

Transcript

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 King's New Clothes*. You can find a transcript of the episode at EasyStoriesInEnglish.com/KingL1. That's EasyStoriesInEnglish.com/KingL1. There, you can also download the episode as a PDF.

This is a levelled-down version of an intermediate-level story. You can listen to the intermediate version of *The King's New Clothes* at EasyStoriesInEnglish.com/King.

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

A **wardrobe** is a tall cupboard that you hang your clothes in. Most people have a wardrobe in their bedroom. Sometimes, wardrobes have mirrors on the door.

An **outfit** is a set of clothes that you wear together. For example, a suit is an outfit. You have the shirt, the jacket, the tie, the trousers and the shoes. Together, they make an outfit. Some people like to choose their outfit before they go to bed, so that they don't have to think about it in the morning. It's fun to wear an interesting outfit when you go to a party.

When you **weave**, you put lots of threads together to make new fabric, new material. For example, you take wool from sheep, and you weave wool together to make a strong fabric for warm clothes. People who weave as a job are called weavers. But now we have machines that make clothes, so there aren't many weavers anymore.

When you **lie**, you say something that isn't true. For example, if I tell you, 'Hi, I'm Queen Elizabeth,' that's a lie, because it's not true. I am not Queen Elizabeth. Children often lie when they don't want their parents to get angry at them. Sometimes people lie because it is very hard to say the truth.

When you **pretend**, you do something but you don't really do it. For example, if you pretend to eat, you don't actually put the food in your mouth. If you pretend to drink, you don't actually put the drink in your mouth. If you pretend to know something, you say, 'Oh yes, I know that!' but really you don't.

Stupid means not intelligent, not clever. It is not nice to call someone stupid. Sometimes, we call ourselves stupid, because we can't do something easy. But of course, nobody listening to this podcast is stupid! You are all very clever.

A **parade** is a kind of celebration. In a parade, lots of people walk, sing, shout and hold pictures and banners. For example, LGBT Pride parades happen in many countries around the world. Sometimes, parades have big cars that carry people and sculptures, and these are called parade floats.

When a king or queen **knights** someone, they make them into a knight. In the past, knights rode on horses and fought with swords, but now knights are just people who have done something special for their country. In the UK, the king or queen knights these people. For example, Sir Elton John has been knighted for his musical achievements. Because he is a knight, we call him *Sir* Elton John.

When you have no clothes on, you are **naked**. You usually cannot be naked in public, but there are some people who like to be naked all the time. They are called nudists. There are also people who hate being naked and never take their clothes off.

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OK, so listen and enjoy!

The King's New Clothes

Once, there was a king who worried a lot about how he looked. Most kings worried about the country's money, but this king only thought about clothes. He spent all the country's money on clothes, and his **wardrobe** was as big as a country. He only went to the theatre when he had a new **outfit** and wanted people to see it. The king was not often in **council**, but he was often in his wardrobe.

So the people in the country wore old dirty clothes and the king's council did all his work for him. Actually, this was quite good. The council understood the job better than the king. Things went well, until one dark day...

A pair of brothers came to the castle, saying that they were famous **weavers**, but they were **lying**. But when the king heard that there were weavers in the castle, he wanted to see them.

'My dear king,' said the first brother. 'We have travelled through your country, and we have heard lots of stories about your amazing outfits.'

'You have?' said the king. He was happy that everyone knew about his outfits. 'How wonderful.'

'We have an idea,' said the second brother. 'We want to weave you a beautiful outfit, and then the whole world will know about you.'

'The whole world!' said the king. 'Isn't that a wonderful idea?'

He looked at his council, but they did not look so happy.

'If the other kings and queens hear that I have such an outfit, they will think we are rich, and they will not make war with us.'

'And it won't just be beautiful!' said the first brother. 'The clothes will be *magic*. Only people who are clever and good at their job will be able to see them.'

The king thought this was brilliant. His outfit would make him famous, and he would also know if his council were good at their jobs, and who was clever.

'We must start immediately!' said the king. 'What do you need to weave this wonderful outfit?'

So the lying brothers asked for two bags of gold and a room to work in. There, they put two big machines, and **pretended to** start working. They put the gold in their own bags, and they did not put anything in the machines. They moved their hands in the air and worked the machines. It made lots of noise, but of course, the machines were empty. They were only pretending.

A few days later, the king was looking at clothes in his wardrobe, and then he had an idea. He could send his council to go and see how the weavers' work was going. That way, he would know if his council were good at their jobs.

He sent the oldest man in the council to go and talk to the weavers. The councilman thought he would easily see the outfit, but when he walked in, he saw two empty machines, and the weavers working.

'My God!' he thought. 'Does this mean I am **stupid**? Then I must not be good at my job.'

'Councilman!' said the brothers, stopping their work. 'Thank you for coming to see our work. Come closer, so you can see the clothes better.'

The councilman pretended to look at the outfit.

'Tell us, do you like how it looks? And what do you think of the colours?'

They spoke for a long time about the clothes, used many long words, and asked what the councilman thought. He said, 'Yes, yes,' and told them that the outfit was beautiful. He did not want them to think he was lying, so he asked for the names of the colours, so that he could tell the king.

'Oh, and before you go!' said the brothers. 'Could we have more gold? We have used most of it already.'

So the councilman gave the message to the king, and the king gave more gold to the lying brothers, which they put in their own bags.

The king was happy with the oldest councilman, so a few days later, he sent the youngest councilman. This man also thought he would be able to see the clothes, and when he walked in and saw the empty machines, he began to worry.

'If I tell the king I cannot see the clothes, he will kill me!' he thought.

So he looked at the machines for a long time, and spoke loudly about how beautiful the clothes were, and how he wanted to tell the whole city about it. The weavers asked him lots of questions, and said that they wanted to make sure it was perfect, and then asked the councilman for more gold.

The councilman told the news about the magic clothes to the city, and everyone started talking about it. They all wanted to see the outfit, so that they could know who was stupid or bad at their job.

Finally, the king decided that he could wait to send his councilmen to the weavers, because he wanted to see the clothes himself. He went to their room with his council, and of course they only saw the empty machines, but nobody said anything in front of the king.

The king was very surprised that he could not see the clothes.

'Does this mean that I am a bad king?' he thought. 'But how can that be? I have been a good king all my life! But maybe... My council has always done most of the work. And isn't that the job of a king? The people look at how wonderfully perfect I am, and then the king chooses a strong council who does all the work. I must not speak of this, or people will think I am a bad king.'

So the king said that the clothes looked wonderful, and that he would give the weavers as much gold as they needed. The council **laughed** and talked about the beautiful colours. If you listened to the council, you would think the clothes were black, white, red, green, yellow, orange, blue, purple and gold!

'Yes, yes, you have done an excellent job,' said the king. 'So I think we must hold a **parade**! There, we will show everyone the new outfit, and afterwards you will **be knighted**.'

The lying brothers' mouths fell open.

'We will be knighted? How amazing! Our king is too kind.'

The night before the parade, the weavers did not sleep. They worked all night on their machines. Then they took the clothes out, cut them with scissors and so on. Of course, they were really just pretending, cutting the air with scissors.

In the morning, the lying brothers came to the king and showed him each piece of the outfit.

'Here are your new trousers, my king!' they said, and they helped the king put on his trousers.

'Here is your new scarf, my king!' they said, and they helped the king put on his scarf.

'Here is your new shirt, my king!' they said, and they helped the king put on his shirt.

'The clothes are so light that you will not feel them,' they explained.

'They are as light as air!' the king said.

The weavers took the king to the mirror. He stood there completely **naked**, but the weavers pretended to look at the outfit, talking about how good he looked.

The parade began, and all the people of the city came to see the king's new clothes. Of course, there was really nothing to see, but nobody wanted to say anything, because then people would think they were stupid. So everyone talked about how wonderful the king looked.

Finally, a young girl saw the king, and she could not understand what everyone was talking about.

'But he's naked!' she said. 'The king is naked!'

The words quickly went through the crowd. Everyone started to talk about the king's new clothes – well, everyone started to talk about how the king didn't *have* any clothes.

Soon, people started to **laugh**. 'The king is naked!'

'It does not matter,' the king thought. 'The people of the city are stupid. I knew that already. And I know that I look excellent.'

When the parade was finished, the king went back to the castle to find the weavers, so he could knight them. But the two lying brothers were gone. Nobody could find them.

'Hello? Where have those two gone?'

They had left when the parade started, taking all their gold with them.

And so the king stood, naked, in his castle. He felt quite stupid.

THE END

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