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# THE VALIANT LITTLE TAILOR

Once upon a time, there was a little tailor who lived in a small workshop. He spent his days sewing clothes, mending shirts, and fixing trousers with great patience. Although he was not big or strong, he was quick with his hands and very clever. He liked to work by the window, where the sunlight came in and he could watch people passing by on the street.

One morning, while he was sewing carefully, he heard a woman calling out in the street:

—Good jam! Sweet jam!



The little tailor's mouth began to water.

—Madam, please come up —he said, leaning out of the window—. I would like to buy a little.

The woman climbed the stairs with her basket and showed him several jars. The little tailor chose a small one, because he did not have much money, and the woman left it on the table. After she went away, the little tailor cut a piece of bread, spread jam on it, and set it near him while he kept sewing.

—I will eat it in a moment —he said with a smile.

But the sweet smell of the jam attracted many flies. First one came, then another, and then a whole swarm. In just a few seconds, the flies were all over the bread.

—Get out of here! —shouted the little tailor.

He waved his hand to chase them away, but the flies kept coming back again and again. So he grabbed a cloth, and when he saw them all together, he raised it high and brought it down hard on the table.

Whack!

When he lifted the cloth, he looked in surprise.

—Seven at one blow! —he cried.

He was so impressed by what he had done that he began to feel very proud of himself.

—This is no small matter —he said—. The whole world should know about it.

Then he cut a strip of cloth and stitched some important words onto it:

Seven at one blow.

After that, he tied it around his waist, like a great belt of victory.

The little tailor walked back and forth through his workshop, thinking about what had happened.

—I cannot stay here forever —he said to himself—. My bravery deserves to be known in other places.

So he put a piece of cheese in his pocket, took a little bird that he had found trapped near his window, and decided to go out into the world in search of adventure.

He walked along long roads, climbed hills, and crossed paths between trees. He felt light, cheerful, and very sure of himself. After a while, he came to a mountain, and there he saw a huge giant sitting on a rock.

The giant looked at the little man with curiosity.

—And who are you? —he asked in a loud voice.

The little tailor pointed to his belt.

—I am a brave man —he answered—. Look at what it says here.

The giant read:

Seven at one blow.

Then he opened his eyes wide.

He thought that the little tailor must have killed seven men with one blow, and he began to look at him with more respect.

—If you are as brave as you say, let us see what you can do —said the giant.

He picked up a stone in his hand and squeezed it so hard that water came out of it.

—Do that, if you can.

The little tailor smiled. He reached into his pocket, but instead of taking out a stone, he took out the piece of cheese.

He squeezed it hard, and the whey began to come out.

—You see? —he said—. That is not difficult for me.

The giant frowned. He was not quite sure what he had seen, but it looked impressive.

Then he picked up another stone and threw it high into the air.

—Let us see if you can do something better than that —he said.

The little tailor reached into his other pocket and took out the bird.

He threw it into the sky, and the bird, happy to be free, flew much higher and never came back.

—My throw goes much farther —said the little tailor.

The giant began to feel uneasy. That tiny man seemed far more dangerous than he had imagined.

—Come with me to our cave —he said at last—. I want to show you something more.

The little tailor agreed. When they arrived, he saw that other giants were in the cave as well. They all looked at him in surprise, but when they saw the belt, they preferred not to come too close.

That night, they prepared a bed for him, but it was so large and heavy that the little tailor did not want to sleep in it. Instead, he hid in a dark corner of the cave.

At midnight, one of the giants decided it would be better to get rid of him before he caused them trouble. He took a huge iron bar and struck the bed with great force, believing that the little tailor was sleeping there.

But the little tailor was not in the bed. He was still hiding in the corner.

The next morning, the giants went to look, thinking they had crushed him. But they were very surprised to see the little tailor walking around calmly, as if nothing had happened.

—Good morning —he said quietly.



Now the giants were truly afraid. They thought that if he had survived such a blow, he must be even more dangerous than they had believed. So they ran out of the cave and fled as fast as they could.

The little tailor continued on his way until he reached a kingdom. Since he was tired, he lay down on the grass in the palace yard and fell asleep.

Some soldiers saw him resting and came closer very quietly. When they read the words on his belt, they became nervous.

—Seven at one blow—they whispered—. This must be a great warrior.

At once they went to tell the king.

The king had a very serious problem, and he thought that this man might be able to help him. In a nearby forest lived two terrible giants who caused destruction, tore up trees, and frightened everyone. No one dared to face them.

When the little tailor woke up, he was taken before the king.

—If you can defeat those two giants —said the king—, I will give you great riches and also the hand of my daughter.

The little tailor bowed slightly.

—I accept —he answered—. Two giants are not much for someone who can deal with seven at one blow.

He set out for the forest accompanied by some soldiers, although they stayed far behind because they were afraid. The little tailor went on alone until he found the two giants asleep under some trees.

Then he picked up some stones and began his plan. He threw one stone at the chest of one giant. The giant woke up with a start and struck the other one.

—Why are you hitting me? —growled the second giant.

—I did not hit you —answered the first.

They lay down again. Then the little tailor threw another stone, this time at the second giant.

—Again! —shouted the giant angrily.

And the two of them began to fight each other. They pushed, struck, and tore branches from the trees to use as clubs. The fight was so fierce that at last both of them fell to the ground and could not get up again.

Then the little tailor came out from his hiding place, stepped closer, and thrust his sword into each of them, so that everyone would think he had defeated them by himself.

Then he returned to the king.

—The task is done—he said calmly.

The king was greatly astonished, but although he admired the result, he was still not completely convinced. Before keeping his promise, he wanted to test the little tailor once more.

—There is a unicorn in the forest that also causes trouble—he said—. If you are truly so brave, bring it to me.

The little tailor agreed once again. He went into the forest and found the unicorn, which ran toward him with its great horn ready to attack. But the little tailor stepped aside at the last moment, and the unicorn drove its horn into a tree. Since it could not pull it free, it was trapped.

The little tailor tied it up and brought it before the king.

But the king still wanted to set a third test.

—There is still a wild boar to be captured—he said—. If you manage to do that, then I will keep my promise.

The little tailor went into the forest again. When he saw the wild boar charging toward him in fury, he quickly ran into a small chapel. The boar ran in after him, but the little tailor jumped out through a window. Then he shut the door from the outside, and the boar was trapped inside.

So he brought that proof to the king as well.

Now there were no more excuses. The king had to keep his promise. The little tailor married the princess and lived in the palace.

However, as time passed, some people began to suspect that this brave hero was really only a humble little tailor. One night, the princess heard him talking in his sleep and mentioning his old workshop, his needles, and his cloth. Then she understood who he truly was.

The king grew worried when he heard this and began to think about getting rid of him. But the little tailor, who was very clever, secretly overheard the plan and spoke aloud so that everyone could hear him:

—I defeated giants, captured a unicorn, and trapped a wild boar. I am not afraid of a few men in the palace.

Those who heard him ran to tell the king, and the king became frightened. He thought it would be better not to challenge someone so famous and clever.

And so the little tailor remained in the palace and lived as a great lord.

And so, everyone learned that the biggest or the strongest does not always win. Sometimes, the one who uses intelligence, quick thinking, and courage well can go very far.

# THE END

