

Sir William the Conqueror

Dad had a friend called Thomas, who was a writer. One summer when they were on family holiday by the sea, Thomas was there as well. He watched William playing with his wooden sword and said,

“Do you know, my boy, that a thousand years ago, there was a King of England called Sir William the Conqueror? You are very much like him! Only William the Conqueror was a knight and they used the title Sir in front of his name.”

“I’m also a knight!” William declared.

“You don’t get to be a knight just like that,” Thomas explained him. “You have to be knighted.”

“Knighted like how?”

“Well, you have to bend down on one knee and then they touch you with the blunt edge of the sword, first on one shoulder, then on the other, and then they say that you’ve been knighted. Sir William the Conqueror slapped his son Henry pretty hard as well, so that he’d remember it very well.”

William took a few steps away from Thomas.

“I don’t want to be slapped!”

“But do you want to become a knight?”

“Yes, I do.”

“Well, let’s do it without a slap then!”

William dared to step closer now and Thomas took his plastic sword.

“You’ll have to get on your knees now.” William did.

Thomas dubbed him by touching both of his shoulders with the sword.

“Now you’re Sir William. And if you want to, you can take the Conqueror as your second name.”



“Sir William the Conqueror! Sir William the Conqueror!” William shouted, running around the yard and swaying his sword. In the end he got tired and went to Thomas.

“Hey, but who am I going to conquer?”

“Why don’t you start with Scotland?”

“But this is really far away!”

“Yes, but you can imagine that it’s right behind this corner.”

“The lunch is ready!” Mum called from the door and Scotland was left unconquered this time. After lunch, William had to have a brief nap.

“I’m not going to bed after all,” William thought. “I’m going to conquer Scotland, instead!” But Mum didn’t let him get out of bed.

William was lying in his bed until he could hear the hoofbeat and clinking of arms. All of a sudden he was in the middle of a battle and sitting on a spotted horse, holding a sword in his hand. It was so heavy that William couldn’t do anything with it.

The horse rode through the heated battle and finally reached a top of a hill where he stopped. William saw there was a man with a big belly fighting with others.

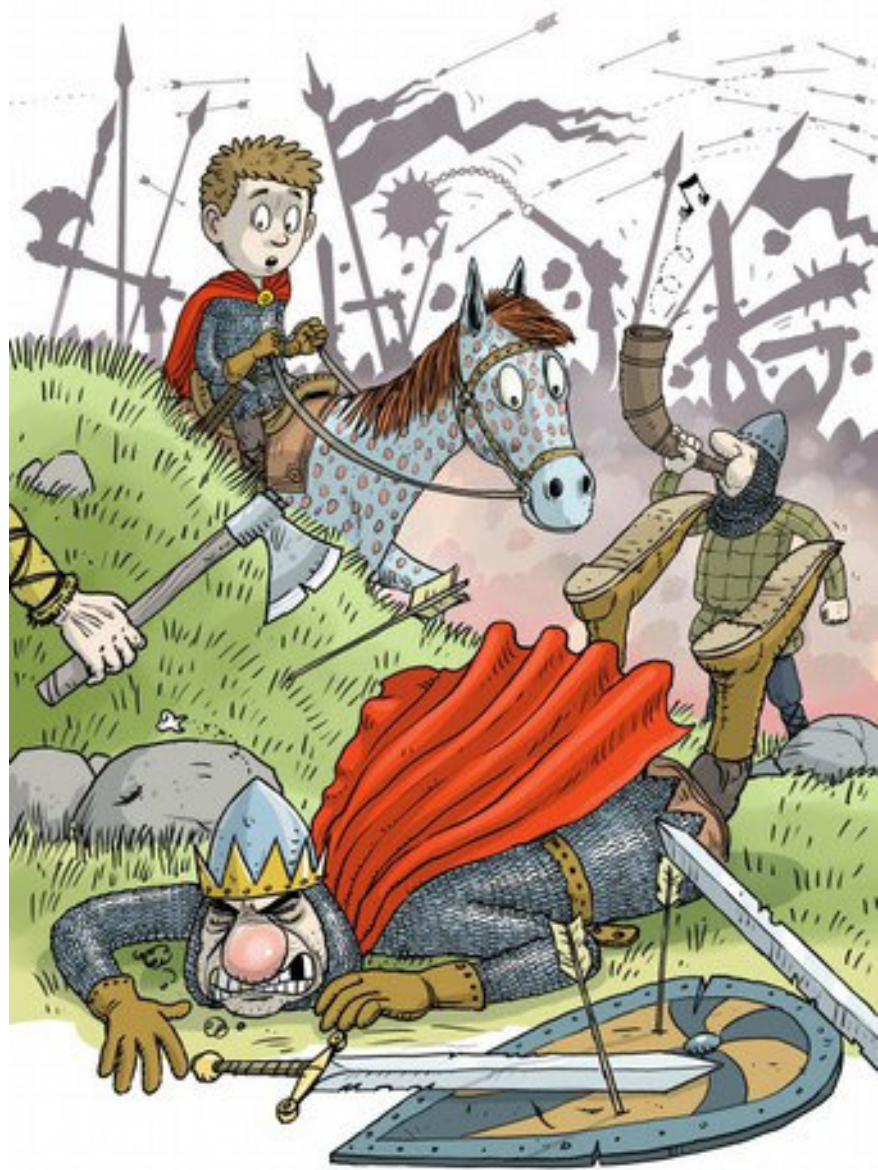
Then the man’s horse stumbled and he fell down with a terrible hump, like a sack of flour. He couldn’t get up and his co-fighters dragged him away.

They managed to win the battle anyway and later on, William heard that the fat man had been Sir William the Conqueror.

Now William woke up, got out of bed and went straight to Thomas.

“Listen, Thomas, do I need to be as fat as this Sir?”

“No, you don’t,” Thomas smiled. “You know what? Why don’t we go swimming in the sea for a change?”



While they were walking towards the sea, William asked,

“So, am I not a knight anymore?”

“Of course you are,” Thomas said. “Once you’ve been knighted, it’s not that easy to take it back. Now you’re officially Sir William the Conqueror who won’t get fat.”

William was pleased and trod proudly after Thomas and Dad.

