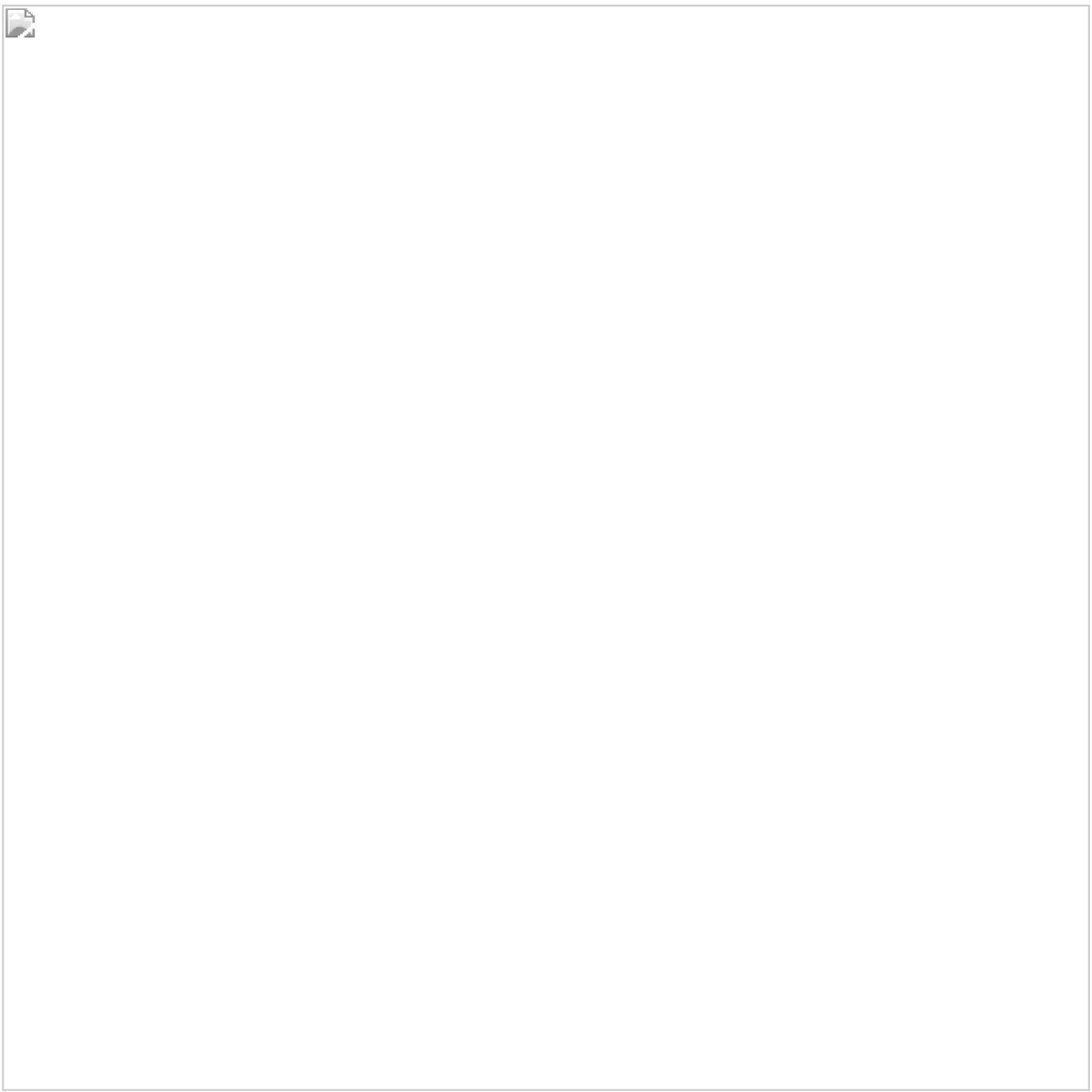
COLORING THE CLASSICS

Midas

A Myth of Greece and Rome



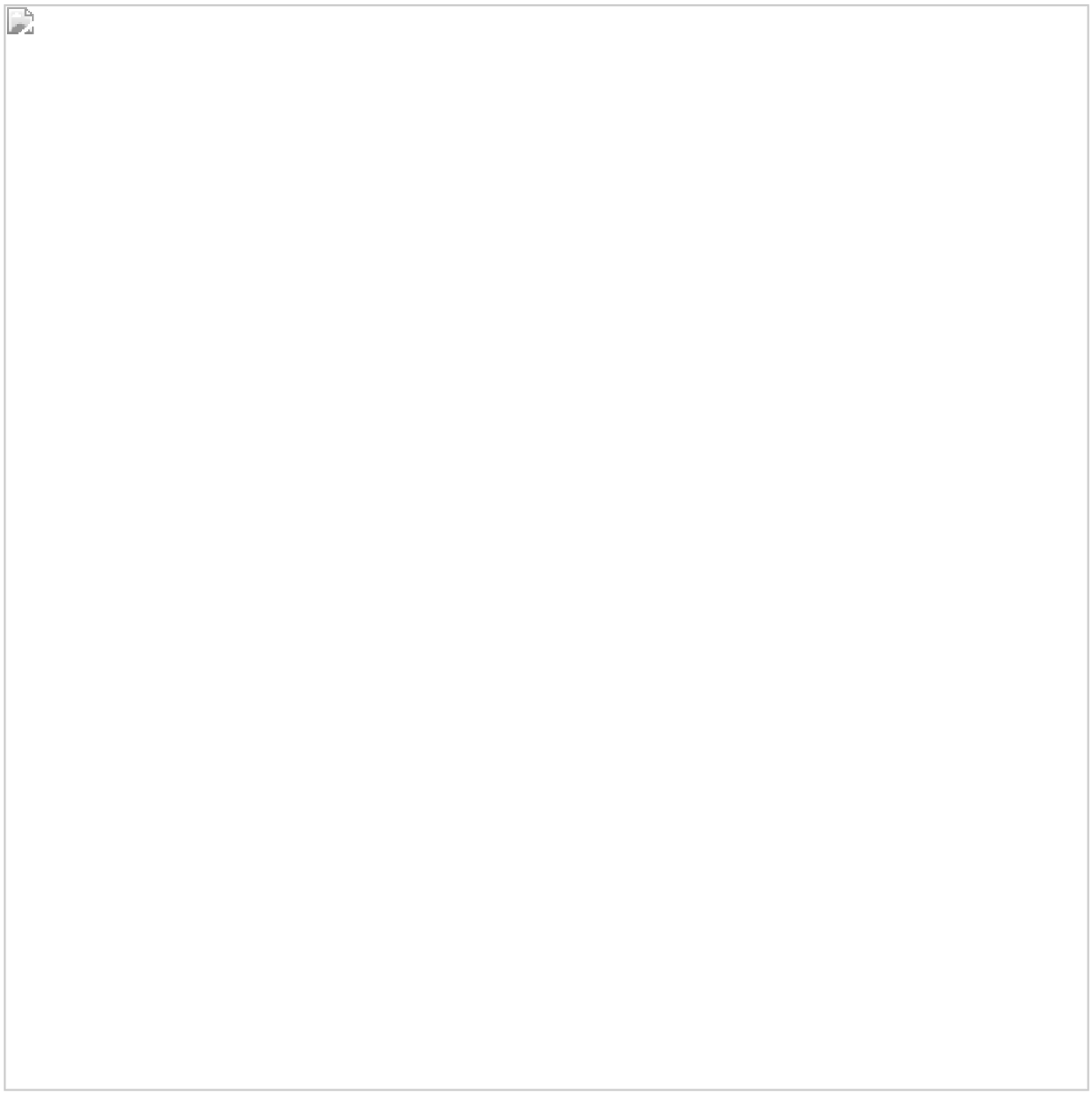
Once upon a time there lived a very rich king named Midas. He loved gold more than anything in the whole world. Or if he loved anything better, it was his little daughter, who played so merrily beside his footstool.

TALK ABOUT IT

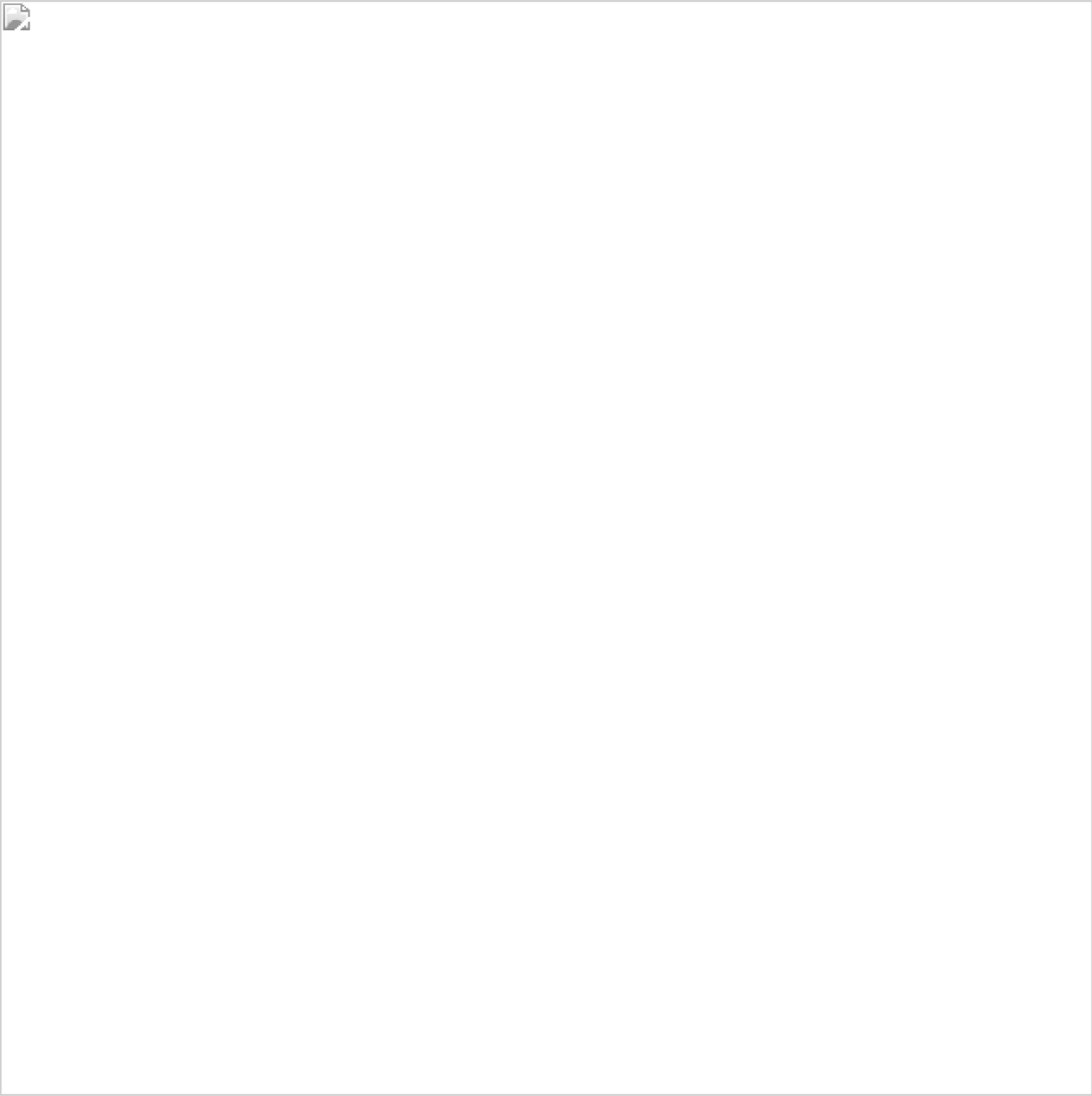
Midas loved his daughter and he loved his gold. Which do you think he loved more? Why?

This book belongs to _____

Midas · another picture



The King Who Loved Gold

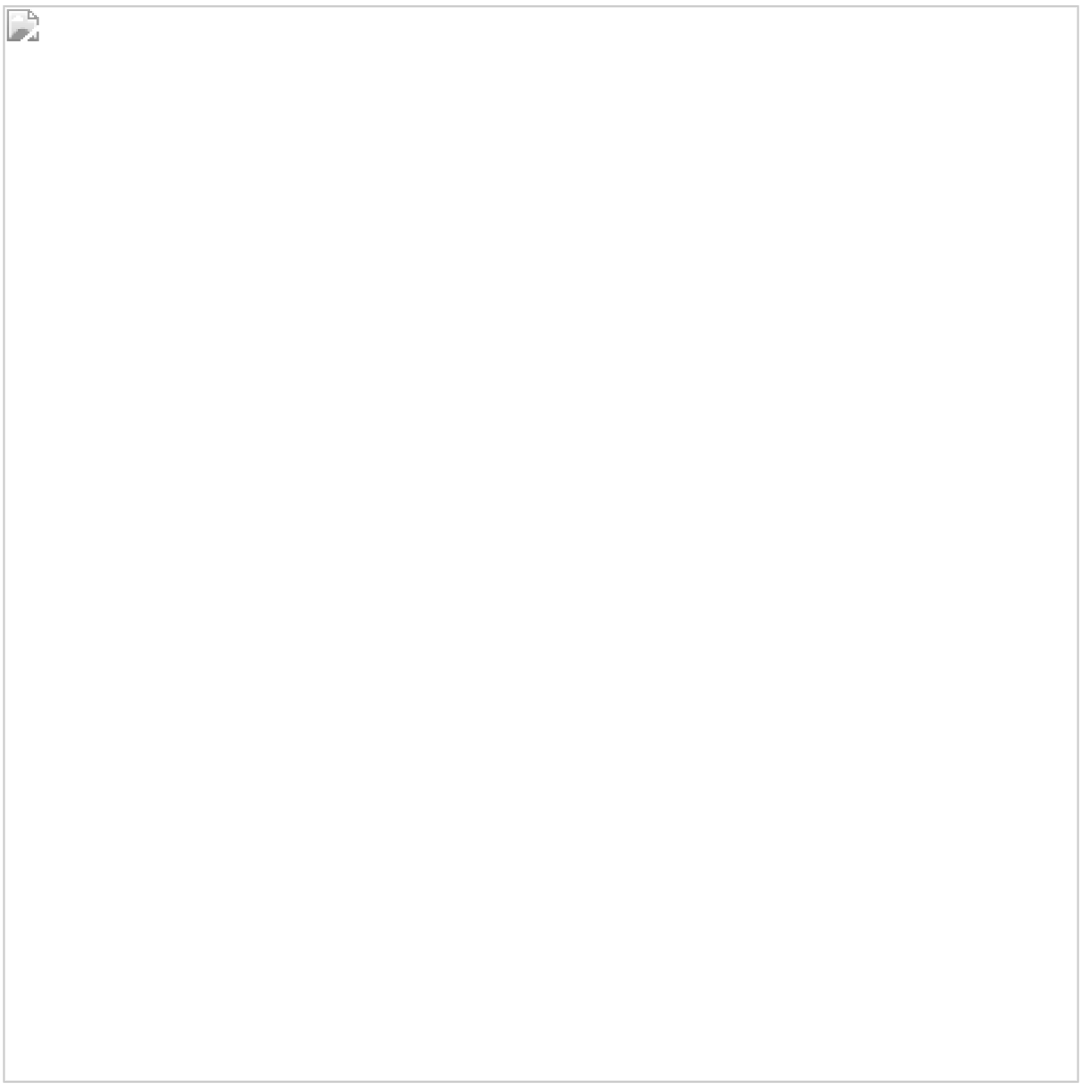


The more he loved her, the more he wished to be rich for her sake. He thought the best thing he could do for her was to leave her the biggest pile of gold that had ever been heaped together.

So he gave all his thoughts and all his time to getting it.

TALK ABOUT IT

Midas thought he was doing the best thing for his daughter. What do you think she would have liked best from her father?

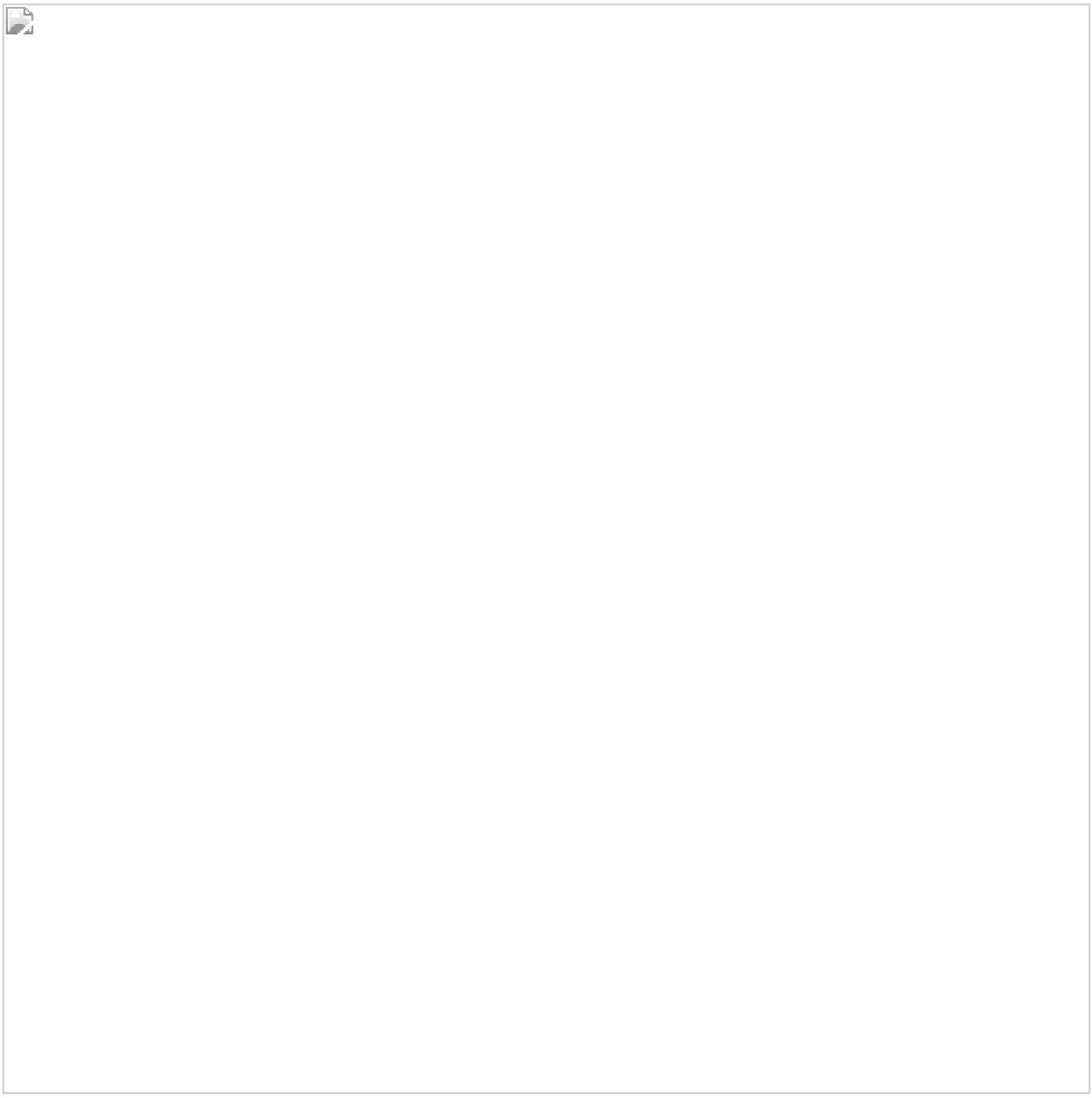


Think about it

1. Who did King Midas love most of all?

- ○ His little daughter
- ○ His horse
- ○ His cook

Buttercups



When Midas worked in his garden, he used to wish that the roses had leaves made of gold.

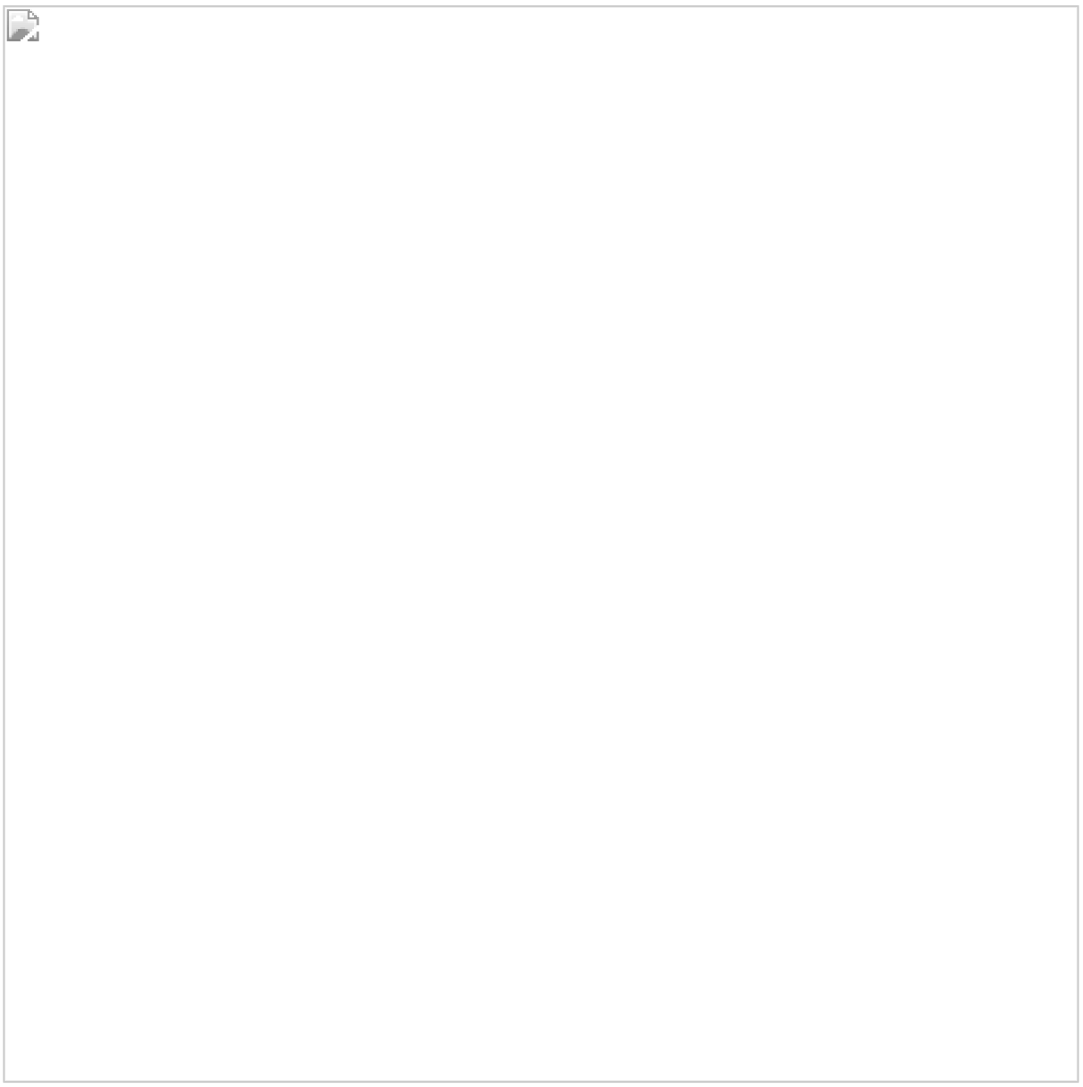
One day his little daughter brought him a handful of yellow buttercups. “Now if these had only been real gold,” he said, “they would have been worth gathering.”

Soon Midas forgot how beautiful the flowers and the grass and the trees were. He could hardly bear to look at anything that was not gold.

TALK ABOUT IT

What do you think the little girl thought when her father said that about her buttercups?

Buttercups · another picture

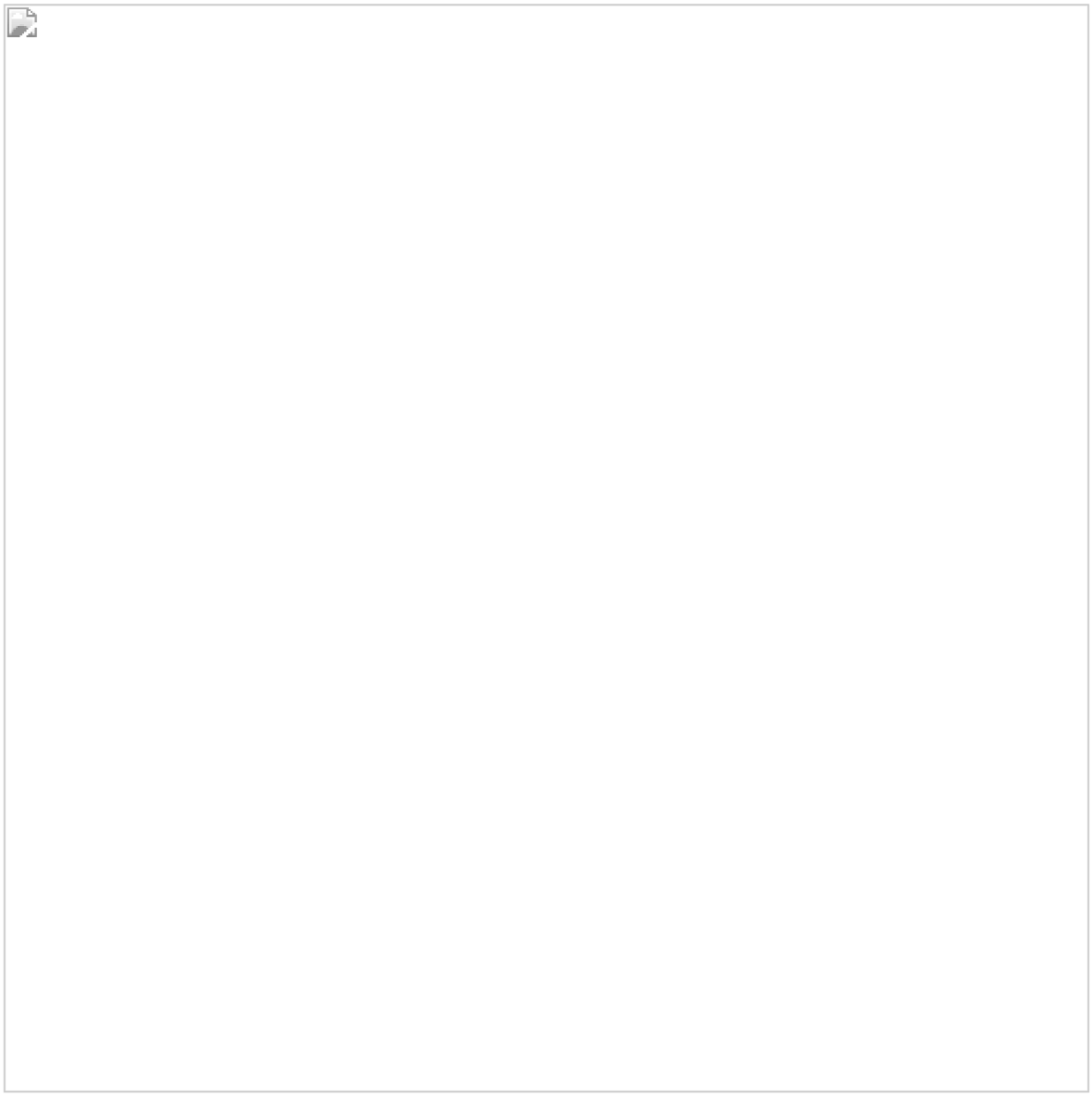


Think about it

1. What did the little girl bring her father?

- ○ A handful of buttercups
- ○ A bag of coins
- ○ A basket of apples

The Dark Room



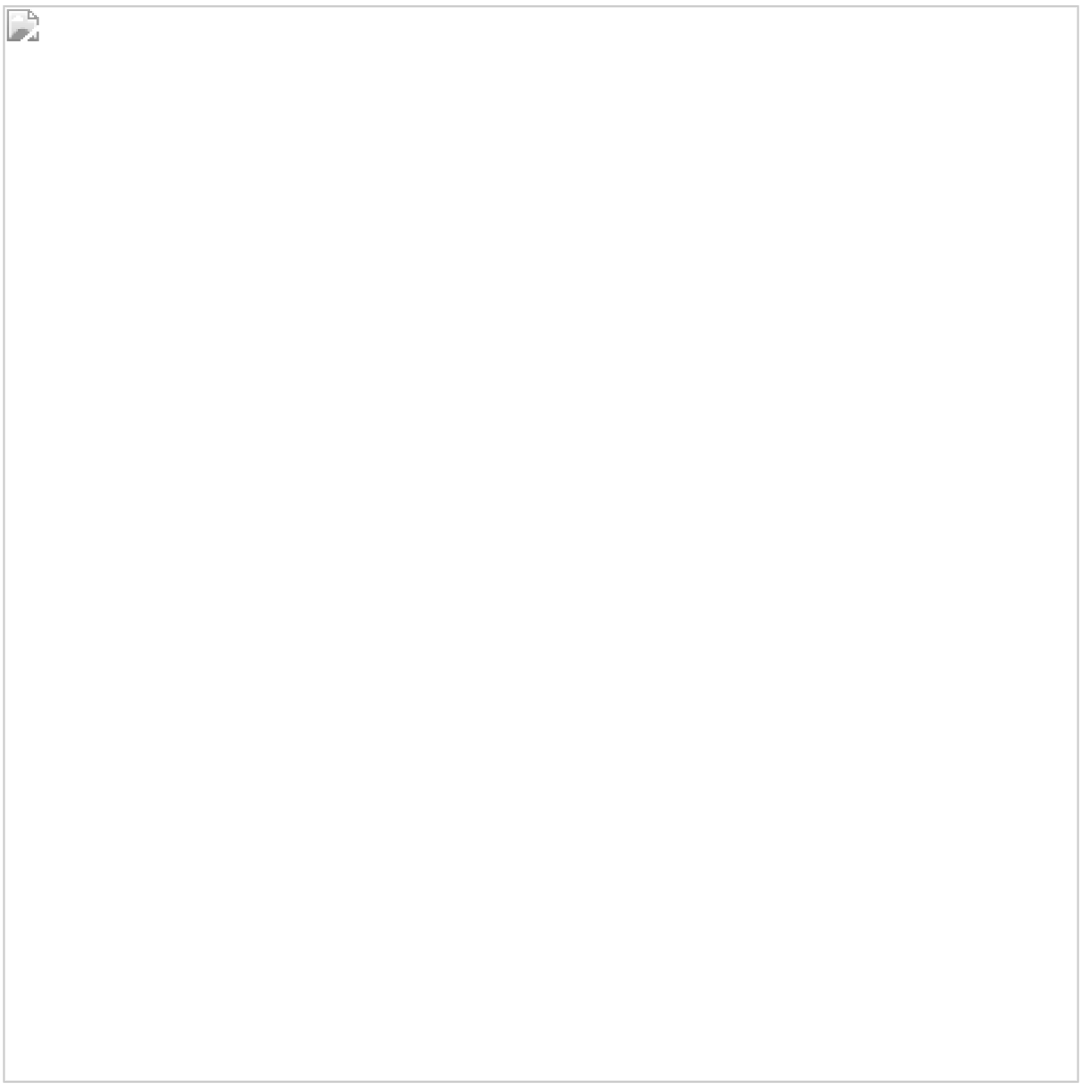
Every day Midas spent hours in a dark, ugly room underground, where he kept all his money.

Whenever he wanted to be very happy, he locked himself in and poured gold coins out of his money-bags. He counted the bars of gold in a big oak chest with a great iron lock. Sometimes he looked at a heap of gold dust in the light from one tiny window.

It never seemed to be enough. “What a happy man I should be,” he said one day, “if only the whole world could be made of gold, and if it all belonged to me!”

TALK ABOUT IT

Midas had a great deal of gold, and still it never seemed enough. Why do you think that was?

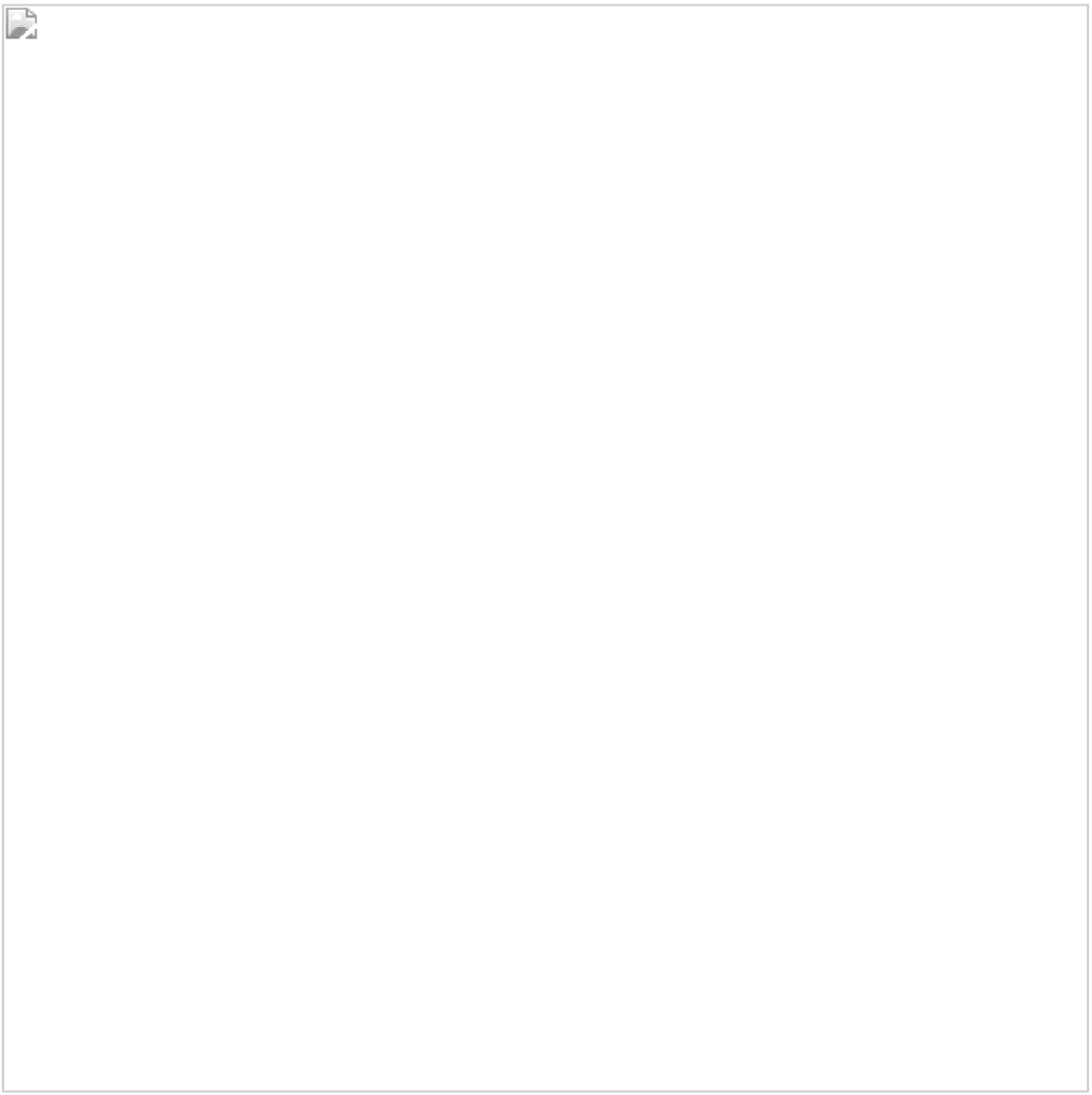


Think about it

1. Where did Midas keep his gold?

- ○ In a dark room underground
- ○ In the garden
- ○ Under his daughter's bed

A Stranger in the Sunbeam



Just then a shadow fell across the golden pile. Midas looked up and saw a young man with a cheery, rosy face, standing in the thin strip of sunshine from the little window.

Midas had locked the door, so no ordinary person could have come in. But the stranger seemed so friendly that Midas was not afraid.

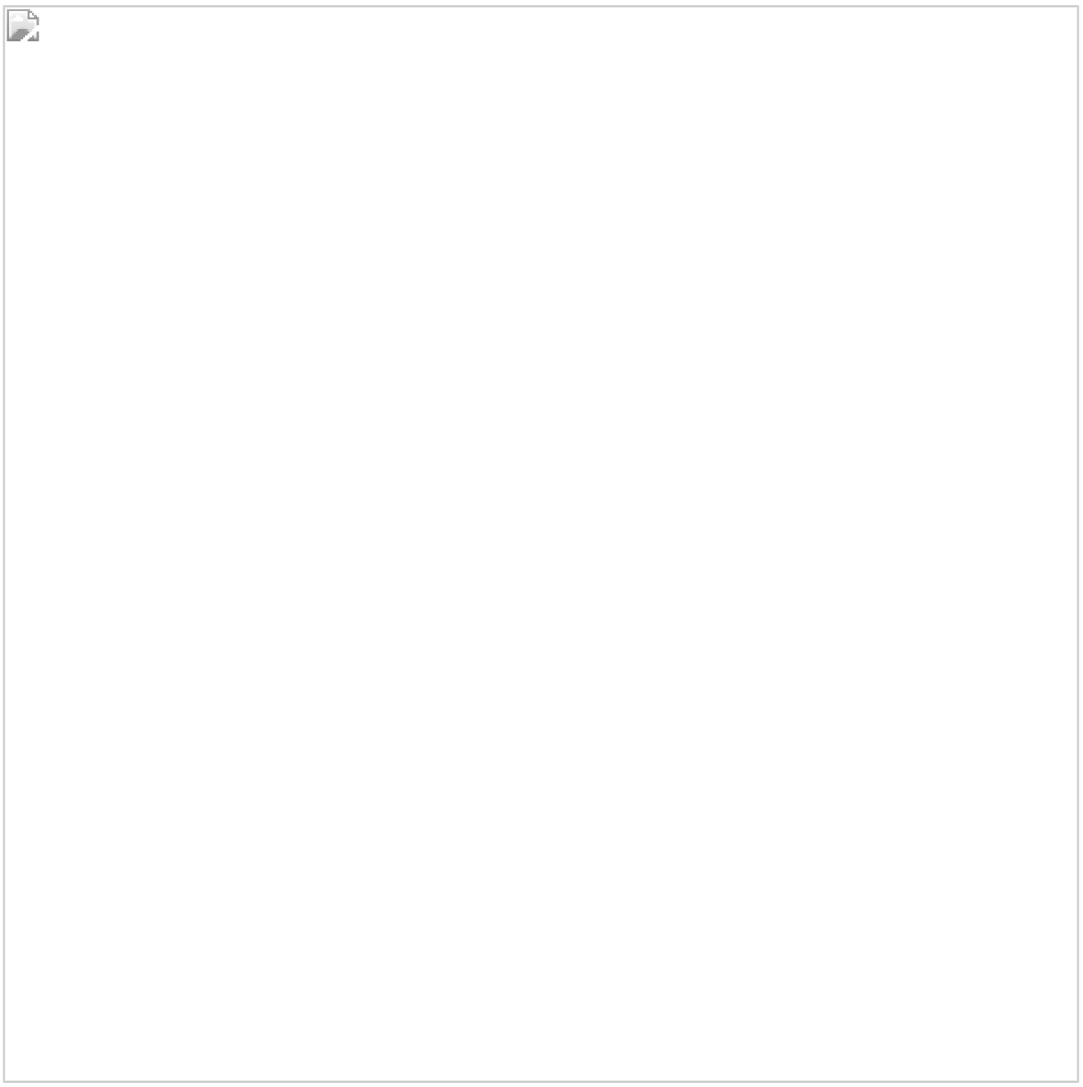
“What would satisfy you?” the stranger asked.

Midas thought for a minute. “I should like everything I touch to be changed into gold.”

TALK ABOUT IT

Midas had locked the door, and the stranger came in anyway. Who do you think this stranger might be?

A Stranger in the Sunbeam · another picture

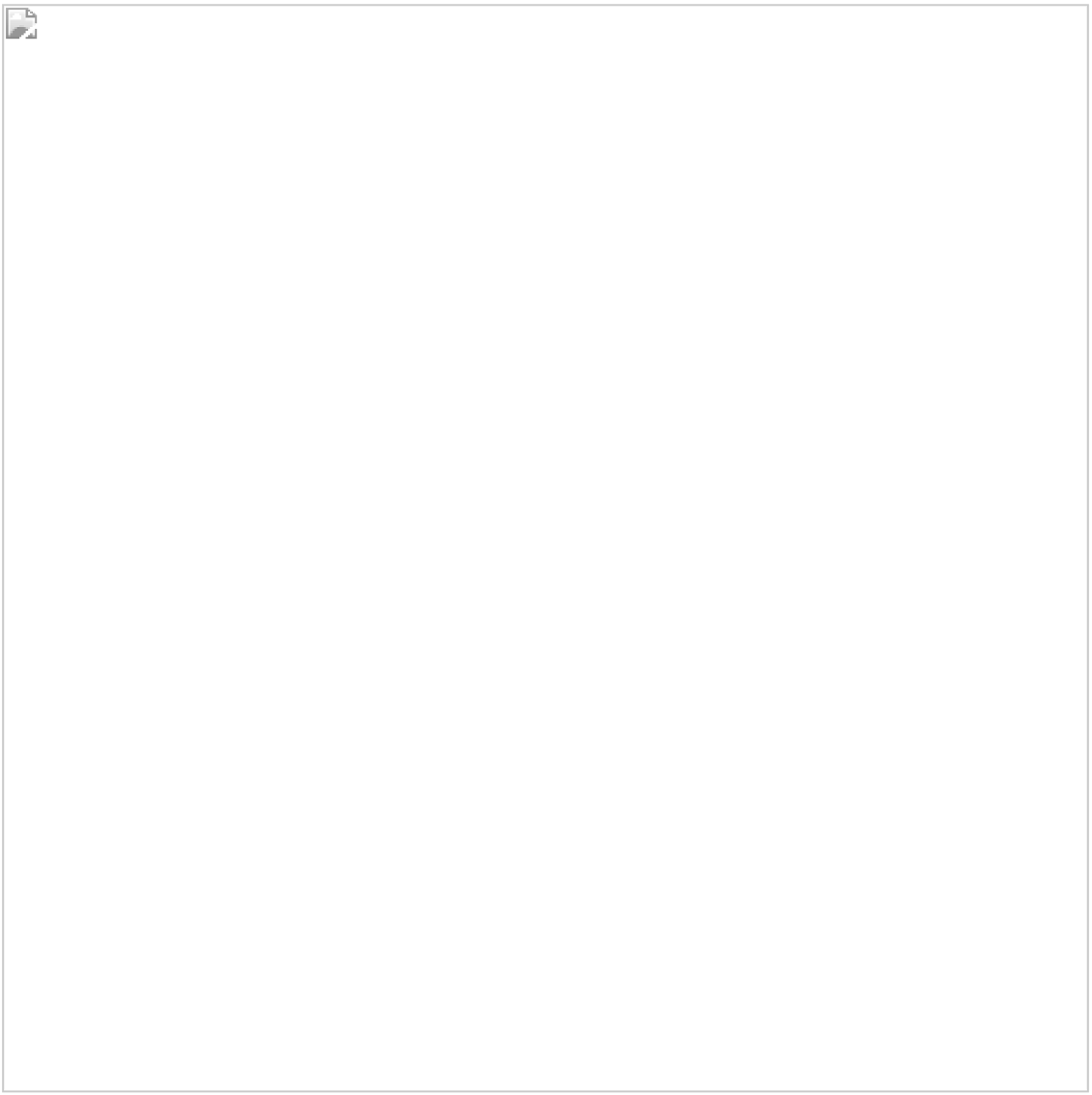


Think about it

1. What did Midas wish for?

- ○ To fly
- ○ To turn everything he touched into gold
- ○ To live in a castle

Are You Quite Sure?



The stranger smiled, and his smile filled the room like a flood of sunshine. “Are you quite sure, Midas, that you would never be sorry if your wish were granted?”

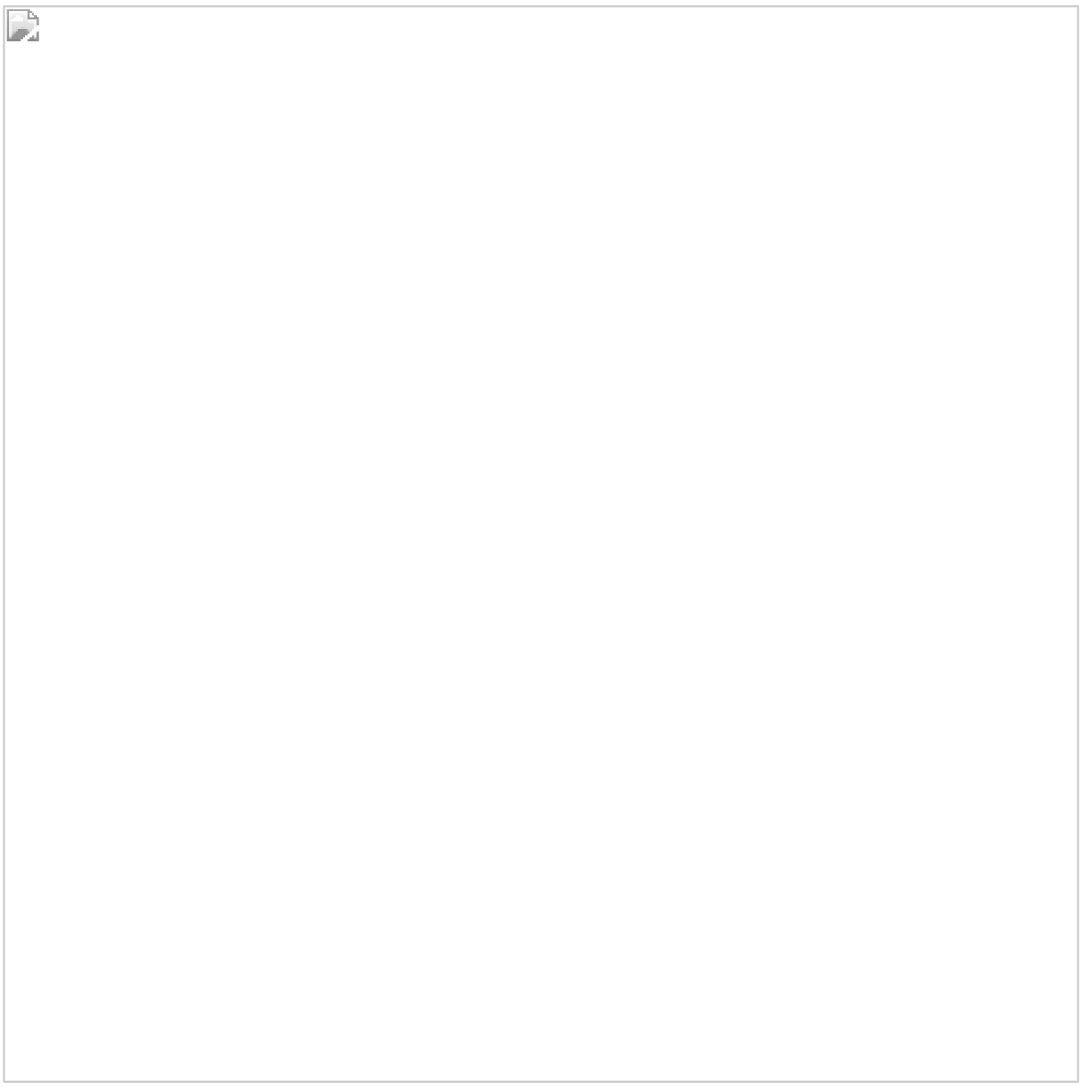
“Quite sure,” said Midas. “I ask nothing more to make me perfectly happy.”

“Be it as you wish, then,” said the stranger. From tomorrow at sunrise, he said, everything Midas touched would be changed into gold.

The stranger grew brighter and brighter, and Midas had to close his eyes. When he opened them, only a yellow sunbeam was left.

TALK ABOUT IT

The stranger asked Midas if he was sure. Is there a time when you stopped to think before you asked for something?

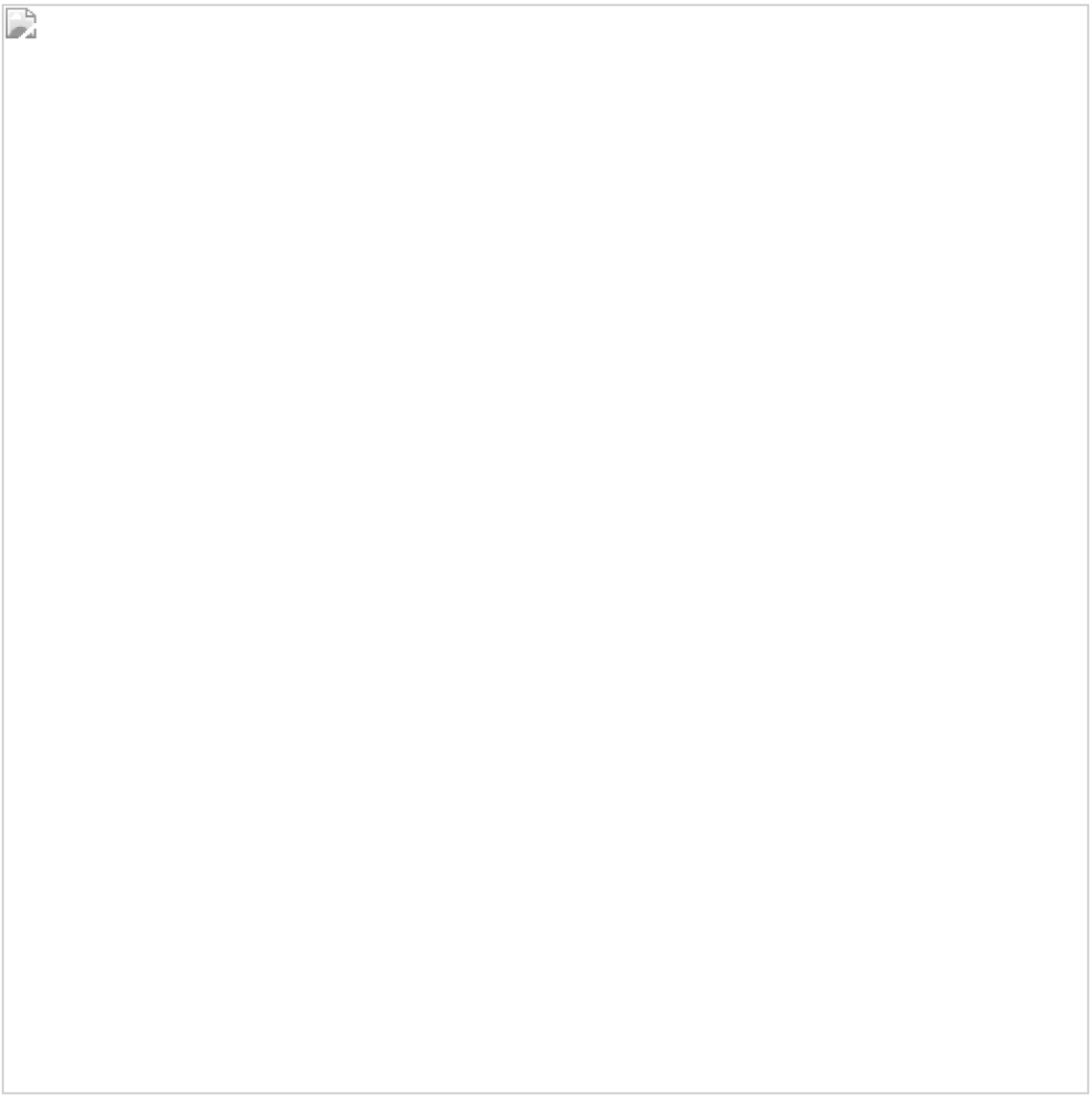


Think about it

1. When would the golden touch begin?

- ○ At sunrise the next day
- ○ That very minute
- ○ At the next full moon

The Golden Morning



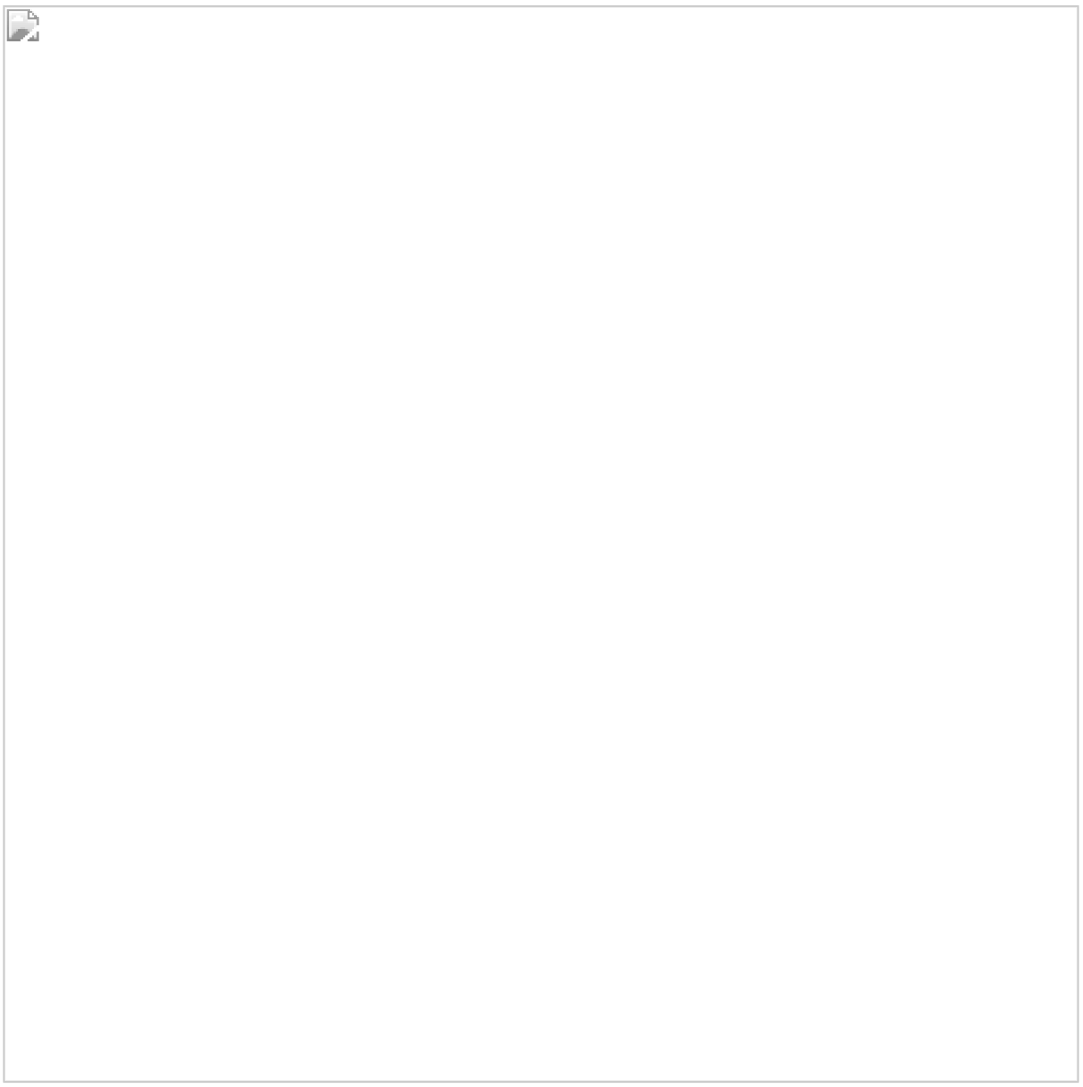
Midas hardly slept that night. At first light he touched his chair, and nothing happened. Then the sun rose, and the bedcover under his hands turned into woven cloth of pure gold!

The bed-post became a golden pillar. The curtain tassel became a heavy lump of gold. A book became a bundle of thin golden leaves, and no one could read a word of it. His spectacles turned to gold, too, and he could not see through them.

Midas thought that was rather troublesome, but he soon forgot about it. He went downstairs laughing, and the stair rail turned to gold under his hand.

TALK ABOUT IT

Midas could not read his book or see through his glasses any more. What other things might you miss if everything you touched turned to gold?

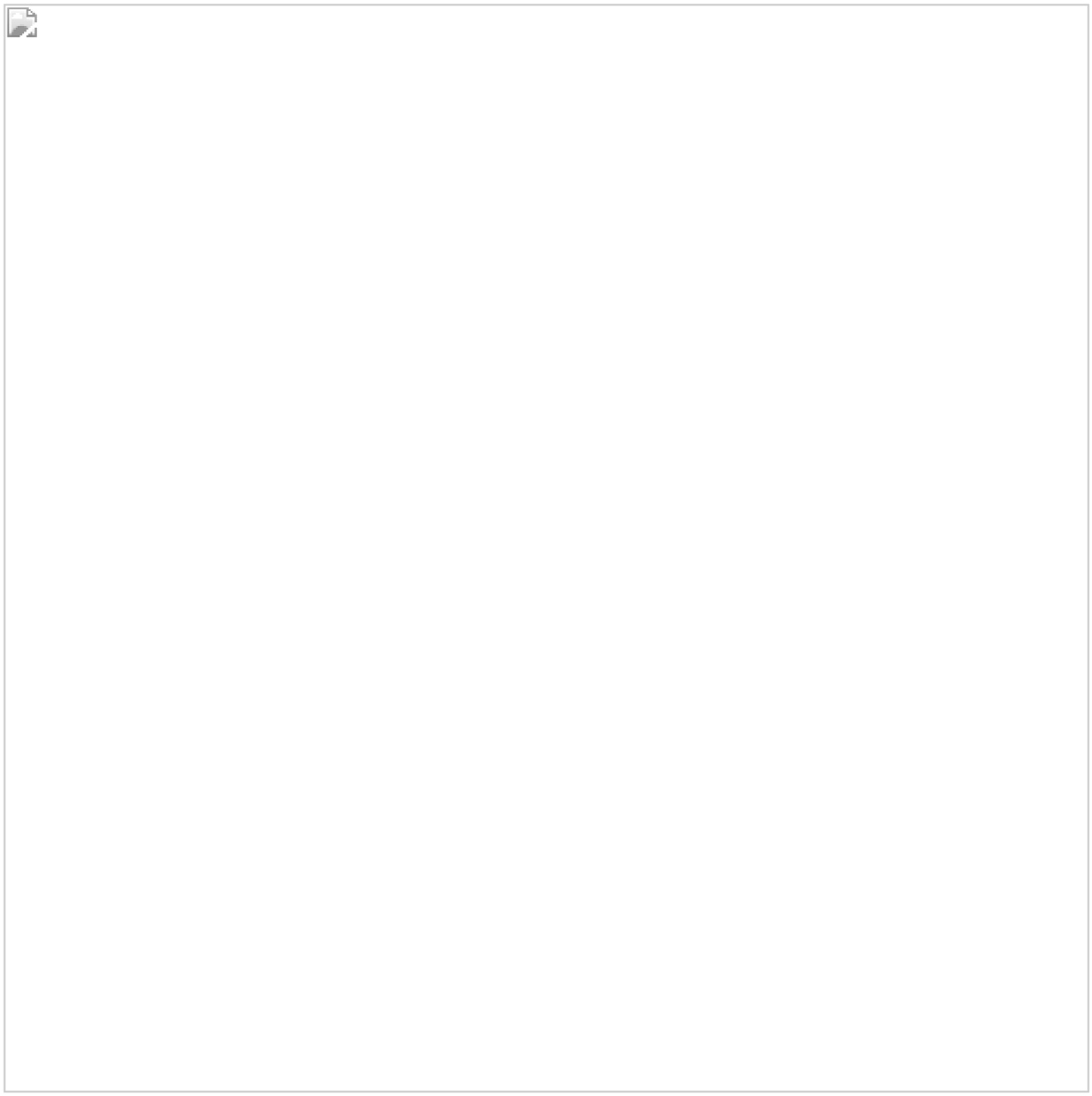


Think about it

1. What happened to the book Midas picked up?

- ○ It became thin golden leaves, with no words to read
- ○ It flew away
- ○ It opened by itself

The Garden



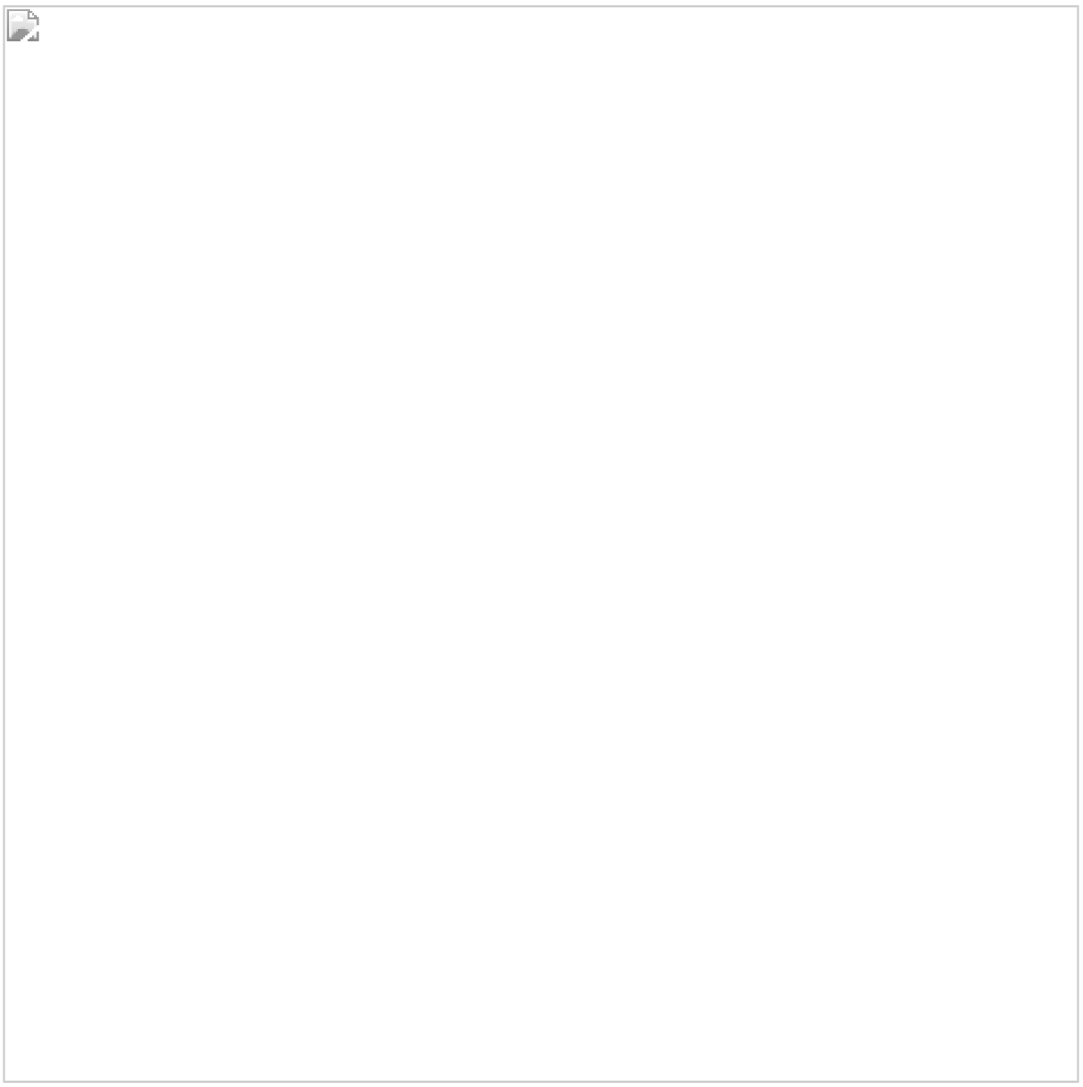
The garden was lovely that morning. Red roses scented the air, violets nestled under the bushes, and birds sang in the cherry trees full of white blossoms. But Midas did not even see it.

He went from bush to bush and touched the flowers. The pink and red faded from the roses. The violets turned stiff and hard. The snow-white blossoms became flakes of solid gold.

Midas was pleased with his morning's work. He went back to the palace for breakfast.

TALK ABOUT IT

What do you think the roses lost when they became gold?

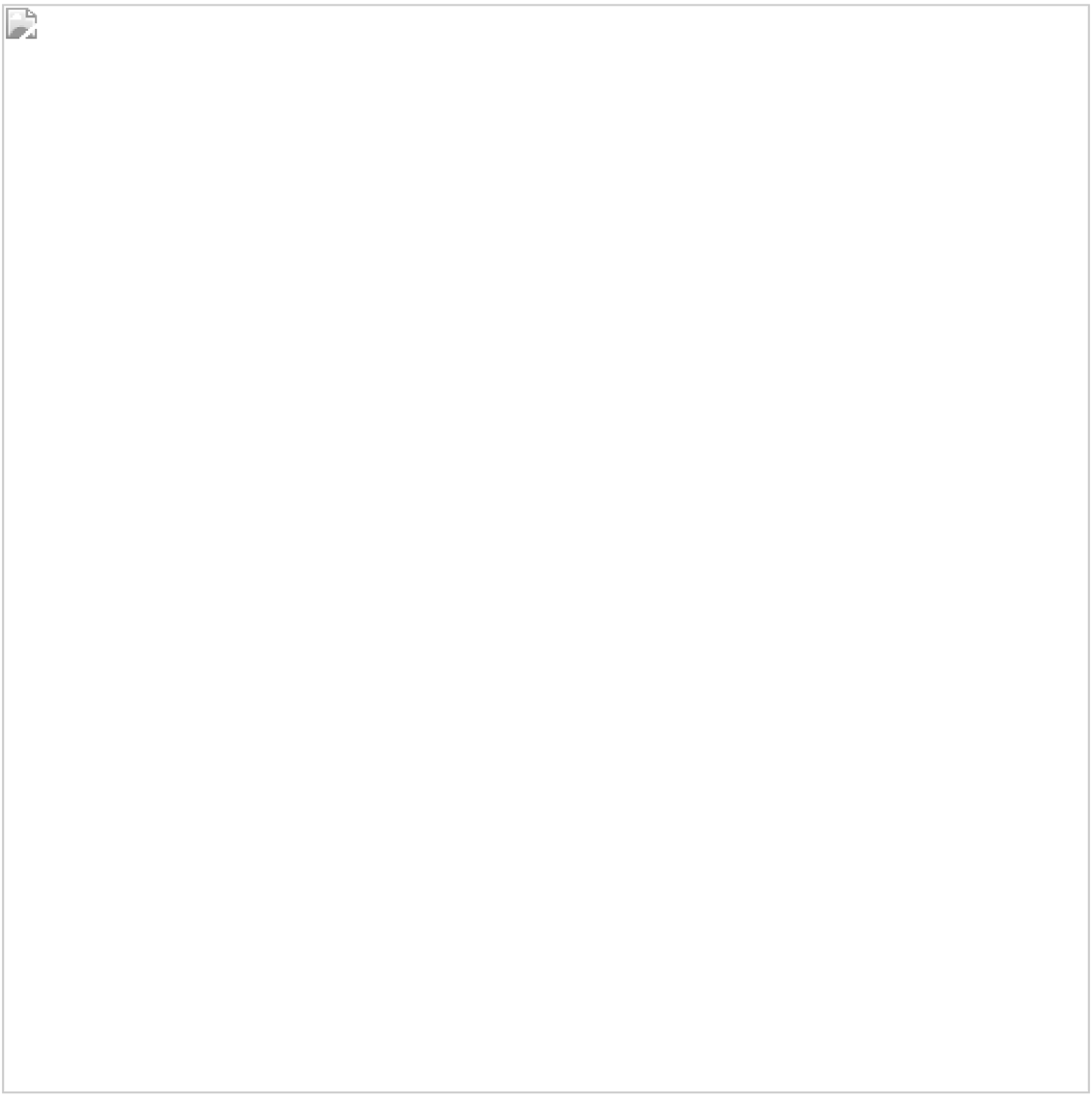


Think about it

1. What happened to the roses when Midas touched them?

- ○ They turned hard and yellow, and lost their scent
- ○ They grew bigger
- ○ They turned blue

A Very Rich Breakfast



Just then his little daughter ran in, crying. She had gone to gather him some roses, and “they are all spoiled,” she sobbed. They had grown ugly and stiff and yellow, with no scent.

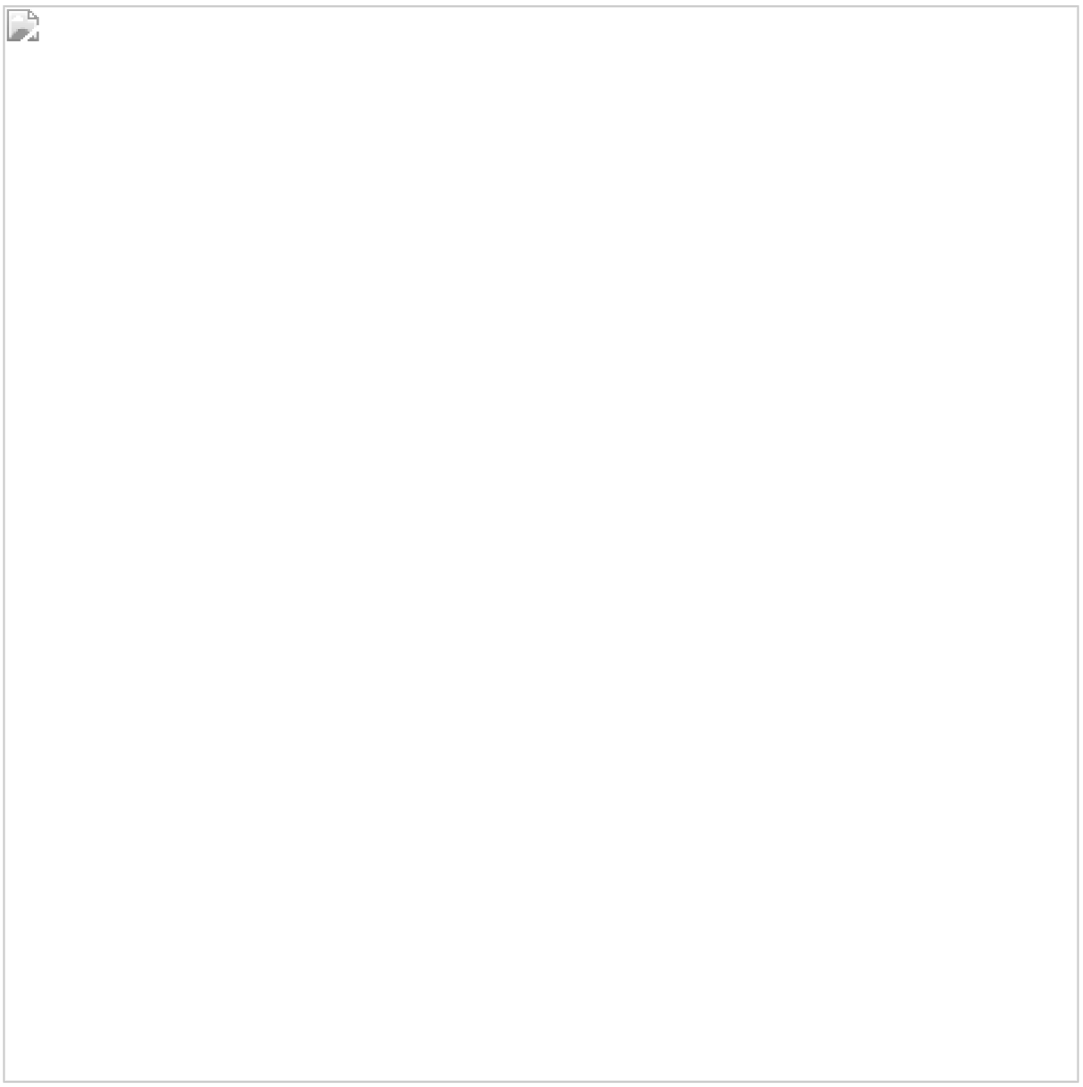
Ashamed that it was his doing, Midas said nothing. They sat down to breakfast.

He took a sip of coffee, and it hardened into a lump of gold. The fish on his plate turned to gold. He broke a hot cake, and the crumbs shone like hard sea-sand.

When she asked what was the matter, he said, “Nothing, child, nothing.” Then he looked at his little girl eating her bread and milk.

TALK ABOUT IT

Midas did not tell his daughter the truth about the roses. What do you think he could have said?

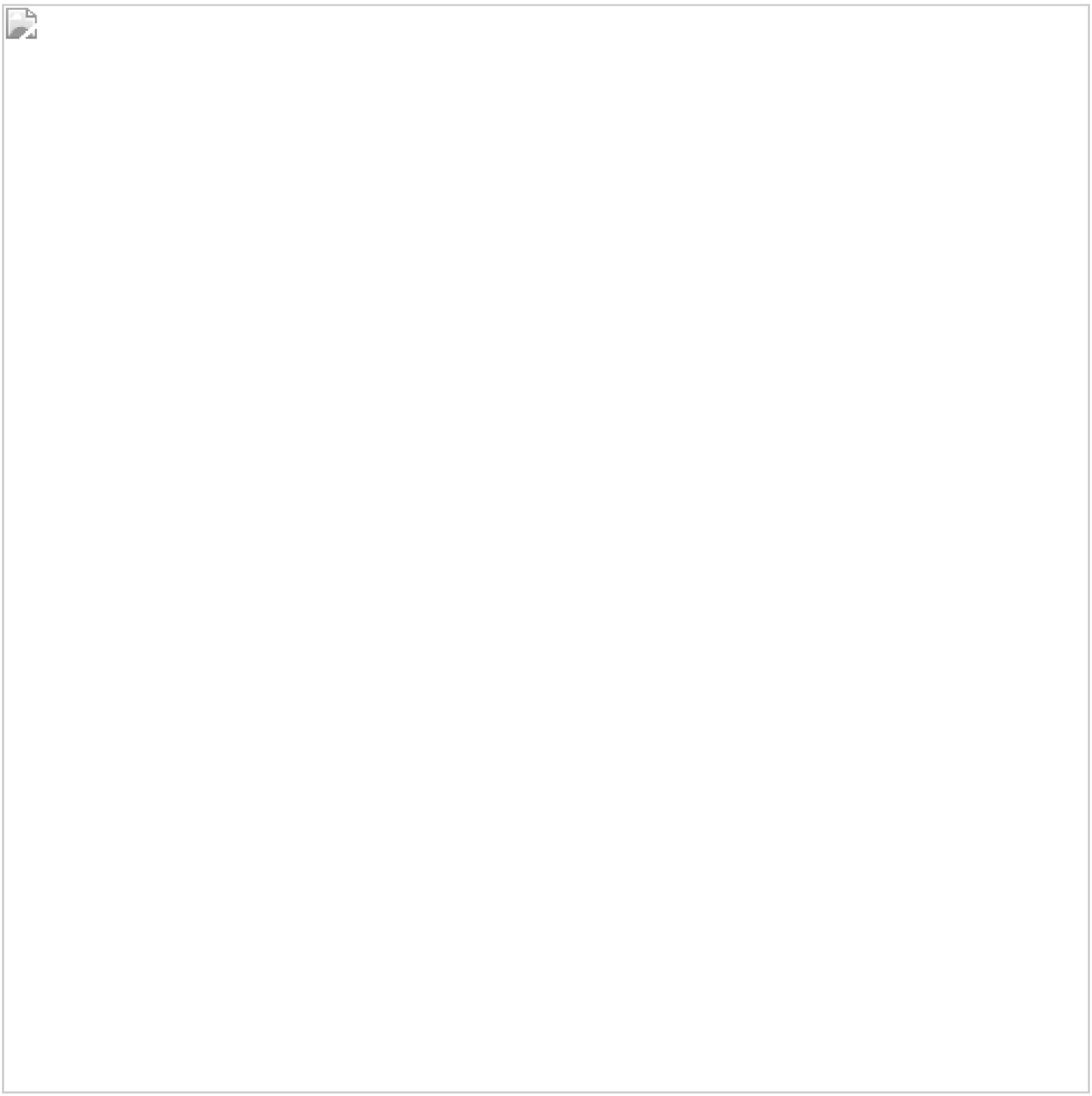


Think about it

1. Why couldn't Midas eat his breakfast?

- ○ He was not hungry
- ○ Everything he touched turned into gold
- ○ His daughter ate it all

The Kiss



Midas began to wonder if riches were the only good thing in the world. He was so hungry that he groaned.

His daughter noticed. She climbed down from her chair and ran to him and threw her arms around his knees.

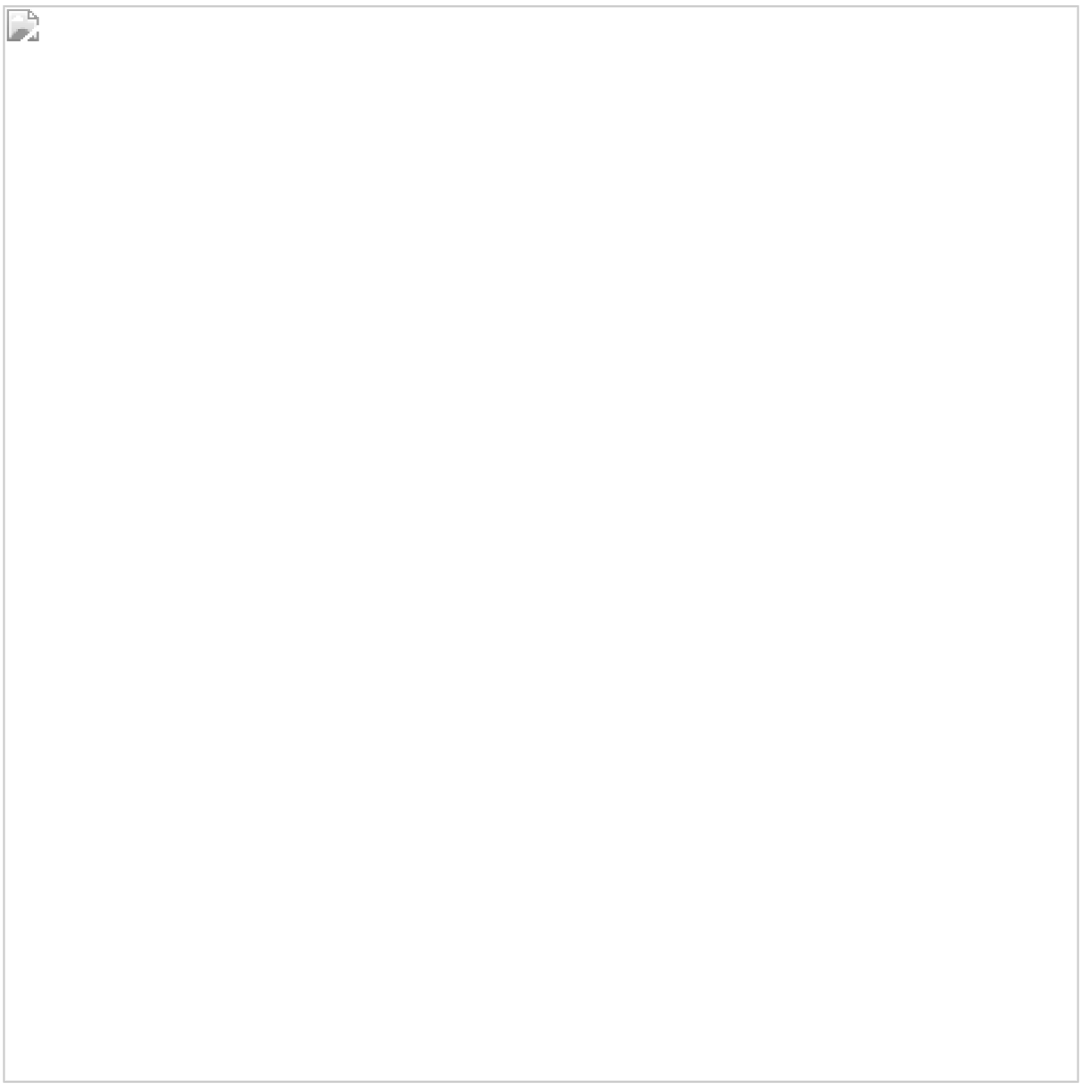
Midas bent down and kissed her forehead. “My precious, precious little girl!” he said. But there was no answer.

Her rosy face had turned to shining gold. Her brown curls hung like golden wires. Her soft little body had grown stiff in his arms.

TALK ABOUT IT

How do you think Midas felt when his daughter did not answer? What would you have wanted to do?

The Kiss · another picture

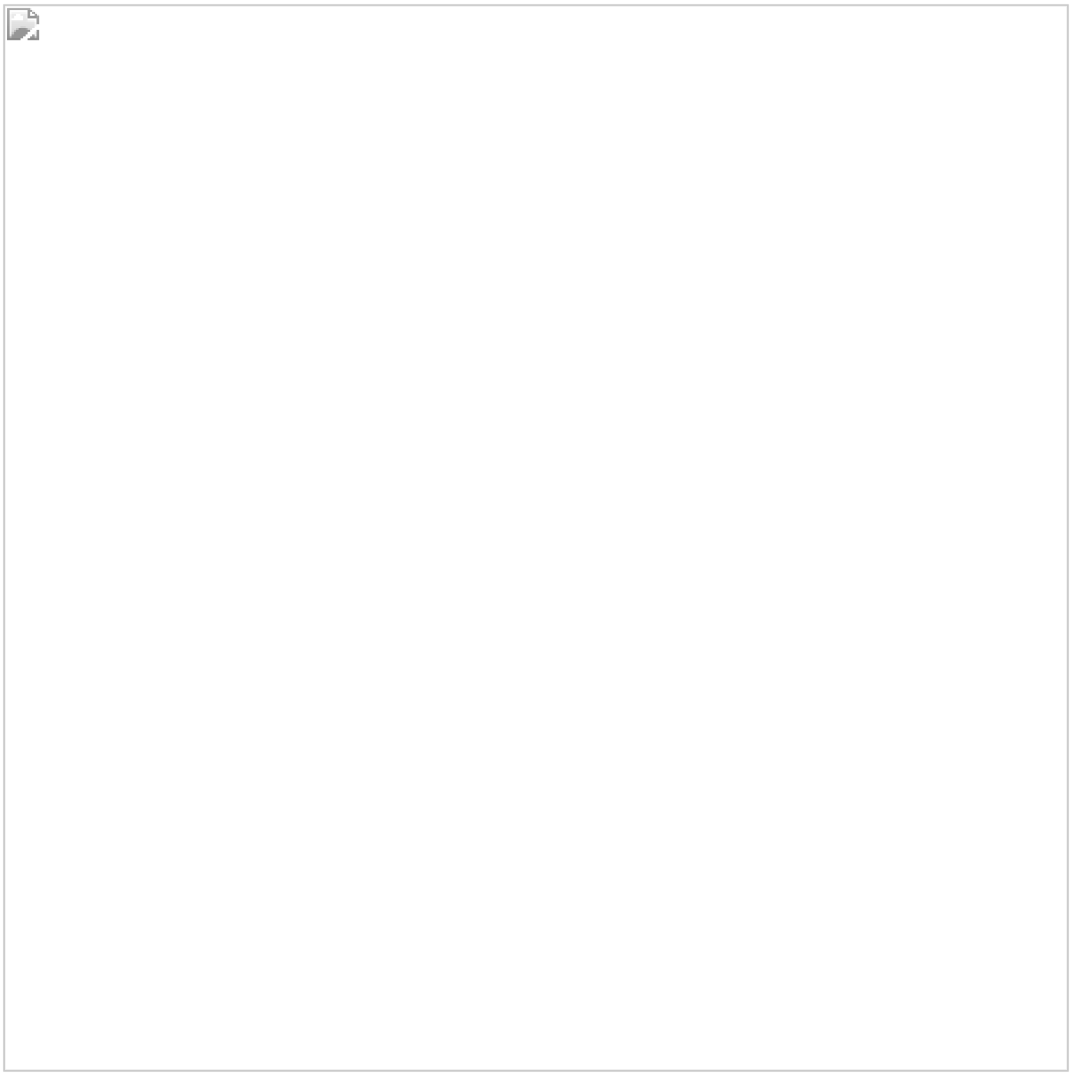


Think about it

1. Why did the little girl run to her father?

- ○ She noticed he was not eating and wanted to hug him
- ○ She wanted gold
- ○ She was playing hide and seek

What Is Worth the Most?



Midas wished he were the poorest man in the world, to bring the color back to his child's face.

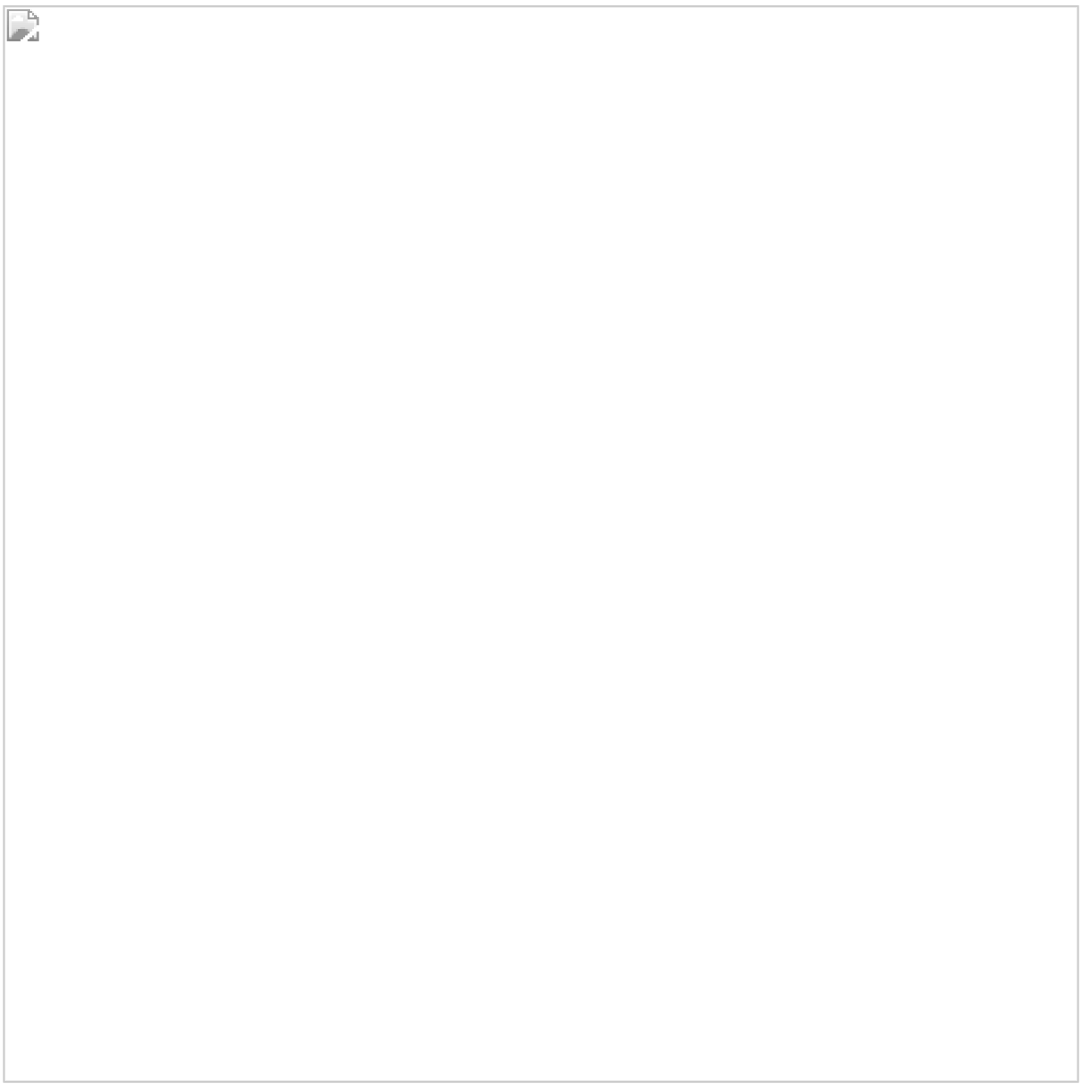
The stranger came back. “Well, friend Midas,” he said, “pray how are you enjoying your new power?”

“I am very miserable,” said Midas. “Gold is not everything, and I have lost all that my heart really cared for.”

The stranger asked which was worth more: a cup of cold water and a crust of bread, or a golden statue, or his own little daughter, alive and loving. “O my child, my child!” sobbed Midas. He would not have given one of her curls for all the gold in the world.

TALK ABOUT IT

The stranger said, “You are wiser than you were.” What did Midas learn?



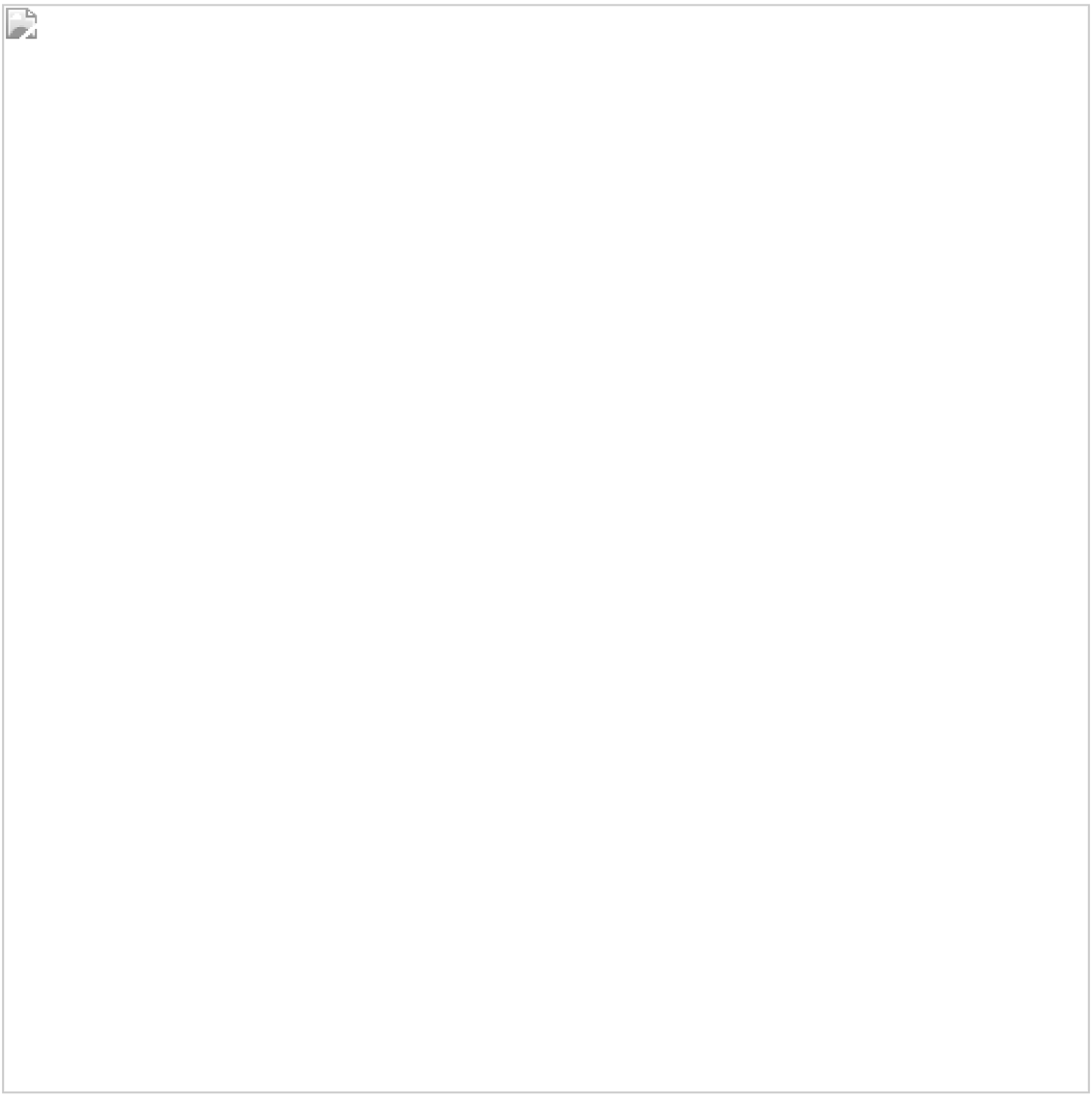
Think about it

1. What did Midas say was worth more than gold?

- ○ His crown
- ○ His daughter, alive and loving
- ○ A bigger palace

2. Is there someone in your life who is worth more to you than any treasure? Who?

The River



“Do you really wish to get rid of your fatal gift?” asked the stranger.

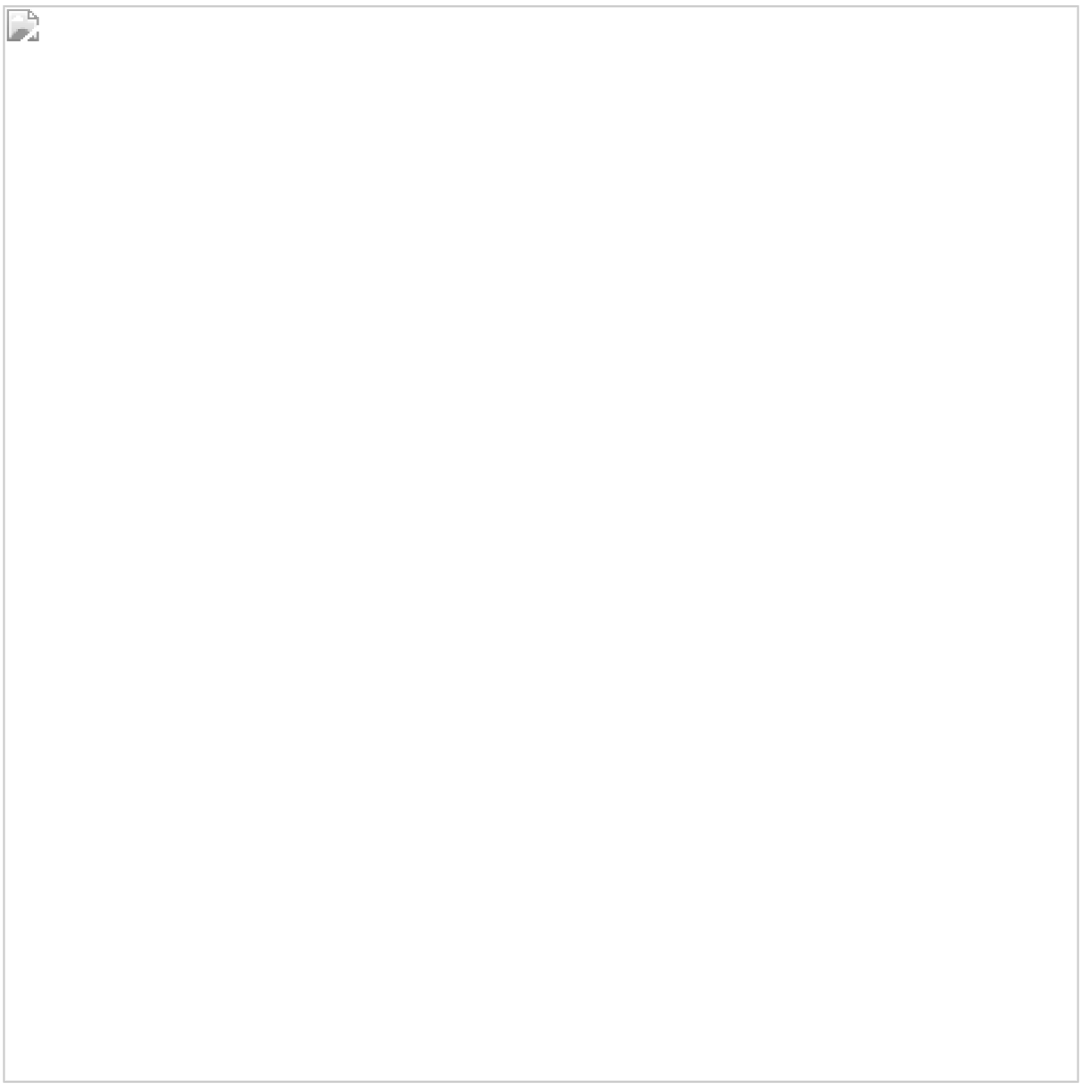
“Yes,” said Midas. “It is hateful to me.”

“Go then,” said the stranger, “and plunge into the river that flows at the bottom of the garden.” He should take a pitcher of the same water, too, and sprinkle it over anything he wanted to change back.

Midas ran to the river and jumped in without even taking off his shoes. When he dipped the pitcher, it became a plain earthen pitcher again. A heavy weight seemed to leave him, and he felt light and human once more.

TALK ABOUT IT

The story says that perhaps Midas's heart had been turning to gold too. What do you think that means?

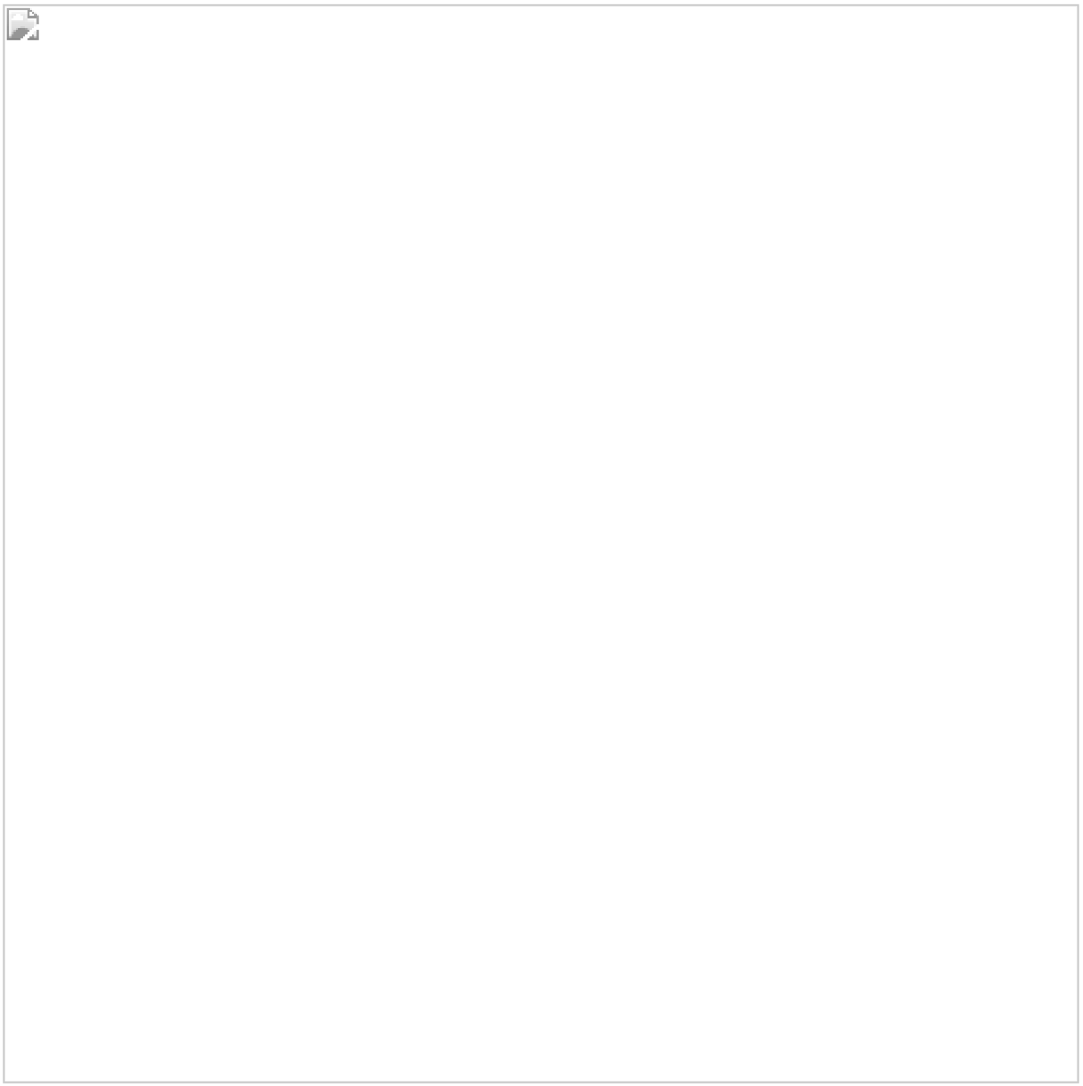


Think about it

1. How could Midas undo the gold?

- ○ With river water
- ○ With a magic word
- ○ By waiting a year

Golden Curls



Midas hurried back to the palace and sprinkled the water over the golden figure of his daughter. The rosy color came back to her cheeks. She sneezed and choked, very surprised to find herself dripping wet.

She did not know she had ever been a statue.

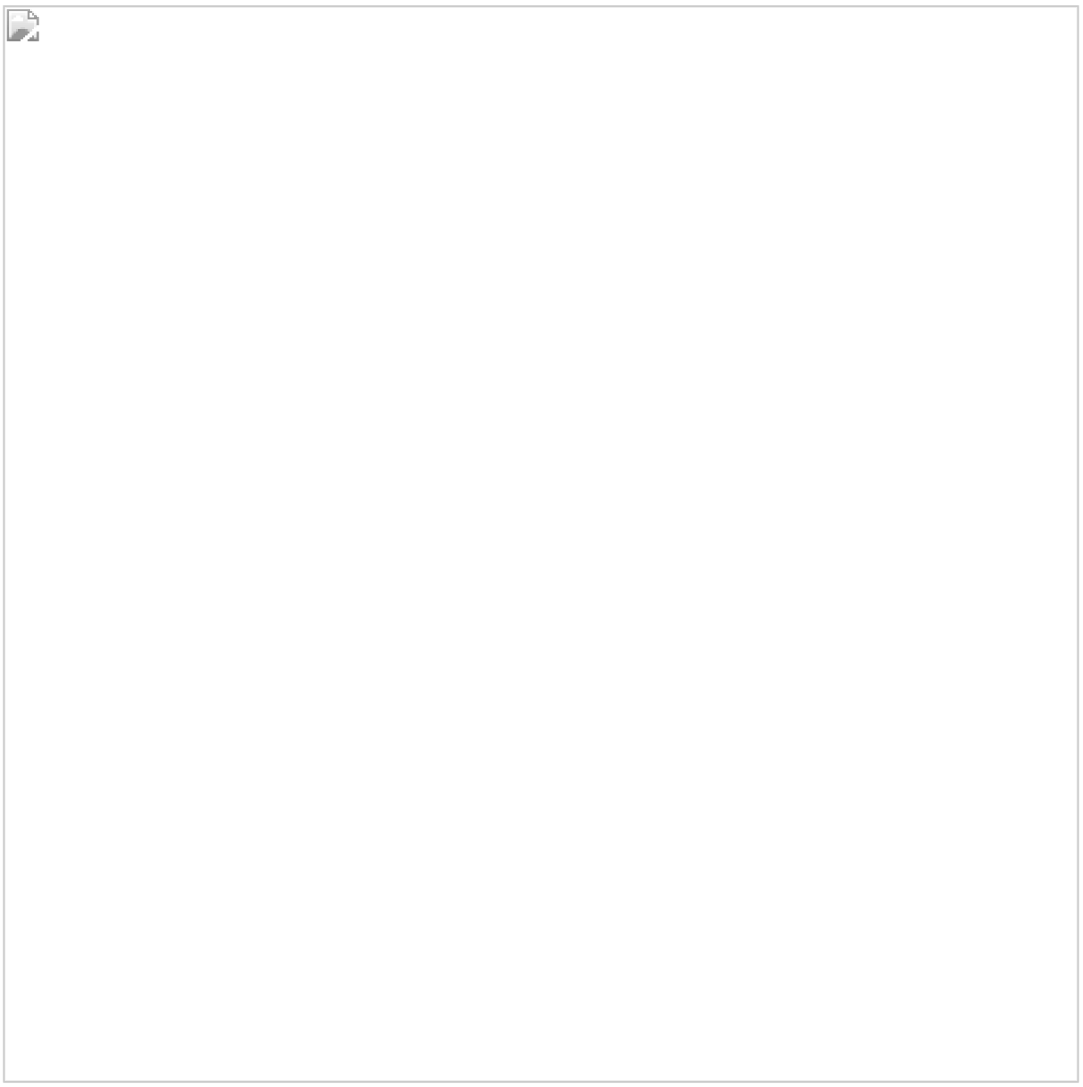
Then Midas sprinkled the roses, the grass and the trees in the garden, and in a minute they were blooming as freshly as ever.

Two things reminded him all his life. The sand at the bottom of the river always sparkled like grains of gold. And his little daughter's curls were no longer brown. They had a golden tinge.

TALK ABOUT IT

Midas gave away the gold and got his daughter back. What do you think he did differently after that day?

Golden Curls · another picture



Think about it

1. What was different about the little girl's curls at the end?

- ○ They had a golden tinge
- ○ They turned white
- ○ They were cut short

2. What would you want to do first, if you had just got back someone you loved?

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

— Yeshua HaMashiach

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