



# The Brave Taylor

*Contributed by Ailie Finlay*

Jack was a tailor.

A travelling tailor.

He stopped at every house and made clothes for the people. *[knock on wood to indicate different houses]*

And the thing he made best was waistcoats. *[Show a waistcoat]*

One day he went further than he had ever been before *[knock loudly]* – to the castle.

'Come in. Come in.' Said the king. 'Come in. I have heard about your waistcoats. Make me a waistcoat and I will give you five golden coins. But only if you make it in the dark tower.'

Now the dark tower was very dark.

And the dark tower was very windy *[make wind noise]*

And the dark tower was full of spiders *[make spidery noise by rubbing hands together]*

And the dark tower was full of ghosts *[make ghost noise]*

But the tailor didn't mind. He didn't care one little bit.

He went pit-pat-pit-pat-pit-pat up the stairs to the top of the tower.

And it was dark.

And windy *[make wind noise]*

And full of spiders *[make spidery noise]*

And ghosts *[make ghost noise]*

But the tailor he just sat down and began to sew.

Stitch, stitch, twist, button. Stitch, stitch, twist, button.

*[Rattle noise]*

'What was that? What was that noise?' said the tailor

*[Monster voice]* 'It's my bones. Do you hear that tailor? Do you hear that?

'I do' said the tailor. 'I do. I hear that very well. I hear that, but I stitch this.'

Stitch, stitch, twist, button. Stitch, stitch, twist, button.

*[Shaker noise]*

'What was that? What was that noise?' said the tailor

*[Monster voice]* 'It's my brains. It's my brains rattling in my skull. Do you hear that tailor? Do you hear that?

'I do' said the tailor. 'I do. I hear that very well. I hear that, but I stitch this.'

Stitch, stitch, twist, button. Stitch, stitch, twist, button.

*[Teeth rattle noise]*

'What was that? What was that noise?' said the tailor

*[Monster voice]* 'It's my teeth. It's my rattling teeth. Do you hear that tailor? Do you hear that?

'I do' said the tailor. 'I do. I hear that very well. I hear that, but I stitch this.'

Stitch, stitch, twist, button. Stitch, stitch, twist, button.

*[Drum noise]*

'What was that? What was that noise?' said the tailor

*[Monster voice]* 'It's my feet. It's my two muckle feet. And I'm coming to get you. Do you hear that tailor? Do you hear that? It's my bones *[rattle]* and my brains *[shaker]* and my teeth *[teeth rattle]* and my two muckle feet. And I'm coming to get you tailor. I'm coming to get you. Do you hear that?'

'I do' said the tailor. 'I do. I hear that very well. I hear that, but I stitch this.'

Stitch, stitch, twist, button. Stitch, stitch, twist, button. Stitch, stitch, twist, button. Stitch, stitch, twist, button. *[Getting faster and faster]*

The tailor finished the waistcoat, he ran down stairs. Pit-pat-pit-pat-pit-pat. He ran to the king:

'Here's your waistcoat king. Here it is!'

And the king gave him his five golden coins.

And the tailor set off down the road. And never saw the monster again. And lived happily ever after.

## Notes on telling

Encourage your audience to join in as much as possible. For example with the noises in the tower and the 'stitch, stitch, twist, button'. This 'stitch, stitch...' refrain can be tapped out on the back of someone's hand, if it seems appropriate. One finger taps for each 'stitch', the 'twist' is a wee circle 'drawn' with the finger and the 'button' another tap:  
*tap, tap, circle tap; tap, tap, circle, tap.*

This will help anyone with more complex needs to be included in the rhythm of the story. Linger on the quiet 'stitch, stitch' bits of the story to mark the contrast with the loud scary monster. The 'stitch, stitch...' refrain should get fast and frantic as the monster approaches, the running down stairs should be in a panic, the climax of the story is when the tailor flings the waistcoat to the king. Then there should be a wee pause before the king brings out the five gold coins.

## Props

If possible use a real waistcoat. Old waistcoats fit in well with the atmosphere of the story. Vintage clothes shops usually have a good supply.

The instruments I use are as follows:

Bones: a wooden 'football rattle'

Teeth: a wooden guiro

Brains: a seed shaker

My two muckle feet: small drum

These are all available to buy online. I've found the following websites to be good for finding a wide variety of percussion instruments.

<http://www.normans.co.uk/>

<http://www.knockonwood.co.uk/>

Amazon also has a good choice of instruments.

If you already have a music box then you can use whatever you have and just improvise. Brains might jingle instead of rattle, toe nails might clatter, ears could flap in the breeze...!

You could also add in:

A wee jingly pouch of money for the 'golden coins'

A big shiny cloak and crown for the king.

A nice long measuring tape for the tailor. Lots of measuring tapes would be even more fun.

## **Follow-on activities**

Make the monster 'one more time' all together. Pass out your instruments, maybe adding in some more to make sure everyone gets a turn. Then bring the monster to life adding one instrument at a time, and then all together at the end to make as much noise as possible!

*Make the dark tower even scarier...*ask your audience for more ideas of other noises they might hear in the dark tower, then improvise these noises to make a really scary tower... Ideas might include mice, rats, earwigs, bats, vampires, owls, thunder and lightning, witches. It can also be fun to add in something completely incongruous like a duck! If you are working with children you could make simple stick puppets of the scary creatures. The puppets could be under the children's chairs ready to come out when the tailor climbs the tower. (Make sure the puppets are put away under the chairs after the tower scene or they will be too much of a distraction during the rest of the story)

*Tell the story all together.* This is a good story to tell as a group. One person can be a narrator. Then everyone else can be tailors or monsters and act out the appropriate bit as it comes. The tailors can act out their part without speaking if they like; knocking at the door, climbing the stairs, sewing faster and faster. They can join in with the question: 'What was that? What was that noise?' Being 'the monster' and using the musical instruments can be a lot of fun for children who are non-verbal or reluctant to talk.

*Add on an ending.* The tailor took the five gold coins to market and bought...each child decides on one item that he can buy. Each item can be added on to the list so that it becomes a memory game (The tailor went to market and bought chocolate and a kitten and an Xbox and some chewing gum... This is played in the same way as 'My Grandmother went to market')

Sometimes I add this bit on at the end:

*The tailor was in such a hurry to get away from the monster that he forgot one thing. Can you see what he forgot? (At this point I hold up a waistcoat that has one button missing) That's right – he forgot one of the buttons. But by the time the king realised, the tailor was away down the road with his five golden coins...*

If you are using this ending you could play a 'hunt the button in the dark tower' game.

If you have any questions at all please contact me at: [info@flotsamandjetsam.co.uk](mailto:info@flotsamandjetsam.co.uk)

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