

#1 The town of Knottingham is a quaint little village of Knotts that can be found on a mountainside high above the clouds, just across from the Twine mountain range. The only way to get there is by crossing an old rickety wooden bridge that is in desperate need of repair.

One day the mayor of Knottingham, mayor Ham, rang the bells in the bell tower and called a meeting in Town Square which brought all the Knotts in the village out to hear what the Mayor had to say.

“Loyal subjects of Knottingham,” he began, “It has come to my attention that King Goodwig is coming to visit our humble hamlet. He wishes to thank us personally for helping him out when he was at the end of his rope. He will be here next Thursday so we must prepare for his arrival. You know the ropes.”

#2 Well, this was exciting news indeed! The King had never visited Knottingham before and all the Knotts were fraying with delight at the very thought of a royal visit. Now each Knott in the village was special and had a specific job to do in order to help in the preparations.

The Slip Knotts gathered together and tied themselves around the gift packages that would be presented to the King. The Bowline Knotts hitched themselves to the horses that would be in the parade welcoming King Goodwig to Knottingham. All the Fisherman’s Knotts went down to the lake to catch the fish that would be served at the feast while the Pipe Hitch Knotts joined with the pulleys that would work the curtain of the Knottingham Theater where the King would be entertained with Knott-Knott jokes.

#3 There were Miller’s Knotts, and Sheet Bend Knotts; Timberhitch Knotts, and Clove Hitch Knotts; Sheep Shank Knotts and Stevedore Knotts. And all throughout the town each Knott was hard at work doing what it did best to make sure everything would be in perfect order when the King arrived. All of them, that is, except for Square Knott. He was a long rope, by far the longest in the village. Hideously long, too long, he thought, to do anything well and everywhere he went the other Knotts would point at him and laugh and say things that hurt his feelings. It seemed everyone remembered all the times he tried to help out but had failed.

#4 There was the time he tried to be a rope swing but he was so long and gangly that when he flung himself over the branch of the tree the knot at the end tumbled all the way to the ground and no one could swing. Once he tried to be a jump rope but he stretched so long and far that he couldn’t get enough momentum going for anyone to be able to jump. Another time he tried to join the Slip Knotts and wrapped himself around a package, but there was just so much of him that he ended up a jumbled, tangled mess. It was hopeless, he decided. It seemed there wasn’t anything at all he was good for. “God must have made a mistake when he made me,” he thought to himself.

#5 The day before the King was to arrive the residents of Knottingham again heard the ringing of the bells in the bell tower, but this time they were sounded in alarm. “Whatever could be the problem?” they were asking amongst themselves as they hurried

towards Town Square. "Perhaps the King isn't coming after all," someone said, "And we've gone to all this work for nothing. Why, the whole town will be tied up in knots."

"Dear Knotts," the Mayor cried in distress once everyone had gathered, "The bridge has collapsed and it will be impossible for the King to get to Knottingham without it. But it's too late to send him a message and tell him not to come and there is no time to build another bridge. The entire situation has my stomach in knots."

#6 They wasted no time in rushing to where the bridge had been. Sure enough, there were pieces of wood scattered and broken all the way down the side of the mountain. "What can be done?" asked the Slip Knotts, "We won't hold, because we are made to come easily undone. Besides, we aren't long enough to reach the Twine Mountains."

"Well, we certainly can't do anything," chimed in the Sheepshank Knotts. "We are made to shorten a rope without it having to be cut in two. This is entirely beyond our ability."

Then Lariat spoke up and said, "Hey! Maybe you could just toss me across the valley and I'll throw myself around the King and everyone can help hoist him back across to Knott-ingham!"

"Don't be ridiculous. We can't exactly drag the king up the mountainside now, can we? Besides, you aren't long enough," the other Knotts said with exasperation.

#7 Each Knott spoke up in turn and explained why they weren't suitable for the job at hand. It looked as though the King would not be able to get into Knottingham after all and he was supposed to be there tomorrow!

Meanwhile, as the others were contemplating the hopelessness of the situation and wandering sadly back to their knotholes, Square Knott, who had been hiding behind a tree the whole time had an idea. "Maybe," he thought to himself, "Just maybe I can be good for something after all." He began immediately to work on his idea, but still, he would have to hurry. Time was short and there was much work to be done.

#8 He worked all through the night. Over and under, around and through he labored on and on, without stopping to rest or slowing his pace. By the time the first rays of sunlight were streaming across the ridge he was done. And just in time. He could hear the trumpets in the distance announcing the approach of the King's entourage. He quickly fastened himself to one side of the mountain and then hurled himself across to the other side and, grabbing a large stone, tied himself securely to it. At that moment the King's procession arrived and the King looked out from his carriage marveling at the sight before him. He was looking at the most intricately tied suspension bridge he had ever seen.

#9 The Knotts of Knottingham were stunned to see the King in their midst. The mayor rushed out to greet him, but before he could ask how he managed to get to their village, the King raised his hand and said, "I have been welcomed in many places and seen many marvelous things, but I have never seen a bridge as wonderful as the one you prepared for my arrival."

As soon as King Goodwig had been greeted and taken to the mayor's knothole so he could rest before the festivities, all the Knotts rushed to see what he could possibly be talking about. And there, to their utter amazement, was Square Knott, tied into a breathtaking suspension bridge stretching securely across the valley to Twine Mountain.

#10 "You've done it," they cried, "You were the only one who was long enough to make a bridge for the King! And what a beautifully knotted bridge you are. You have done what none of us could have ever done!"

Square Knott beamed with delight and at that moment all the Knotts of Knottingham realized that each of them was created special and unique. Each Knott in Knottingham had a job that God had equipped him to do. From that day on Square Knott was hailed as a hero and spoken of with pride and appreciation far and wide. And to this very day, if you travel through the clouds toward the village, you will still find him proudly leading folks into Knottingham.