



Words and Their Stories: Money (Part 1)

Now, the VOA Special English program WORDS AND THEIR STORIES.

I think people everywhere dream about having lots of money. I know I do. I would give anything to **make money hand over fist**. I would like to earn large amounts of money. You could win a large amount of money in the United States through **lotteries**. People pay money for tickets with numbers. If your combination of numbers is chosen, you win a huge amount of money – often in the millions. Winning the lottery is **a windfall**.

A few years ago, my friend Al won the lottery. It changed his life. He did not have a rich family. He was not **born with a silver spoon in his mouth**. Instead, my friend was always **hard up** for cash. He did not have much money. And the money he did earn was **chicken feed** – very little.

Sometimes Al even had to accept **hand-outs**, gifts from his family and friends. But do not get me wrong. My friend was not a **deadbeat**. He was not the kind of person who never paid the money he owed. He simply **pinched pennies**. He was always very careful with the money he spent. In fact, he was often a **cheapskate**. He did not like to spend money. The worst times were when he was **flat broke** and had no money at all.

One day, Al **scraped together** a few dollars for a lottery ticket. He thought he would never **strike it rich** or gain lots of money unexpectedly. But his combination of numbers was chosen and he won the lottery. He **hit the jackpot**. He won a great deal of money.

Al was so excited. The first thing he did was buy a costly new car. He **splurged** on the one thing that he normally would not buy. Then he started spending money on unnecessary things. He started to waste it. It was like he had **money to burn**. He had more money than he needed and it was **burning a hole in his pocket** so he spent it quickly.

When we got together for a meal at a restaurant, Al paid every time. He would always **foot the bill**, and **pick up the tab**. He told me the money made him **feel like a million dollars**. He was very happy.

But, Al spent too much money. Soon my friend was **down and out** again. He had no money left. He was back to being **strapped for cash**. He had spent his **bottom dollar**, his very last amount. He did not even build up a **nest egg**. He had not saved any of the money.

I admit I do feel sorry for my friend. He had enough money to live like a king. Instead, he is back to living **on a shoestring** -- a very low budget. Some might say he is **penny wise and pound foolish**. He was wise about small things, but not about important things.

(MUSIC)

WORDS AND THEIR STORIES, in VOA Special English, was written by Jill Moss. I'm Faith Lapidus.