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Firefly **Plus!**

# Magic Touch Reader

*A collection of stories*

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Firefly

# Magic Touch

*A collection of stories*

Reader

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Firefly Books

# Contents

1. Jack and The Beanstalk.....	3
2. The Three Wishes.....	13
3. The Brave Tailor.....	23
4. Alice in Wonderland.....	34
5. The Goatherd and His Goats.....	49
6. The Noble Stag.....	60
7. The Soup Made of Stones.....	70
8. King Midas.....	80
9. Aladdin and His Magic Lamp .....	92
10. The Lion and The Jackal.....	108

## Firefly Books

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Magic Touch Reader



1

## Jack and The Beanstalk

Once upon a time, there was a boy named Jack. He lived with his mother in a village. Jack and his mother were very poor.

They had a cow that gave them milk. Jack would sell the milk and get enough money to buy food for himself and his mother. They also had a little patch of land where they grew vegetables.

One day, the cow stopped giving milk. Jack's mother was **dismayed**. She told him, "Take the cow to the market and sell her to the **butcher**, so that we can buy a goat with that money."



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Poor Jack took the old cow to the market. He did not feel like selling her to the butcher as the cow was like a friend to him. As he was walking down the path towards the market, they met an old man. The man asked Jack, "Where are you off to, lad?"

Jack told the man, "I am taking my cow to the butcher. The poor animal has stopped giving us milk. My mama wants me to sell her and buy a goat instead."

The old man looked at them thoughtfully and said, "I can see that you don't want the butcher to get his mean hands on that poor cow. I will take her. You can have my magic beans in exchange for that cow."

Jack was not a very clever boy. He gave the cow away and took the magic beans from the old man. He **pocketed**

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them and returned home, **whistling** a happy tune to himself. His mother saw him return alone. "Where is the goat?" she asked him. Jack told her about the old man and the magic beans. His mother was **furious**!

She **screamed** at him, "How could you be so foolish? Exchanging our cow for these **worthless** beans! Do you think these beans will get us any food or money? Off to bed with you, silly boy. No supper for you tonight!"

Jack was very upset. He walked into his room and sat by the window. He pulled out the beans from his pocket and looked at them. They looked so ordinary. "I don't think they do any magic," he said sadly and threw them out of the window.

Jack went to sleep on an empty stomach that night. "Tomorrow I will look for a job in the village," he said to himself as he fell asleep. When Jack woke up the next morning, it was quite dark inside his room. He looked out and saw a giant tree growing outside his window. How did the tree get there? There had been nothing but a **barren** patch of land outside his window until last night!





Jack ran outside the house and looked at the tree. It was so tall that he could not see the top! Suddenly, he remembered the magic beans.

'It must be those beans,' he thought to himself. 'They have grown into this **massive** tree.' He decided to climb up the tree and see how tall it was. He **hoisted** himself onto the nearest branch and began the long climb up the tree.

Jack continued to climb for hours. Soon, all he could see below him were huge white clouds. He could not see his house at all. The church, which was the tallest building in the village, was **invisible** to him too!

Jack was tired, but he wanted to see where this giant tree took him. He continued to climb slowly. After many hours, he was able to see a huge stretch of land above him.



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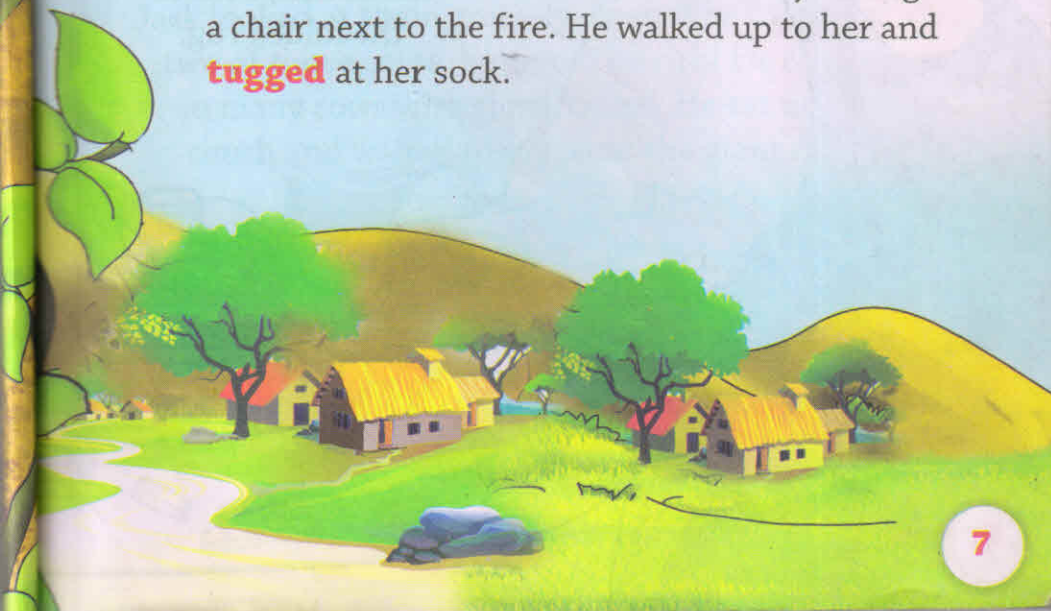
Jack was quite excited now. He climbed up hurriedly and stepped onto the land. And what a shock he got!

The land had trees just as huge as the one he had just climbed. There were giant houses ahead of him. As he walked on, he saw blades of grass that were as big as he was. Why, an ant twice as big as him, had just **scurried** by!

Jack realised that he was in the land of giants. He was amazed by what he saw. Just then, he felt the ground shake behind him. He climbed onto a leaf and hid there safely. A huge giant walked by!

Jack was so small, as small as the giant's hand! The huge giant walked heavily, making the ground shake **violently** under his huge feet. Jack knew that he was not safe where he was. He looked for a place to hide.

Soon Jack spotted a large cottage with an open door. He walked in and saw an **enormous** lady sitting on a chair next to the fire. He walked up to her and **tugged** at her sock.

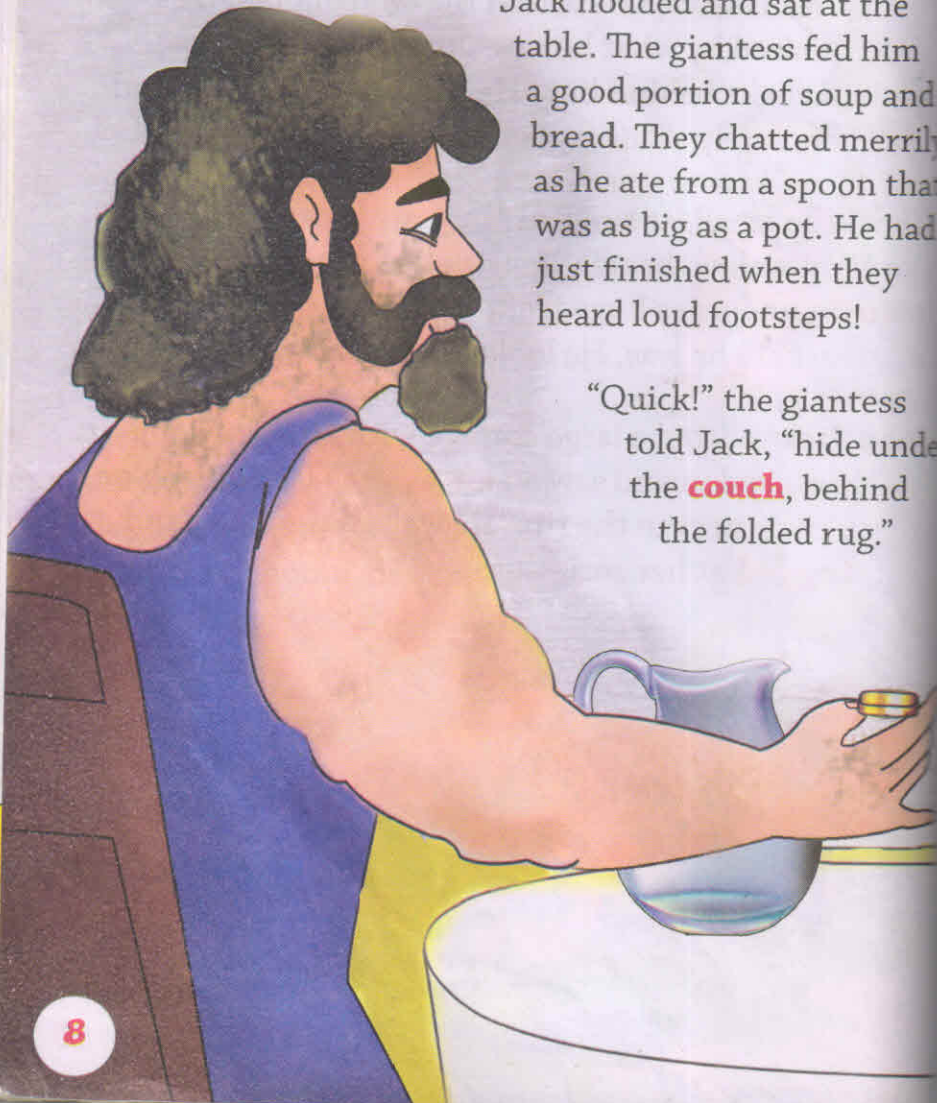


She looked down and was surprised to see the tiny boy standing at her feet!

Jack smiled at her politely and said, "Good morning, ma'am. Could you spare a little piece of bread for me?" The giantess smiled at him and said, "Sure, little one. But you must eat quickly. My husband will come home soon and he will eat you up!"

Jack nodded and sat at the table. The giantess fed him a good portion of soup and bread. They chatted merrily as he ate from a spoon that was as big as a pot. He had just finished when they heard loud footsteps!

"Quick!" the giantess told Jack, "hide under the **couch**, behind the folded rug."



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Jack ran and hid safely. The giant walked in a few minutes later.

He looked huge and cruel. "Fee Fi Fo Fum!" he said loudly, "I smell the blood of a little man! Be he alive or be he dead, I will have his bones with my toasted bread."

"Don't be silly," said his wife, as she placed a huge plate of food in front of him. "There is no one here but you and me. Eat your food quietly." The giant shook his head and **gobbled** up his food noisily.

After he had finished eating, he cleaned the table and went to his room. He came back with a huge sack. Jack was curious to find out what was in the sack.

The giant pulled out gold coins as huge as Jack's dinner plates! The giant emptied all the coins from the sack onto the table. He started counting them and arranging them in piles.

Jack looked at them greedily. Even if he took just two of those coins, he would be rich! He could buy so many cows with those coins! He sat under the couch and waited to see what the giant did next.





The giant fell asleep as he was counting his money. Jack ran up to the table and grabbed five large coins. He stuffed them into his little bag and climbed down from the table. Just as he was running out of the door, the giant woke up!

The giant saw Jack and **bellowed** loud enough to make the roof shake. "I was right! There is a little man in the house. I will eat him for supper tonight." He ran after Jack who ran out of the house and into the garden. There, he saw a giant sparrow about to fly away. He grabbed the sparrow's leg and flew away with him. The sparrow stopped on the same tree that Jack had climbed earlier. He got off and quickly slid down the tree.

When Jack reached the ground, he ran for his axe and chopped down the tree so that the giant could not come after him. The tree fell with a loud crash!

Jack went to the market and sold the giant's golden coins. He got a lot of money for them. He bought many cows and goats with that money. He even bought a bigger cottage and a piece of land too.

Soon, Jack and his mother were rich and happy. They became rich farmers with vast fields and many animals! Jack never forgot the magic beans and his adventure in the giant's land. After all, it was those beans that had brought him such good luck!

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### Now we know

**We must always be brave  
and think smart.**

### New Words We Learnt

- |           |   |  |
|-----------|---|--|
| dismayed  | - | really upset   |
| butcher   | - | A person whose trade is cutting and selling meat in a shop.            |
| pocketed  | - | to take money or valuable for oneself, in a greedy or dishonest manner |
| whistling | - | making a high pitched sound through one's lips                         |
| furious   | - | very angry   |
| screamed  | - | yelled   |
| worthless | - | something that is not of any use                                       |
| barren    | - | land that does not produce any vegetation                              |
| massive   | - | huge   |
| hoisted   | - | raised something   |
| invisible | - | something that cannot be seen  |
| scurried  | - | crawled hurriedly  |
| violently | - | in a rough, scary manner   |
| enormous  | - | huge   |
| tugged    | - | pulled   |
| couch     | - | sofa   |
| gobbled   | - | ate fast   |
| bellowed  | - | shouted loudly   |

## Fun Time!!!

★ Fill in the blanks to complete the words from the story.

D \_ S \_ A \_ \_ D

B \_ TCH \_ R

T \_ OU \_ \_ TF \_ \_ L \_

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RE \_ U \_ N \_ D

A \_ AZ \_ D

★ Find 5 nouns and 5 verbs from the story and write them here

**nouns**

**verbs**

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## 2

## The Three Wishes

**L**ong, long ago, there lived a woodcutter and his wife. They owned a pretty little house just outside a huge forest. Everyday, the woodcutter would go into the forest and chop wood. His wife would pack a bag with food and water for him so that he wouldn't go hungry.

One day, the woodcutter spotted a giant oak tree in the forest. He felt that it would give him a lot of wood. The quality of the wood was very good too. It would fetch him a lot of money.

The woodcutter decided to come back the next day and chop the big tree. So the next day, the woodcutter woke up early and set off for the forest with his bag of food.

When he reached the great old oak tree, the woodcutter looked at it for a while. He tried to think of an easy way to chop down the huge tree.

Finally, he picked up his axe and swung it high above his head. He wanted to chop off a large portion of the oak in one stroke.

However, before his axe could touch the tree, he heard a soft, sweet voice.

He dropped his axe and looked around him to see whose voice it was. Then he looked back at the oak tree and saw

a beautiful fairy sitting on a branch. The fairy requested the woodcutter **politely**, "Please, kind sir! Spare this old oak. It has been my home for **centuries**. Where would I live if it was chopped down?"

The woodcutter was too **stunned** to talk. The fairy continued to plead for the oak's life. "Please don't take my home away from me," she begged.



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The woodcutter gently told her, "Do not worry, kind fairy. I will not destroy your home." The fairy was happy. She thanked the woodcutter and said, "I now grant you three wishes. Wish wisely." Then, the fairy **vanished** into thin air. The woodcutter could not believe that he had just spoken to a fairy. He stood still in front of the oak tree for a long time. Then, he picked up his axe and headed back home. He was glad he hadn't chopped the tree down.

When the woodcutter reached home, he felt tired and hungry. He longed to stretch out his feet and enjoy a delicious meal. However, it was too early to eat supper. His wife had just started preparing the meal. So he stretched out on the couch for a while to rest.

The woodcutter tried to rest, but he was too hungry. He called out to his wife and asked her, "Have you finished preparing supper?" The wife replied, "Not yet. You might need to wait for an hour." The woodcutter sighed. His stomach was **rumbling** so much! He said to himself, "How I wish I had a plate of warm, delicious jilebis in front of me right now!"

No sooner had he said the words, than he heard the **clatter** of a dish. A large plate had appeared in front of him out of nowhere. On that plate were the finest, most **aromatic** jilebis he had ever come across!

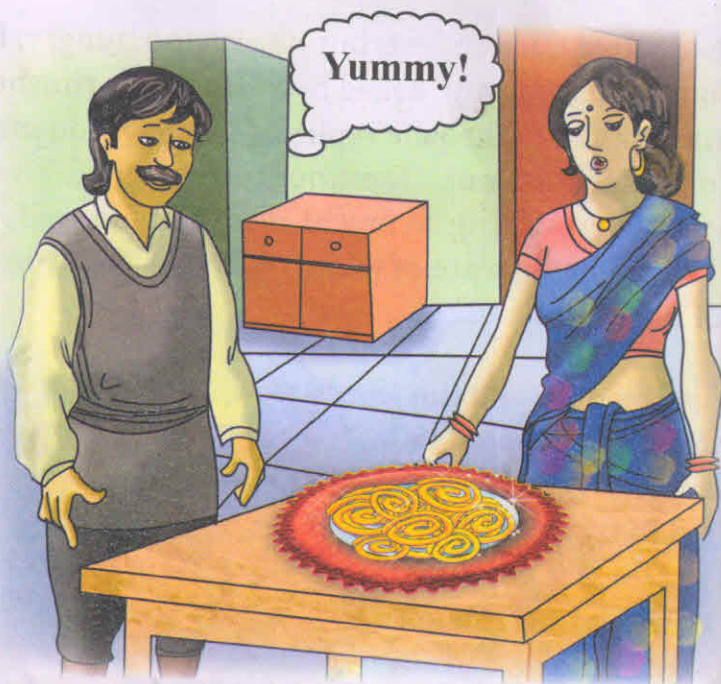




The woodcutter couldn't believe his eyes. The fairy's promise had come true! He had just wished **absent-mindedly** for jilebis, and there they were, in front of him.

They were the perfect jilebis. They had the most beautiful golden-brown colour and they smelled simply delicious! The woodcutter hopped around the room, singing with joy.

His wife heard him singing and came **bustling** out of the kitchen. "Why are you hopping around the room?" she asked him. Then she noticed the jilebis. "Where did those jilebis come from?" she asked.



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"I shall tell you everything," the woodcutter told his wife. "Let's eat these jilebis first. I am **starving!**" So the woodcutter and his wife sat down at the table and enjoyed the delicious jilebis.

After they had finished the entire plate, the woodcutter turned to his wife and told her about the fairy who lived in the oak tree. He told her how he had granted the fairy's request and the fairy in turn had granted him three wishes.

The woodcutter's wife listened in **amazement** as her husband told her the entire tale. A fairy! Three wishes! Then her husband told her about how he had wished for some jilebis. His wife was really upset to learn that he had only wished for some jilebis. She started screaming at him, "You could have wished for a palace. You could have wished for riches. You could have wished for rooms filled with precious stones. And you wished for some jilebis?"

The woodcutter tried to reason with her. He said, "I had completely forgotten about the fairy's promise. I was so hungry that I did not realise what I was saying. We still have two wishes left."

The woman looked angrily at her husband. "Hmph!" she snorted, "wish for some jilebis, indeed. I wish some jilebis get stuck on your nose."

As soon as she said this, a few jilebis appeared out of nowhere and stuck themselves on the poor man's nose!





Oops!

The woodcutter was shocked. He couldn't believe that his wife's wish had come true! He tried to pull the jilebi away from his nose, but they just wouldn't come off!

The woodcutter's wife was **horrified**. She tried to help him to pull them off too. But the jilebis refused to **budge**. They were stuck tight on the poor woodcutter's nose!

The woodcutter was very angry. He shouted at his wife, "What on earth made you wish for such a horrible thing? How am I going to work with jilebis stuck on my nose?"

The wife was shocked. "How was I to know that I could make a wish too? You never told me that I could," she said.

They continued to **bicker** for a while. Finally the woodcutter said, "We must stop fighting. We have already wasted two wishes, and now I am stuck with

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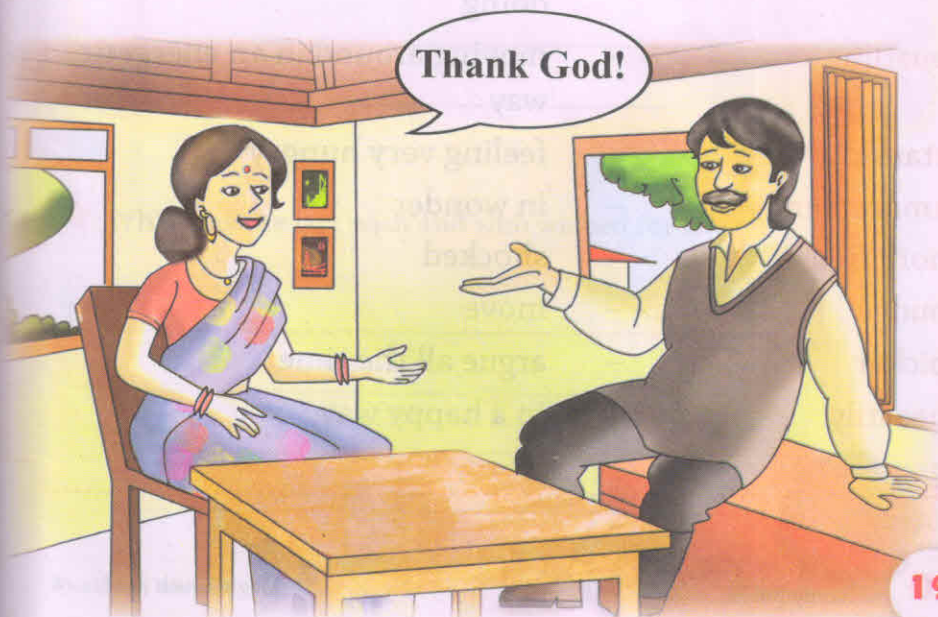


these stupid jilebis on my nose. I need to get them off my face."

The woodcutter's wife did not want to waste their third wish, but there was no other way to get the jilebis off her husband's nose. She felt sorry for screaming at him and wasting their second wish.

She finally nodded and spoke loudly, "I wish that the jilebis leave your nose." In an instant, the jilebis disappeared. The woodcutter touched his nose. It was back to normal.

The woodcutter's wife felt disappointed that they had wasted all the three wishes. But the woodcutter smiled and said to her, "At least, we **heartily** enjoyed delicious jilebis!" His wife laughed and agreed with him. She went back to finish making their supper.



## Now we know

We must never wish for things when we are angry. They might just come true!

## New Words We Learnt

politely	- in a kind manner
centuries	- hundreds and hundreds of years
stunned	- shocked
vanished	- disappeared
rumbling	- making soft, grunting noises
clatter	- make a rattling sound
aromatic	- fragrant smell, usually coming from spices
absent-mindedly	- in a manner where one is unaware of what he or she is doing
bustling	- moving around in an energetic way
starving	- feeling very hungry
amazement	- in wonder
horrified	- shocked
budge	- move
bicker	- argue all the time
heartily	- in a happy way

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## Fun Time!!!

- ★ What if you were a fairy and were allowed to grant three things to a dog? What magical gifts would you give the dog? Write your answers here!



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- ★ What was the last wish and who wished for it?

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## Fun Time!!!

★ Which was your favourite part of the story? Write it in the form of dialogues!

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## 3

## The Brave Tailor

On a fine summer morning, a tailor sat near the window of his pretty little cottage and said, "What a lovely day! I feel like making a jam sandwich."

He went into his kitchen and made himself a delicious sandwich with lots of strawberry jam in it.

The tailor placed the sandwich on a plate and took it to the window. He placed the plate on a table and sat on a chair. "Aah!" he sighed, "this is what I call a perfect day!"



Just as he was about to eat the sandwich, he spotted several flies **hovering** over it. He picked up a belt that was lying nearby and smacked the flies with it. When he pulled the belt away, he saw seven flies lying dead on the table.

The tailor thought that he had done a great and brave deed by killing seven flies with one blow. So he stitched the words 'Seven In One Blow' on his belt and wore that belt all the time.

The **townsfolk** saw his belt and thought that he was a brave tailor indeed. But they all thought that he had knocked out seven **thugs** with one blow! So, they shook his hand and sang his praises and called him the bravest man in town.

As days went by, the tailor grew prouder still! One day, he set off for an adventure in the jungle. He told the townsfolk, "There is nothing exciting for me to do in this boring town. I am off to the jungle to look for a real adventure!"

The next day, he set off early in the morning with an old piece of cheese in his pocket. As he walked towards the jungle, he found a bird stuck in a bush. He pulled the bird out of the bush and put it into his other pocket. "Don't worry, little one," said the tailor, "I will look after you."



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The tailor continued walking towards the jungle. He walked through the **dense** woods and reached a river. There, he found a huge giant sitting under an oak tree. He looked up and greeted the giant warmly, "Good day, Mr. Giant!"

The giant looked down and saw a **puny** little tailor smiling up at him. He was furious. What made this tiny creature think he could talk to the **mightiest** of giants so casually? He was about to learn a tough lesson. The giant roared at the tailor, "You puny little creature! What makes you think you can talk to me? I can crush you with my bare hands!" The tailor looked up proudly and replied, "Perhaps you can, but you do not know my strength. Look at my belt, will you?"

The giant **peered** closely at the tailor's belt and read 'Seven In One Blow'. The giant was **impressed**.



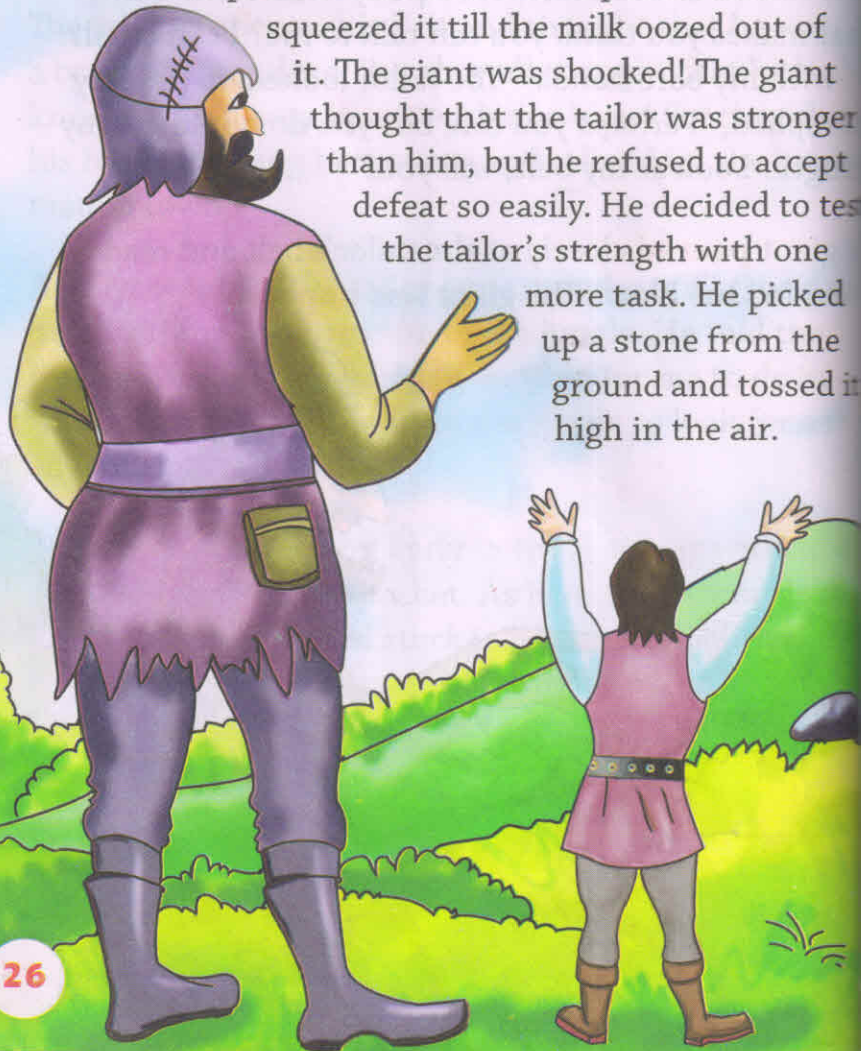
This little tailor had killed seven people with one blow. The giant too, didn't know that the tailor had actually only killed seven flies.

The giant wanted to find out how strong the tailor really was. He told him, "If you really are that strong, can you do this?" He picked up a stone and squeezed it until water started **oozing** out of it.

The tailor **scoffed** and replied, "That's easy!" He pulled out the piece of cheese from his pocket and

squeezed it till the milk oozed out of it. The giant was shocked! The giant thought that the tailor was stronger than him, but he refused to accept defeat so easily. He decided to test the tailor's strength with one

more task. He picked up a stone from the ground and tossed it high in the air.



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He looked at the tailor and said, "Can you toss a stone higher?" The tailor pulled out the bird from his pocket and let it go. The bird flew high into the sky until it could not be seen anymore.



"There you go!" said the tailor proudly.  
"My stone is probably about to touch the sky!"

The giant could not believe his eyes. This tailor was much stronger than he had thought! He decided to test his strength with a final task.

The giant stood up. He pulled the mighty oak tree under which he had been sitting, out of the ground. He looked at the tailor and said, "If you really are as strong as you say, help me carry this tree to that mountain." He pointed to a mountain across the river.

The tailor nodded his head. "I will take the branches and the leaves as they are heavier. You can carry the tree trunk as that is lighter." The giant agreed. As soon as he **hoisted** the trunk on to his shoulder, the tailor ran back and sat on one of the branches.

The giant could not turn around to see if the tailor was actually carrying the tree.

He **grunted** and groaned as he carried the tree all by himself towards the mountain.

The tailor sat comfortably among the branches and sang merrily all the way.

The giant thought that the tailor was actually carrying the tree behind him. "This tree must be so light for him!" he muttered under his breath. "He hasn't huffed or puffed even once! He can actually sing while carrying such a heavy tree all the way to the mountain."

After a while, the giant was unable to carry the tree anymore. He dropped it and turned around. The tailor hopped off the branch he was sitting on as quickly as he could and said, "What happened, friend? Can't you carry this little tree anymore?"

The giant shook his head and replied, "Sadly, I cannot. I need to go home and rest." Suddenly, the giant had an idea. "Why don't you come home with me?" he asked the tailor. "You can meet my friends and rest with us."

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The tailor and the giant walked up the mountain and reached the cave where the giant lived. He called out to all his giant friends and said, "Friends, come out and greet the strongest man you will ever meet!"

The giants **scrambled** out to see who this strong man was. When they saw the puny little tailor standing next to the giant, they started laughing! The giant then told his friends about the three tasks the tailor had performed. They were amazed!

In a while, they lit a fire and started to roast their food over it. The tailor sat with the giants and enjoyed his food. They talked for a long time. The tailor was enjoying every minute of his adventure. This was definitely better than the boring life in his **cramped** cottage.

After a while, the tailor excused himself from the group sitting by the fire and went to look for a place to sleep.

The giant from the river called out to him, "Where are you off to, little one?"

The tailor replied **drowsily**, "I am looking for a place to sleep." The giant smiled and said,





"You can sleep on my bed!" The tailor thanked him and climbed onto the giant's bed. However, he wasn't comfortable on it at all. So he climbed down and curled up in a little corner of the cave.

That night, the giants crept into the cave and chopped the bed into bits! Little did they know that the tailor was not on the bed. They thought that they had got rid of the tailor once and for all.

The next morning, the giants sat outside their caves, chatting merrily. Just then, the tailor walked out of the giant's cave and stretched lazily. "Aah! That was not too comfortable! I had better get going." Imagine how shocked the giants were to see the little fellow alive! The tailor bade them farewell and walked into the jungle. He continued to walk all day until he reached a huge castle. He walked into the castle and spotted a patch of soft, green grass. He was very tired. So he lay down there and was soon fast asleep.

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A few people walked by and spotted the tailor lying on the grass. When they moved closer, they noticed the belt with 'Seven In One Blow' written on it. Everyone thought that he had killed seven thugs with one blow. They were impressed! Soon, the King came to hear about the brave man who had killed seven thugs with one blow.

He walked out into his garden and saw the very same man lying on his lawn, fast asleep.

The King was peering at the belt when the tailor woke up. He stood up and introduced himself. The King greeted him warmly and asked him how he had found his way to the castle.

The tailor told the King about his adventures with the giant. He even told the King the truth about the 'Seven In One Blow' belt. The King was impressed to meet such a clever man. He thought the tailor was **worthy** of becoming his son-in-law.

A few days later, the tailor married the King's beautiful daughter and they lived happily ever after in the palace.



### Now we know

Quick thinking and  
confidence in ourselves leads  
to success.

### New Words We Learnt

hovering	- flying above something, as though waiting
townsfolk	- people living in a certain town
thugs	- thieves
dense	- thick growth
puny	- small and thin
mightiest	- strongest
peered	- looked closely
impressed	- felt good about someone or something
oozing	- flowing out of
scoffed	- made fun of
hoisted	- raised or lifted
grunted	- made a sound of disgust
scrambled	- crawled hurriedly
cramped	- stuck in a limited space
drowsily	- in a sleepy way
worthy	- deserving

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## Fun Time!!!

★ The giant wants you to answer some questions about the brave tailor. See if you can answer them all!

a. What did the tailor kill with one swipe of his belt?

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b. What did the town people think he had killed?

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c. How did the tailor defeat me in the three tasks?

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d. Why couldn't my friends kill the tailor when he was sleeping in my cave?

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e. What happened to the tailor in the end?

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## 4

## Alice in Wonderland

Many, many years ago, there lived a curious little girl called Alice. She lived with her father in a huge **mansion** just outside the woods. One day, Alice was sitting with her father in the garden, enjoying a cup of tea.

Just then, she spotted a white rabbit running across the garden. What a **queer** little creature he was! He wore a little

**waistcoat** with a watch

pocket! The rabbit was looking at his pocket watch and shaking his head disappointed as he ran.





**Curious** little Alice wanted to know where the rabbit was off to. She **excused** herself from the table and quietly followed the rabbit into the woods, where he walked into a huge hole under an old oak tree. Alice peered into the hole and fell in headfirst! She fell through a long **tunnel** and landed gently in a strange hallway.

The hallway was full of doors. Alice stood up and brushed the dirt off her dress. She tried opening the doors, but none of them opened. She looked around and saw a little table in the middle of the hallway. This table had a small key on it. Alice walked towards the table and picked up the key.

She looked around the room once more and spotted a tiny door. The key had to belong to this door! But how would Alice go through the door? It was too tiny for her!



The table also had a small bottle with a strange **potion** in it. There was a note beside the bottle that said, 'Drink This'. Curious Alice opened the bottle and took a large gulp.

As soon as Alice gulped the potion, she began to **shrink** until she was small enough to fit through the door. However, the key was on the table, and was too high for her to reach! She tried to climb up the legs of the table when she noticed a little pastry. It was lying next to one of the table legs. There was a note beside it that said, 'Eat This'.

Alice took a tiny bite and immediately grew back to her **original** size. She grabbed the key from the table and gulped down the rest of the potion. As soon as she shrunk into a tiny girl, she rushed towards the door and opened it with the key.

The door opened into a beautiful garden with the strangest plants you could ever see! Alice was completely **fascinated** by this place. She wandered into the garden, marvelling at the strange things surrounding her.

Alice continued to wander **marvelling** till she spotted the rabbit walking ahead. Quickly she ran up to him and introduced herself. "Hello, Mr. Rabbit. My name is Alice. It's nice to meet you!"

The rabbit was a little absent-minded. He thought that Alice was his maid! He told her shortly, "Run home and fetch my cakes! Oh dear, I am so late!" and he ran away, before Alice had a chance to explain anything.





Alice wandered around this strange place. She came upon a caterpillar who talked, a pigeon who thought she was a **serpent** and a Cheshire Cat who could appear and disappear whenever he wanted to! Indeed, this was a place filled with wonders!

The Cheshire Cat chatted with Alice as she walked through this strange land. He was just as curious as she was, and soon they were **exchanging** tales with each other. The Cheshire Cat said to Alice, "A word of warning about this place. Everyone who lives here is mad."

Alice laughed merrily and continued to walk. Soon, she came across an extremely strange sight. A huge table was placed in the middle of nowhere. On this table were piles and piles of **haphazardly** placed dishes, teapots, cups and saucers.

Four chairs were arranged around the table. Two of them were piled high with books. On one pile sat a queer little mouse. On the other sat the rabbit. The third chair was occupied by a strange looking man wearing a large, funny hat. He looked up at Alice and said, "Won't you join us, my dear?"

Alice took a seat and introduced herself, "Hello, I am Alice. May I know who you are?"

The man with the hat introduced himself, "I am the Mad Hatter. That is the Dormouse and that is—" The rabbit cut him off **abruptly** and said, "I am the March Hare and it is past 6 o'clock. You are late!"

Alice was amazed by these queer people. Their tea party was just as strange as them. The three of them kept arguing over silly issues all the time! Soon, Alice was fed up. She took leave of them and continued to roam about in the strange land.

In a while, she reached a beautiful garden. Alice walked in, and what a queer sight she saw! Three large men stood there, painting all the roses red. But, wait! Their bodies were in the shape of playing cards! Alice was so fascinated by the sight of them, she did not notice someone **approaching** her.

While Alice was watching the card-men, the Queen of Hearts had walked into the garden. She saw Alice and





cleared her throat loudly. Alice turned around. "And who are you?" asked the Queen **haughtily**.

Alice smiled at the Queen and replied, "I am Alice. It's a pleasure to meet you, your highness." The Queen smiled at her and asked, "Would you like to play **croquet**, Alice?" Alice nodded happily and followed the Queen into her palace.

Alice soon learnt that the Queen played the most **extraordinary** game of croquet! The balls and **mallets** were actually live animals! Poor Alice found it very difficult to play. Just as she was about to give up, the Cheshire Cat appeared at the palace.

The Queen of Hearts was not too fond of the Cheshire Cat, who was now smiling at Alice and chatting merrily with her. She dragged Alice away from the cat and took her outside the palace. "Have you met my friends yet?" she asked Alice.

Alice asked, "Do you mean the Mad Hatter, the Dormouse and the March Hare?" The Queen let out an impatient **snort** and said, "Not those fools. I am talking about the Gryphon and the Mock Turtle." Alice was puzzled. Who were these **weird** creatures?

The Queen led Alice into another garden and let out a long, **shrill** whistle. At once, a strange creature flew down from a tower. It had the body of a lion and the head and wings of an eagle. The upper part of its body was covered with feathers, while the lower part was covered with a thin coat of fur.

The Gryphon greeted Alice warmly and was soon **swapping** tales with her. The Queen of Hearts stood with them for a while and then bid them farewell, saying "I must go back to the King now. He gets cranky, you know." And with a smile she departed, leaving Alice with the Gryphon.

The Gryphon talked to Alice for quite some time, and then took her to meet his friend, the Mock Turtle. "Why is he called the Mock Turtle?" asked Alice. The Gryphon replied with a sad smile, "That is because he doesn't really know who he is."

Alice climbed onto the Gryphon's back and held on tightly. Together, they flew towards a rocky shore. There, behind a huge rock, sat a very sad-looking turtle! Alice wondered why he looked so sad.

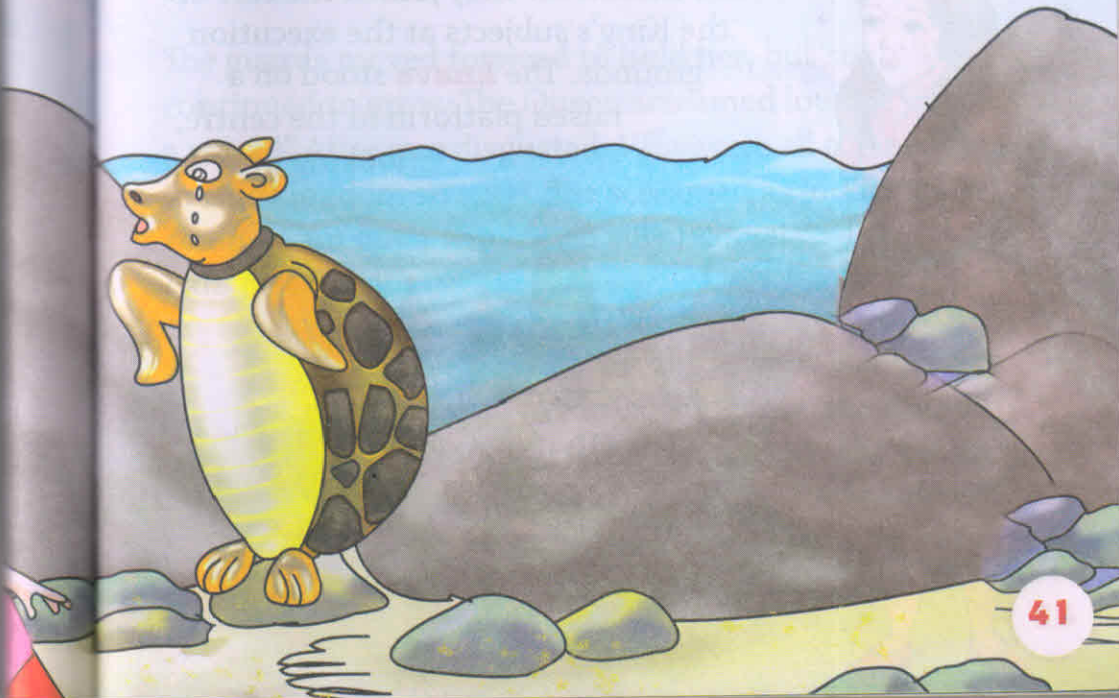




The Mock Turtle did not look too happy to see Alice. However, Alice soon found out that the Mock Turtle was never happy. He began to tell Alice **bizarre** tales about himself.

The Mock Turtle had always thought he was a real turtle, but he happened to be a different creature. He told Alice about a school under the sea. Alice lit up when she heard 'school' and said, "I love school! They teach you poetry and different languages and so many interesting things!"

"No, they don't," **whined** the Mock Turtle, "I hated school. I had a horrible teacher, a sea turtle called Tortoise. I did not like anything he taught me." Alice was surprised to hear him say the teacher's name. "Why did you call him Tortoise if he was a turtle?" she asked.



The Mock Turtle told her, "Why, because he taught us, of course, you silly girl!" and he continued telling them his bizarre tales about the school under the sea.

After a while, the Gryphon looked at the skies and announced, "We must hurry now, Alice. It is almost time for the execution!" Alice looked puzzled.

"Who is getting **executed**?" she asked the Gryphon.

The Gryphon replied sadly, "The Knave of Hearts. He stole the Queen's delicious tarts, so the King **sentenced** him to death!" Alice was shocked! A death penalty for stealing tarts? This truly was a strange land!

The Gryphon took Alice back to the palace after they bid farewell to the Mock Turtle. The Mock Turtle did not want to come for the execution as he felt it would upset him even more. Alice and the Gryphon

arrived at the palace just in time for the execution. They joined the rest of the King's subjects at the execution grounds. The **knave** stood on a raised platform in the centre, looking upset.





The King and the Queen sat right in front of him, looking quite cross.

A moment later, the King stood up and announced sternly, "Knave of Hearts, you stole my beautiful Queen's tarts. You are hereby declared guilty. You will be executed by the Ace of Hearts today, here, at this very moment." The Ace of Hearts stepped onto the platform and headed towards the Knave.

Just then, Alice felt something strange happening to her. She looked down at her and noticed that she was growing back to her original size! The shrinking potion was wearing off!

The Queen was shocked! She thought Alice was some strange magical creature. She yelled for her guards. "Seize her!" cried the Queen, as Alice continued to grow **alarmingly** tall.

The guards moved forward to hold her, but she continued to grow. The Queen screamed loudly, "She is a witch!" Alice was disgusted. Why were all the people in this kingdom so silly? She screamed as loudly as she could, "I am not a witch, you silly people! I am just a girl!"

At this point, everything went black. Alice blinked her eyes. Suddenly, she found herself lying on her bed. She sat up and looked around. It was a dream! Her adventure was nothing but a dream! Or, was it?



### Now we know

Our dreams may take us to strange worlds, but we must never be afraid of them. After all, they are just dreams.

### New Words We Learnt

mansion	– a large house
queer	– strange or odd
waistcoat	– a sleeveless coat worn under a suit jacket
curious	– eager to know
excused	– allowed someone to leave
tunnel	– a passage under the ground
potion	– a liquid of medicinal, magical or poisonous content
shrink	– reduce
original	– present or existing from the beginning in its actual form
fascinated	– attracted
marvelling	– thinking in wonder about something
serpent	– a snake
exchanging	– give up something for something else
haphazardly	– in a random manner
abruptly	– suddenly
approaching	– coming towards
haughtily	– in a proud way



## New Words We Learnt

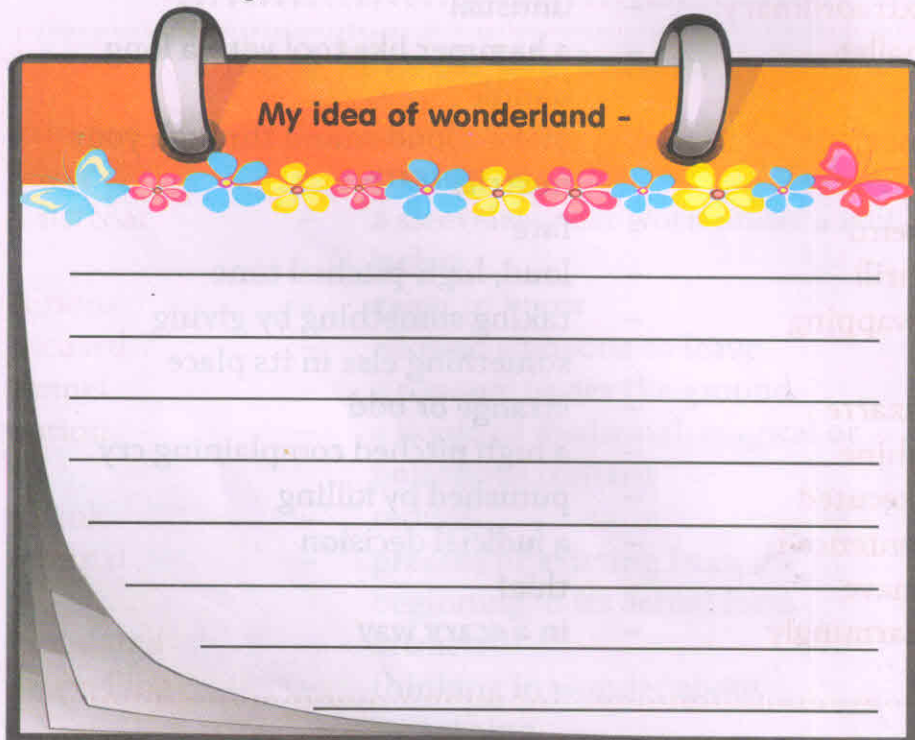
croquet	-	a game played by knocking wooden balls through metal wickets
extraordinary	-	unusual
mallet	-	a hammer like tool with a long handle
snort	-	make a loud sound through your nostrils
weird	-	fate
shrill	-	loud, high-pitched tone
swapping	-	taking something by giving something else in its place
bizarre	-	strange or odd
whine	-	a high pitched complaining cry
executed	-	punished by killing
sentenced	-	a judicial decision
knave	-	thief
alarmingly	-	in a scary way



## Fun Time!!!

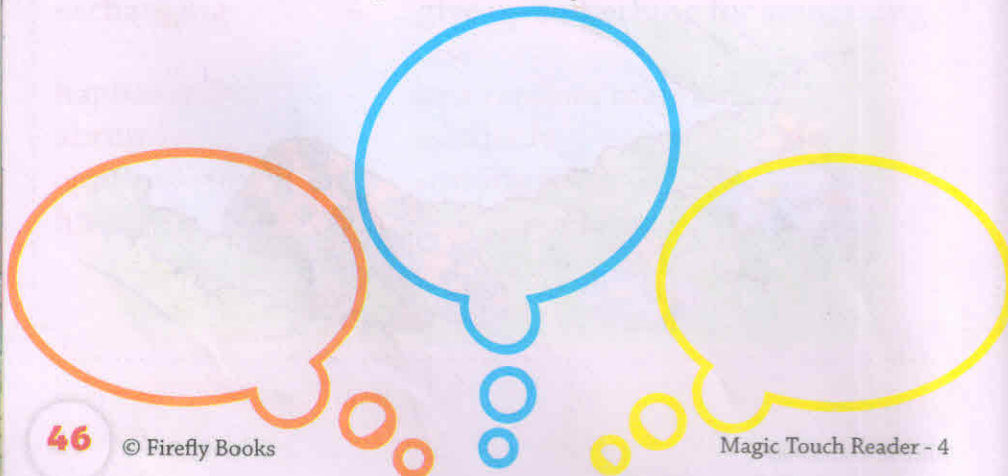
- ★ Alice's wonderland is filled with such strange creatures! What if you could create such a land filled with strange creatures? Write a few lines about your idea of wonderland and create some strange creatures for it!

**My idea of wonderland -**



A notepad with a decorative floral border and a blank area for writing.

**Some strange creatures you will find there -**



Three large, empty speech bubbles for drawing or writing.



## Fun Time!!!



Blank handwriting practice paper with horizontal lines.

## Fun Time!!!

★ Search for the new words you just learnt from the story in this wordsearch!

(swapping, potion, shrink, abruptly, weird, tunnel, curious, fascinated, haphazardly, croquet)

H	S	W	A	P	P	I	N	G	R	U
A	G	Q	J	I	O	T	P	T	D	I
P	V	R	Z	F	T	U	N	N	E	L
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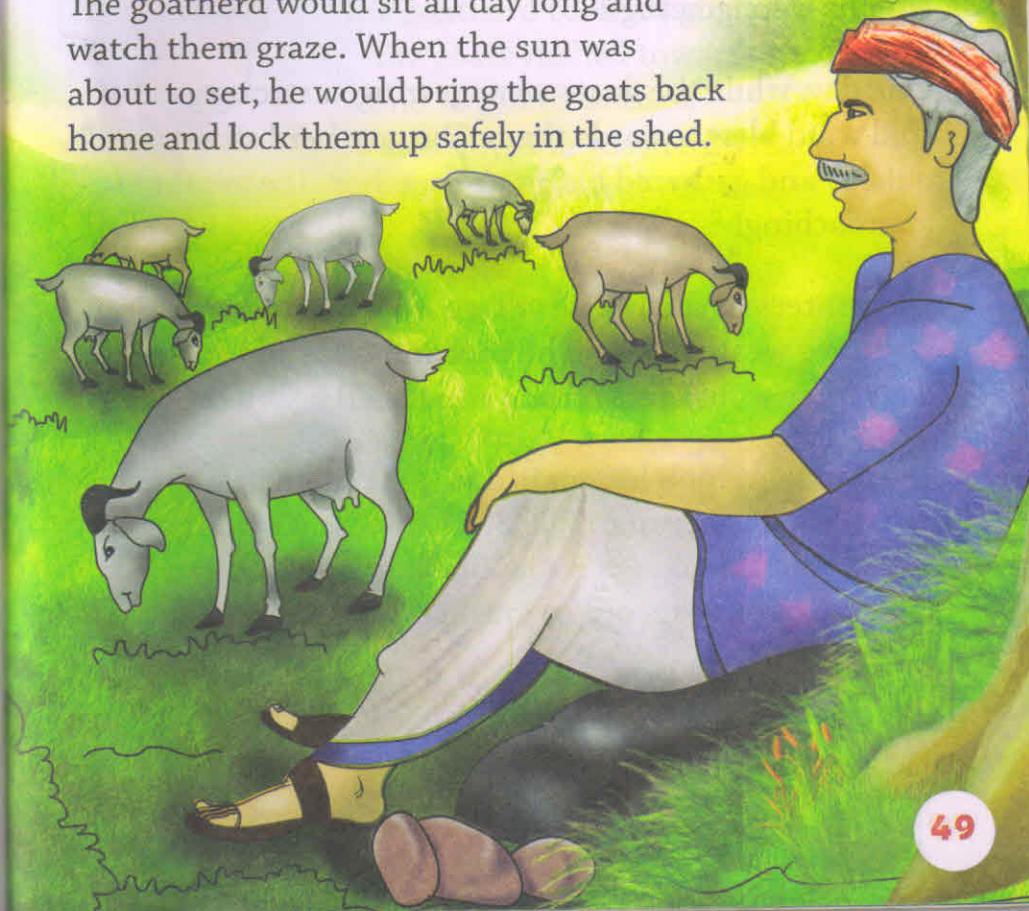


## 5

## The Goatherd and His Goats

**L**ong, long ago a goatherd lived in a little cottage at the foot of a hill just outside a village. He lived there with his flock of goats. Everyday, the goatherd would take his herd up the hill to **graze**.

The goatherd would sit all day long and watch them graze. When the sun was about to set, he would bring the goats back home and lock them up safely in the shed.



The goatherd loved taking his goats up the hill. He did not have many friends back at the village. His real friends were the goats.

The goats loved to play around the goatherd. They would playfully **nibble** his ear when he fell asleep. They would **tug** at his shirt when they wanted to go back home.

The goatherd loved his goats. He often sat under a tree on top of the hill and talked to them. The goats would talk to him as well in their own way.

The goats never left him alone. They would take turns to keep him company and talk to him while their other friends were grazing.

One day, while the goats were grazing, a strong gust of cold wind blew towards them. The goatherd stood up quickly and gathered his goats together. The winter was approaching!

The winters in their little village were quite **fierce**. Some days, the weather would be cool and calm and some days, they would face strong winds and heavy snowfall!

The goatherd took his goats down the hill. Later that day, the snow began to fall. Soon, the land was covered with a thick blanket of snow. The goatherd could not take the poor goats out to graze!

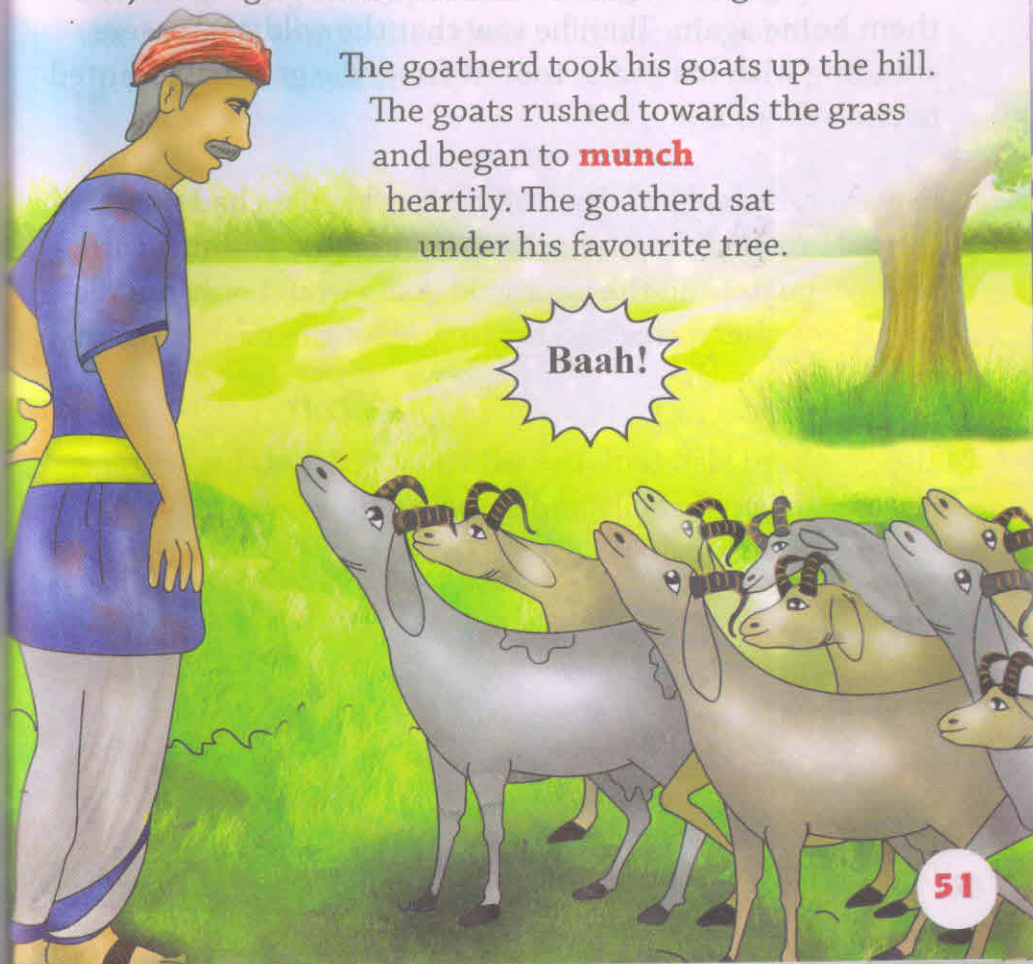


The snow continued to fall for three days. The poor goats were so hungry! The goatherd took them into his cottage and fed them broccoli soup. But they wanted to go out to their favourite spot on top of the hill and graze.

They asked the goatherd to take them up, but he told them to be patient. "When the snowfall stops, we will go up the mountain. Until then, you must learn to enjoy your broccoli soup."

A few days later, the snow stopped falling. The roads were clear once again. The little goats were so excited! They could go back to their mountains and graze!

The goatherd took his goats up the hill. The goats rushed towards the grass and began to **munch** heartily. The goatherd sat under his favourite tree.



The goatherd was happy to be out again. He hated being **cooped** up inside his little cottage with just the goats for company. He did not hate his goats, but he was getting tired of having just those animals as his companions.

As he sat under the tree, he saw three wild goats approaching. His goats greeted these wild ones in a friendly way. Soon, they were all grazing together.

Just when it was time for them to return, the snow began to fall again. This time, the snowfall was heavy. Within a minutes, the ground was **cloaked** in a thick layer of snow. The goatherd gathered all his goats together to take them home again. Then he saw that the wild goats were standing with his goats, too! At first, the goatherd wanted to shoo them away.

However, he realised that the poor wild goats had nowhere to go. He would return home to shelter and warmth with his own goats, and the poor wild goats would only huddle together under a tree and try to protect themselves against the **harsh** weather.

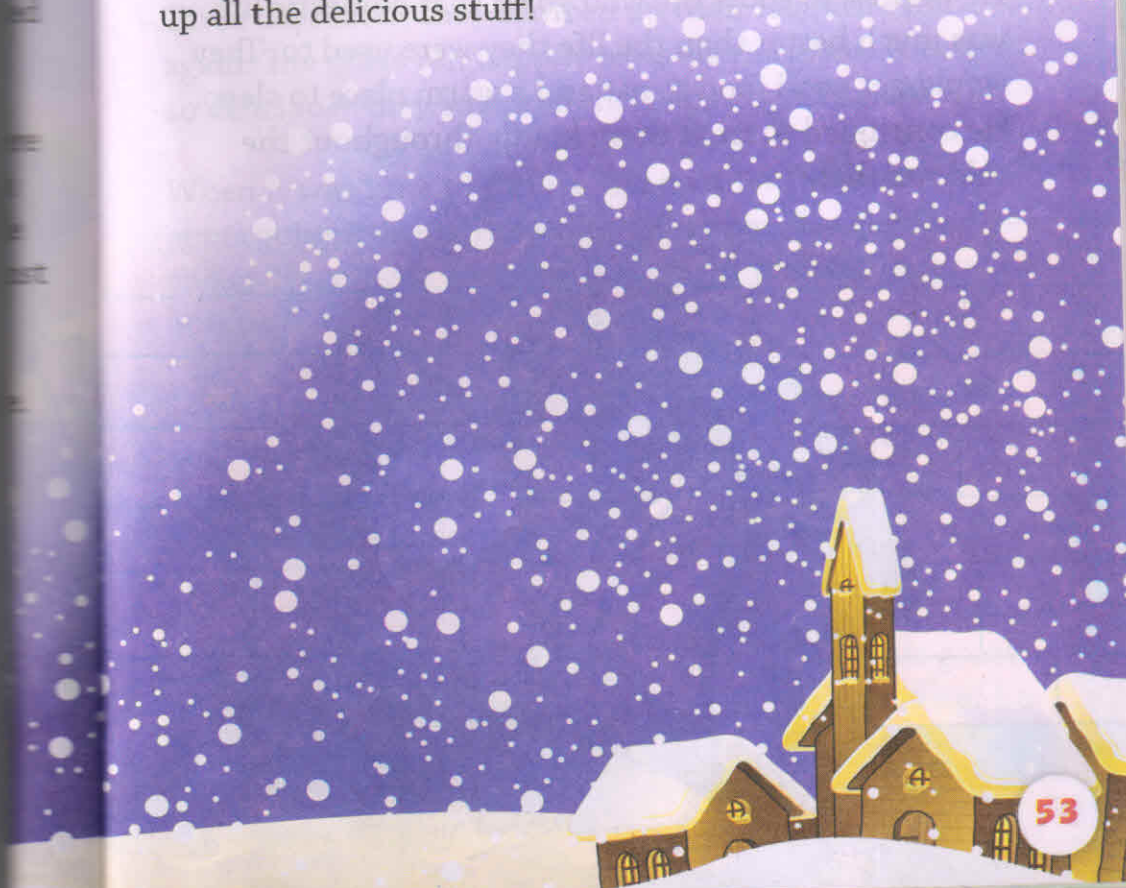
The goatherd also took the wild goats back to his cottage. It was snowing heavily and it took them a long time to come down the hill.



For the next few days, it continued to snow heavily. The goatherd could not see anything but snow everywhere. The trees were hidden under their snow covers.

The rooftops of the cottages were decorated with snow. The entire village was hidden under a snowy cover. Even the pathways were hidden under the snow! The goatherd again fed the broccoli soup to his own goats. However, he looked after the wild goats more lovingly! He offered leaves, grass, and bits of his own food to the wild goats!

His own goats were not at all happy about their wild friends getting such special **treatment**. All they ate was broccoli soup, while their wild friends gobbled up all the delicious stuff!



Every night, the goatherd wrapped a thick blanket around the wild goats. But his own goats just had a thin, **ragged** blanket to cover themselves. He treated the wild goats like **royalty**, but he ignored his old goats!

The goats did not know what was on the goatherd's mind. Actually, he wanted the wild goats to join his herd! He thought that his old goats would enjoy the company of these new goats.

Hence, he fed them delicious food and looked after them well every night. He wanted to take good care of them so that they would be **tempted** to stay back.

He wanted to show the wild goats that domestic life was much better than the life they were used to. They would get good food to eat and a warm place to sleep. He continued to treat them kindly throughout the cold weather.





A week later, the snow stopped falling. 'At last,' thought the goatherd! His supply of food was running short and it would be nice to go out and gather more food.



The goats were happy too. 'No more broccoli soup', they thought. They longed to go back to the hill and graze to their heart's content.

The goatherd and his goats waited for the snow to melt. Three days later, they climbed up their favourite hill again. The goats ran happily towards the grass. It tasted so delicious! They smacked their lips and had their fill.

When it was time to return, the goatherd saw the wild goats going away in the other direction! He called out to them, "Won't you join us?" The wild goats just laughed at him.

"We saw the way you treated your old goats. We know that you will treat us the same way once we join your herd. We would not like being treated that way. But thank you for looking after us," they said, and walked away.

The goatherd felt very sorry. He apologised to his goats. Ever since then, he has been taking very good care of his own dear goats!

### **Now we know**

**We must not neglect our old friends  
when we get new ones.**

### **New Words We Learnt**

graze	-	eat grass
nibble	-	chew small bites
tug	-	pull on
fierce	-	scary
munch	-	chomp one's mouth while eating
cooped	-	stuck in
cloaked	-	covered oneself in
harsh	-	rough
treatment	-	behaviour towards someone
ragged	-	torn and tattered
royalty	-	members of the royal family
tempted	-	really wanted to



## Fun Time!!!

★ Unscramble the letters to find words from the story! ★

LOCAEKD

TAREETNMT

GREAGD

PCOEOD

LIBRCOCO

## Fun Time!!!

★ Why was the goatherd nice to the wild goats and mean to his goats? Write a few lines about it.

Blank lined paper with horizontal ruling lines.



## Fun Time!!!

★ If you had a pet goat, how would you look after it? Write down five fun things you would do with your pet goat!



★ What is the moral of this story? Write it down, but don't turn the page to check!

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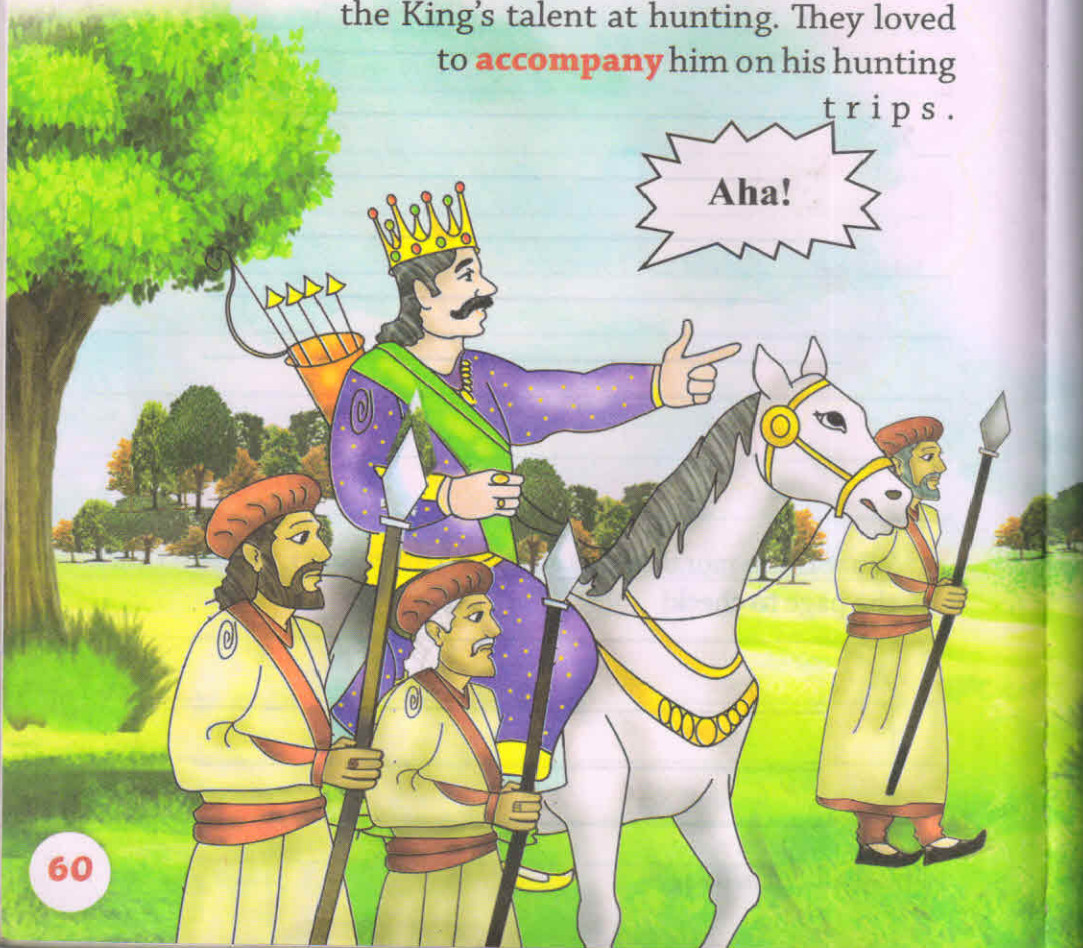
## 6

## The Noble Stag

**A**long, long time ago, there lived a King who ruled a huge kingdom and had many subjects. The King was good to all his subjects. He was always kind and fair.

The King was very fond of hunting. Every week, he would set out with his **courtiers** to the jungle to hunt for deer. The King was an excellent hunter. He always bagged many deer during his hunting trips. The courtiers were impressed by the King's talent at hunting. They loved to **accompany** him on his hunting trips.

Aha!





The King often **boasted** about his hunting skills, too! One day, a courtier told the King about a jungle on the outskirts of the kingdom. "This jungle is full of all kinds of wild animals! You will love to hunt there, sir!" said the courtier.

The King wanted to **explore** this new jungle. He gathered his courtiers and set off **enthusiastically** for a hunting trip the next day. They were all so excited!

They rode away from the kingdom before dawn. A few hours later, they came to a dark jungle. "This is the one!" said the courtier excitedly. The King rode forward into the jungle. His courtiers followed him.

The King spoke to all his courtiers, "We must not let a single deer get away. Let us form a tight circle and surround them. That will not leave much room for them to escape."

The courtiers thought this was a good idea.

They nodded and set off. Soon, they sighted a deer **grazing** in a hollow. Slowly, the courtiers spread out and formed a huge circle.

They began closing in on the deer. The deer **sensed** danger and tried to run away, but there was no place for them to

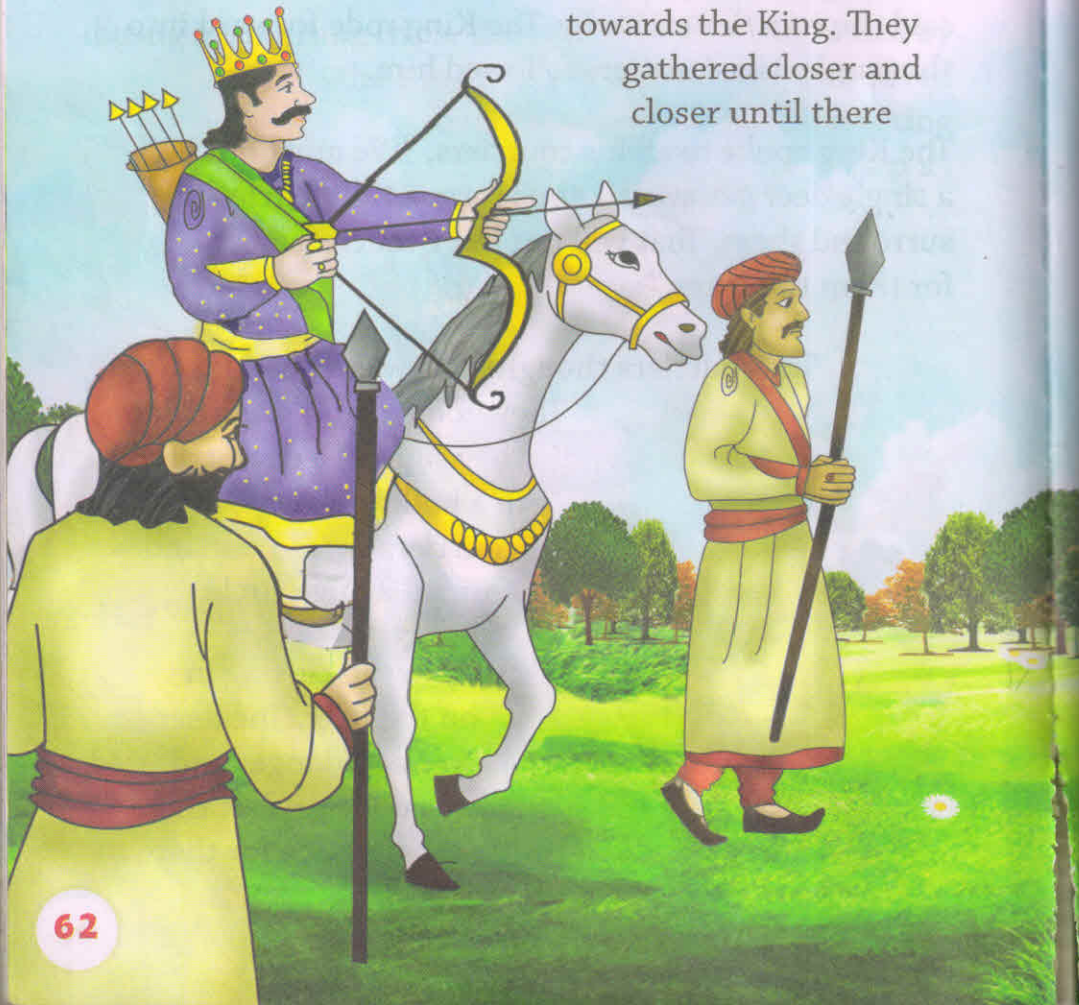




escape. Soon, five of them fell prey to the King and his group. The King and his courtiers **advanced** further into the jungle. They wanted to **capture** a stag now! They looked everywhere for a stag, but were unable to sight one.

Just when they were about to give up, one of the courtiers spotted a magnificent stag grazing nearby. He silently **gestured** to the others and they formed a tight circle once again.

Together, they forced the stag towards the King. They gathered closer and closer until there

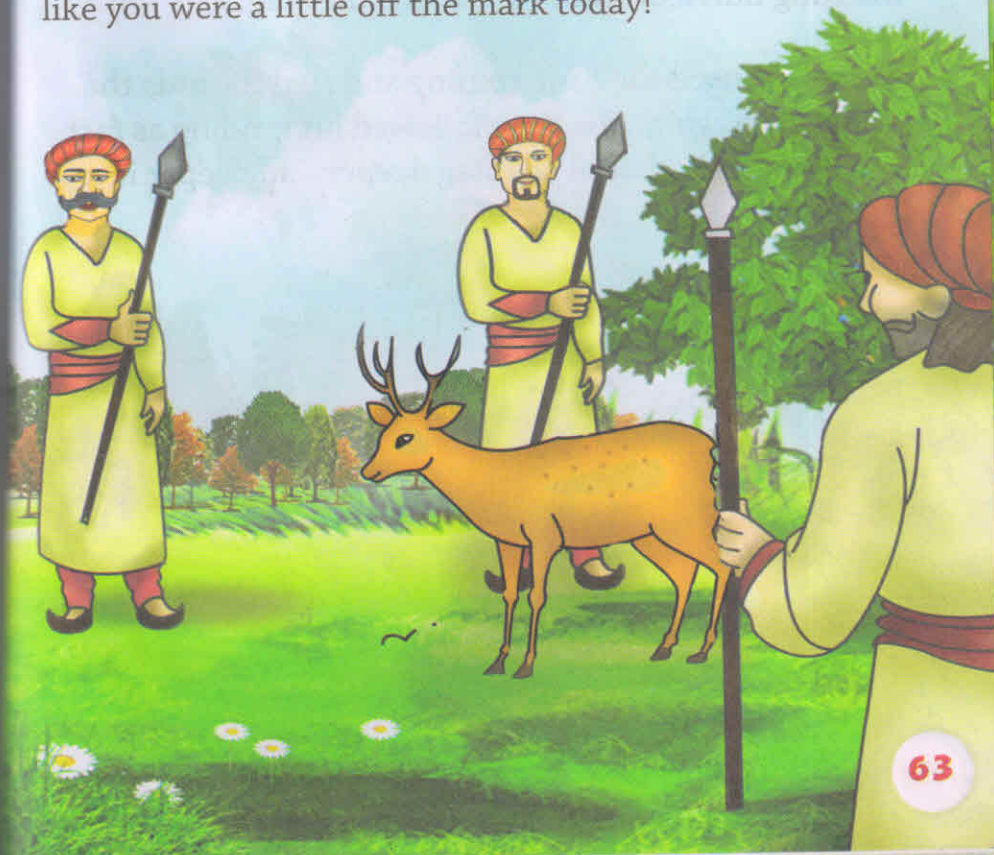


was no way for the stag to escape. The only escape route for the stag lay close to the King. The poor stag was cornered! The stag looked at the King, who was about to release his arrow from his bow. He fled through the little space he found near the King. The King shot his arrow, but missed his mark!

The King was a very good marksman, but the stag had better **instincts**. He managed to avoid every single arrow that the King shot at him. He **dodged**, rolled over, **ducked** and jumped to avoid the arrows. Soon, he was out of sight.

The courtiers laughed silently at the King.

"What happened, your Majesty? Is it a bad day? Looks like you were a little off the mark today!"





The King was very upset. He had never missed his mark before. This stag was **exceptionally** good at dodging. The King was amazed at how he had managed to escape.

The courtiers continued to look at the King with pity until he could take it no more. He declared, "I will not have you **ridicule** my marksmanship. I will find that stag and bring him back."

The King turned his back on the courtiers and set off into the jungle. He just had to find that stag and bring him back. The stag wouldn't escape this time.

The King wandered around in the forest for a long time, looking for the stag. At last, he found him near a lake. The King hurriedly moved towards the stag.

The stag sensed the King coming and fled towards the jungle once again. The King followed him, riding as fast as he could. He chased the stag deeper and deeper into the jungle.





The King shot many arrows at the stag, but the stag managed to avoid every single arrow. He ran like the wind and soon the King was really tired.

As the stag was running, he came across a soft pile of mud. The stag realised that it was a trap. He moved around it and continued to run ahead. After a while, he realised that the King was not chasing him anymore.

The stag wondered if the King had fallen into the trap. He went back to the trap to look for the King. When he reached there, he saw the King lying in the pit, **groaning** softly. The King had been completely **focused** on catching the stag.



He had not noticed the trap and had fallen right into it. The stag looked at the King who was helpless in the pit.

The stag could see the King **struggling** to come out of the pit. He did not want to leave the poor man all alone there. What if no one came to rescue him? He decided that he would help the King. He dragged a huge branch and lowered it into the pit. The King was **astounded**. He had tried to kill this stag, and now the very same stag was trying to save him!

The King grabbed the branch and **hoisted** himself out of the pit. The stag waited till the King **emerged** out of the pit. Once he was out, the stag turned to leave. The King saw the stag returning to the jungle. He called out to him, "Wait!" The stag turned to look at him.





The King walked up to the stag and said, "I thank you, oh noble one! Just a few moments ago, I wanted to capture you. Despite that, you saved my life. I am sorry that I tried to hurt you." The stag nodded at the King and walked away. The King stood there for a long time, staring at the empty path. He realised how cruel he had been.

The King went back to his courtiers and ordered them to release all the deer they had captured. The courtiers were shocked. Why was their King behaving in such a strange manner?

The King was silent all the way back to the palace. When they reached the palace, he gathered all his courtiers and told them, "From now on, we will not hurt a single animal. Their lives matter, just as ours do. We will never hunt again."

The King was praised by everyone in the kingdom for his wise decision. Since then, no one in that kingdom ever hurt an animal.



## New Words We Learnt

courtiers	- members of the King's court
accompany	- go along with
boasted	- to take a great pride in one's abilities
explore	- look around with interest
enthusiastically	- in an excited manner
grazing	- chewing grass
sensed	- felt
advanced	- went further
capture	- catch
gestured	- passed on a message using hand symbols
instincts	- inner feeling
dodged	- avoided being hit by something
ducked	- bent low
exceptionally	- quite rarely
ridicule	- make fun of
groaning	- howling in pain
focused	- paying special attention to a particular thing
struggling	- trying hard
astounded	- amazed
hoisted	- raised or lifted
emerged	- came out from

## Now we know

**We must never hurt other living beings.**



## Fun Time!!!

★ What would you do if you were a stag? Write an adventure about yourself as a stag!

Blank lined area for writing an adventure about being a stag.

7

## The Soup Made of Stones

Once upon a time, a soldier was walking down a path in a strange country. He was tired and hungry.

The soldier was not a rich man. He did not have a lot of money.

The poor soldier had not eaten for two days. He could not afford to eat at a restaurant. How hungry he was!





'I would love to have some delicious soup for dinner tonight,' he thought. The soldier walked until he spotted a few houses.

He walked up to one of them and knocked on the door. Knock! Knock!

"Who goes there?" said an old man's voice and he opened the door a little and peered outside **cautiously**.

The soldier smiled at the man through the opening and replied, "I am a soldier. I have been walking through the country for days and I have not eaten for a long time. Could you spare me a bite of food, please?"

The old man looked at him angrily and said, "Bah! I barely have enough bread to feed my wife and three children. I cannot look after every traveller that knocks on my door. My children will have to go hungry if I feed you. Ask some other villager!"



Saying this, the man **slammed** the door in the soldier's face! The poor soldier tried knocking at other doors. But no one gave him any food. He soon learnt that the villagers feared strangers. Some of them were **reluctant** even to open the door.

The soldier approached many villagers. However, they all turned him away. No one was ready to give him food to eat or a place to sleep.

The soldier was about to knock at the next door when he heard soft, angry voices coming through it. He put his ear against the door, trying to listen to the conversation. Two villagers were talking to each other. "A soldier is walking through the village, asking people for food. We barely have enough to feed ourselves. Why should we feed this wandering man? Hide all the food."

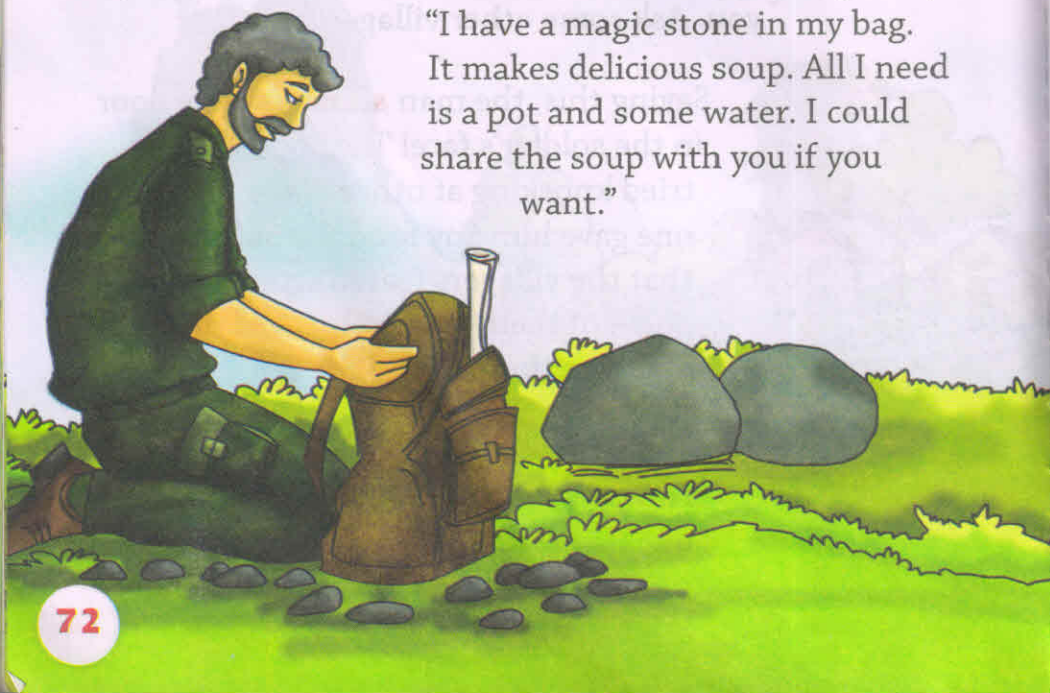
The soldier was quite upset. The villagers couldn't spare some food! He was too hungry to walk further. He sat down and thought of a plan. The soldier looked about him and spotted a smooth, round stone lying at the side of the road. He picked it up and placed it in his bag.

He walked to another house and knocked at the door.

A young woman opened it. "What do you want?" she asked him.

**Plonk!**

He leaned forward and whispered, "I have a magic stone in my bag. It makes delicious soup. All I need is a pot and some water. I could share the soup with you if you want."





The woman was curious. A magic stone, indeed! She would love to have a delicious bowl of magical soup. She invited the soldier into the house.

The soldier walked in and placed his bag on the table. He rubbed his hands together and told the woman, "Before we get started, I want you to know that the stone is very precious to me. I don't want you to tell anyone about it. You must keep it a secret."

The woman nodded in **agreement** and said, "I won't tell a soul about it. Let's get started." The soldier nodded and said, "First, we need a large pot."

The woman went to her kitchen cupboard and pulled out the largest pot she could find. She ran outside and gave it to the soldier. The soldier took the pot and placed it on the fire.

"Now we need some water," he told the woman. She went out to the well and drew up some fresh water.

The soldier added the water to the pot and started the fire. He pulled the stone out of his bag and dropped it gently into the pot. The woman waited **eagerly**. This magic stone was about to turn into delicious soup!



The soldier picked up a **ladle** lying nearby and began to stir the liquid in the pot. Soon, the liquid was boiling. He turned to the young lady and said, "The soup needs salt and spices. Could you get some for me?"

The young lady ran into her kitchen and got him salt, pepper and a few other spices. He added them all and stirred the soup. Soon, they could smell a delicious **aroma** coming from the pot.

The soldier lifted the ladle and held it to his mouth. He tasted the soup and said, "I think it needs some vegetables."

"I will get them," said the woman and rushed into the





kitchen. A few minutes later, she came back with carrots, lettuce, peas, tomatoes and a few potatoes. The soldier quickly chopped them up and added the pieces to the soup.

The woman looked at him eagerly and said, "Do you want to add some chicken **broth** to it as well? I have some on my stove."

The soldier could see how excited the young lady was. He nodded and she ran off to get the chicken broth.

The soldier continued to stir it and told the woman. "This is almost like the soup I made for the king. All it needs is some barley and milk and it will be the same!"

The young lady was amazed. This soldier had prepared soup for the king! She ran and fetched some milk and barley.

At last the soup was ready. The young lady could not believe that a mere stone could make so much soup. The silly woman did not know that she had been tricked! The soldier settled down at the dining table and enjoyed the delicious soup. The young lady sat opposite him, enjoying the soup just as much.

"This stone is indeed magical," she exclaimed. Together, they finished the entire pot of soup. When the pot was empty, the soldier picked up the stone and cleaned it gently. He put it in his bag and bid the young lady farewell.

As he walked out, the soldier thought to himself, 'Had I not thought of this trick, I would have gone hungry. I am so glad I picked up that stone.' He walked on to the next town with the stone in his bag. Clever soldier!

### **Now we know**

**If we think cleverly, we will  
succeed in overcoming problems.**

### **New Words We Learnt**

- |            |   |   |
|------------|---|---|
| cautiously | - | carefully   |
| slammed    | - | banged a door to shut it  |
| reluctant  | - | not willing to do something   |
| agreement  | - | having the same views about something   |
| eagerly    | - | looking forward to with expectation   |
| ladle      | - | a large long handled spoon with a cup shaped bowl, used for serving soup or sauce |
| aroma      | - | the fragrant smell of food, usually spices  |
| broth      | - | thin soup made of meat, fish or chicken   |



## Fun Time!!!

- ★ The soldier was quite clever, wasn't he? Do you know someone who is clever? Write a few lines about why you think he/she is clever.



Handwriting practice lines for the story prompt.

- ★ Write the synonyms of the words given below:

angry

brave

answer

smart

dull

stone

delicious

## Fun Time!!!



Do you think the man was clever? Circle the correct synonyms of 'clever' from the words given below.

BRIGHT

SMART

SHARP

INTELLIGENT

BEAUTIFUL

PRETTY

SENSIBLE

CREEPY

GOOEY

DULL

PLANTED

DUMB



## Fun Time!!!

★ Imagine that you are the stone. Write the story from your point of view.

[illegible]

**A**long, long time ago, there lived a king named Midas. King Midas had just one daughter, Marigold. He loved her dearly.

King Midas was a rich man. He had more wealth than many other kings. **Nevertheless**, he wanted more wealth. King Midas was very greedy. He prayed and prayed to God for more wealth. As the years went by, King Midas began to love his gold more and more. He filled a huge room in his castle with heaps of gold. Every morning, he went to that room and looked at all his gold.

King Midas **gained** more wealth as the years went by. Despite this, he was not happy. He wanted to fill his entire palace with gold.





He began to love gold even more than he loved his beloved Marigold! The poor little Princess **rarely** saw her father. He spent most of his time looking at his gold.

King Midas walked around the palace longing to get more gold. "How I wish I had more gold!" he would mutter softly. Marigold simply could not understand why her father had become so greedy.

One day, King Midas was walking through his gardens. Just then, he spotted something **glittering** near the trees. What could it be?

He went ahead to take a closer look. But every time he came close to the glittering thing, it would move farther away. King Midas was really curious now. He ran towards the glittering object.

King Midas chased the glittering thing all the way into his **orchards**. Finally, it **halted** on the topmost branch of an orange tree. King Midas moved towards the trees and **peered** through the bushes.

The glittering thing hopped down and stood in front of King Midas. It wasn't a thing at all. It was a little fairy! She had blonde hair and a fair glowing skin.

The fairy was wearing a shining golden dress with a golden tiara. She held a wand in her hand. She looked up at the King and asked politely, "Hello, King Midas. What made you chase me today?"

King Midas replied, 'I thought you were some kind of precious treasure. Your dress shines so brightly! I spotted it glittering from the corner of my eye and I was curious to find out what it was.'

The fairy laughed merrily and said, "Aah, I see you have an eye for gold. You wouldn't have chased me all the way if I was wearing a silver dress."

King Midas raised an eyebrow and said, "An eye for gold? My world **revolves** around gold. Gold means everything





to me!" The fairy could clearly see that King Midas was **obsessed** with gold. She asked him, "Is gold the one thing you want more than anything else in the world?"

"Yes!" said the King, his eyes were sparkling, "I would be the happiest man in the world if I had lots and lots of gold!"

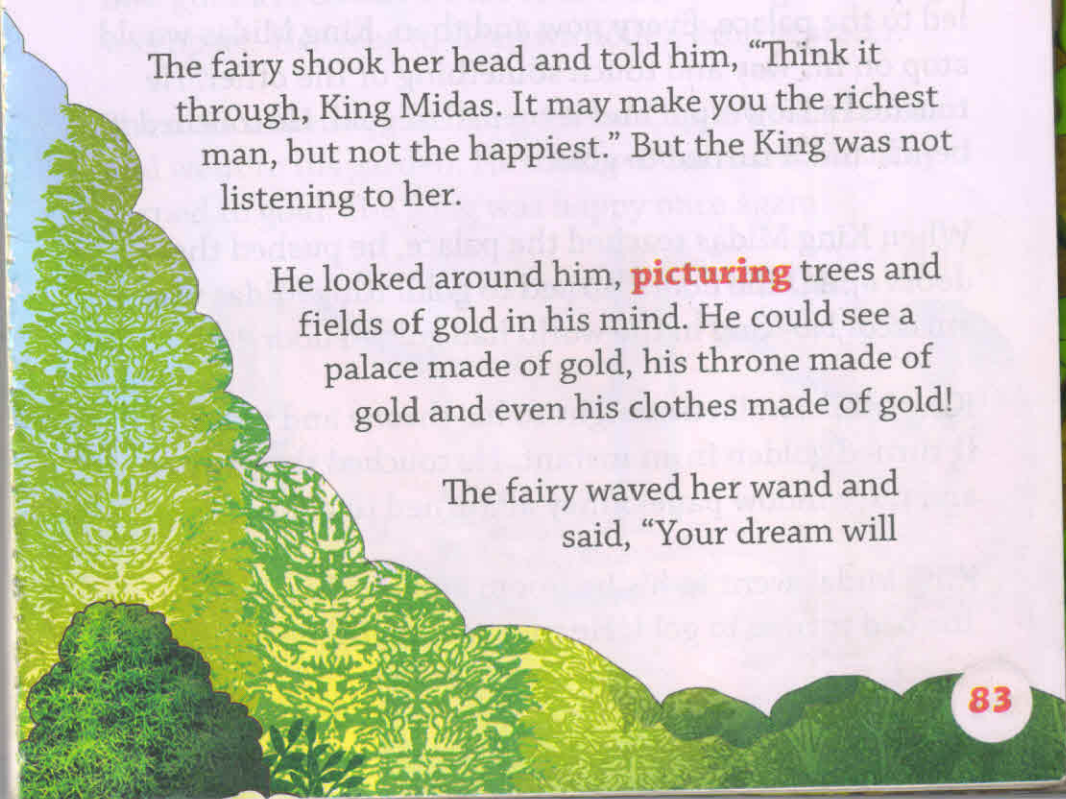
The fairy asked him, "Would that truly make you happy?" "Why, of course!" replied the King. He wondered why the fairy was asking these questions. The fairy looked at the King for a minute and said, "If it truly makes you happy, I can grant you a wish. Would you be happy if everything you touched turned to gold?"

King Midas was excited! "It would make me the happiest man on earth!" he declared happily.

The fairy shook her head and told him, "Think it through, King Midas. It may make you the richest man, but not the happiest." But the King was not listening to her.

He looked around him, **picturing** trees and fields of gold in his mind. He could see a palace made of gold, his throne made of gold and even his clothes made of gold!

The fairy waved her wand and said, "Your dream will





come true. From this moment on, everything you touch will turn into gold. But I am warning you, you will not be happy."

The King ignored her warning. "If you wish to speak to me again, come to this tree and whistle thrice," said the fairy. She clapped her hands, and the next moment she was gone.

King Midas wanted to see if his dream had indeed come true. He went to the nearest tree and tried to pluck an orange. The minute his hand touched the orange, it turned to gold!

King Midas was thrilled. He rushed forward and touched a tree. It turned to gold! "A golden tree in my orchard!" sang the King with joy as he danced along the path that led to the palace. Every now and then, King Midas would stop on his way and touch something or the other. He touched a flowerpot and it turned to gold. He touched a bench and it turned to gold.

When King Midas reached the palace, he pushed the doors open. The doors turned to gold! King Midas was amazed. No King in the world had golden doors!

King Midas walked straight to his throne and touched it. It turned golden in an instant. He touched the **drapes** and the window panes. They all turned to gold.

King Midas went to his bedroom and touched his bed. The bed turned to gold. He touched the frame of his

mirror and that turned to gold, too! Hundreds of golden objects **surrounded** him now! King Midas could not have been be happier. He went to his dinner table and touched it lightly. It turned to gold! The King was excited! He touched his plate and goblet. They turned to gold too!

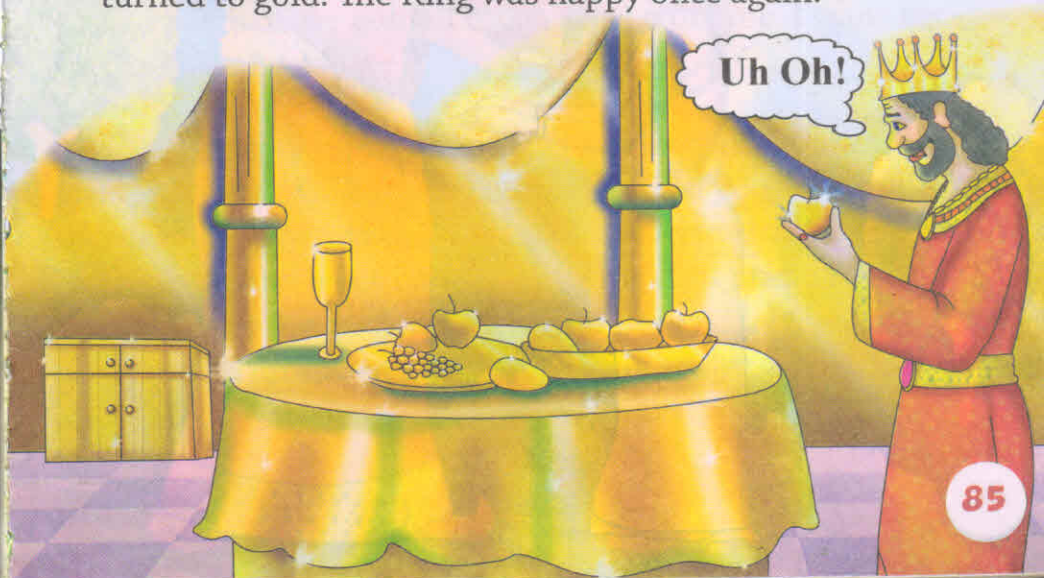


Soon, dinner was served.

The King was thirsty after his walk. He lifted the goblet to drink some water. However, the water turned to a golden liquid as soon as it touched his lips!

The King tried eating his food. But every **morsel** turned into gold! He could not eat or drink anything! The King was upset. He went to sleep without a drop of water.

The next morning, the King dressed up in golden robes and went to his garden. He touched the roses and they turned to gold. The King was happy once again.





Just then, Princess Marigold entered the garden. She was happy to see her father walking there. She ran to greet him.

The King went to hug his daughter, completely forgetting about his golden touch. As soon as he touched her, she turned into a golden statue!

King Midas was horrified! He did not want to lose his only daughter. Gold was not that precious to him now!





The King ran to the orange tree where he had met the fairy. He stood under it and whistled thrice. The fairy appeared before him.

"Aren't you happy, King Midas?" the fairy asked him. The King **knelt** at her feet and folded his hands, "Please take the golden touch away from me. I want my daughter back!"

The fairy told him, "I hope this has taught you a lesson, King Midas. Go back to your palace and you will find everything just the way it was." The King thanked the fairy and went back. He saw his daughter playing happily in the gardens. He ran to her and hugged her tight. He promised not to be greedy again.



## Now we know

**If we are greedy, we will  
never be happy.**

## New Words We Learnt

nevertheless	–	however
gained	–	got more
rarely	–	hardly ever
glittering	–	shining brightly
orchards	–	farms where fruits grow
halted	–	stopped
peered	–	looked closely at
revolves	–	moves around
obsessed	–	constantly occupied with thoughts of something particular
picturing	–	seeing a picture in one's mind
drapes	–	curtains
surrounded	–	to have something or someone all around you
morsel	–	bite of food
knelt	–	bent down on one's knees

## Fun Time!!!

★ Can you answer these questions from the story?

1. Do you think King Midas was driven by greed?

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2. How many children did King Midas have?

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3. Do you think King Midas thought about what he wanted before asking the fairy for a wish?

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4. Would you have asked for the same thing that King Midas did?

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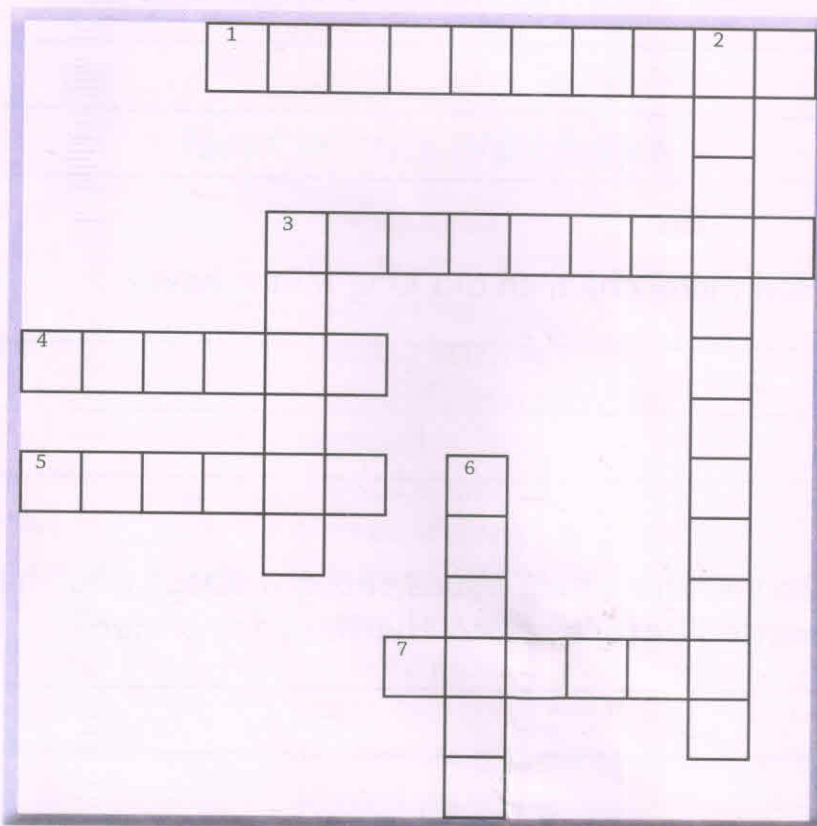
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## Fun Time!!!

★ Solve this crossword by using the synonyms of these words.  
Make sure that the synonyms are from the story.



### Across

- 1 another word for 'shining'
- 3 another word for 'terrified'
- 4 another word for 'hardly'
- 5 another word for 'embraced'
- 7 another word for 'curtains'

### Down

- 2 another word for 'however'
- 3 another word for 'stopped'
- 6 another word for 'looked closely'

## Fun Time!!!

- ★ If you could transform objects like furniture, food, and clothes with a single touch, what would you transform them into? Write a few lines about what you would transform objects into and why you would do that.



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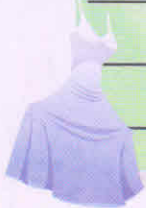
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- ★ Gold is a shiny metal, isn't it? Can you write the names of five shiny objects here?

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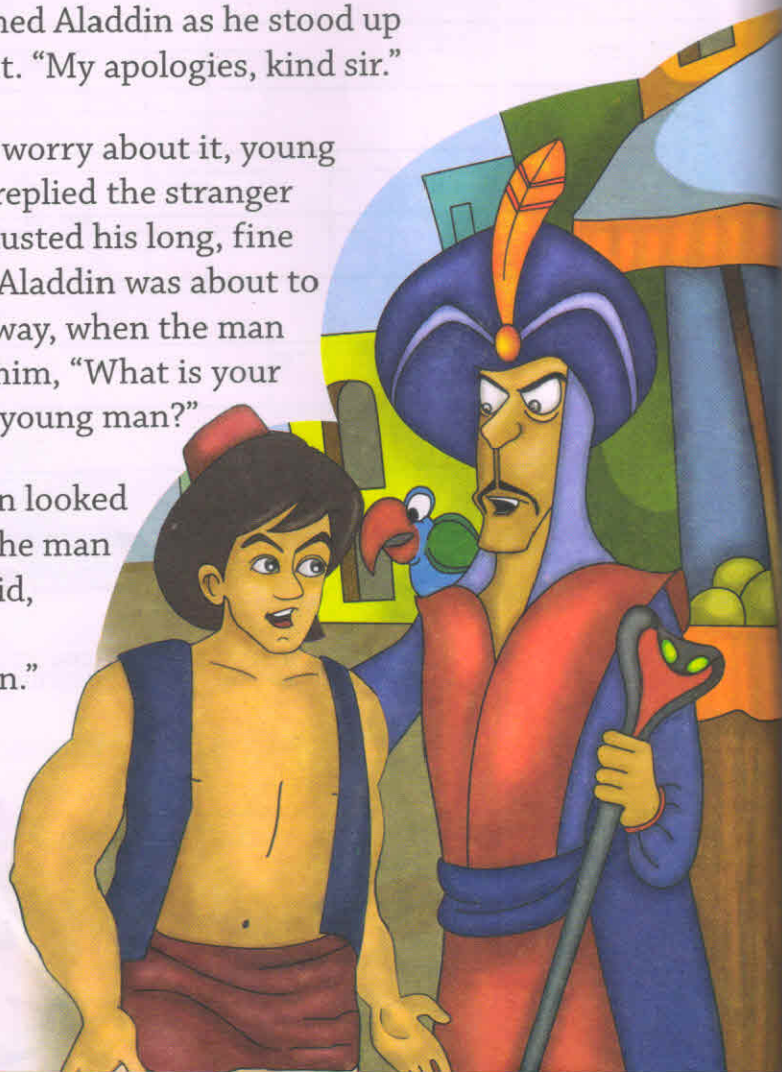


## Aladdin and His Magic Lamp

**M**any, many years ago, in a land far, far away, there lived an **orphan** named Aladdin. He was a careless boy who played on the streets all day long. One day, Aladdin was running around the streets with his friends when he bumped into a stranger. "Oops!" exclaimed Aladdin as he stood up straight. "My apologies, kind sir."

"Don't worry about it, young man," replied the stranger as he dusted his long, fine robes. Aladdin was about to walk away, when the man asked him, "What is your name, young man?"

Aladdin looked up at the man and said, "I am Aladdin."



"Aah! Aladdin. That's a fine name indeed," said the stranger, folding his arms across his chest and looking closely at Aladdin. "It's been a long time since we last met, Aladdin."

"I am sorry, kind sir, but I don't know you," said Aladdin. The man nodded and said quietly, "That is because you were a baby the last time we met. I am Jafar, your late father's eldest brother."

Aladdin had often heard about his uncle, Jafar, when his father was alive. 'So this is my uncle Jafar,' thought Aladdin. Little did he know that this man was a wicked magician in **disguise**!

"It's nice to see you, Uncle Jafar," said Aladdin warmly. The man smiled at him and said, "I have travelled a long way to meet you, Aladdin. Let's rest for a while and tell each other what we have been up to all these years."

Aladdin took the man home and **served** him dinner. Later that night, they sat outside Aladdin's little house and the magician told Aladdin about his **adventures**. Aladdin was **fascinated** by the magician's stories.

"I wish I could set off on an interesting adventure too!" **exclaimed** Aladdin. The magician sat up and said, "I can help you with that. I wanted to set out on a **quest**, but I am getting too old for it. This quest can only be taken up by a strong, young man."



"I will take it up!" said Aladdin excitedly.  
The magician promised to help Aladdin.  
"We will leave tomorrow at dawn."

That night, Aladdin could barely sleep. He was so excited about the adventure! He was wide awake before dawn the next morning. When the sun rose, he set out with the magician.

The magician led Aladdin towards the mountains outside the city. They continued to walk silently till they reached a huge mountain. The magician suddenly stopped and pulled out a little pouch from his pocket.

He turned the pouch upside down and out fell a handful of sparkling dust particles. The magician **chanted** magical words under his breath and suddenly, the ground started shaking violently.

Aladdin looked at the magician **nervously**. Just then, a huge portion of the ground started to sink rapidly. It sank lower and lower and **revealed** a hidden trap door. Aladdin was curious. Where did that door come from?

The magician calmly lifted the trap door and said, "You must do exactly as I tell you, Aladdin. Go down the stairs and walk straight into the cave. Do not touch anything on your way. At the end of the path lies a little lamp on a huge rock. You must pick it up and bring it back to me."

"What will you give me for doing so?" asked Aladdin.  
The magician smiled and replied, "Get me the lamp and

I will give you five large **chests** filled with diamonds and rubies."

Aladdin nodded excitedly and rushed down the stairs. "Don't touch anything else!" the magician called out after him.

Aladdin went down the steps and walked straight into the cave. He saw many sacks **overflowing** with precious gems, but he did not stop to touch them. Uncle Jafar was clearly good at magic and he did not want to disobey him.

At last, he arrived at the rock where the lamp was kept. It was an **ancient**, rusty lamp that looked completely useless. Why on earth did Uncle Jafar want that old lamp?

Whoa!





Aladdin picked up the lamp and set off on his way back.

Just then, he spotted a fancy ring lying on the ground. "Uncle Jafar wouldn't really find out about this, would he?" Aladdin said to himself **mischievously** as he pocketed the ring and continued walking.

Aladdin stopped every few minutes to admire the jewels around him. The rubies were as big as apples and the diamonds shone brighter than stars. He wished he could take them all!

The magician was waiting **impatiently** for him when Aladdin reached the trap door. "What took you so long, you foolish boy? Give me the lamp!" he barked angrily.

Aladdin grew suspicious. Why was the lamp so precious to his uncle? "Get me out safely," he told the magician, "and I will give you the lamp!"

"Never!" yelled the magician as he **lunged** for the lamp. Aladdin held it tight and ran away from the trap door. Just then, the ground shook violently once again and the trap door shut with a loud bang!

Poor Aladdin didn't know what to do. He was stuck in this dark, scary cave! He searched his pockets for a matchstick. Just then, his fingers **accidentally** rubbed against the ring he had put in his pocket and out came a strange, **misty** creature!

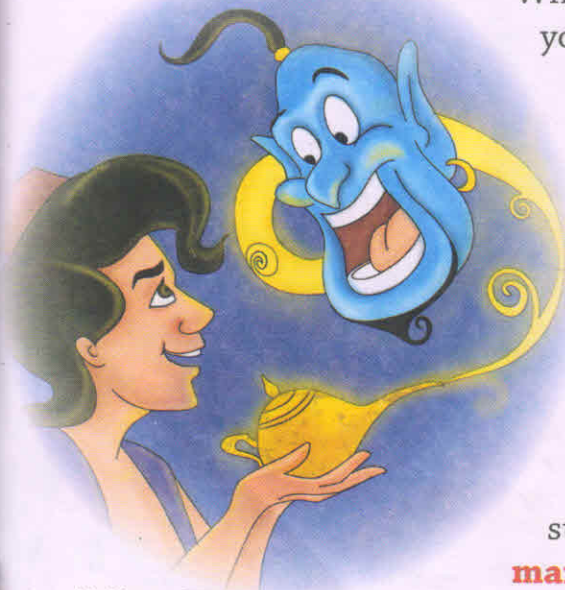
It was a genie! "What can I do for you, master?" asked

the genie. Aladdin thought quickly. "Can you get me out of this cave?" he asked. The genie clapped his hands. Poof! They were safely outside the cave!

Aladdin reached home safely with the help of the genie. The genie was very clever. He always had an answer to everything. Aladdin soon found out that his Uncle Jafar was actually an evil magician in disguise!

"Why does he want an old lamp?" Aladdin asked the genie. The genie replied, "The lamp holds a powerful genie within; someone who is more powerful than me. The master of that genie can easily become the most powerful man in the world!"

Aladdin was amazed. He sent the genie back into the ring. Once the genie was locked up, he pulled out the old lamp and rubbed it. Out sprang a huge genie!



"What do you wish for, young master?" asked the new genie, in a deep voice. Aladdin told him, "I want a huge mansion just outside the city. I want to be a rich man!" The genie clapped his hands and an instant later, Aladdin found himself standing outside a huge **mansion!**



Soon, Aladdin grew famous. Everyone thought he was a rich merchant who had recently moved to their town. Aladdin was very happy with his **newfound** riches. He worked hard and became richer!

One day, Aladdin was walking through the market when he met the beautiful Princess Jasmine. They became good friends instantly. Aladdin visited her father's palace daily. Soon, the two of them fell in love with each other!

A few days later, Aladdin and Jasmine got married with the blessings of the King. The entire kingdom gathered to celebrate their happiness. The magician was there, too!

He was shocked to see Aladdin dressed like a rich man! He kept a close eye on Aladdin for the next few days.



How did a street **urchin** like Aladdin become the owner of a huge mansion? Where did all his riches come from? How could a common man like him marry the princess?

A few days later, the magician spotted Aladdin in his garden, talking to a genie. That troublesome boy had found out what the magic lamp could do!

The magician thought of a plan to steal the lamp. He noticed that Aladdin's wife did not know about the genie. He also noticed that Aladdin left the mansion every morning after breakfast and returned just before sunset.

The next day, the magician waited for Aladdin to leave the mansion. A few minutes after Aladdin had left, the magician disguised himself as a **peddler** and knocked at Aladdin's door.

Jasmine opened the door and saw the magician. He smiled at her and said, "Do you have any old lamps fair lady? Exchange them for these new shiny ones!"

Jasmine looked around the house and saw Aladdin's old lamp lying on top of his clothes. 'I am sure Aladdin could use a new lamp,' she thought.

She took the old lamp and gave it to the magician. His eyes **gleamed** wickedly as he saw it. That was it! That was the lamp he was looking for!





He grabbed the lamp from Jasmine's hand and rubbed it eagerly. Out came the genie! "What do you wish for, master?" he said in his deep voice. Jasmine was shocked. She did not know that her husband had a magic lamp!

The magician grinned evilly and muttered his commands to the genie. Poor Jasmine did not know what was happening! She wished she hadn't touched the lamp!

When Aladdin returned, his house was gone! All that remained was a bare patch of sand where his beautiful mansion had once stood. His beloved Jasmine was missing too!

He searched throughout the town but he couldn't find Jasmine. Aladdin was very sad. He went back to his old house. He wished his genie was with him.

His genie! The genie in the ring was still somewhere in his old house. He looked for the ring and found it under his old bed. If anyone could help him find his Jasmine, it was the genie of the ring!

Aladdin rubbed the ring and the genie came out of it. "Good to see you again, master. What is it that you wish for?" asked the genie with a smile.

"I wish to know where my wife is," Aladdin said hurriedly. The genie told him, "The evil magician has your wife, your palace and your magic lamp." Aladdin was shocked! How had the evil magician found the lamp?

"Take me to my wife," Aladdin ordered the genie, "and make sure the magician does not catch me!" The genie did as he was told. Within minutes, Aladdin was reunited with his **beloved** Jasmine. She had been locked away in a dark room by the magician and he was going to make her his slave!

"We need to get the lamp back from the evil magician and return home soon," Aladdin told Jasmine and the genie of the ring.

The genie had an idea. "Your wife has been asked to serve him dinner. Let us add a powerful sleeping potion to his soup. Once he is asleep, you can take the lamp and return home safely."

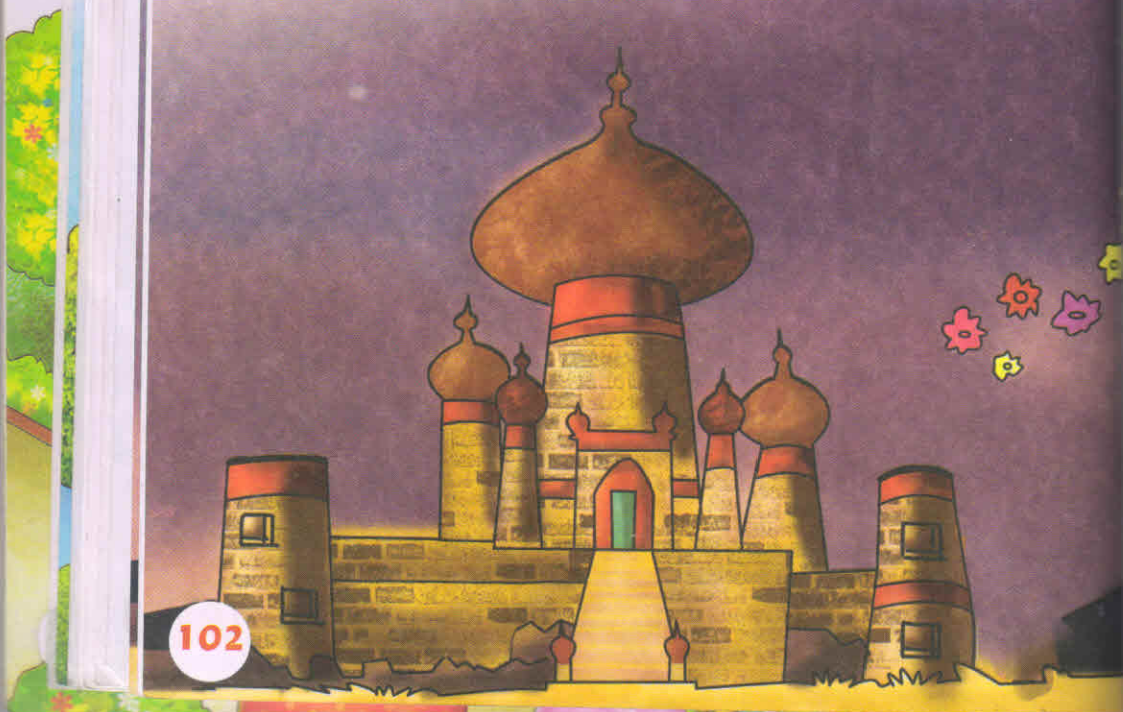
That night, Jasmine added a **generous** amount of the



sleeping potion to the magician's soup. The magician did not know that the soup had been drugged. He drank it up greedily. Within minutes, he was fast asleep.

Aladdin **sneaked** into the magician's room and spotted the lamp lying by his bed. Quickly, he grabbed the lamp and rubbed it. The powerful genie came out and asked, "What do you wish for, young master?"

Aladdin replied, "I want you to take away the magician's evil powers. Once you have done that, I want you to take my house, my wife and me back to where we were."



The genie did exactly as he was told. Aladdin and Jasmine returned safely to their home. The evil magician's powers were gone. No one ever saw him again. Aladdin thanked both the genies and set them free. Aladdin and Jasmine lived happily together for many, many years.

**Now we know**

**Evil can never win over good.**





## New Words We Learnt

orphan	- a child without parents
disguise	- costume worn to hide one's true self
served	- present food or drink to someone
adventures	- a journey filled with risk and excitement
fascinated	- amazed
exclaimed	- to speak out suddenly in joy, fear or surprise; showing strong emotions
quest	- search for something
chanted	- spoke in a rhythmic tone
nervously	- in a scared, worried
revealed	- showed something hidden
chests	- huge boxes
overflowing	- flow or spill over the brim of a box or container.
ancient	- very old
mischievously	- in a naughty way
impatiently	- in a hurried manner
lunged	- moved forward, as though to grab something
accidentallly	- unknowingly
misty	- unclear haze
mansion	- huge palace-like house
newfound	- newly gained
urchin	- a poor boy dressed in rags
peddler	- man who sells things on the roads
gleamed	- shone brightly
beloved	- someone you love the most
generous	- kind and giving
sneaked	- came in silently, without anyone finding out

## Fun Time!!!

★ Aladdin's genie has some questions for you. Can you answer them all?



Who was the man posing as Aladdin's uncle and what did he want?

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Describe Aladdin before he met me.

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Write a few lines about Aladdin's wife.

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What happened to Aladdin after his uncle took me away from his mansion?

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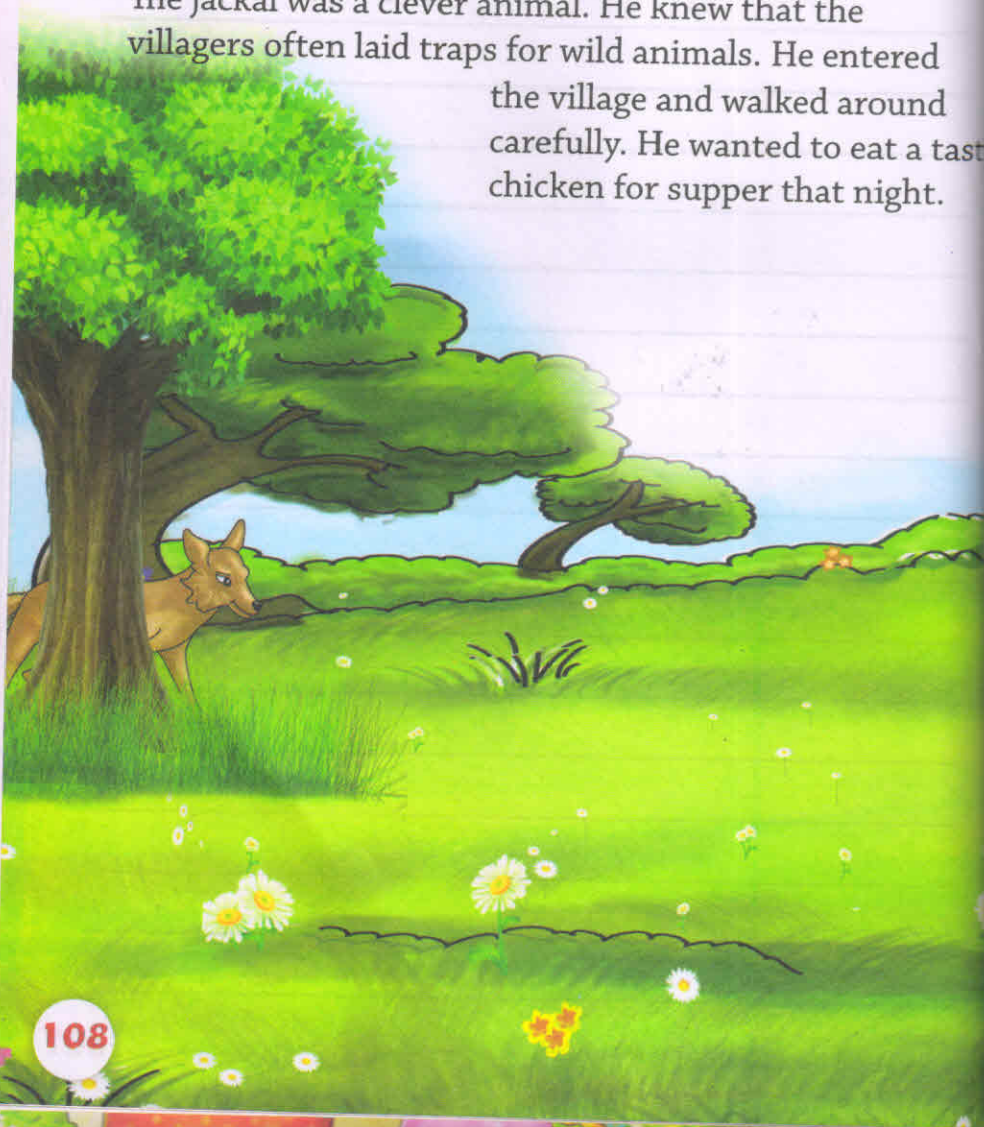
## Fun Time!!!

- ★ What do you think the genie looked like? Can you draw your interpretation of the genie and the magic lamp?

## The Lion and The Jackal

Years and years ago, there lived a jackal. He loved to travel and to see new places. One day, the jackal was walking around **aimlessly** when he spotted a village.

The jackal was a clever animal. He knew that the villagers often laid traps for wild animals. He entered the village and walked around carefully. He wanted to eat a tasty chicken for supper that night.





He **wandered** into a farm and looked for some hens. But he also kept an eye out for traps. He did not want to get caught in a **nasty** trap.

As the jackal was walking towards the farms, he spotted a man digging a large hole nearby. The jackal hid behind a tree to watch what the man was about to do. Once he finished digging the large, deep hole, he covered it with a net. He placed thorns and leaves over this net. Then, he covered it with soft mud. Uh oh! This was a trap!

When the man left, the jackal moved towards the farms, walking as far away from the trap as he could. He reached a huge farm and saw fat hens, geese and ducks running around near a pond. 'There's my dinner,' he thought greedily.



The jackal crept up towards the hens. Just as he was about to pounce on them, he heard a loud roar! The hens heard it too. They fled to their coops, cackling loudly all the way.

The jackal was upset to see his supper slip away from him. Who had let out the roar? He looked around to see where it had come from. A moment later, he heard the roar once again. It was coming from the trap laid by the man. Who had fallen in there? The jackal walked towards the trap and looked inside. A lion was trapped in the pit, looking miserable. A thorn was stuck in his paw. The lion was looking at his paw helplessly and roaring in pain.

The jackal looked at the lion and said, "Mighty King, you should have been more careful. The village is full of traps like these to keep the wild animals like us away from it."

The lion looked up and saw the jackal.





The lion did not want advice from the jackal. He snapped at the jackal, "Why don't you tell me what to do instead of **advising** me on what I shouldn't have done? I was so hungry that I did not see where I was going. I fell in! Now **wrack** your brains and come up with an idea to get me out of here."

The jackal smiled at the lion cunningly. He knew that the lion would gobble him up the minute he was out of the pit. Helping him would be dangerous.

The jackal told the lion, "If I help you out of this pit, you will gobble me up in an instant. You have just told me you were hungry. I am sorry, but I don't think I want to help you."

The lion wanted to get out of the pit before the villagers saw him. He knew that the jackal was his only hope. He begged, "Please, dear friend, get me out of here. I promise I won't eat you. If the villagers see me, they might kill me or send me to a zoo."

The jackal suspected that the lion would not fulfil his promise. He tried to walk away, but the lion continued to beg and **plead** to be freed. Finally, the jackal agreed to help the lion.

The jackal found a large branch lying near the pit. He took the branch and lowered it into the pit. The lion climbed out of the pit with the help of the branch. When he was out, he stuck his paw out and asked the jackal to help him and remove the thorn.

The jackal carefully plucked out the thorn from the lion's paw. When at last it was out, the lion pulled his paw back and **examined** it carefully. He made sure that there was no damage to his precious paw.

However, instead of thanking the jackal, the lion tried to hit the jackal with that same paw. The jackal was shocked. The lion was going to kill him after all!

The jackal jumped back and said, "I knew you would not keep your promise. A fine example you have set, Oh Mighty King. You cannot break a promise so easily. What will your followers think?"

The lion laughed and said, "Do you think I care about a promise? I am hungry and you are the only animal I see around here. I will eat you."

The jackal held up his paw and said, "You cannot just go back on your promise. Let us ask the other animals if they think you are right. We will ask three different animals. If they think you are right, you may eat me."

The lion agreed and, they set off towards the jungle. On the way, they met a tiger. He was sitting just outside the jungle, eating a delicious meal. The jackal and the lion walked up to him.

"Greetings, Mr. Tiger," said the jackal. "We have a question for you." The tiger looked up at them **suspiciously**. The lion told him the entire story and said, "Don't you think I should eat the jackal?"

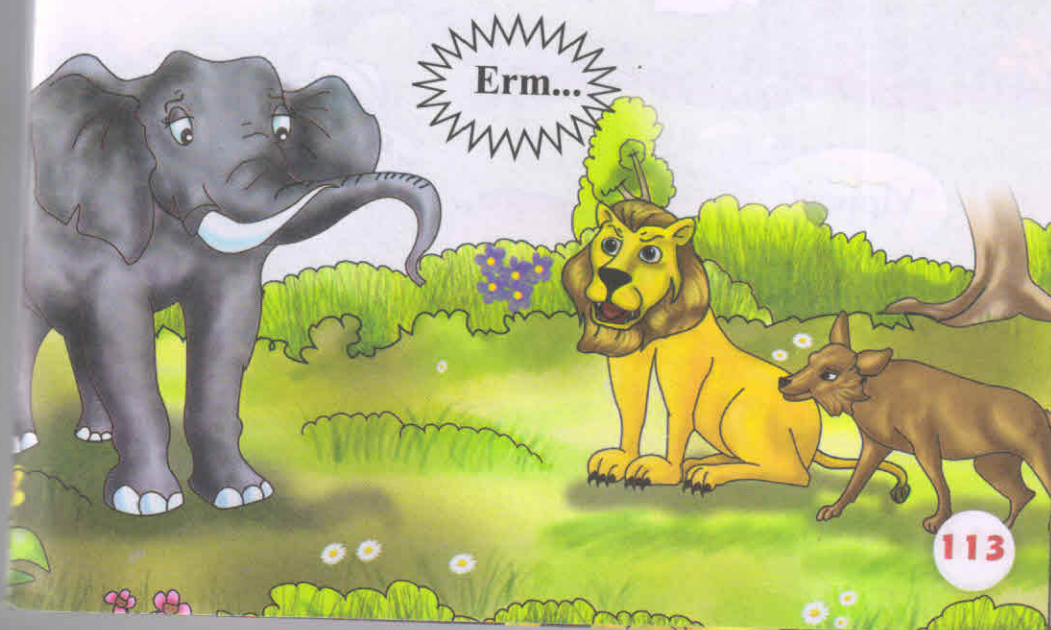


The tiger thought about it for a moment and replied, "I don't like jackals. They steal and eat all my food. I think you should eat the jackal." The lion was happy. The jackal shook his head sadly and started looking for another animal. Why was the tiger being so unfair?

They walked further into the jungle. Soon, they met an elephant. The huge animal was walking hurriedly towards the river. "Hold on there, Mr. Elephant!" cried the jackal.

The elephant stopped and turned to look at the jackal. The jackal smiled at him and said, "The lion and I have a little problem. I pulled him out of a trap after he had promised not to eat me. However, he wants to eat me now that he is safe. Do you think he should break his promise so easily?"

The elephant looked at the lion. He was scared of lion. The elephant looked at the jackal nervously and said, "He can only eat you if you agree to it," and he ran away hurriedly.



Just then, a rabbit passed by. The lion told the jackal, "All this rabbit has to do is agree, and you will be my next meal." The jackal rolled his eyes and called out to the rabbit.

The rabbit listened carefully as they told him the whole story. When they finished telling him the story, he stood silently and rubbed his chin. A moment later, he said, "I need to see exactly what happened." He turned to the jackal and said, "Take me to the place where you found the lion."





The jackal and the lion took the rabbit back to the village. They walked to the place where the trap was laid. The jackal stood over it and pointed out, "This is where I found the lion."

The rabbit looked at the trap with a puzzled **expression** and said, "I am still confused. Mr. Lion, could you please go back into the trap so I can understand exactly what happened here?"

The jackal realised what the clever rabbit was trying to do. He played along with him and helped the lion get back into the pit. As soon as the lion was trapped again, the rabbit and the jackal ran away as fast as they could.

The lion realised that he had been tricked! If only he had kept his promise! He sat sadly in the pit, waiting and hoping for someone to come and rescue him.



### **Now we know**

**We must always fulfil  
our promises.**

### **New Words We Learnt**

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| aimlessly    | – without any particular direction or goal        |
| wandered     | – walk or move in a aimless way                   |
| nasty        | – harmful, damaging                               |
| advising     | – offering one's opinion or views to someone else |
| wrack        | – think hard                                      |
| plead        | – beg   |
| examined     | – looked closely                                  |
| suspiciously | – in a doubtful manner                            |
| expression   | – the look on one's face                          |



## Evaluation Time

You must have read all the stories by now. Did you learn new words? Let us see how much you have learned!

- ★ Who helped Aladdin get out of the cave? \_\_\_\_\_
- ★ What is another word for 'curious'? \_\_\_\_\_
- ★ Unscramble the letters to find a word from the story - 'ntagis'  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ★ 'Midas sat on his golden throne and ate a delicious breakfast.' Spot the verbs and adjectives in this sentence.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ★ Where did the brave tailor sleep in the giant's cave?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ★ 'The goatherd brought his goats home.' Spot the noun here.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ★ Where did the jackal find the lion? \_\_\_\_\_
- ★ What did the King chase in the forest? \_\_\_\_\_
- ★ 'The soldier knocked on another door.' Mark the nouns in this sentence. \_\_\_\_\_
- ★ What got stuck on the man's nose? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you answered all the questions correctly?  
Well done! You are a Rapid Reading Whiz!