

# **THE GIANT AND THE PRINCESS OF CLOUDS**

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**A CHILDREN'S STORY for 5 – 8 year olds**

**by**

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**(My very first story)**

## **CHAPTER ONE - THE ACCIDENT**

ONCE UPON A TIME, a long, long time ago, there lived an *extra tall* Giant. He was good-natured and polite and was always helping his neighbours in the village; building and repairing their little cottages. And he was always most careful where he put his feet! These villagers were very poor and did not own even one stepladder, so it was usually left to the Giant to mend their rooves and fix their chimneys.

One hot midsummer afternoon, having worked since early morning on a very prickly, thatched-roof, he decided to get rid of the bits of straw sticking to his skin by going for a swim in the nearby sea.

How careful he was to slide into the water gently - and what a relief! To get all those itchy bits of straw off him. But accidents will happen. For no sooner had the sea reached his knees than he felt a sharp nip on his foot. He yelled in pain, snatched his leg out of the water and saw, jaws clamped tightly around his big toe, a very nasty looking shark, indeed!

So he jumped up and down on one leg, pulling as hard as he could with both hands at the shark's cold, slippery skin. But this only made the shark hold on tighter and tighter. Trying to fight the shark off his big toe, he kept falling over and making terrible splashes in the water. The sea became very rough, great waves crashing against the wooden, beach-hut that sold ice-creams and cups of tea, but luckily as the villagers and holiday-makers swam only on Sunday, no-one except himself was on the beach.

At last, unable to bear the pain any longer, he stretched his leg back as far as it would go and kicked upwards with all his strength. The shark catapulted away at tremendous speed, flying high in the air, until alas, it fell on to one of the village cottages, completely destroying the roof and

coming to rest at last in the Miller's store room, which of course was full up with sacks of flour.

Now the moment the Giant had kicked the shark away, he lost his balance and fell with a tremendous splash and noise into the sea. He swallowed great mouthfuls of sea-water and not liking the nasty salty taste, spat it out straightaway. All this commotion caused one, very big wave.

Eventually, when the sea had calmed down and he had finished rubbing the salt-water from his eyes, he saw a strange sight. Perched and stranded high up on the cliff-top was the beach cafe. And surrounding it and the fields beyond, were thousands of tiny, wriggling worms glistening in the sunshine.

'They can't much like the taste of sea-water,' the Giant thought, 'They must be coming up for air.' Then he saw that they were not worms at all but lots of little fishes. 'But what a pretty sight, they are!' The cafe started to sway dangerously, looking as if it might topple right over the cliff edge. So he picked up the cafe in his right hand and with his other hand pushed open the front-door to see if anyone was inside, then turning it upside down shook out all the sea-water, before putting it back in its proper place on the sandy beach.

After a while, the Giant lay down for a rest and before long had dozed off to sleep. Only when the incoming tide began to tickle his feet did he wake up. He yawned and decided to make his way home. Besides, his big toe had swollen up badly - quite as large as a football.

It was nearly dusk when he hobbled into the village. The Giant was surprised to see everyone rushing madly about. No-one wished him: 'Good Evening' or enquired about his health. His poor toe felt as if it would burst at any moment. The villagers were all too busy carrying shovels and spades, shouting instructions to each other. With relief, he plunged

his foot into the village-pond, annoying the ducks and soaking the small boys fishing for tadpoles.

‘I can’t tell you how sorry I am,’ he said, apologising to both the ducks and the small boys. ‘But I’m in agony with my big toe.’ Then he noticed that the villagers were dashing to and fro from the Miller’s cottage. ‘It was an accident,’ he said. So he told the villagers all about the shark and falling down in the sea and how he was extra sorry for kicking the shark onto the cottage. He promised to start repairing the roof the very next morning. ‘What about clearing up all my spoilt flour?’ the Miller asked, grumpily.

‘As soon as it gets light, I’ll tidy everything up. You can rely on me to make all your rooms spick and span again.’

‘I don’t know why you didn’t kick the shark the other way - out to sea!’ The Miller’s wife, scolded, joining in the complaining. ‘Any sensible person would have kicked the shark as far out to sea as possible.’

The Giant shook his head sadly and made his way to his own enormous house which looked very much like a castle. Even today, some of these can be seen dotted about the countryside, mostly in ruins, it being such a long, time ago.

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## **CHAPTER TWO - THE CHESTNUT HORSE**

The next morning at first light just before setting out for the Miller’s cottage, the Giant visited his stables to fodder his horse. Now this beautiful and handsome chestnut was very much his favourite pet. He loved it as boys and girls love their hamsters or mice. And really it was only as

large as those tiny creatures to him. But when he reached the stable door he saw a 'Notice' pinned up. As he bent down to read the small print with his magnifying-glass - an instrument Giants always need to carry about with them, tears came to his eyes. For this is what he read:

WE HAVE DECIDED  
THAT AS PUNISHMENT FOR  
YOUR STUPID AND THOUGHTLESS  
BEHAVIOUR TO SET LOOSE YOUR CHESTNUT HORSE

Underneath was the Miller's signature and other important villagers.

The Giant sat down on the nearest hill and gave way to tears. He stopped only when he saw the old washer-woman climbing the grassy slope towards him. Forgetting his troubles, he scooped her up in the palm of his hand and put her down beside him.

'Thank 'ee kindly, Mr Giant,' said the old woman. 'Now don't 'ee fret for I see's clearly what they done to your poor old horse and as you've done me many a good turn in the past, I can tell 'ee I saw 'em lead that fine old Chestnut of your'n out by forest gate.'

And before the Giant could reply, she went on: 'And I'll give 'ee a bit of magic potion for that bad toe.'

'But it's *marmalade!*' the Giant said, astonished.

'Magic marmalade!' the old woman cried indignantly. 'Hold 'ee still while I empties it out.'

So saying, she emptied and shook the whole pot of marmalade onto the Giant's toe. 'Now, put your sock on and keep it snug. See! 'tis going down already.'

'It's very sticky,' said the Giant, pulling on his sock carefully. He then thanked her and went back to his large house for his chequered-cap and set off on his journey.

In twelve strides, he was at the edge of the forest.

Now, along the pathway through the forest there was barely enough room for the Giant to put his feet and as he loved the creatures of the forest he took great care to tread carefully.

This is what he did: Every time he took a step, he held for a moment his great black boot a few feet off the ground; thus letting the rabbits and squirrels, snakes and mice, scamper and slide away as quickly as they could. For they all knew what the sudden dark shadow meant. But because he was impatient to find his beloved, pet horse, he soon forgot to be careful and his boot accidentally squashed the tails of a couple of very *sleepy* bears! He was so upset by this that he decided on a dramatic course of action. He bent down, took a deep breath until he felt that he was about to burst and then blew with all his might along the forest pathway. The little creatures were blown clean out of the way. Luckily, with no more damage than a few bruises and hurt pride. Some silly ones who did not understand, still talk to this day of that terrifying, upside-down, turning wind.

At last, the Giant was free of the forest, and now that his foot was better he began to stride across the wide, grassy plains. He even took one broad river in a single, gigantic leap. Soon he saw a range of beautiful mountains in the distance. He remembered that he had seen them once as a small boy. But growing up to be a rather stay-at-home, Giant, had never since strayed far from his village. He gazed with wonder at the snowy peaks tinged with pink clouds. They were the biggest objects he had ever seen. He actually had to look up to something! He also realised that he would have to climb over them.