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FUN STUFF

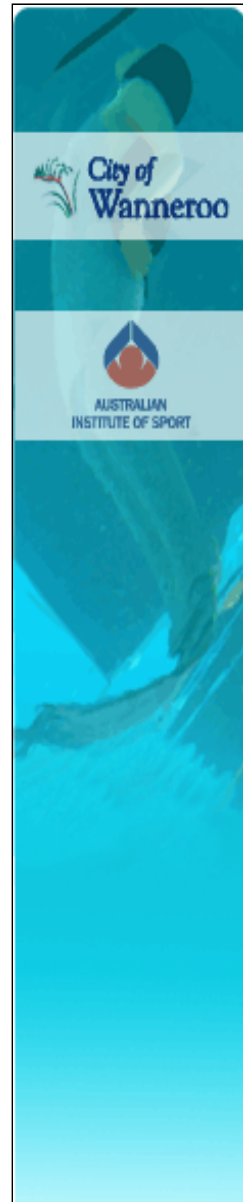
The mouse and the matchbox

There was once a mouse who lived in the castle walls. Each day the mouse would hurry and scurry about looking for food and interesting items left by the people who lived in the castle.

The mouse would creep along the walls and through confusion of tables and chairs, people, food, armour and swords until he reached the kings chambers.

In the kings chambers he would always find the best pickings.

The king was the most untidy person you ever met. He so untidy he needed 3 servants just to keep him dressed. The king a very generous and well loved fellow did not mind a bit. He said it gave other less fortune people something to do. The servants did not like to tell the king they had plenty of other thing they would rather be doing than cleaning up after the king.



This particular morning however, the king was not happy. “Oh bothersome! Oh bothersome! He kept saying as he stalked around the bedroom turning over boxes and blankets looking and searching. The servants were all doing the same but nobody seemed to be getting anywhere.

Oh bothersome the king said again even louder. Call for the Royal Tailor!. The servants scurried away as the king turned over a very large pile of blankets. “Ha ha” he cried the Royal trousers.

The mouse continued to hunt around the now terribly messy bedroom. He was certain he would find something interesting today. Suddenly the door flew open in walked the servants with a somewhat disheveled tailor in tow.

Your Majesty said the tailor with a bow. “Yes, yes” replied the king, “you may go. I have found the royal pant. Oh but run me of a couple more pairs just to be on the safe side. There’s a good fellow”.

The tailor bowed and left and the king smiled at the servants. “Just give the place a once over and get me something to eat for breakfast” said the king to the servants. But the servants did not move.

“Your highness” said the oldest servant “we are sorry to say that we cannot do so. And with the greatest of respect DO IT YOURSELF. We quit”. And with that the servants turned around and went to learn how to fish.

By the end of the week the whole palace look just like the kings bedroom. Cupboards were turned out, horses wandered the hallways, pieces of armour were rusting in the rain, carts of half eaten and rotting food were everywhere.

“Oh bothersome” cried the king somebody has got to do something. With that he began looking for his crown and an idea. He found the idea in half the time it took to find his crown. I will make a royal proclamation he said to him self. Tonight at 7 pm when all the children are in bed all the parents must come to the town square to hear what the king has to say.

That night the mouse crept into the kings pocket and went with him to the town square.

The king walked up the old stairs and onto the stage. “People of the town” he said “ I the king by royal decree request that any person able to help me stop losing thing around my castle will be awarded with his hearts desire. Those who wish to apply themselves must come to the castle today with there ides. At which point I shall choose a winner if one presents itself”.

With that the king returned to the castle to wait.

The king did not have to wait long. A knocking on his chamber door alerted him to the fact his idea might just be working. The king opened the door to see a strange looking fellow all tied up with string. “Your Highness” he said with a bow . He removed his hat to give a bow and the king noticed a piece of string ran from the hat to the collar of the mans coat. “ I have come about the reward he said”.

“Come in said the king” as he looked around for somewhere to sit. “ Now let’s here what you have to say”.

“Your majesty, I like yourself have often mislaid important items, being a traveling man I have taken to tying my belongings to myself with string. I suggest the you do the same.

“Brilliant said the king. I will try it straight away”.

When they final found the string and all the kings clothes the man began tying away. He tied the crown to his head, the shirt to his back , his trousers to his bottom and his slippers to his feet. “Finished” said the man.

“Good” said the king “now to try it out. Come back tomorrow morning and we will see how well it works”.

The king was overjoyed, all day long he knew exactly where everything was. The tailor was overjoyed in fact he took his first ever day off. And the people were overjoyed that the king knew how to find his crown with both hands.

All went well until the king went to bed. He sat on the bed and tried to undress. Unfortunately the crown was tied so tight it would not come off, nor would the slippers or the rest of his clothes. “OH BOTHERSOME”! Shouted the king and began to search for some scissors. But it was no good he could not find them anywhere. He would have to wait till morning and have the man untie him “what a silly idea this was” said the king as he fell into a restless sleep.

Whilst he slept the mouse crept up to the king and nibbled away the string. When the strings were all cut the king seemed to relax and fell into a deep sleep.

The next morning the string man returned to collect his reward. “I’m sorry said the king but it is just not the idea I am looking for”.

“Oh, that’s alright” said the man “I guess its just *Knot* for you” and with that he left.

No sooner had he gone than another man appeared. He looked strange covered in pieces of paper. “Yes” said the king.

“I have come about the reward” sniffed the paper man.

“Come in “ said the king. As they sat down he explained how he would place a label on everything so that it could be filed and in that way the king would know exactly what something was and who it belonged to. In this way you could simply return the item to its rightful owner and that would tidy up all the mess.

“Brilliant” said the king” lets begin right away” When they found a pen and some sticky paper they began to write. “CROWN for the crown” said the paper man and stuck the label right over the largest gem in the crown. “SHIRT for the shirt” he said and stuck the label right over the kings crest. “PANTS for the pants” he said and asked the king to sit down on the label.

When they were done the king was pleased and bade the man return the following day.

The king was overjoyed, he could label the whole castle. The tailor was overjoyed, he took a second day off. The people were not overjoyed. They thought the king looked silly. And they were all too busy to go around labeling things, besides some of them did not yet read or write.

“Oh BOTHERSOME”! said the king “this is no good” and he spent the rest of the day trying to remove the labels.

The next morning the paperman returned to collect his reward. “I’m sorry said the king but it is just not the idea I am looking for”.

“Oh, that’s alright” said the man “ There is no need to get all creased up about it”

As he was leaving he passed another man who wore only the simplest of clothes.

“Your Highness” said the simple man with a bow, “ I think I may have the answer you are looking for”.

“Tell me more” said the king.

“Unfortunately I cannot, but if you trust me I can make the problem disappear. Leave the castle key with me whilst you visit your subject and when you return your troubles will be gone”.

“Oh” said the king “I am not to certain I should I don’t even know you”.

“It’s all right said the man “ my name is Feng and I specialise in problems of this sort. Trust me and be at one. Now handover the key and run along”.

The king a little taken a back handed over the key to the simpleman and left to tour the town. The king was overjoyed at the chance to see the town, the tailor bought a cigar and considered retiring, the people were overjoyed to see the king without string and labels. After a long days waving the kings arm was exhausted and he could not wait to get himself into a bath but when he opened the door the whole castle was empty save for the royal throne and a coat hanger.

“OH BOTHERSOME”! said the king “ I’ve been robbed”.

“Not robbed your majesty” said a voice behind him “ Feng Shuied”.

“Feng what”? said the king.

“Feng Shui” said the man “ the simplifying of life and removing of clutter from your life, a way to live in harmony with your possessions”.

“What possessions “ asked the king” there all gone.

“ No not gone. Donated to charity and the needy. You had enough shirts and trousers to cloth a small town. And the small town were very happy” said the simple man.

“This just will not do said the king. “I’m sorry said the king but it is just not the idea I am looking for”.

“Oh, that’s alright” said the man “ There is nothing to worry about”. And with that he left.

The poor king spent the rest of the day traveling around the small town buying back all his belongings. The people of the small town said he was the best king ever but why did he look so sad?.

When he returned to the castle he sat down heavily on his throne as cart after cart load of his belonging were wheeled in to the court yard.

“Oh bothersome, oh bothersome, oh bothersome” he kept saying “ is there no one who can help me with my problem.

“Your majesty” squeaked a tiny voice “your majesty I think I can help”.

The king looked down and saw the mouse “you he laughed how can you help your just a mouse”.

“Not just a mouse, I’m a mouse with an idea” said the mouse.

“Well let’s hear what you have to say” said the king.

“If you keep everything tidy and put away all your clothes and belongings the castle will stay tidy and you will not keep losing things”

“Ha marvelous” said the king with great joy and immediately called for the carpenter to make him a dozen chests and wardrobes.

The king was overjoyed that the castle was tidy, the carpenter was overjoyed that his business was doing well, the tailor was so overjoyed that he went fishing with the servants and only had to work once a week , the people were overjoyed that the benevolent king was happy.

But what of the mouse? What reward do you think he chose? If you could look inside the mouse hole you would be amazed at the mess. He could never find anything he needed. So he chose humble matchbox to keep all his belongings in. After all a mouse hole can get just as messy as a castle if you don’t tidy up.

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