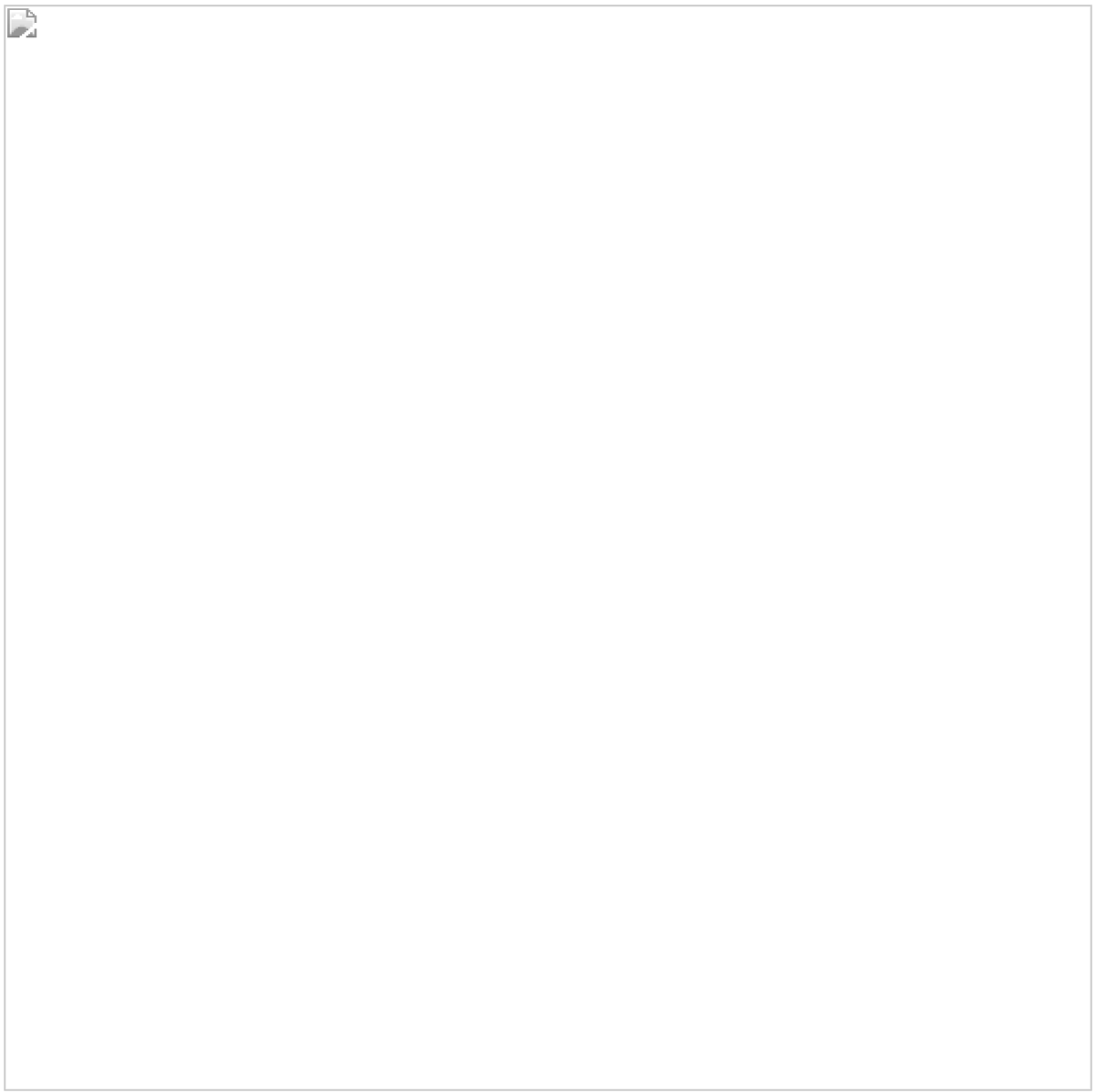
COLORING THE CLASSICS

Harisarman

A Tale from India



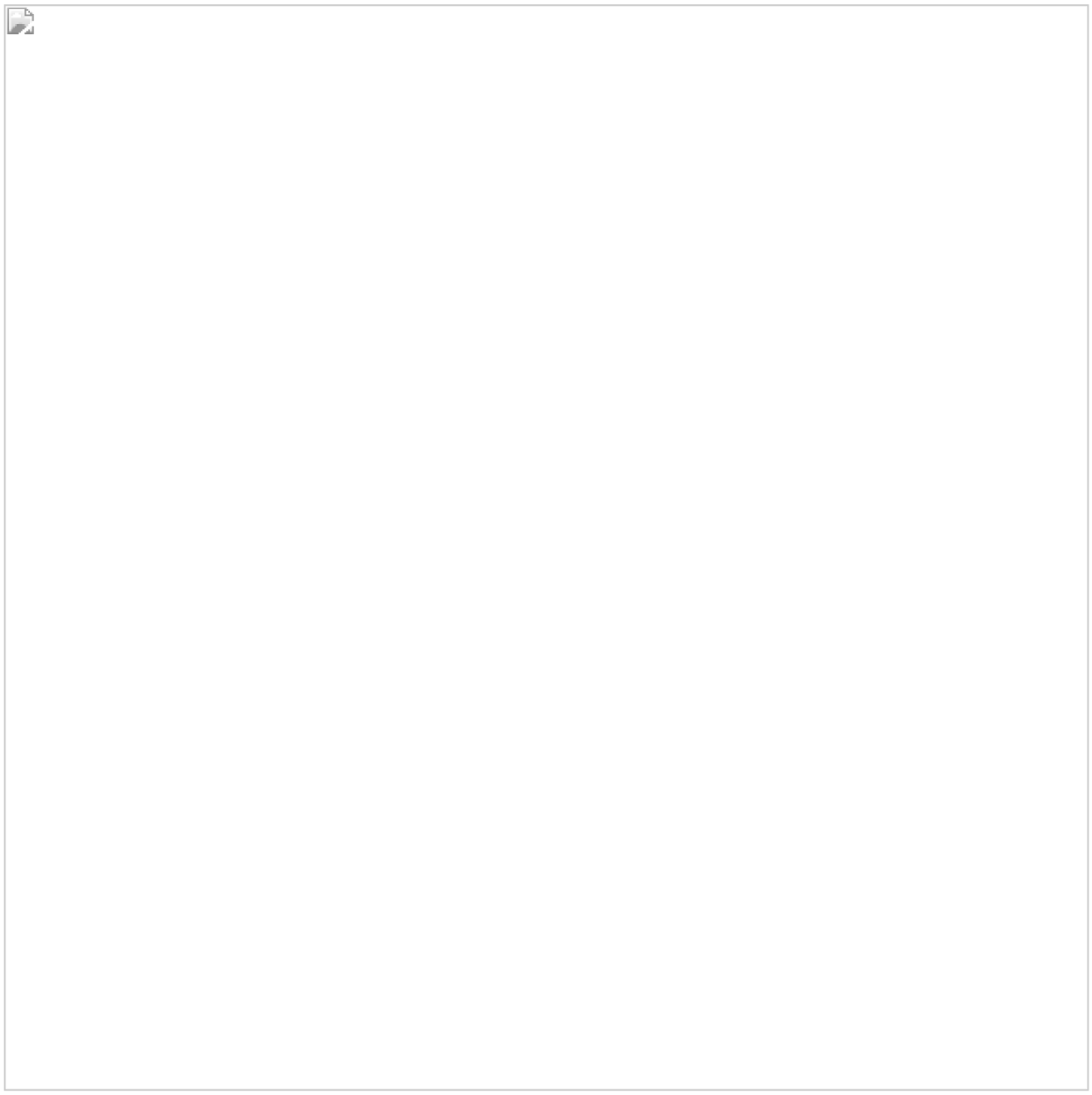
In a certain village there lived a poor man named Harisarman. He had no work, he had very many children, and he was unhappy.

TALK ABOUT IT

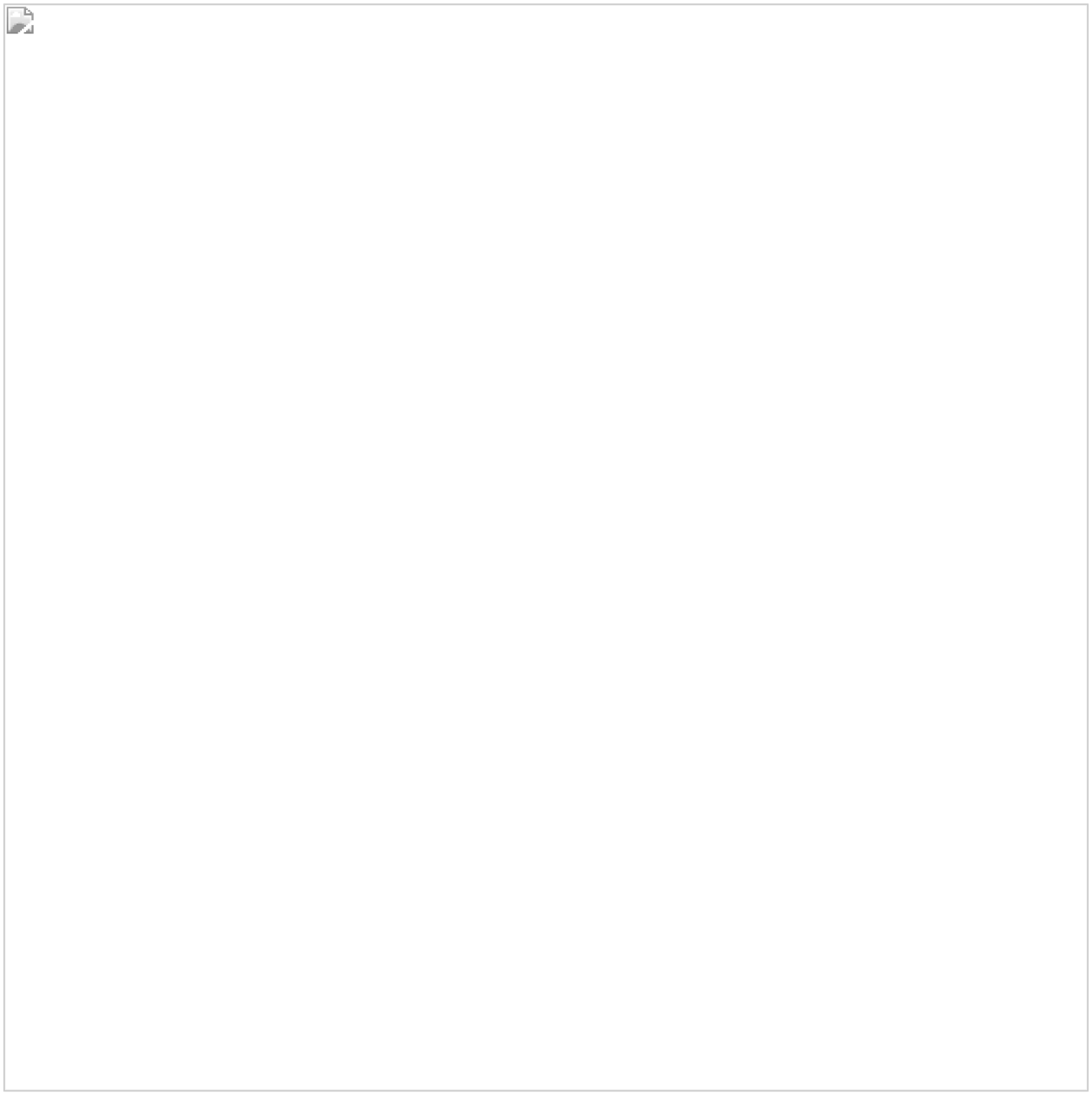
Harisarman was poor and worried about his family. What do you think a person might do when they are in that spot?

This book belongs to _____

Harisarman · another picture



A Servant in a Rich House



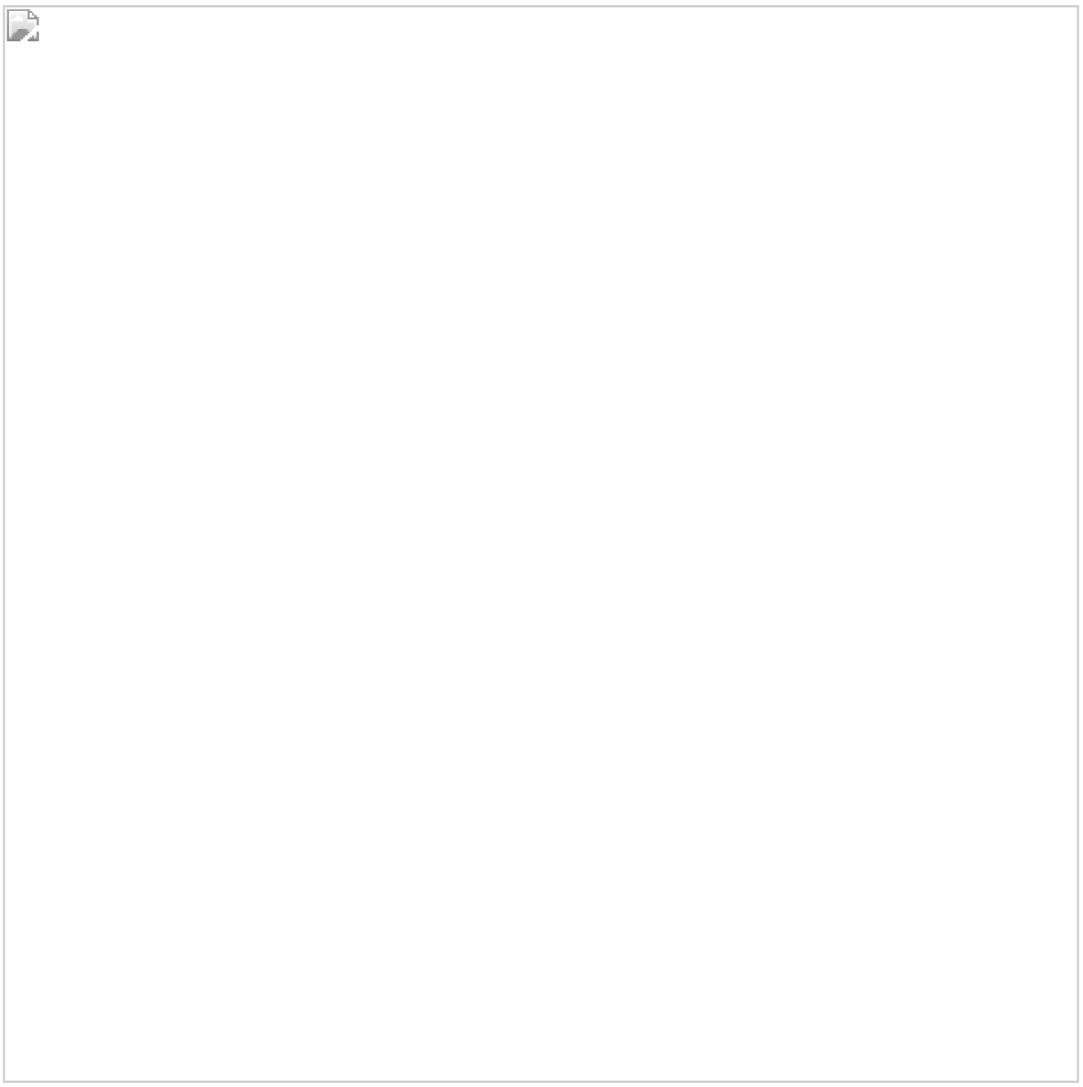
Harisarman wandered from place to place, begging, with his family. At last they came to a city, where a rich man named Sthuladatta gave them work.

Harisarman's sons looked after the cows and the other property. His wife became a servant in the house. Harisarman himself lived close by and did the odd jobs of an attendant.

TALK ABOUT IT

Harisarman's whole family worked for Sthuladatta. What would it be like to work for someone and hope they notice you?

A Servant in a Rich House · another picture

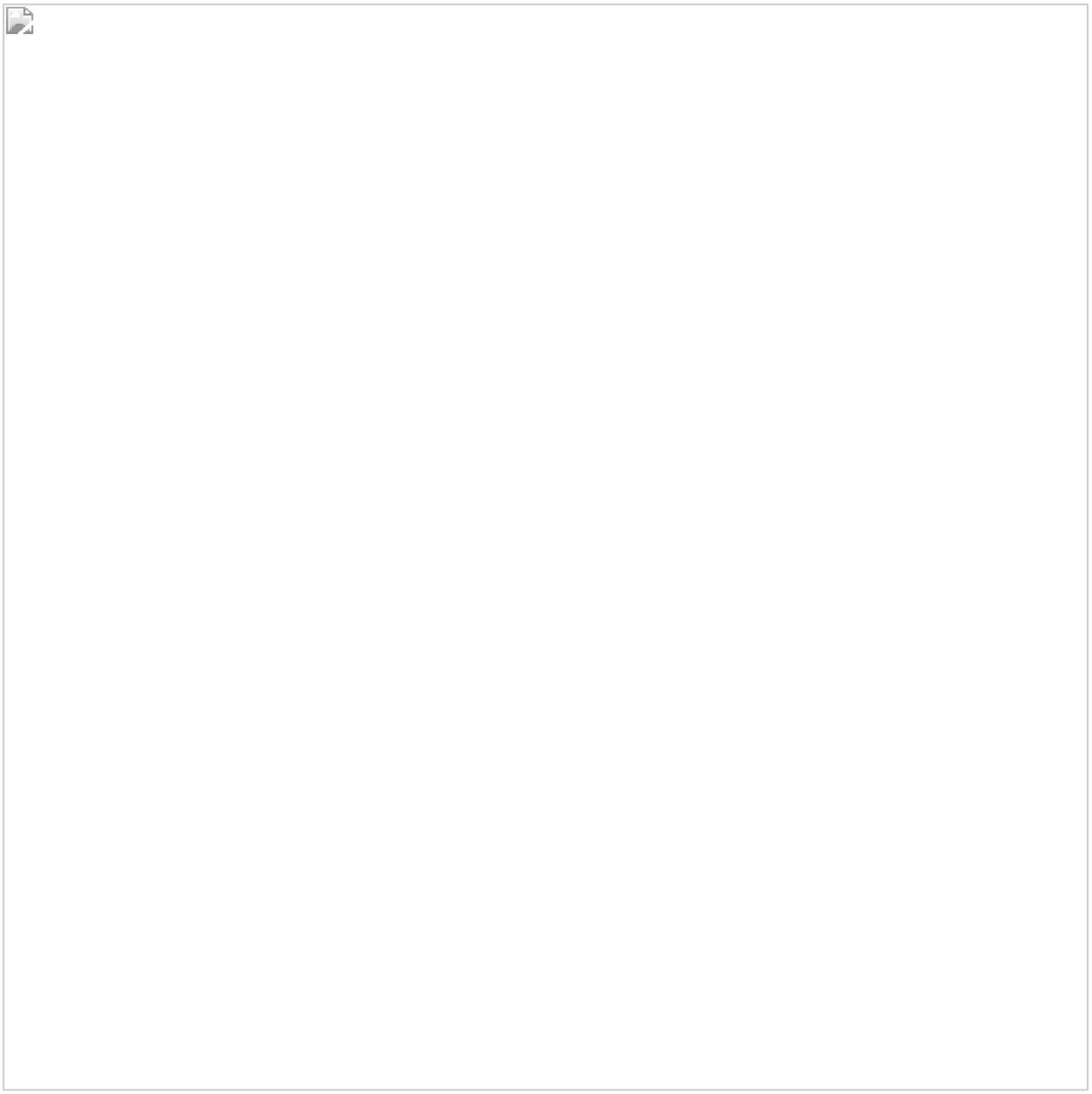


Think about it

1. What jobs did Harisarman's sons do?

- ○ They cooked the dinner
- ○ They looked after the cows and other property
- ○ They drove a cart

The Wedding Feast



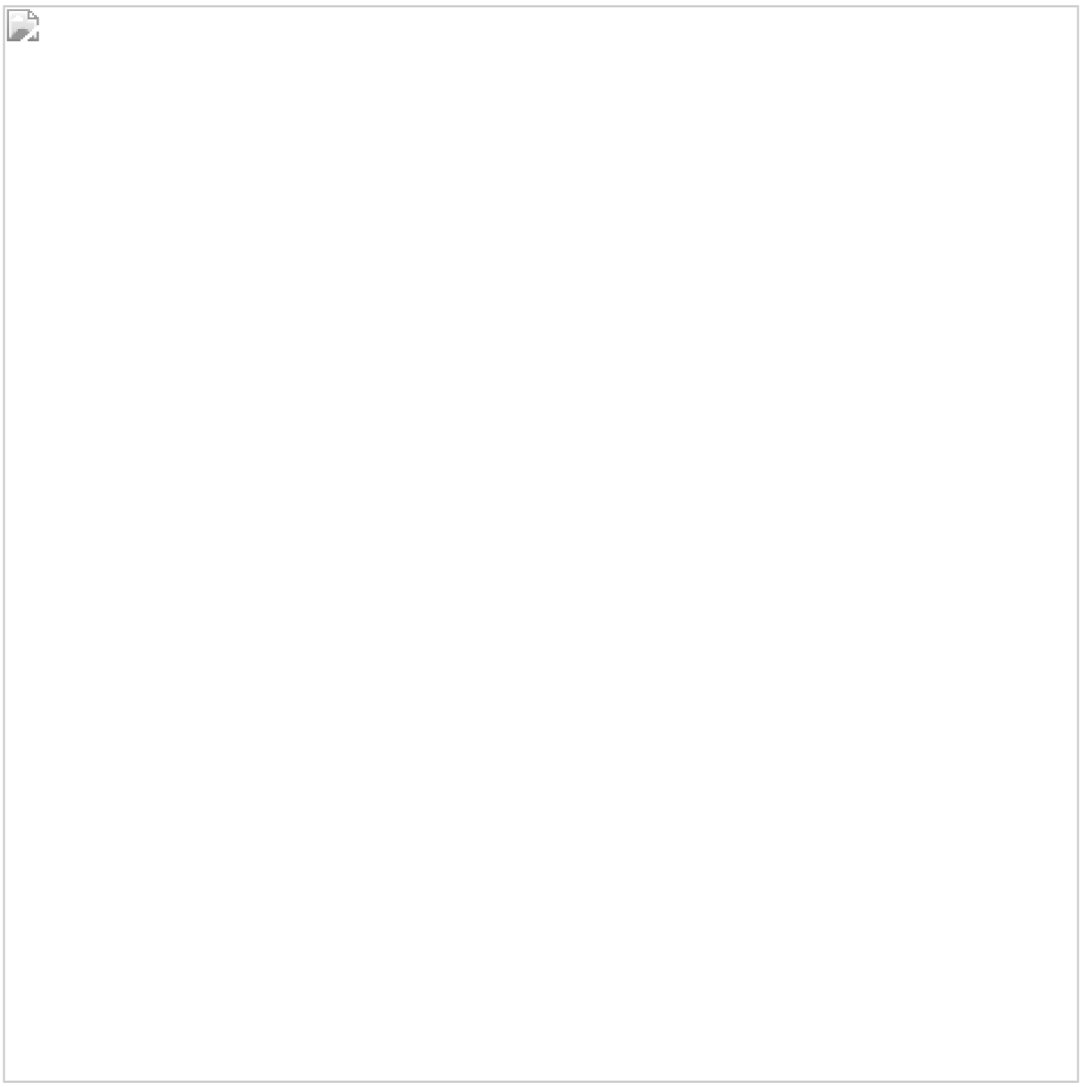
One day there was a great feast for the wedding of Sthuladatta's daughter. Many friends of the bridegroom came, and there was music and merry-making.

Harisarman hoped to eat his fill of good food, and to bring some home to his family.

He waited and waited. But no one thought of him at all.

TALK ABOUT IT

Everybody at the feast had plenty, and Harisarman was forgotten. What do you think someone should do when they notice a person who is left out?



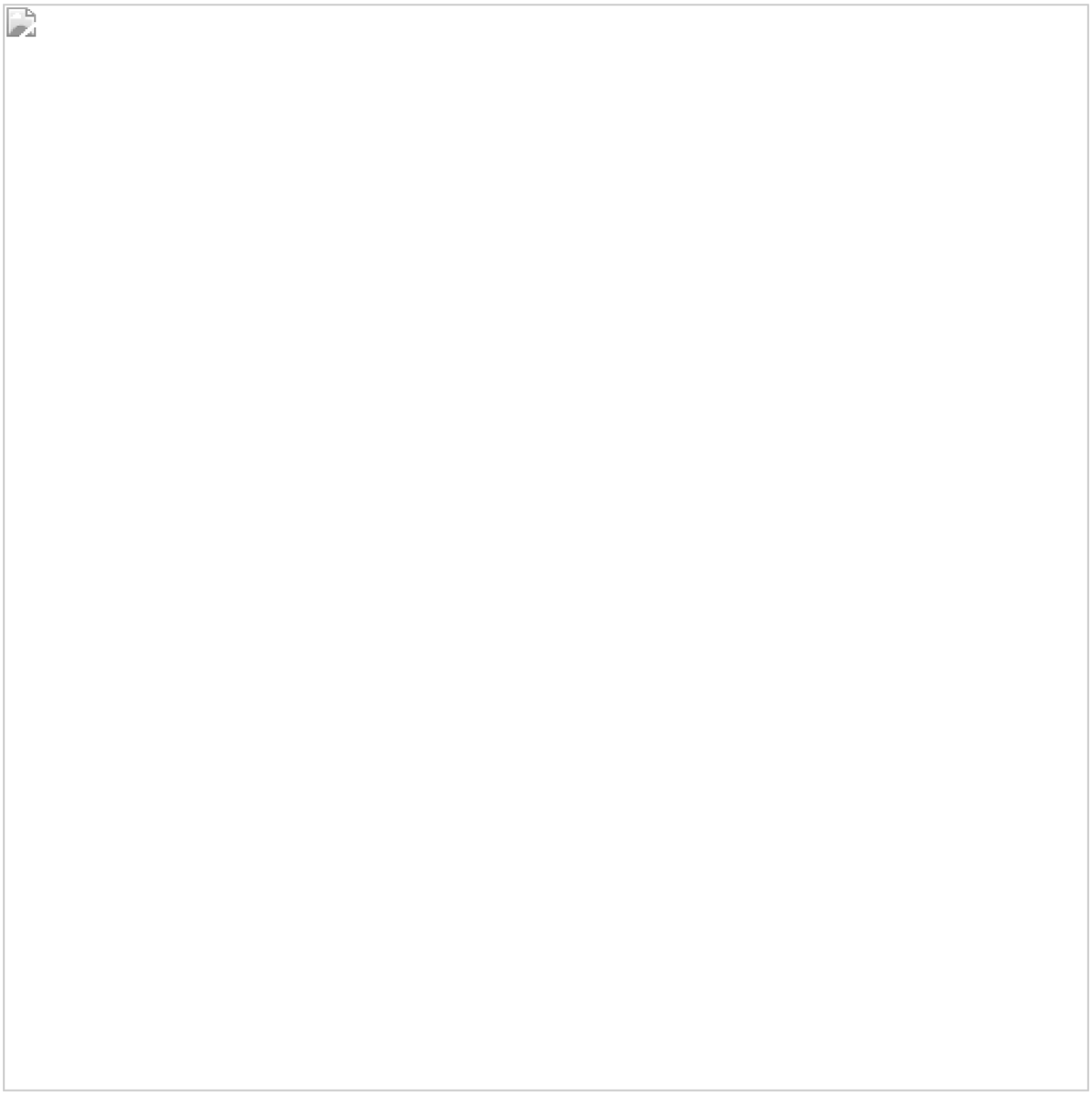
Think about it

1. What was the feast for?

- ○ A harvest
- ○ A birthday
- ○ A wedding

2. How do you think Harisarman felt as the feast went on?

A Plan



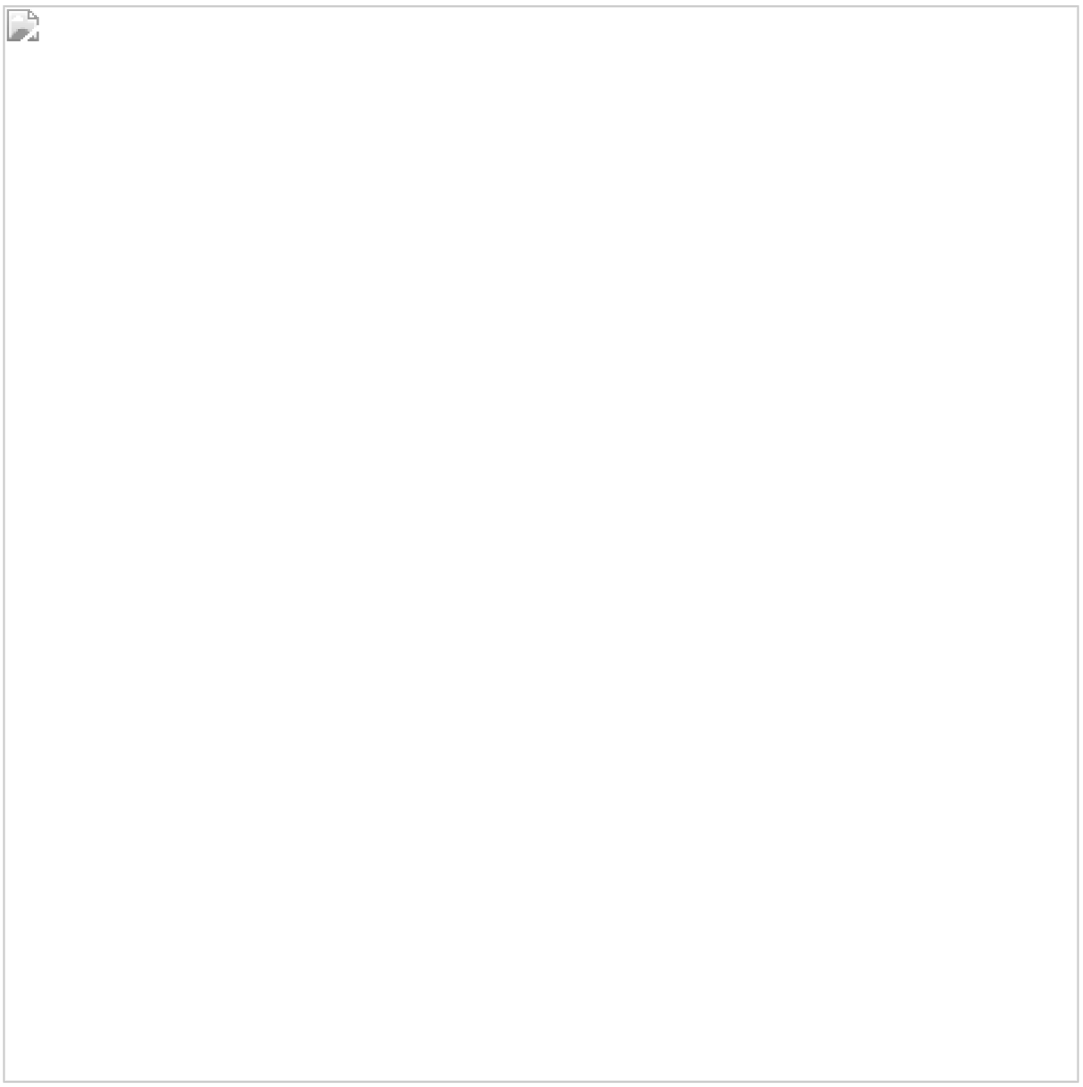
That night, Harisarman said to his wife that he was treated with disrespect because he was poor and foolish. He had a plan: he would pretend to know magic, so that Sthuladatta would respect him.

He told her to tell Sthuladatta, when the time came, that her husband had magical knowledge.

Then he did something that was not true and not right. While everyone slept, he took the horse the bridegroom had ridden and hid it far away.

TALK ABOUT IT

Harisarman could simply have told Sthuladatta that he and his children were hungry. Why do you think he chose a trick instead?

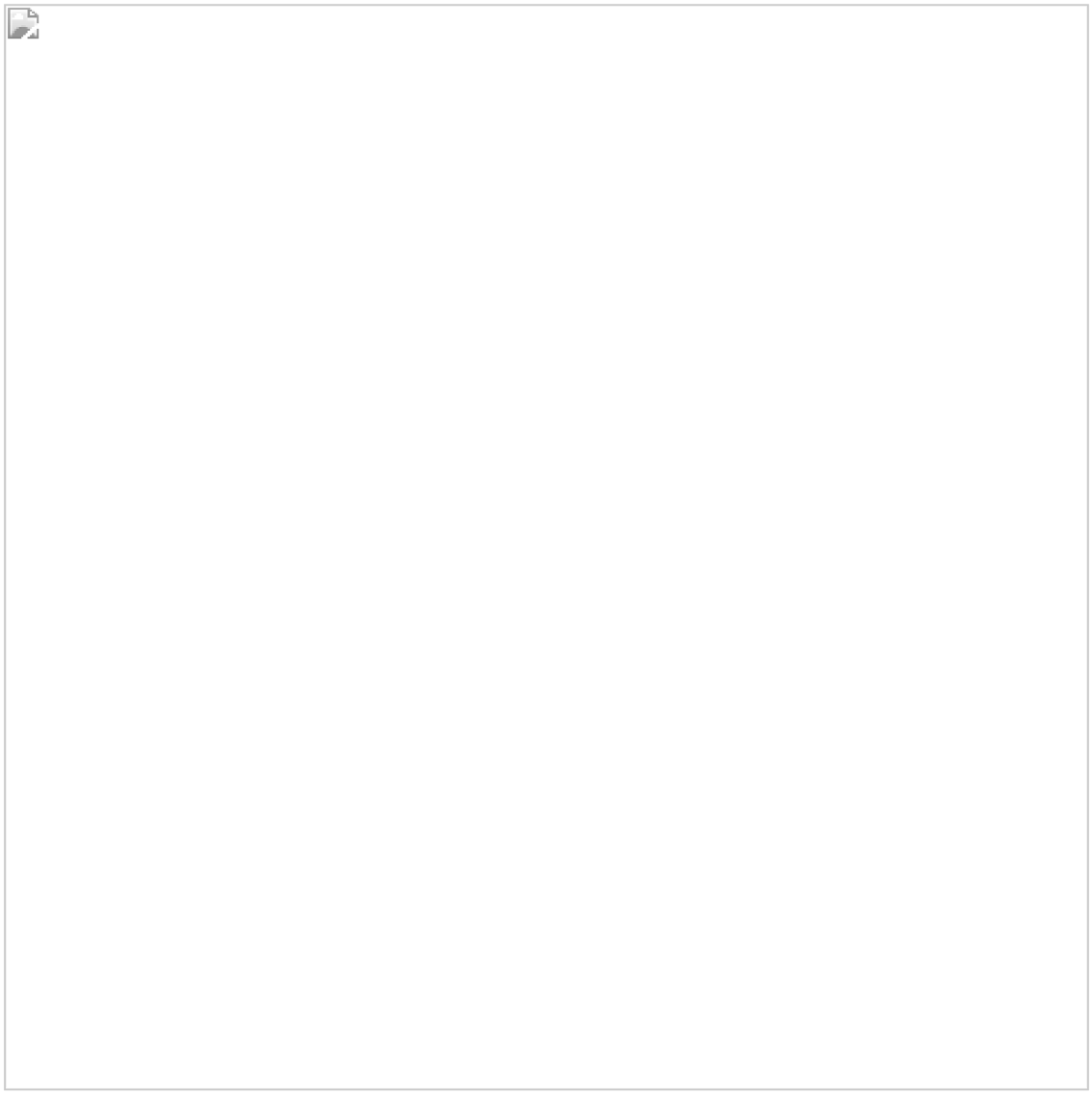


Think about it

1. What did Harisarman take in the night?

- ○ The bridegroom's horse
- ○ A bag of gold
- ○ A feast basket

The Missing Horse



In the morning, the horse could not be found. The bridegroom's friends searched everywhere. Sthuladatta was upset, because a missing horse at a wedding seemed a bad sign, and he sent men to look for thieves.

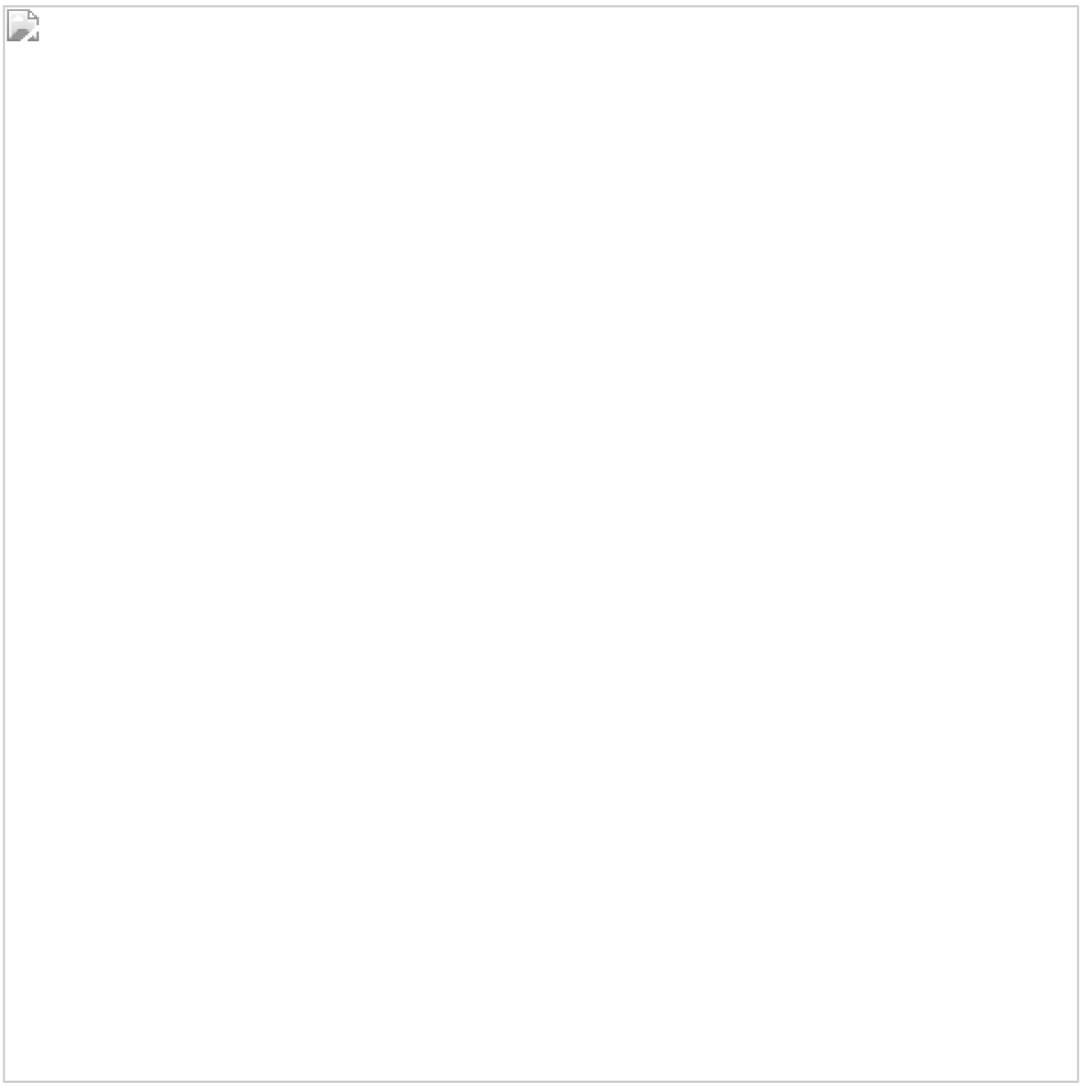
Then Harisarman's wife came to him and said that her husband was a wise man who knew magic. “Why do you not ask him?”

Sthuladatta called Harisarman. Harisarman said, “Yesterday I was forgotten, but to-day, now the horse is stolen, I am called to mind.”

“I forgot you, forgive me,” said Sthuladatta.

TALK ABOUT IT

Sthuladatta said he was sorry he had forgotten Harisarman. Do you think that makes it all right? What else could he have done?

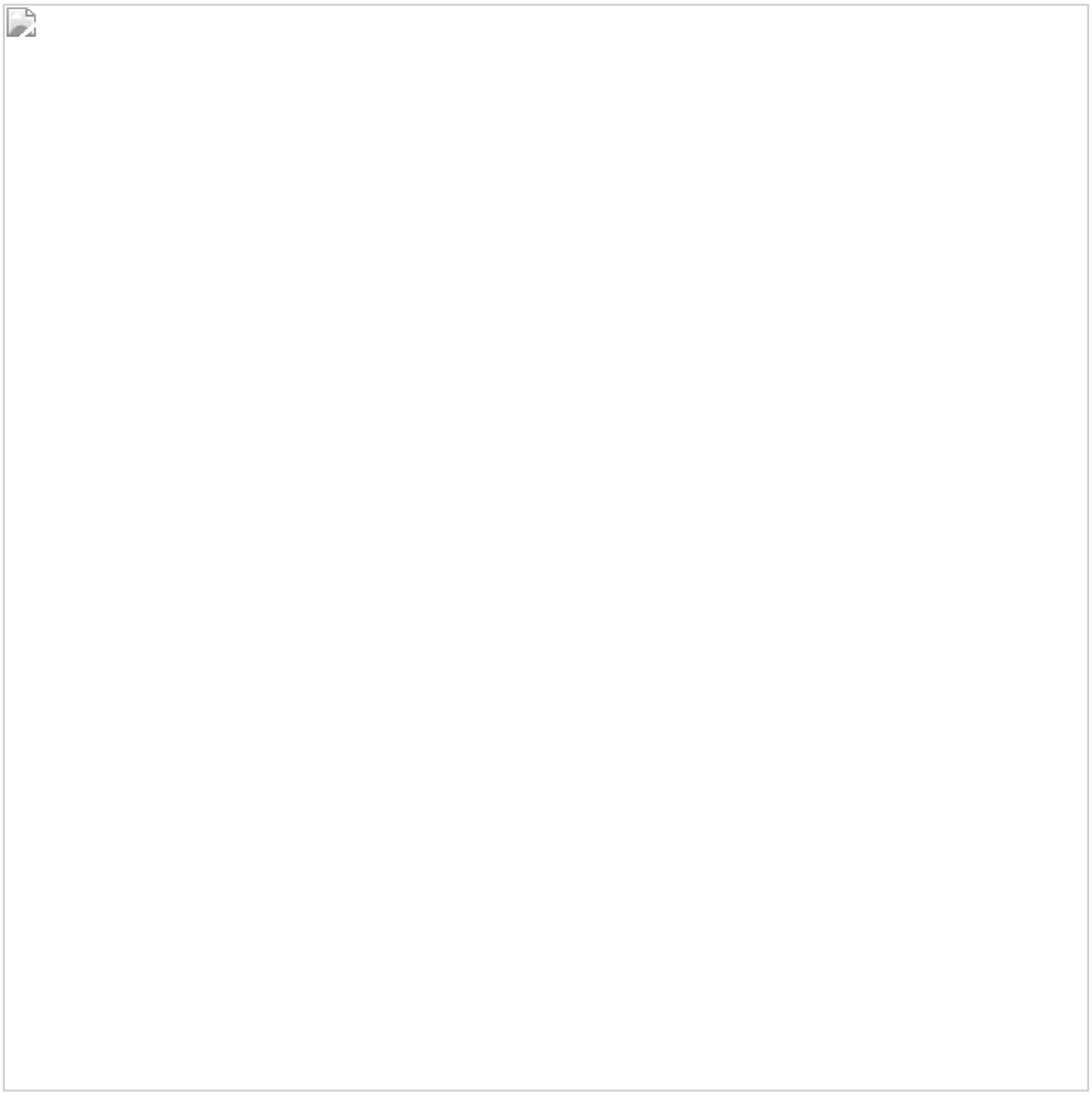


Think about it

1. Who told Sthuladatta that Harisarman knew magic?

- ○ The king
- ○ Harisarman's wife
- ○ A neighbor

Pretend Magic



Harisarman drew all kinds of pretend diagrams on the ground. Then he said that thieves had hidden the horse south of the town, and that it must be fetched before the end of the day.

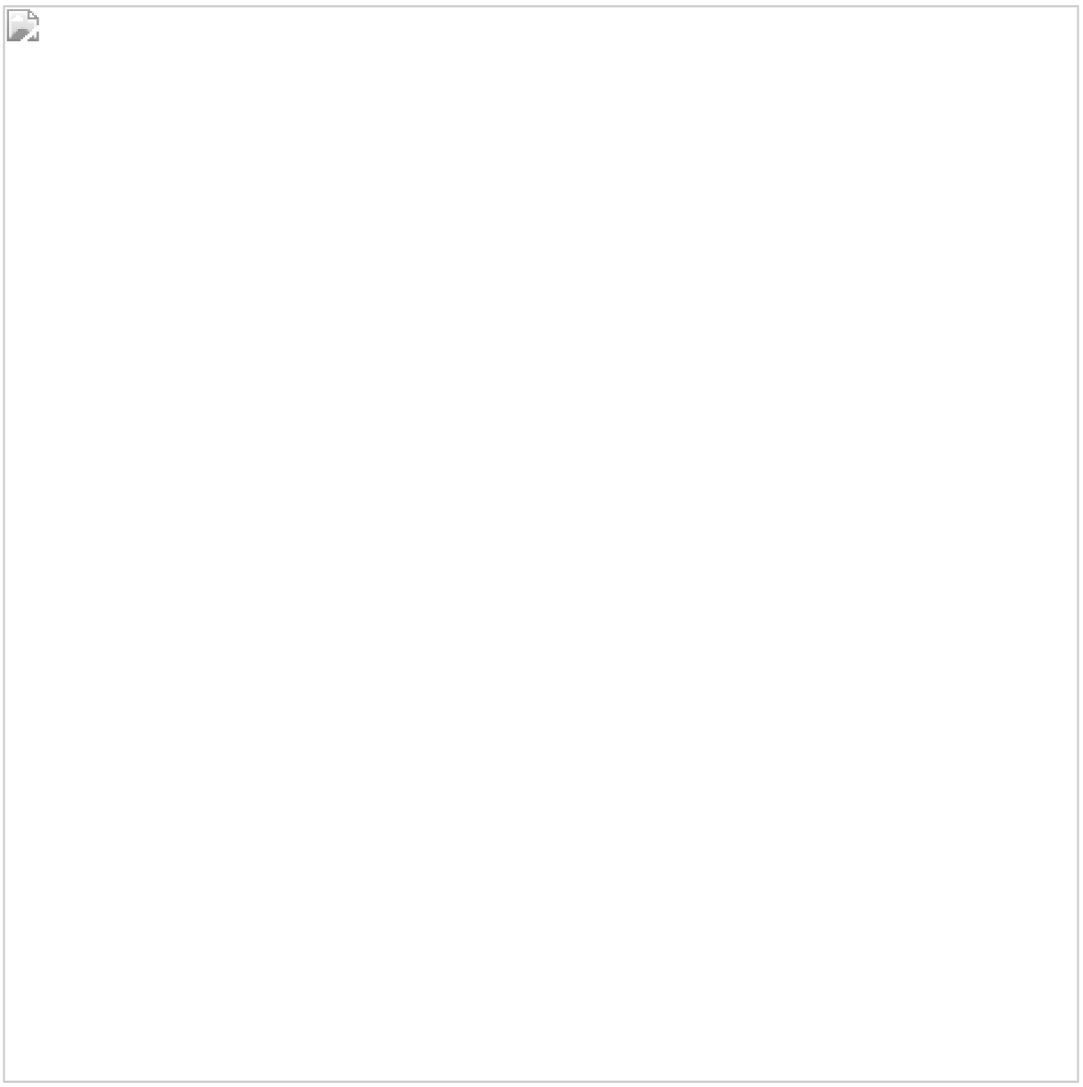
Men ran and brought the horse back. Everyone praised Harisarman for his wisdom.

From that day on, Harisarman was honored as a sage, and Sthuladatta treated him with great respect.

TALK ABOUT IT

Harisarman knew where the horse was because he had hidden it himself. Who knew the truth? Who did not?

Pretend Magic · another picture



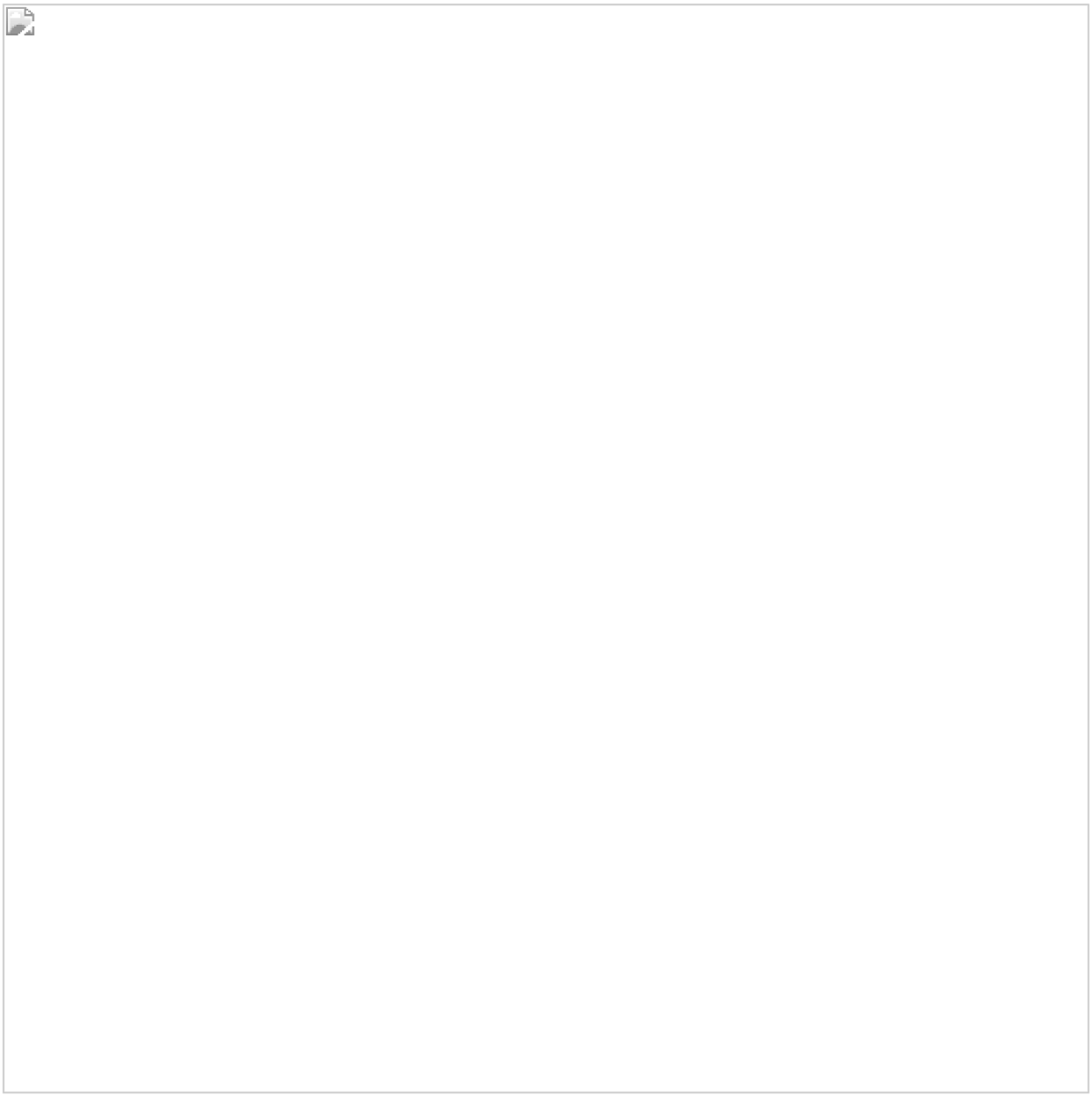
Think about it

1. How did Harisarman know where the horse was?

- ○ He had hidden it himself
- ○ A bird told him
- ○ His diagrams showed him

2. Who was worried or put out when the horse went missing?

Called to the Palace



Some time later, a great deal of gold and jewels was stolen from the palace of the King. No one knew who had done it.

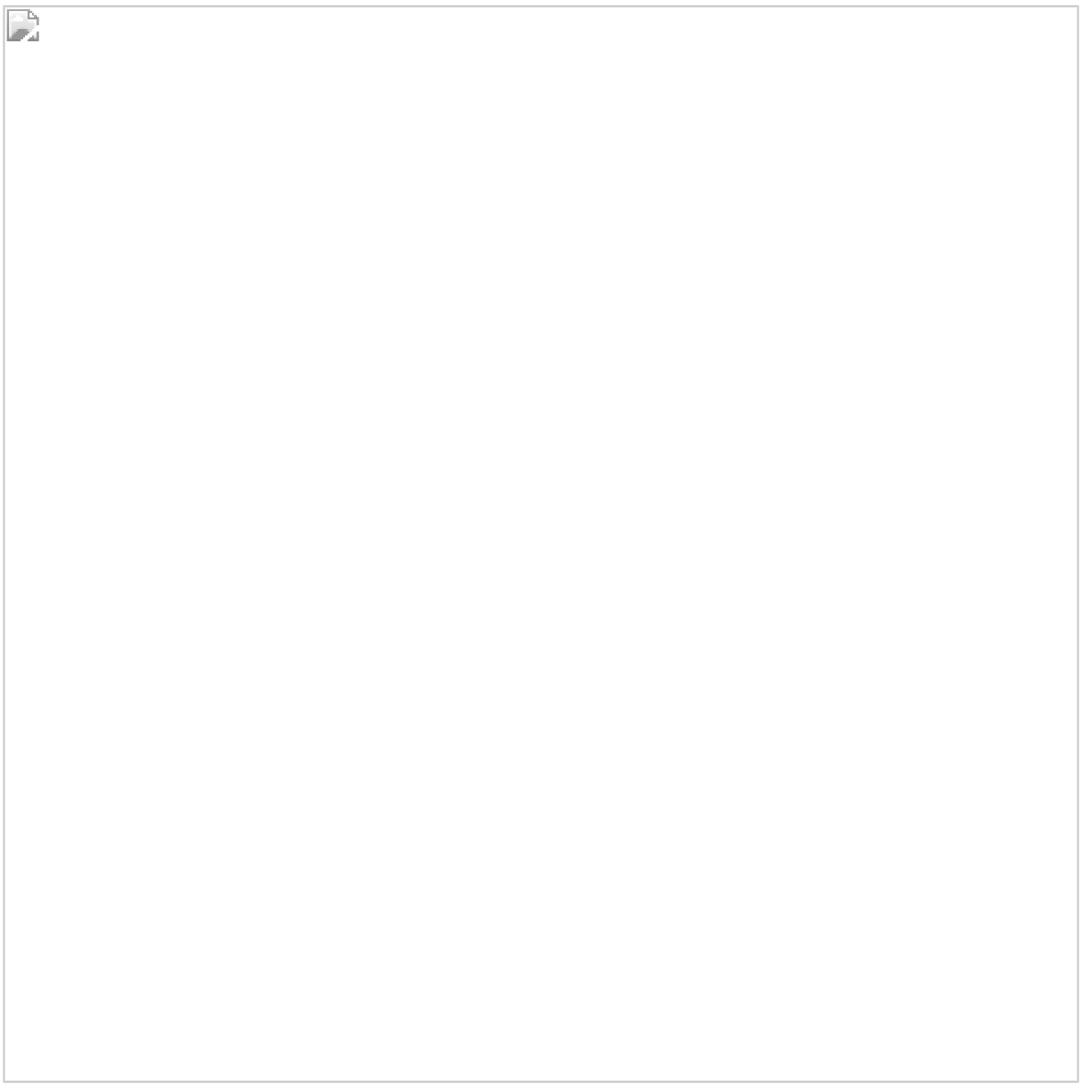
The King had heard of Harisarman's fame, so he sent for him. Harisarman was afraid and stalled for time: “I will tell you to-morrow.”

The King put him in a room and had it guarded all night. And Harisarman was sad that he had pretended to have knowledge.

TALK ABOUT IT

Now Harisarman was stuck in a room, guarded by the King's men, because of a pretend he had begun. Why do you think one pretend sometimes needs another?

Called to the Palace · another picture

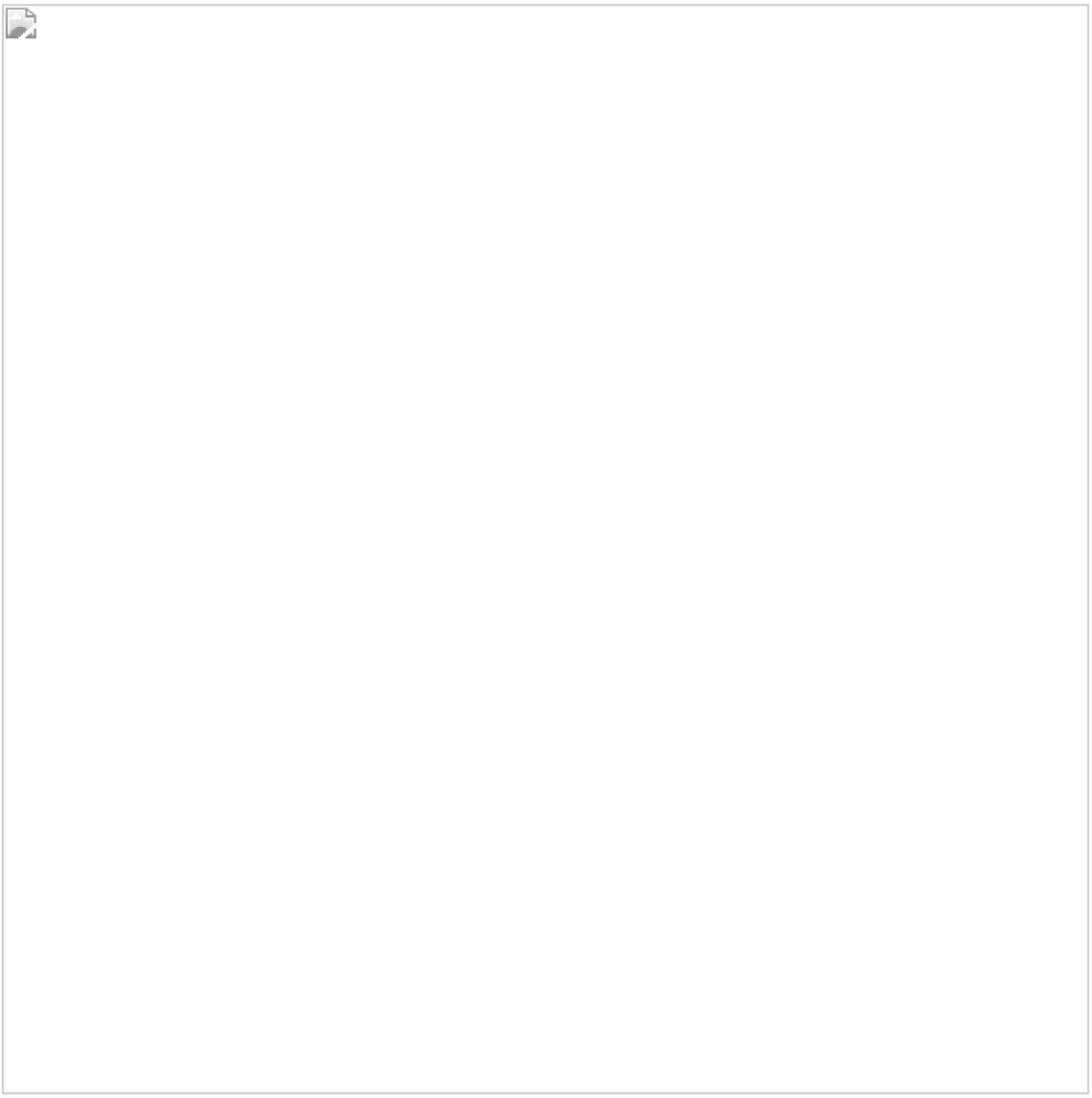


Think about it

1. What did Harisarman say when the King asked him to find the thief?

- ○ “I will tell you right now”
- ○ “I do not know magic”
- ○ “I will tell you to-morrow”

Tongue



Now in the palace there was a maid named Jihva, which means Tongue. She and her brother had stolen the treasure. She was frightened of the wise man, and at night she crept to his door and put her ear to it.

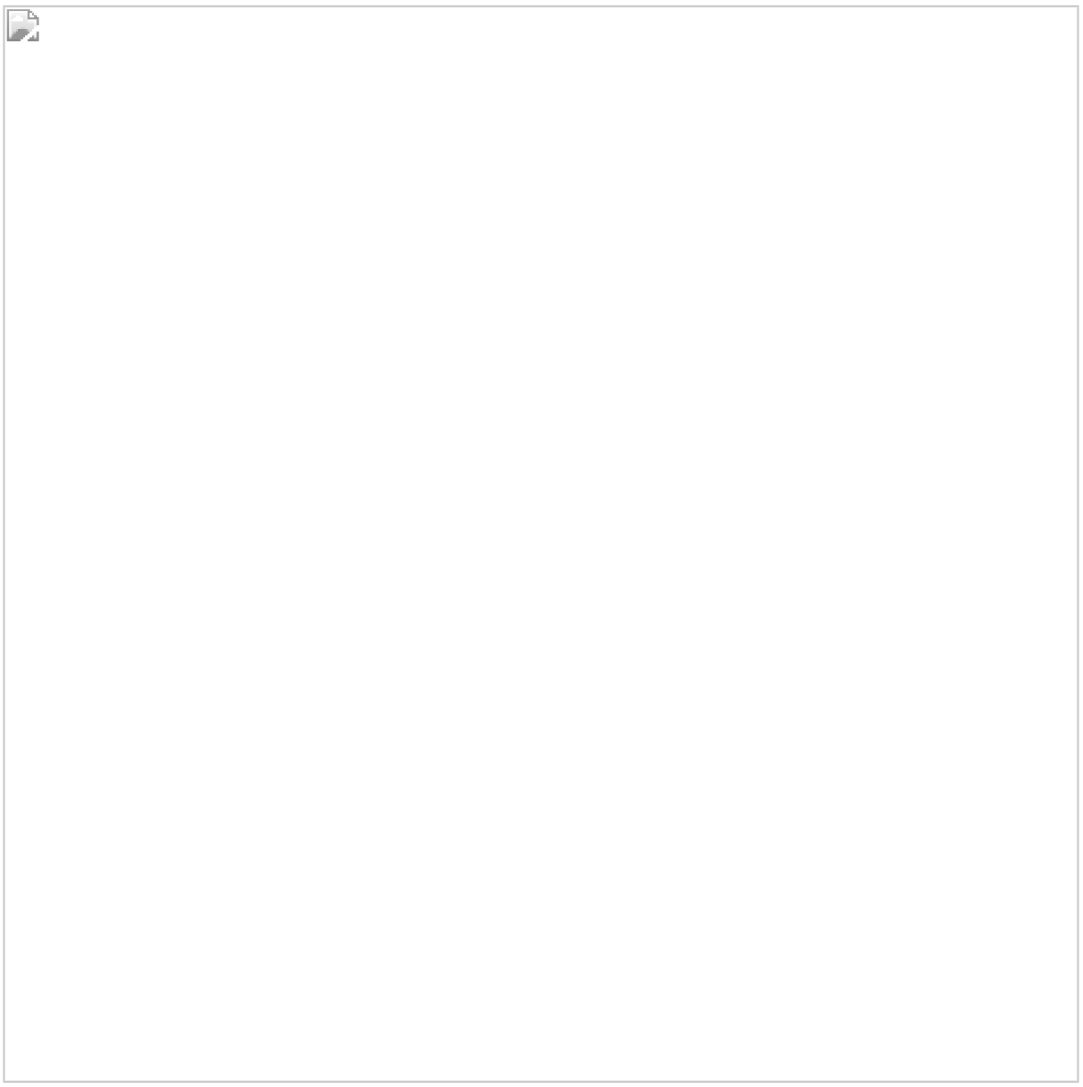
Inside, Harisarman was alone. He was scolding his own tongue: “Oh, tongue, what is this that you have done through your greediness?”

Jihva heard this and thought he knew! She slipped in, fell at his feet, and said she was the thief, that she had buried the treasure under the pomegranate tree in the garden. She begged him to spare her.

TALK ABOUT IT

Harisarman was blaming his tongue, and a girl named Tongue heard him. What a coincidence! Did it make Harisarman wise, or only lucky?

Tongue · another picture

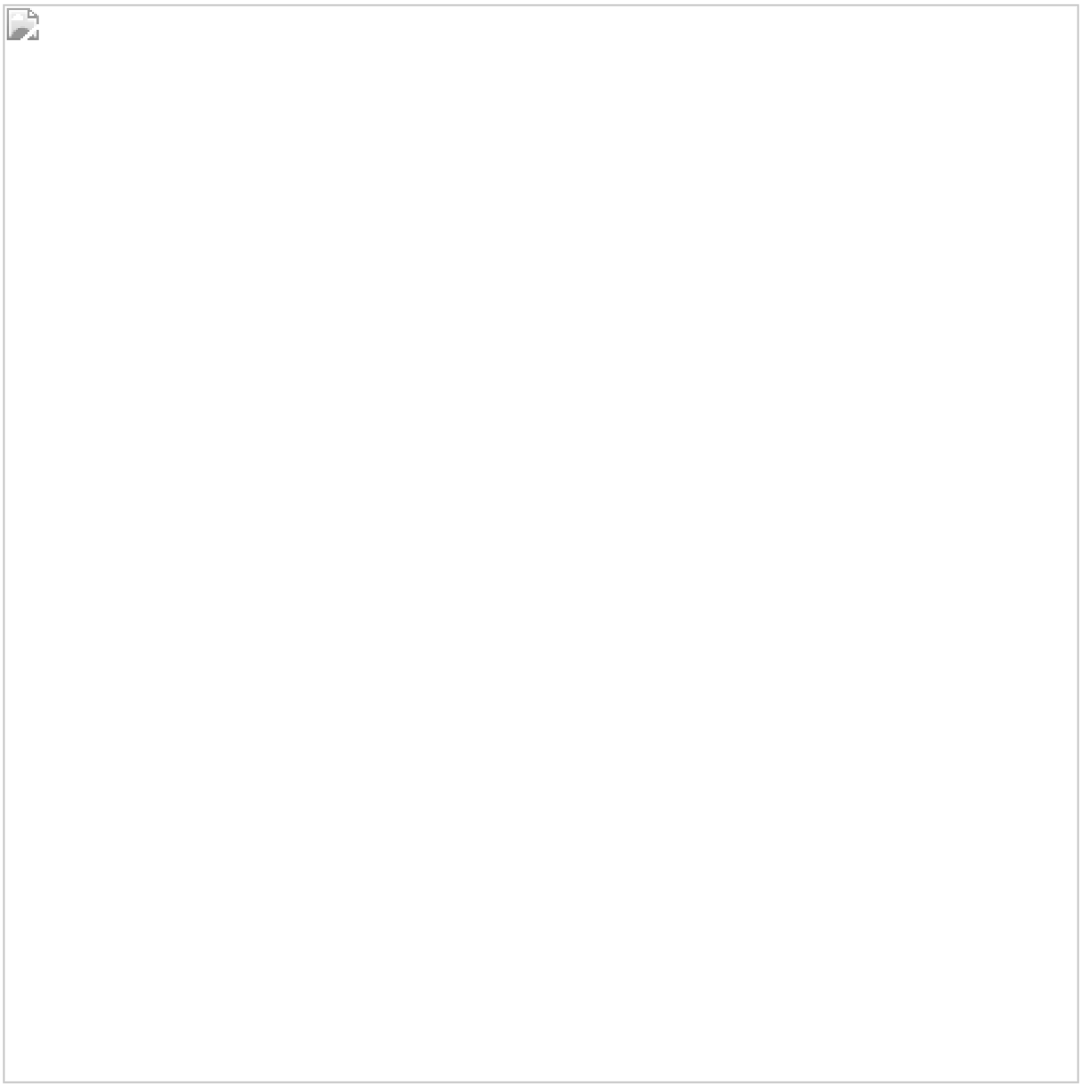


Think about it

1. What was the maid's name?

- ○ Sthuladatta
- ○ Idun
- ○ Jihva, which means Tongue

The Treasure Under the Tree



Harisarman said grandly, “I know the past, present, and future,” and that he would not tell on her. But he told her to give him whatever gold she still had, and she agreed.

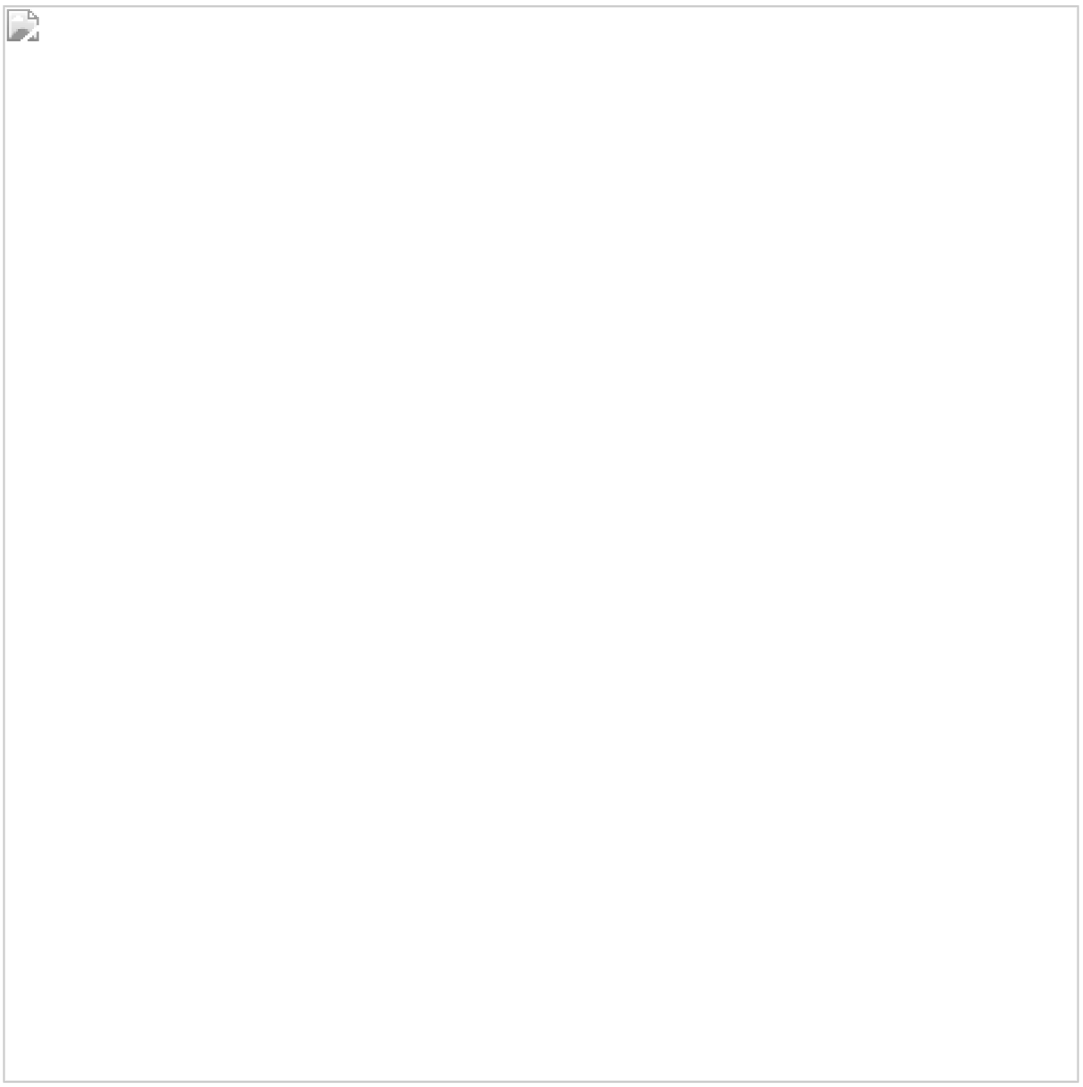
Then Harisarman thought it over. It was luck that had saved him, he said to himself. “Secret crimes manifest themselves by means of fear.”

In the morning, he led the King into the garden with a great show, straight to the pomegranate tree. The treasure was found. Harisarman said the thief had run away with part of it.

The King was pleased and gave him the money from many villages.

TALK ABOUT IT

Harisarman did not tell the whole truth to the King, and the maid who stole the treasure was not named. What do you think about that?

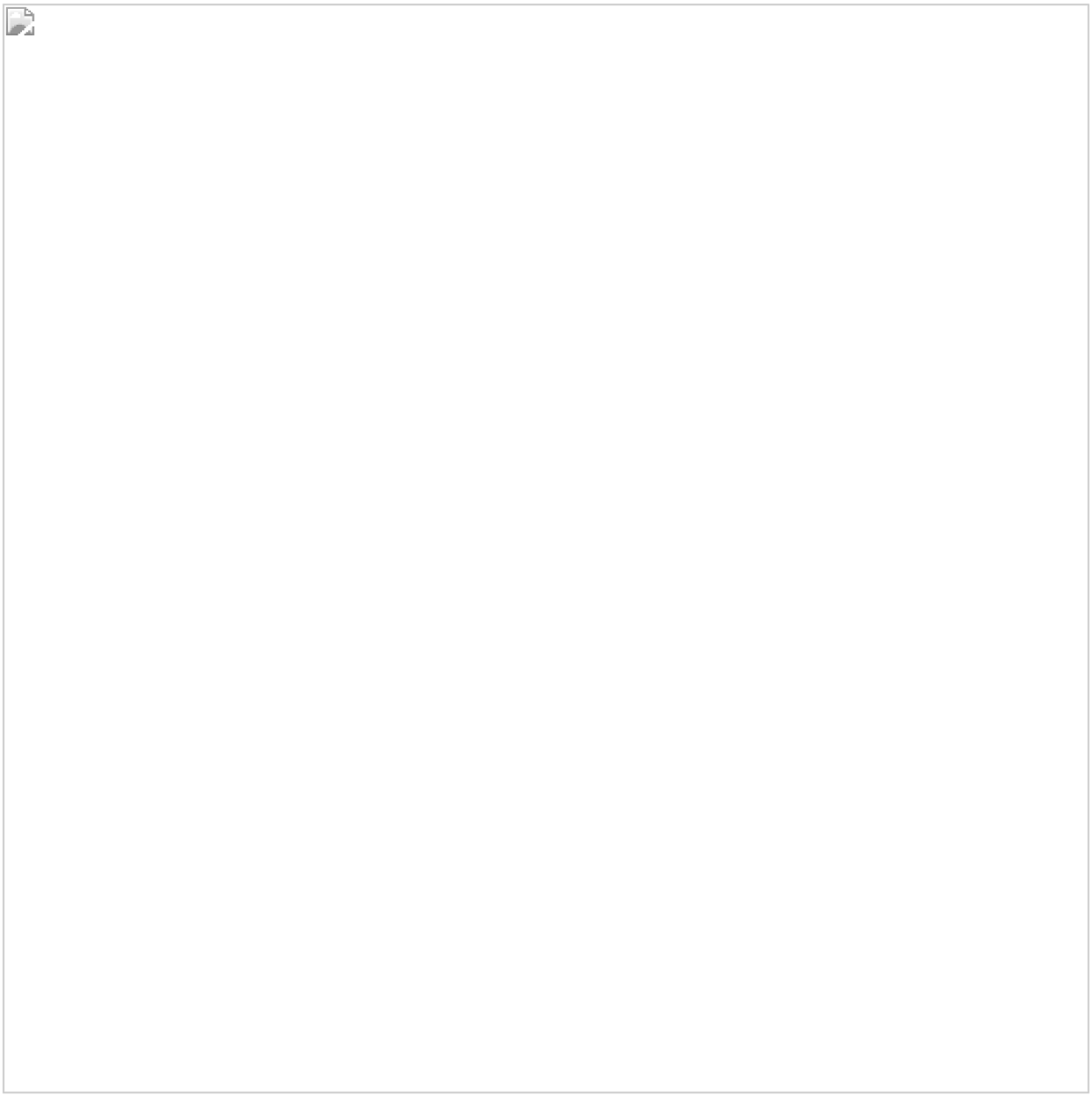


Think about it

1. Where was the treasure buried?

- ○ In the well
- ○ Under a pomegranate tree
- ○ In the temple

The Minister Wonders



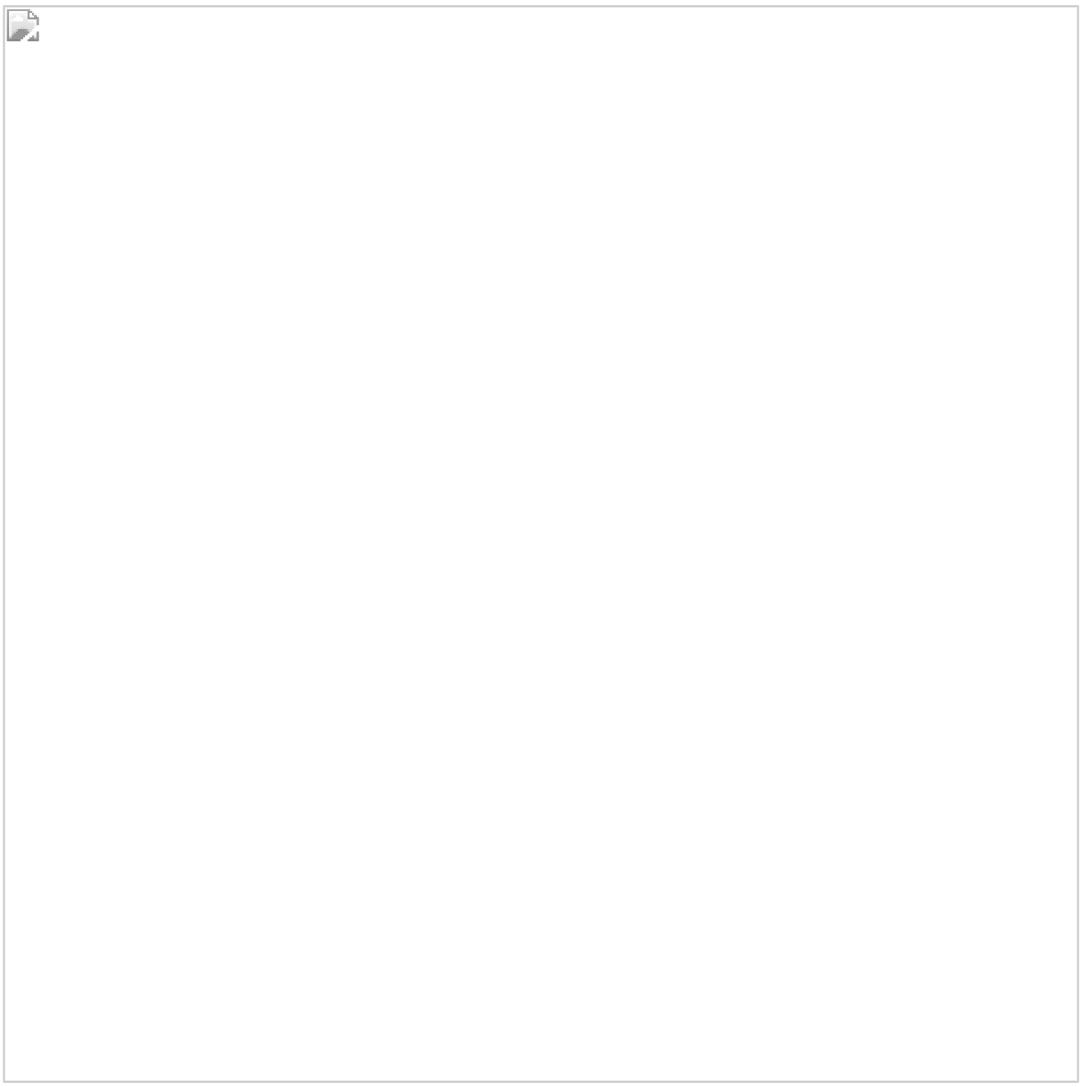
But the King's minister, Devajnanin, had his doubts. He whispered in the King's ear: “How can a man possess such knowledge unattainable by men without having studied the books of magic?”

He thought Harisarman had a secret understanding with thieves. “It will be much better,” said the minister, “to test him by some new artifice.”

So the King took a pitcher, dropped a frog into it, and covered it.

TALK ABOUT IT

The minister asked a good question and wanted a test. Why do you think it matters to check whether someone's claim is true?

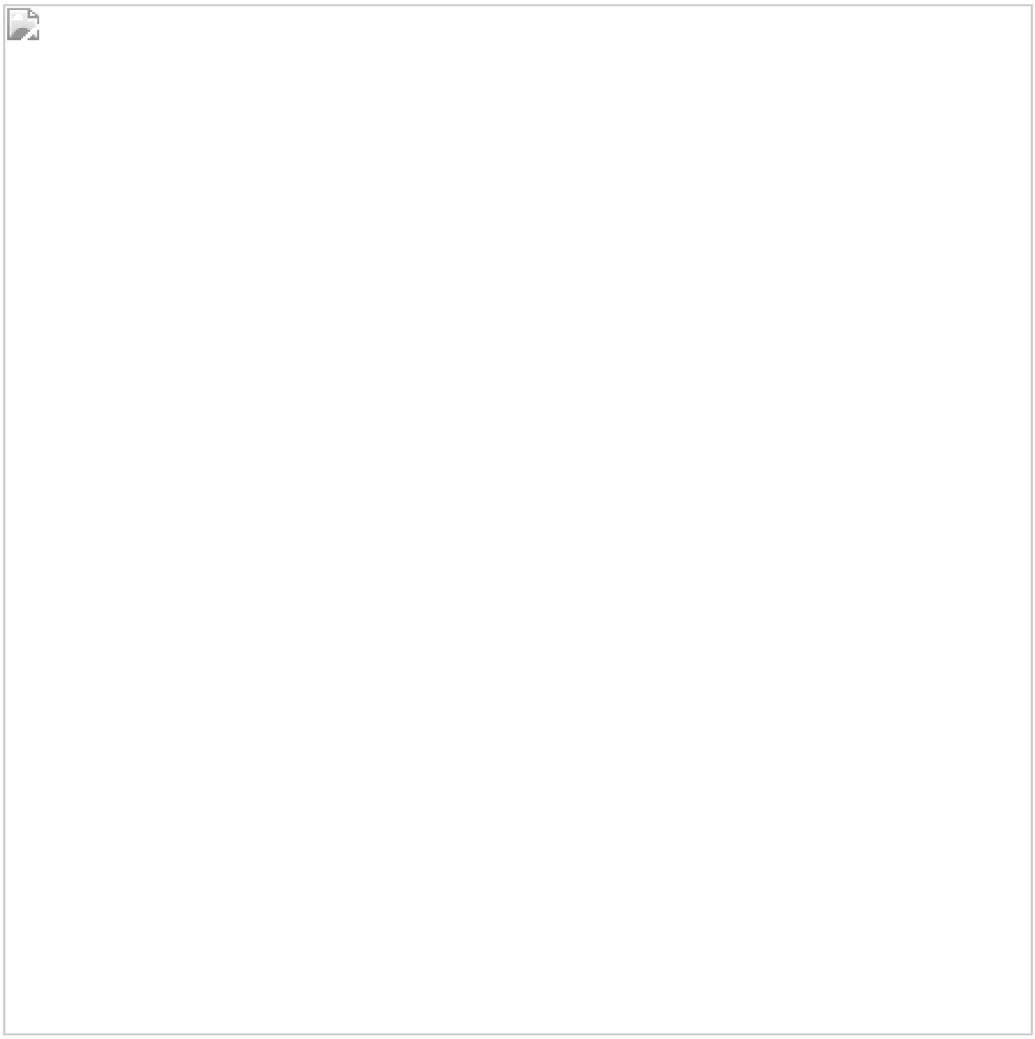


Think about it

1. What did the King put in the pitcher?

- ○ A frog
- ○ A snake
- ○ A gold coin

Froggie



“Brahman, if you can guess what there is in this pitcher,” said the King, “I will do you great honor to-day.”

Harisarman thought his last hour had come. When he was a child, his father had called him “Froggie.” Sighing, he talked to himself by that pet name: “This is a fine pitcher for you, Froggie; it will soon become the swift destroyer of your helpless self.”

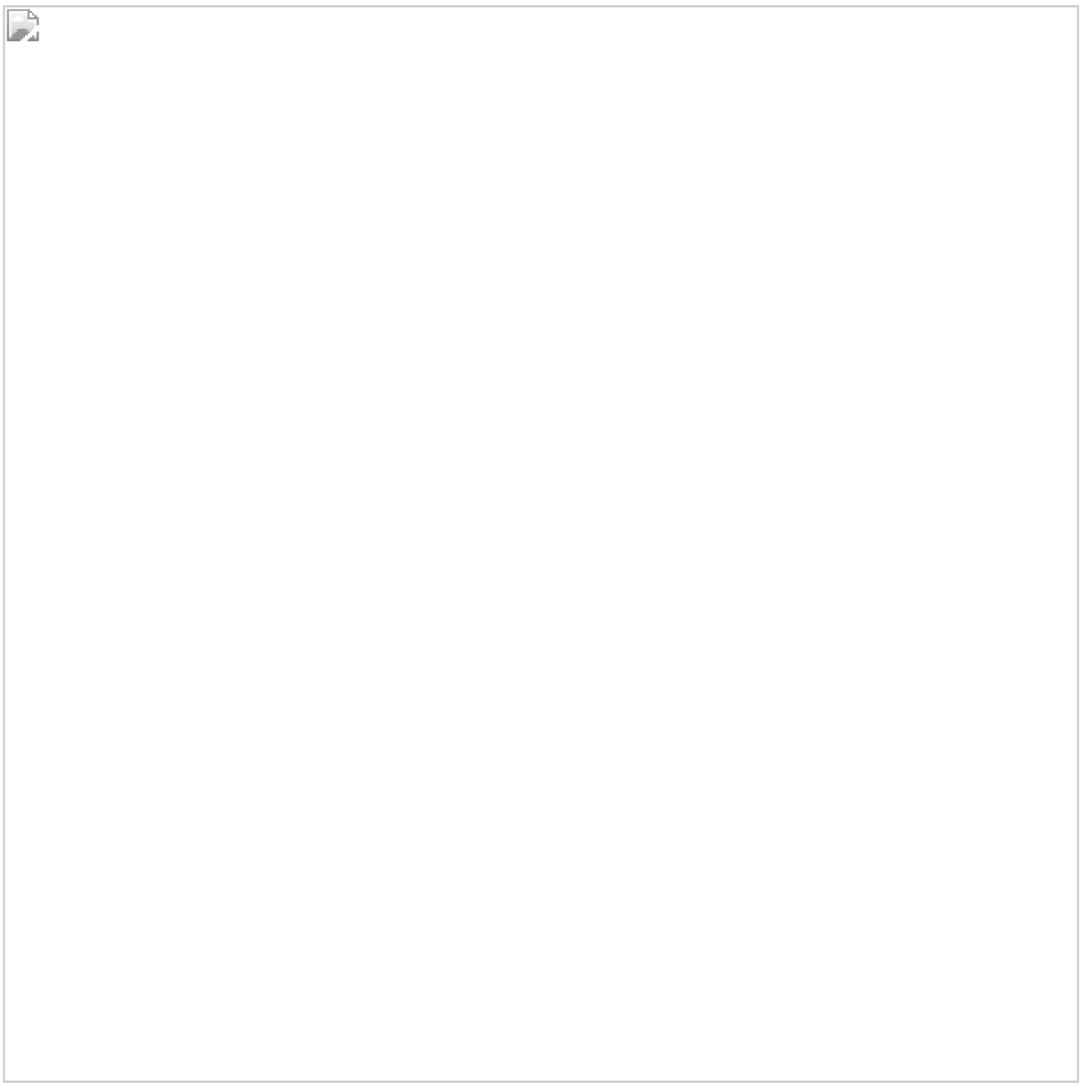
The people cheered: “Ah! a great sage; he knows even about the frog!”

The King was delighted. He gave Harisarman the money from more villages, with gold, an umbrella, and carriages of state. And so Harisarman prospered in the world.

TALK ABOUT IT

An old book says to be “speaking the truth in love” (Ephesians 4:15). At the wedding feast, what could Harisarman have said? Who would have been better off?

Froggie · another picture



Think about it

1. Why did everyone think Harisarman knew about the frog?

- ○ He peeked in the pitcher
- ○ He called himself Froggie by chance
- ○ The King told him

2. Harisarman never told anyone the truth. What do you think might happen next?

“There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

— Yeshua HaMashiach

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