

Misty the Snake (Rerun) – Transcript

In today's episode, I go back to a previous story, *Misty the Snake*, and add new commentary afterwards. I also talk about an exciting new project I have coming up. Keep listening to learn English!

[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 *Misty the Snake*. You can find a transcript of this rerun at EasyStoriesInEnglish.com/MistyRerun, or click the link in the description.

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

When you don't want someone to hear or see you, you **sneak**, and the past tense is **snuck** or **sneaked**. For example, if you want to steal something from your brother's room, you might wait until he is sleeping and sneak inside. You walk very slowly and quietly, and you try to stay in the dark so that people don't see you. Thieves are usually very good at sneaking. I am very bad at sneaking—I don't know how to move quietly.

A **parcel** is like an envelope, but you use it to send big things. For example, you send a letter in an envelope, but maybe you want to send some chocolate and it doesn't fit into an envelope. So you put the chocolate in a parcel instead. If an item is too big for a parcel, we usually use a box instead.

A **queue** is a line of people waiting for something. For example, when you wait for the bus, you might stand in a queue. The person who was there first is at the front of the queue, and the person who was there last is at the back of the queue. Queueing is very important in the UK. It's rude if you don't stand in the queue.

Bubble wrap is something you use when you want to send something that is fragile, that can be damaged easily. If you send a glass in the post, it will probably break. So you put it in bubble wrap. Bubble wrap has lots of small bubbles of air to protect the thing and stop it from breaking. Bubble wrap is also very fun to play with.

Marmite is a spread from the UK. Spreads are things like Nutella, jam, marmalade and butter that you put on bread. Marmite is a very strange spread, though. Marmite is made from yeast extract, and it has a very strong flavour. Many people don't like it. People say about Marmite: 'You either love it or hate it.' Personally, I hate Marmite!

When you put your tongue on something, you **lick** it. For example, you lick ice creams to eat them. You lick an envelope to close it. When you lick your lips, it is because you are hungry and you are thinking about food.

Your **ex** is someone you were in a relationship with, but now you're not in that relationship. 'Ex' is short for ex-boyfriend, ex-girlfriend, ex-husband or ex-wife. Many people think about their exes a lot, and often they are sad about this. But some people are friends with their exes. I have some exes I'm friends with, and some I never speak to.

Prison is a place where bad people go because they did bad things. For example, if you steal lots of money, you will go to prison. In prison, you have basic food and drink, but you don't

have any freedom. You can't control your life. People in prison live behind prison bars. Their room has one wall that isn't really a wall—it's made of metal prison bars.

When someone is very bad and the government wants to catch them, they **put a bounty on their head**. A bounty is an amount of money, for example a thousand dollars. If you catch the person and take them to the police, you will get the bounty money.

The **owner** of something is the person who owns, who has, something. For example, if you buy a dog, it is your dog. You are the owner. If you buy a house, then you are the owner of the house. You can also own a restaurant, a computer and so on.

Your **tongue** is the long pink thing inside your mouth. You use your tongue to speak. For example, if I say *th*, I am putting my tongue between my teeth. Tongues are also important for eating and drinking. If you don't like someone, you can stick your tongue out at them. Dogs often stick their tongues out when they breathe.

OK, so listen and enjoy!

Misty the Snake

The Rabbit Who Loved Cheese

Once, there was a rabbit who loved cheese. But of course, rabbits live in forests and fields, where there is no cheese. So every day, this rabbit **snuck into** people's houses and stole their cheese.

One day, a little girl found the rabbit eating her breakfast, and she was very excited.

'Mum, Dad!' she said. 'A little rabbit has come into our home! Can we keep her as a pet?'

And so the windows were closed, and the rabbit could not return to the forest. Every day, they gave her lots of cheese, and she was very happy.

But one day, the window was open and a snake came through it. It saw the fat little rabbit, and it thought she looked very good. The rabbit tried to run away, but she was too slow. The cheese had made her fat and lazy, and the snake easily ate her.

A Present for Misty

Five days ago, I went to the post office to send a **parcel**. I *hate* going to the post office. I'm 20 years old, and people of my age don't send letters and parcels. We just use emails and text messages.

So I was standing in the **queue**, waiting to send my parcel. Most of the people there were old, and the queue moved very slowly.

An old woman turned to me and said, 'You're a young girl, aren't you? Are you sending that parcel to your boyfriend? Or maybe it's a present for your family?'

'Uh, not exactly,' I said.

'Oh?' she said. 'Who is it for?'

This was the other reason I hated going to the post office. Why did old people like asking so many questions?

'It really doesn't—'

Before I could finish, a man ran into the post office. He ran into me, and I dropped my parcel. CRASH! My present had broken. I had used so much bubble wrap, but it wasn't enough.

'Oh no!' said the old woman. 'Let me help you.'

'No, really, it's fine!'

But it was too late. She picked up the parcel and smelled it. Now that the glass was broken, the smell was very strong.

'Is that... Marmite inside there?'

Everyone in the post office turned to look at me.

'Y-yes,' I said. I should have never come. What was I thinking?!

People started talking: 'Marmite?', 'That's horrible!', 'And such a young girl, too...'

I started to cry.

'I'm sorry,' I said.

I picked up my parcel and ran home. I opened the parcel and cried while I licked the Marmite off the broken glass.

Why could nobody understand it? I loved Marmite, and so did my pet snake, Misty. Well, she wasn't *my* pet. She was my ex-boyfriend's. But I loved her more than him.

And she loved me, too. As soon as that letter had come through the door, I knew it. I was her real owner. Not my ex.

'Misty, I'm sorry,' I said, getting Marmite on my shirt. 'Next time, I'll use more bubble wrap.'

Brazil Isn't Safe Anymore

'Why do you always do this?'

I looked at Misty through the prison bars. My snake was *always* making problems, and this was not the first time she'd gone to prison.

'You're a snake, but that doesn't mean you can sneak into anyone's house and eat their pets.'

Misty didn't look at me. But she understood. I knew she understood.

We had had to leave the United Kingdom because of her. She loved eating pets so much, and the London police had put a bounty on her head. If someone found her and took her to the police, they would get ten thousand pounds. Ten thousand pounds! It was a very big bounty. I really needed the money, but I loved Misty too much.

So we came to Brazil. I knew my girlfriend wouldn't understand. She thought Misty was perfect. She didn't know that Misty was killing rabbits every day. One time, she even ate a cat!

I had tried changing her. I closed all the doors and windows, and I gave her mice to eat. But she wouldn't eat them. She only ate people's pets. I tried buying mice that were pets, that people didn't want anymore. But it was too expensive. I thought about buying some mice and making them have children. Then I would have food for her, and they would be pet mice. But I didn't have time to do that!

'It's a good thing that I like going to the beach,' I said. 'I can't believe I moved to Brazil just for my snake.'

There was another reason, of course. It was about my ex-girlfriend, Beverly. She was a bit... strange. One day, she decided that Misty loved Marmite. Every day, she tried to give her Marmite. But she was a snake! Snakes can't eat Marmite!

One day, I'd woken up to find Misty and Beverly in the kitchen. She had covered Misty in Marmite, so that she looked like a Marmite snake. A Marmite snake! I couldn't believe it. Then she started licking off *all* the Marmite. I almost called the police, but there was the bounty on Misty's head, so I couldn't.

'But it's OK,' I said to myself. 'Beverly's still in the United Kingdom. She doesn't know where we are. We're safe. Or we *will* be safe if you stop eating people's pets!'

Misty said nothing. The police came and opened the prison bars, and I took her home. I had to pay a lot of money, but Misty didn't have to stay in prison.

But when we got home, there was a parcel waiting for us. I picked it up and saw the address on it, and it came from the United Kingdom.

I dropped it. CRASH! I knew what was inside, I *knew*. And then the smell came.

'She knows where we are, girl.'

I thought about what to do. My ex knew where we were, but that didn't mean she would come here... did it?

Then I remembered that horrible morning, when Beverly had licked the Marmite off Misty's body.

I packed my suitcase, took Misty and ran into the street. I called a taxi and told them to take us to the airport.

I wasn't going to do this again.

Misty's Plan

Misty the snake was finally home: Ghana.

She had been taken from her country at a young age, and she had to live in that horrible United Kingdom, where it was always so cold.

So she had done everything to get back to Ghana. She knew that British people loved their pets. So she ate them. Then they put the bounty on her head. That was perfect.

She just had to make her **owner** take her to Ghana. So she waited for the newspaper every day. She took it in her mouth, and she opened it to the travel pages. She found pictures from Ghana, and stories about it, and she left them on the kitchen table. She used her **tongue** to change the television channel, to find programmes about Ghana. She took Beverly's Marmite—oh, it was horrible!—and used it to write GHANA on the floor.

And her owner had taken her to *Brazil*. He didn't read the newspaper, or watch TV. He didn't even look at the floor! He only looked at his phone, and he had wanted to go to Brazil all his life.

So when they were in Brazil, Misty tried again. She watched him and learned how to open his phone. One day, while he was having a shower, she opened his phone with her tongue. Then she opened lots of websites about Ghana. She did this every day.

Sometimes, her owner said, 'That's strange... I didn't open that website!'

But he never thought it was her. He didn't think that snakes could do that.

Finally, she had to give him a reason to leave. And Beverly was *perfect* for that. Yes, it had been difficult to send a letter as a snake. Licking the envelope was easy, but writing with a snake tongue was *very* hard. But she had done it. She sent a letter to Beverly asking for her help, and Beverly sent her the Marmite. Everything had worked perfectly.

And now, finally, she was in Ghana. She was home. She could eat all the animals she wanted.

But right now, there was one animal she really wanted to eat. An animal she had wanted to eat for a very long time.

Misty the snake sneaked into her owner's bedroom. He was sleeping. She hoped that he would wake up. It was always more fun when they woke up.

THE END

This episode first came out on the 21st of September 2021, almost three years ago. It's crazy to think it was that long ago. If you had asked me when I wrote this story, I would have said it was only one or two years ago! Time flies, huh? That's something we say to mean 'time passes quickly': time flies.

So if you're not sure that you understand the ending of the story, I'll just explain it: Misty the snake eats her owner. Misty's owner is the man from the previous chapter. Misty's owner is the ex-boyfriend of Beverly. Misty the snake is annoyed at her owner because he took her to Brazil when she wanted him to take her to Ghana. That is why she eats him.

The first thing I noticed when I listened to this episode again was: I talked too fast! As you can hear, I'm trying to talk more slowly and clearly now. Well, this is quite an old episode. Hopefully I am better at talking slowly now. But this has always been a problem for me. I love talking fast.

Another thing I noticed: the first-person perspective works really well. What is perspective? Well, most stories use third-person perspective. Third-person perspective is he, she or it: 'He walks into a room. He opens a jar of Marmite. He eats the Marmite'. Second-person perspective is you: 'You walk into a room. You open a jar of Marmite. You eat the Marmite'. Second-person perspective is not very common in stories, because it sounds strange. First-person perspective is I: 'I walk into a room. I open a jar of Marmite. I eat the Marmite. I say, "Eww!"'

Most of the stories on the podcast are in third-person perspective. Actually, most stories in general are in third-person perspective. But I think I want to do more first-person stories. I think first-person works really well for telling a story in audio, a story you listen to. I think it's actually very obvious – I don't know why I didn't think of that before. Of course, audio is very personal. It's like I'm talking into your ear. And first-person perspective is also very personal. It's all *I*. So first-person stories work well for audio. I have been making this podcast for almost six years, but I'm still learning things!

When I recorded this story in 2021, I said that I hate Marmite, but actually, I like Marmite now. My tastes have changed. Tastes are things that you like and don't like. My tastes have changed – I used to hate Marmite, but now I like it. I also like wine now, but I hated wine before. However, I don't eat Marmite. In last week's episode, *My Sister's Wedding*, I talked about ultra-processed food. I am trying to eat less ultra-processed food, and Marmite is an ultra-processed food.

Actually, the history of Marmite is interesting. Marmite was invented by a German scientist called Justus von Liebig. Marmite is made from yeast. **Yeast**, Y E A S T, is something that you use to make beer and bread. Yeast is an important ingredient. Yeast eats sugar, and we use yeast to make bread rise, to make bread get bigger. Without yeast, it is very hard to make bread. This is why gluten-free bread, bread without gluten in it, is often not very good. When you

make beer, there are parts of yeast left over, parts of yeast that normally you cannot use. However, the German scientist Justus von Liebig found that you can take this leftover yeast from making beer and turn the leftover yeast into food. And so he invented Marmite.

Marmite became popular during World War I because it has lots of vitamins in it. The British government gave Marmite to soldiers fighting in World War I to make sure they had enough Vitamin B1. So yes, Marmite is ultra-processed food, but it is quite good ultra-processed food. It has important vitamins in it.

Bad ultra-processed food is usually food that you want to eat and eat. You can't stop eating it. It is very hard to eat just one biscuit, for example! You always want to eat lots of biscuits, or at least I do. But Marmite is not like that. You can't eat lots of Marmite. It is too salty. So, because Marmite has good vitamins in it and because it is hard to eat a lot of Marmite, you could argue that Marmite is not ultra-processed food.

Hmm, so maybe I will start eating Marmite! I will just make sure to not spread Marmite on any snakes. I don't want Misty the snake to eat me like she ate her owner! Anyway, if you come to the UK, you should try Marmite. You will probably hate it – most non-British people who try Marmite hate it – but it's an interesting cultural experience.

So, what is this exciting new project I talked about at the start of the episode? Well, I am happy to announce that I am going to be doing an online group class. This course will take place on Zoom, and it will be an affordable way to study English with me. If you have wanted to take classes with me but found it too expensive, or if you prefer learning in a group, then this is just for you.

The course is called Story Builders. Why Story Builders? Well, together we will be building a story! Over eight weeks, we will learn about each other and create a story based on our shared interests. This story will then appear on the podcast. The idea is that we are building a story like a house: brick by brick. Bricks are the big red squares that you put together to make a house.

The details for the Story Builders course aren't finalised – I haven't decided everything yet. But most likely, the course will start in October and it will be eight weeks long. I will be opening sign-ups for the course soon – soon, I will be telling you how you can join the course. If you want to hear as soon as sign-ups are open, join my email newsletter at EasyStoriesInEnglish.com/Email, or follow the link in the description.

Thank you for listening to today's episode. Did you like this experiment where I went back to an old episode and added new commentary? Let me know what you think in the comments. Again, if you want to hear about my Story Builders course as soon as it opens, then go to EasyStoriesInEnglish.com/Email and sign up for my newsletter. See you soon!