

Who do you think lives here? A giant, bear or dragon...



Below is a story created by local school children with Storyteller Jane Mather.

Many, years ago, long before people, giants walked the land. One, Arthur the terrible six headed giant, was so terrifying, no giant dared talk of him in more than a whisper.

In this time too, there were three, brothers, they were a wee bit smaller than the other giants and because of this they were often teased.

One day the eldest brother said "I'm sick of being pushed around, we must prove that we are just as clever and strong as all the others even though we are smaller."

"Let's seek our fortune!" cried the middle brother

"Go on a quest!" cried the youngest...

"Oh sons" said their mother "If only your father was here, they would'nae

dare tease you, if only he hadn't been lost to us these long years since the wars"

The brothers set off, on foot, each with their Mother's blessing, a gift and a wee bannock. She kissed her eldest son on the forehead, "you will have the gift of sight."

To her middle son she gave "herbs, to cure any illness" and to her youngest she gave a small silver ring with unusual markings, "I doubt it's worth much, but it belonged to your father, it's all I have left of him."

She waved goodbye until they rounded a curve in the road and she couldn't see them anymore.

The brothers, walked and walked until their feet began to ache and they needed rest. It was growing dark and beginning to rain, when they saw, in the distance they saw a little light in the hills and went to ask for shelter. When they knocked at the door a faint voice called "let yourself in, I'm too weak" when the three brothers entered the cottage, they saw an old, sick, giant on a bed in the corner. The middle son immediately began to brew up his healing herbs and the youngest set about making the old man as comfortable as possible, once the old man drank a few sips he felt better and could sit up without help.

"You've saved my life this night!" he thanked them, then saw the ring on the youngest brother's finger and asked him where he got it, "It was a gift from my mother," he replied "it used to belong to my father"

"That ring was once mine I gave it to your mother you are my sons!" cried the old giant. "I wouldn't have recognized you! You've grown so much, I was never able to find you again after the last war, but I am your long-lost father!" They had a great celebration and shared stories into the night. The brothers explained that their mother's house was only a day's walk away, only in the next village. "Tomorrow, I'll return to her" their father vowed.

That night, they all slept soundly apart from the oldest brother who dreamed, that a terrible six headed giant called Arthur captured him and made him his slave. He couldn't get back to sleep and went for a walk to get some fresh air

and clear his head, it was still dark and he had not gone far when he heard a great rumbling and thumping, reverberating round the hills the ground was shaking, the noise echoed all round and he couldn't tell which direction it came from, he began to run, back toward the cottage and bang, straight into the arms of Arthur the six headed giant.

"I need a sturdy lad to be my slave." and so the oldest brother became his prisoner.

In the morning his brothers thought he was hunting breakfast, but when at length he didn't return, they went to look for him and saw in the mud, the most enormous footprint they'd ever seen, "Alas!" cried their father "he has been taken by Arthur, the six headed giant only he leaves such a huge mark" "We must save him!" Cried his younger brothers.

"If Arthur has taken him your brother will surely be dead, Arthur is no ordinary giant, he's the giant other giants fear, some say he even eats his own kind."

"Father, we must try, has he any weakness?"

"I know he is only able to come out at night. He is so evil, that if the pure light of day touches him, he will turn to stone..."

If you are going after Arthur you will need a horse in the byre you will find mine, she is old, but still fast, take her to speed your journey."

Then he fetched from a dusty corner, a long, thin, cloth-wrapped parcel, and handed it to his middle son, "Take this, it has served me well, but only unwrap it if you are in mortal danger."

The two brothers mounted their father's horse and rode away following the enormous footprints, they rode all day and it was growing dark when they saw the footprints disappeared into the side of a hill.

They hid themselves among the whins and waited, when it was very dark they heard a great rumbling noise and the side of the hill opened, out stepped Arthur the six headed giant. He sniffed the air, "I smell strangers!" he growled.

"Slave!" he snarled "clean my cave. I'm going to find them and when I do, I'll

eat them for dinner.” As soon as he disappeared from sight, the brothers came out, they found their older brother chained in Arthur’s cave and a huge key hanging beyond his reach, the brothers fetched it down and hurried to make their escape on their father’s horse. Not a moment too soon, Arthur realizing he was looking in the wrong direction was running back toward his cave and as they rode off at top speed they heard behind them a roar of anger and saw, running after them, the six headed giant, it was true, each head was uglier than the one before.

The eldest brother spurred the horse on, but fast as she was, carrying three riders, the fierce giant was gaining on them, “I think we are in Mortal danger now cried the middle brother and unwrapped the long cloth covered parcel.” It was a sword, the like of which he’d never seen, its hilt inlaid with gold and jewels, but he had no time to admire it, for the thunder of the enormous feet pounding the earth drew closer and closer, the middle brother knew what he must do, he swung the sword with all his might, cutting off one of Arthur’s heads. There Giant gave a huge roar of pain before angrier than ever, he continued to race after them, the middle brother chopped off the second head and away it rolled, then the third, the fourth, the fifth, each time the giant yelled more ear splittingly loudly, “I’ll get you for this, I’ll tear you limb from limb and use your thighbone as a toothpick!”

“Oh no, you won’t!” yelled back the middle brother holding his nerve and with all his remaining strength gave one final swing of his father’s sword cutting off Arthur’s sixth and final head, as his head rolled away the fearsome giant crashed to the earth in a most undignified way landing with his bum sticking in the air just as the first rays of dawn light turned the sky a golden pink, the giant’s remains were turned into stone...and became what we know today as the seven hills of Edinburgh

Braid Hill, Blackford Hill, Calton Hill, Craiglockhart Hill, Corstorphine Hill, Castle rock and where his bum sticks in the air, well, that is known today as Arthur’s seat.