Edward and the Dragon

Educational Value
Cleverness

Moral of the story
Quick thinking is the best weapon of all, and should always be used in preference to violence

Story
Edward was the youngest knight in the kingdom. He was still pretty much a boy, but was so brave and intelligent that, without having to fight anyone at all, he had defeated all his enemies.

One day, while riding through the mountains, he came across a small cave. On entering it he found it was enormous, and that inside was an impressive castle, so big that he thought the mountain couldn't be real, and that it must have been a facade put there to hide the castle.

On nearing the castle, Edward heard the sound of voices. Without hesitating, he climbed over the castle walls, and followed the voices.

"Anybody here?" he asked.
"Help! Help us!" came the response from inside, "we've been locked in here for years, serving the castle dragon."
"Dragon?" thought Edward, just before an enormous flying flame almost burnt him alive. Edward spun silently around, and addressing the terrible dragon face to face, said: "It's all right, Dragon. I forgive you for what you just did. You probably didn't know it was me."

The dragon was very surprised at words like these. He never expected anyone to stand up to him, and certainly not in such a brazen manner.

"Prepare to fight, dwarf! I don't give a fig who you are!" roared the dragon.
"Wait a moment. Well, it's clear that you don't know who I am. I am the guardian of the Great Crystal Sword!" continued Edward, who - before fighting - was capable of making all sorts of things up. "You well know that the sword has killed dozens of ogres and dragons, and that if I unsheathe it, it will fly straight into your neck and kill you."

The dragon had never heard of such a sword, but this frightened him. He certainly didn't like the sound of something cutting his throat. Edward carried on talking.

"In any case, I want to give you a chance to fight me. Let's travel to the other side of the world. Over there there's a snow-covered mountain, and at the summit there's a great tower. At the top of the tower there's a golden cage where a wizard made this sword. There the sword loses all its power. I'll be there, but will only wait for you for five days."

On saying that, Edward raised a cloud of dust and disappeared. The dragon thought Edward had performed some kind of magic, but he had only hidden in some bushes. Wanting to fight with that impudent knight, the dragon quickly flew out of the cave, towards the other side of the world, in a journey which lasted more than a month.

When Edward was sure the dragon was far away, he came out of his hiding place, entered the castle, and set free all the prisoners inside. Some had been missing for many years, and when they returned home everyone praised Edward's great intelligence.
And what about the dragon? Well, can you believe that on the other side of the world there was really a snowy mountain with a big tower on top, and a gold cage on top of that?

Well yes, the dragon squeezed into the cage and couldn't get out; and there he remains, hoping that someone intelligent will one day come and rescue him...

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