood how to break the curse, she was very happy.

'Now I will explain,' she said. 'I am not a witch, but a princess. I am the Turnip Princess, of the Turnip Country. Well, I *was* the princess. You see, a horrible witch wanted to take my country away from me. So she changed herself to look like me, and she made me look like an old witch. Usually, that would not be a problem. I know vegetable magic, you see. Vegetables have very strong magic. But the witch made all my vegetables go bad.'

Arran thought about the vegetables in the field that had bitten him. They were certainly bad vegetables.

'She cursed my brother as well, and turned him into a dog. Then she sent us to this house and cursed me to sleep until someone said they would marry me. Oh, she is a horrible witch... But I knew someone would come and find me. You see, turnips have a very special magic. Turnips can help you find your way in the world. The witch didn't know this, so she didn't stop my brother from talking about it. I knew that he would tell someone about the turnips, and that they would find the way to break the curse.'

'But I don't understand,' said Arran. 'Was the house collapsed all that time while I had the painting?'

‘Yes. Don’t worry, I was sleeping all the time, and it didn’t hurt. You see, my magic uses vegetables, but the witch’s magic uses art. So she used the painting to make the curse. She thought that, if someone took the painting, they would run away from the house, and the curse would still not be broken.’

‘It sounds like this witch isn’t very good at magic,’ said Arran.

The Turnip Princess **laughed**. ‘Yes, magic is difficult. And she isn’t very good.’

‘What will you do now? Do you want to go home?’

‘Not today. Today, I want to talk to the man who broke my curse. And if we are going to get married, I would like to meet his parents.’

So they used another turnip to find the way to Arran’s home, and the Turnip Princess met his parents. They liked her a lot, and together they made Arran eat his vegetables. But he was happy, and the Turnip Princess cooked vegetables so well. He actually started to like them!

‘If I can eat the vegetables, and the vegetables can’t eat me, then I’m happy!’ he said.

A month later, Arran and the Turnip Princess got married, and they lived happily ever after.

THE END

On *Easy Stories in English*, I tell a lot of fairy tales. These are old stories that we have all around the world. Most fairy tales come from books written by the Grimm Brothers. The Grimm Brothers travelled through Germany and collected fairy tales from people, and then they wrote them down in books.

However, there are lots of fairy tales that the Grimm Brothers didn’t collect. Another man, called Franz Xaver von Schönwerth, also collected fairy tales. Actually, Von Schönwerth collected more than 500 fairy tales that the Grimm Brothers didn’t collect, but these fairy tales were kept in an archive—a place where nobody could read them. But in 2009, a woman called Erika Eichenseer took some of the stories out of the archive and put them in a book.

So now we have all these new fairy tales that are quite different to the Grimm Brothers’ fairy tales. I only learned about Von Schönwerth’s fairy tales recently, but I thought it was really interesting. *The Turnip Princess* is one of the stories from his collection. Maybe in future I will use more stories from this collection.

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