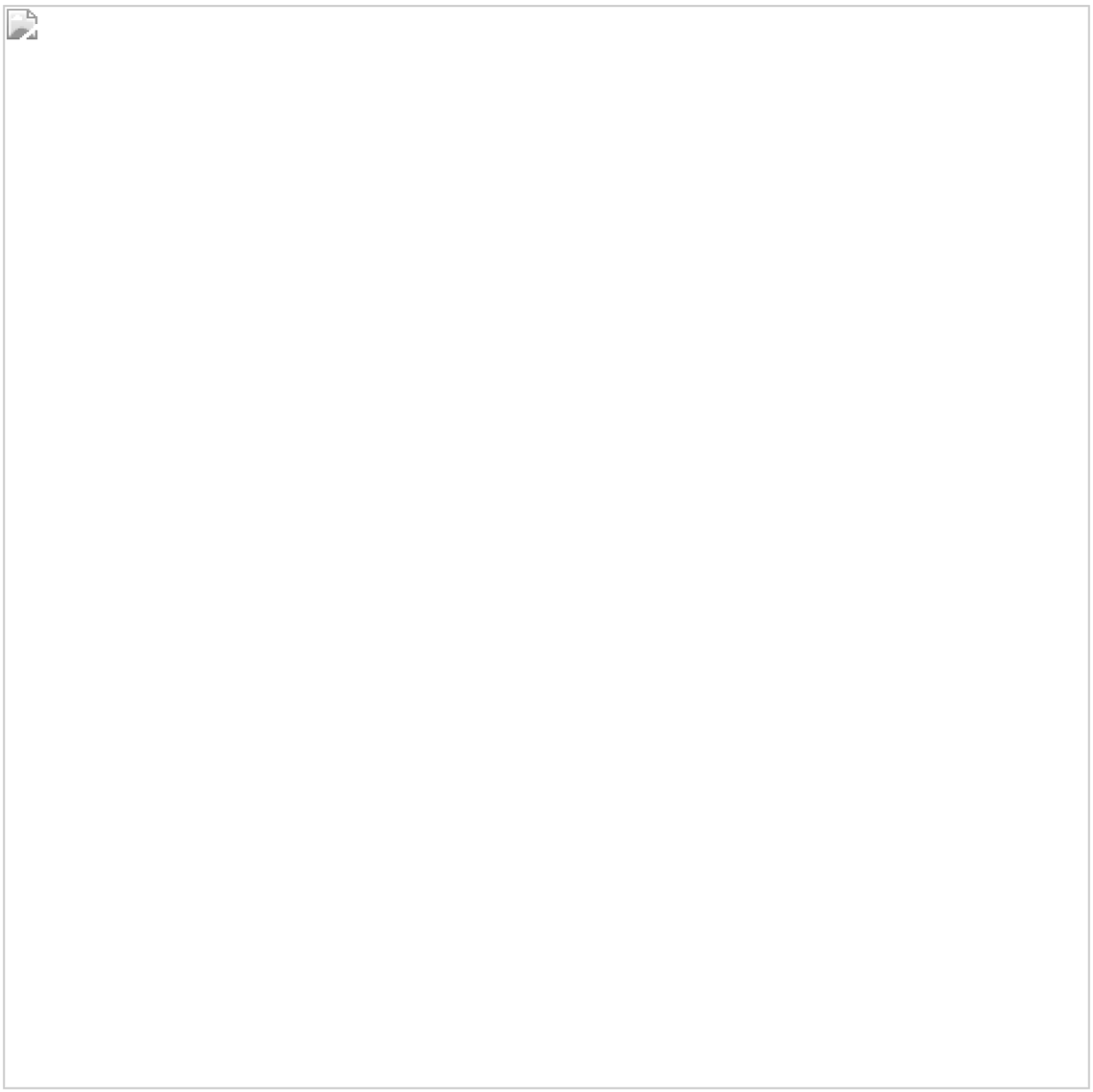
COLORING THE CLASSICS

The Magic Fishbone

A Holiday Romance



"There was once a King, and he had a Queen." They had nineteen children, and were always having more.

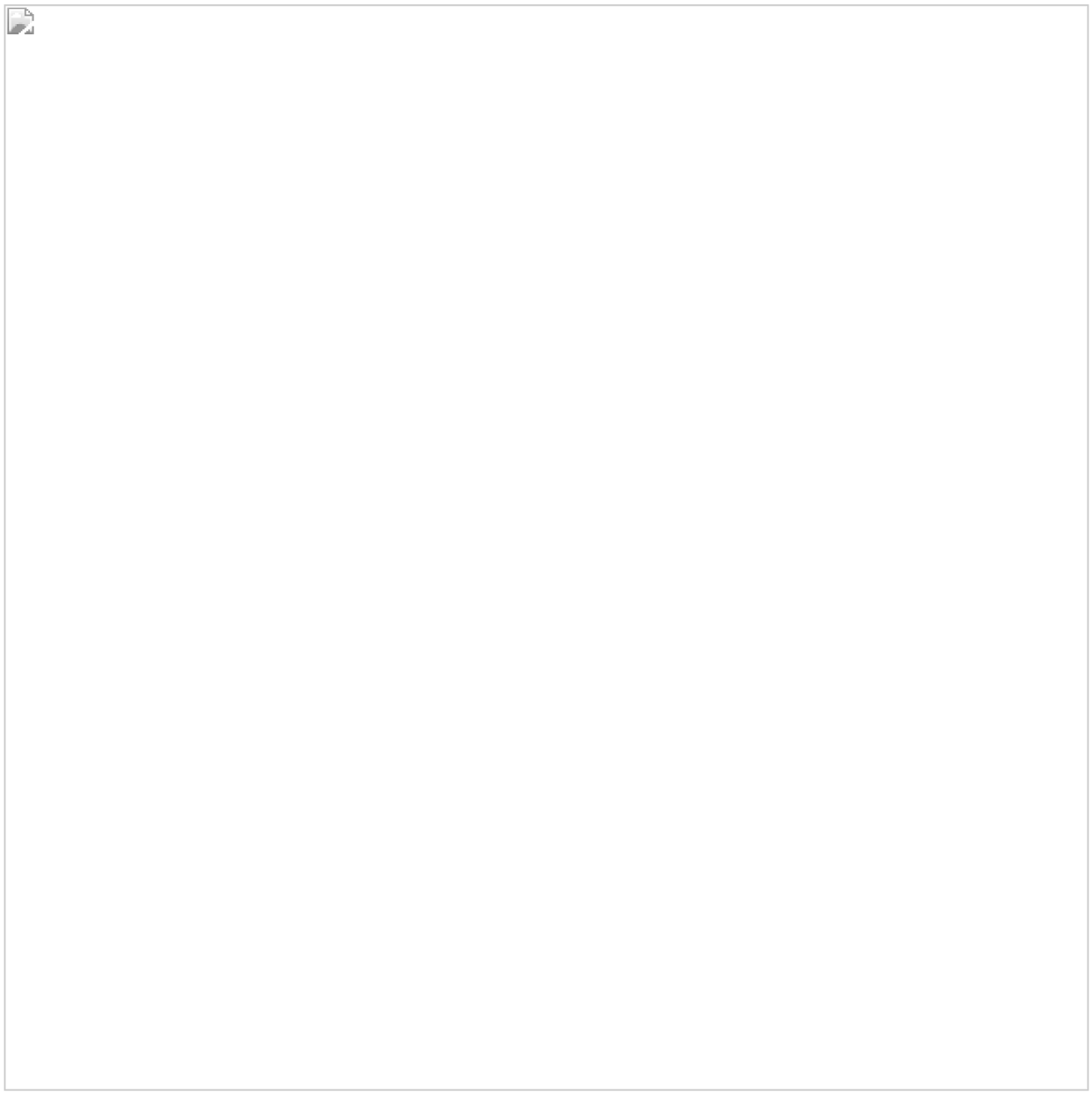
The oldest was Princess Alicia. Seventeen of the children took care of the baby, and "Alicia, the eldest, took care of them all."

TALK ABOUT IT

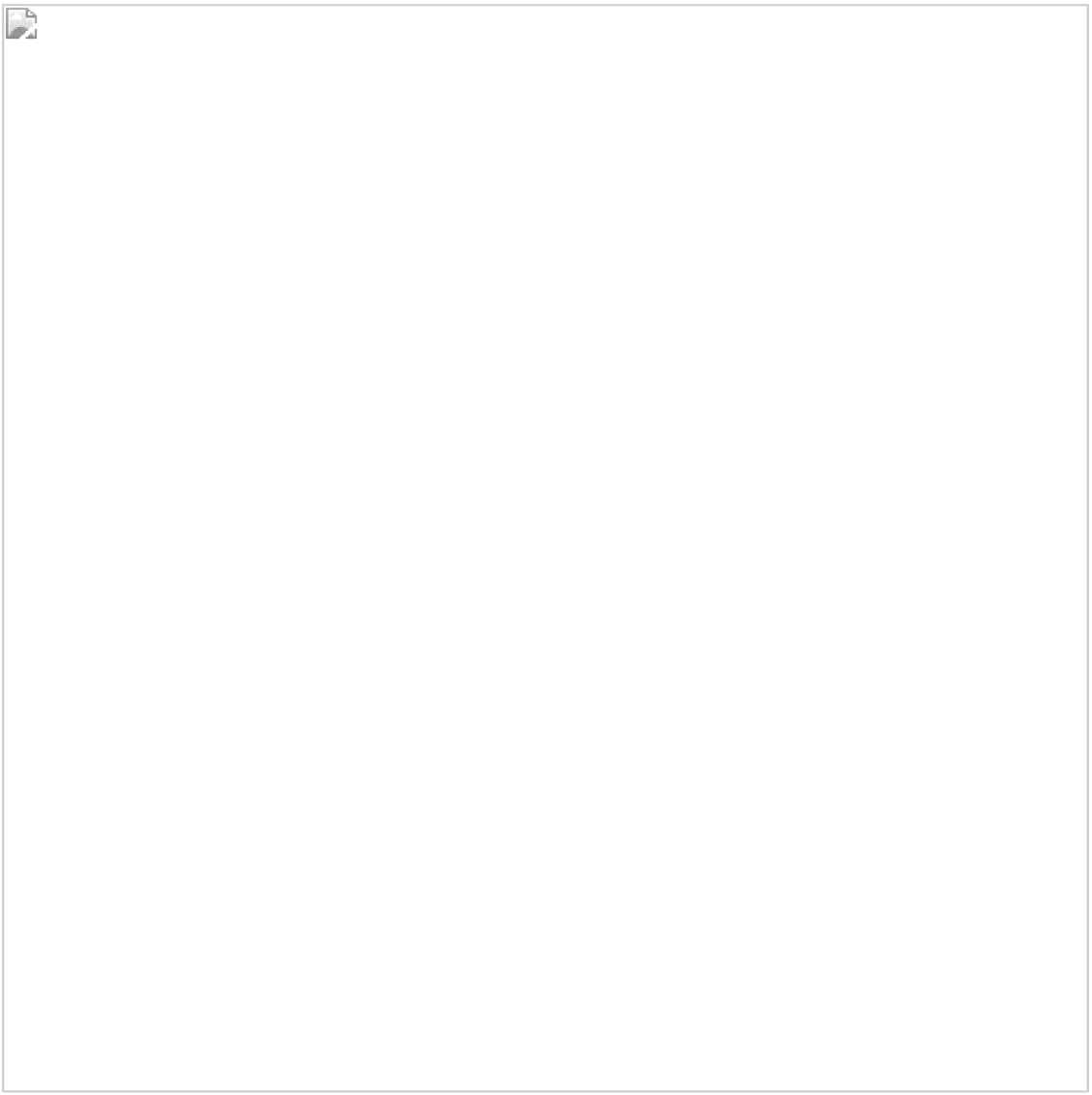
Alicia was the oldest of nineteen children. What do you think it is like to be the one who looks after everyone?

This book belongs to _____

The Magic Fishbone · another picture



The Old Lady in the Fish Shop



One morning the King stopped at the fishmonger's to buy salmon for the Queen, then walked on toward his office, feeling gloomy. He had very little money, and several of the dear children were growing out of their clothes.

Suddenly the fish shop's errand-boy came running after him. “Sir, you didn't notice the old lady in our shop.”

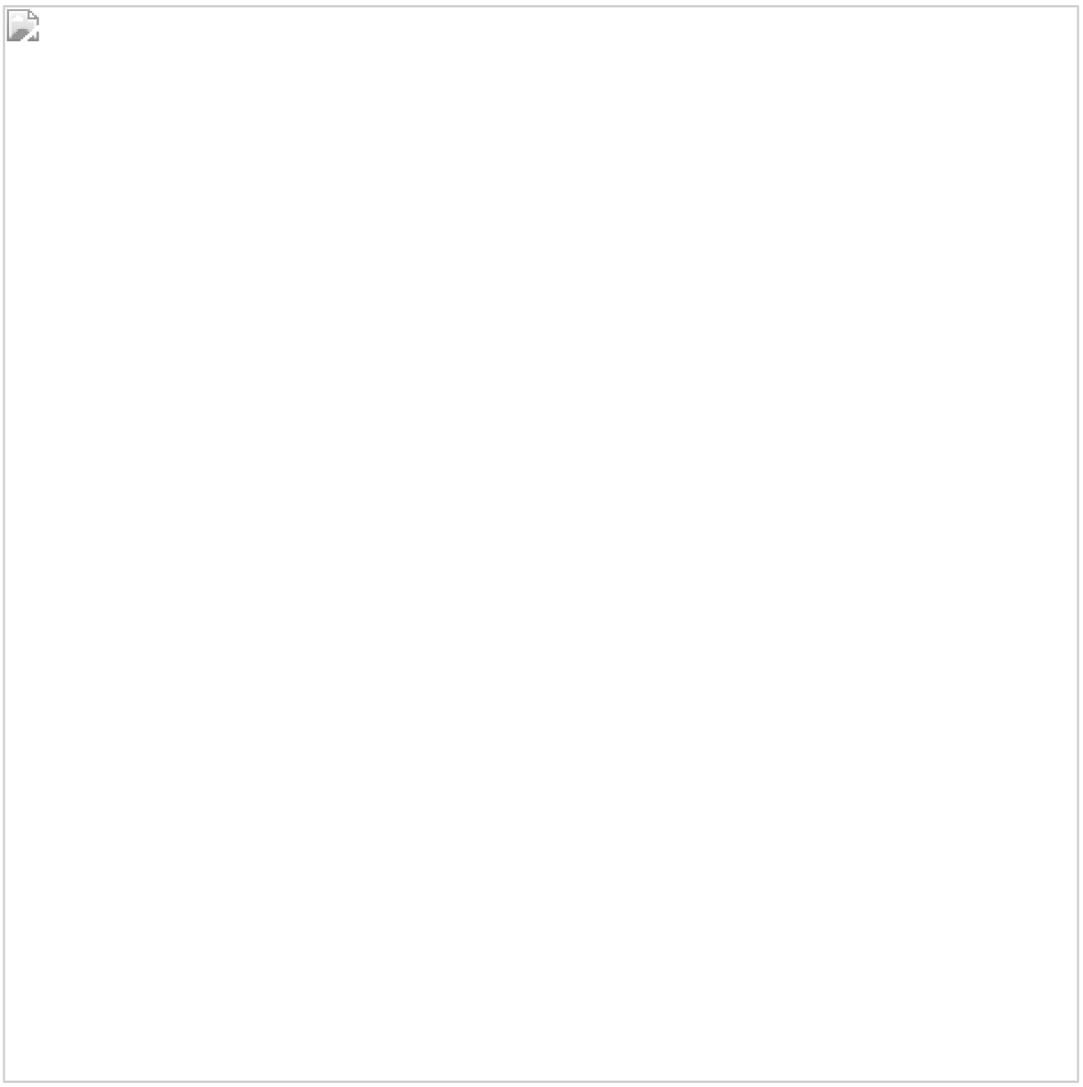
“What old lady?” asked the King. “I saw none.” She had been invisible to him. Then up trotted the old lady, in shiny silk that smelled of dried lavender.

“I am the Good Fairy Grandmarina,” she said.

TALK ABOUT IT

The King did not see the old lady, but the errand-boy did. Why might one person notice something that another person misses?

The Old Lady in the Fish Shop · another picture

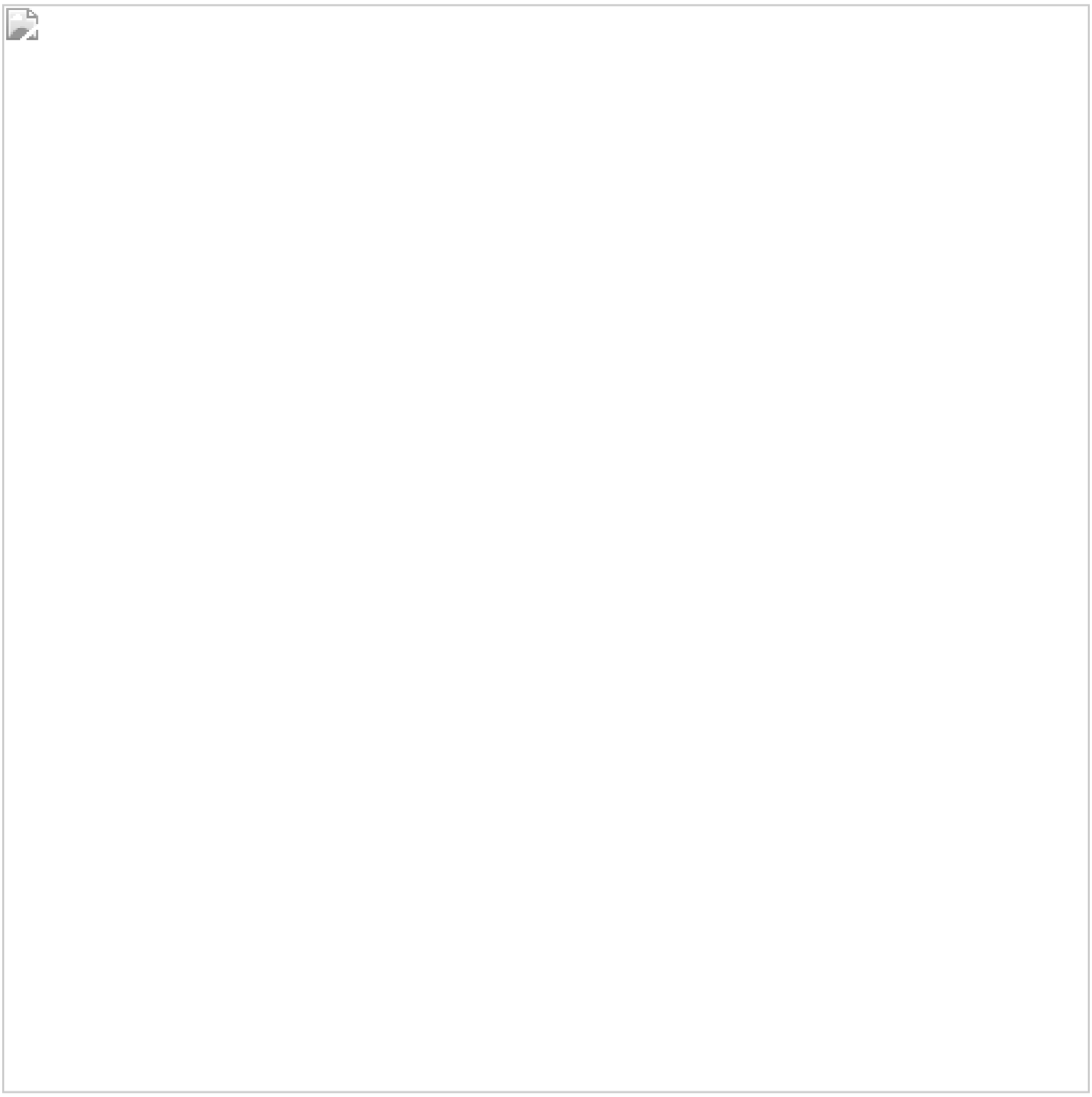


Think about it

1. Who was the old lady in the fish shop?

- ○ The Queen's mother
- ○ The Good Fairy Grandmarina
- ○ The fishmonger's cat

The Fairy's Message



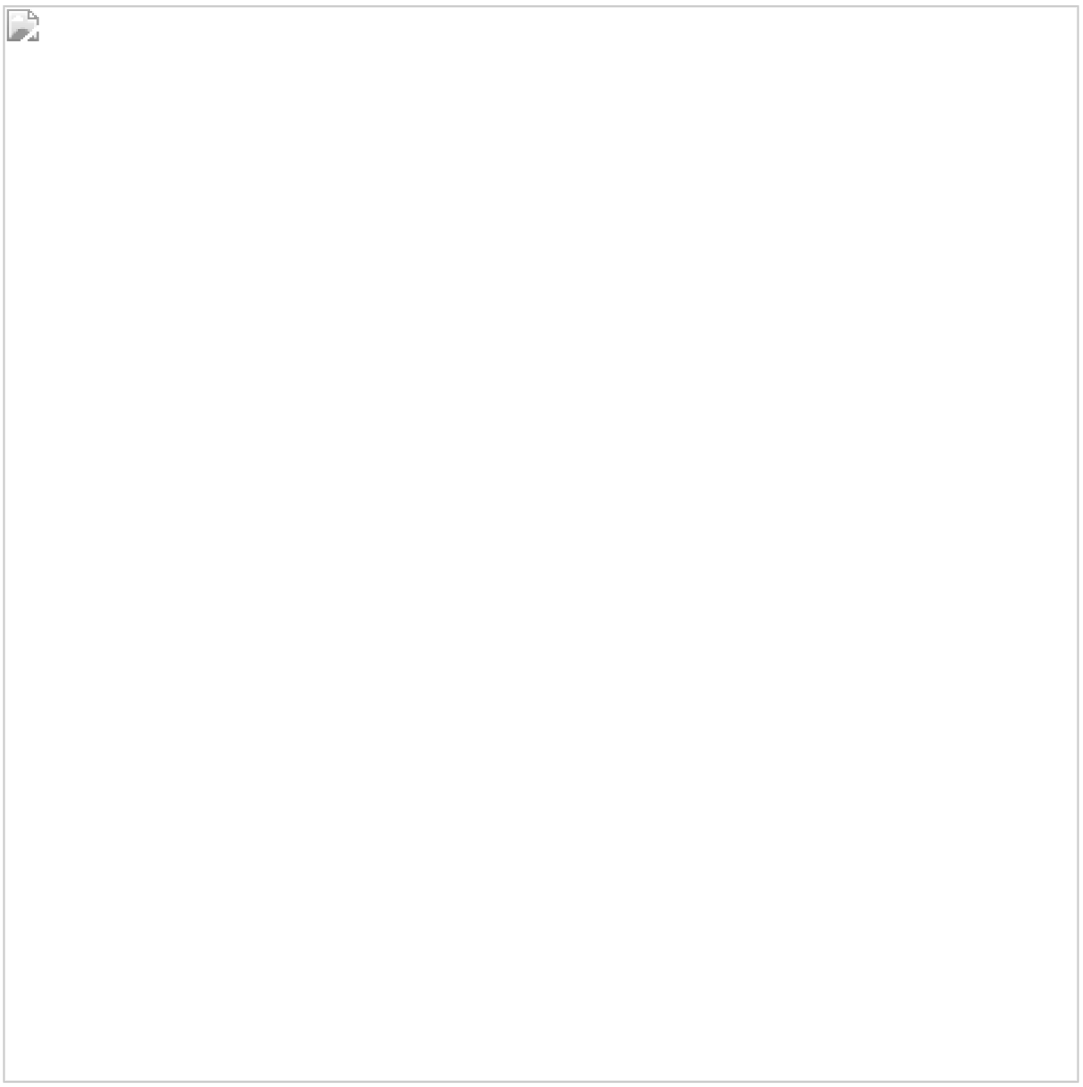
The Fairy was very cross, and very particular. The King must ask Princess Alicia to eat some of the salmon. She would leave a fishbone on her plate, and must dry it, and rub it, and polish it until it shone like mother-of-pearl.

“Tell the Princess Alicia, with my love, that the fish-bone is a magic present which can only be used once.” It would bring whatever she wished for, “PROVIDED SHE WISHES FOR IT AT THE RIGHT TIME.”

“Might I ask the reason?” began the King. The Fairy stamped her foot. “No reason. There! Hoity toity me! I am sick of your grown-up reasons.” Then she vanished.

TALK ABOUT IT

The Fairy said the wish must come at the right time, but she did not say when that was. How do you think Alicia will know?

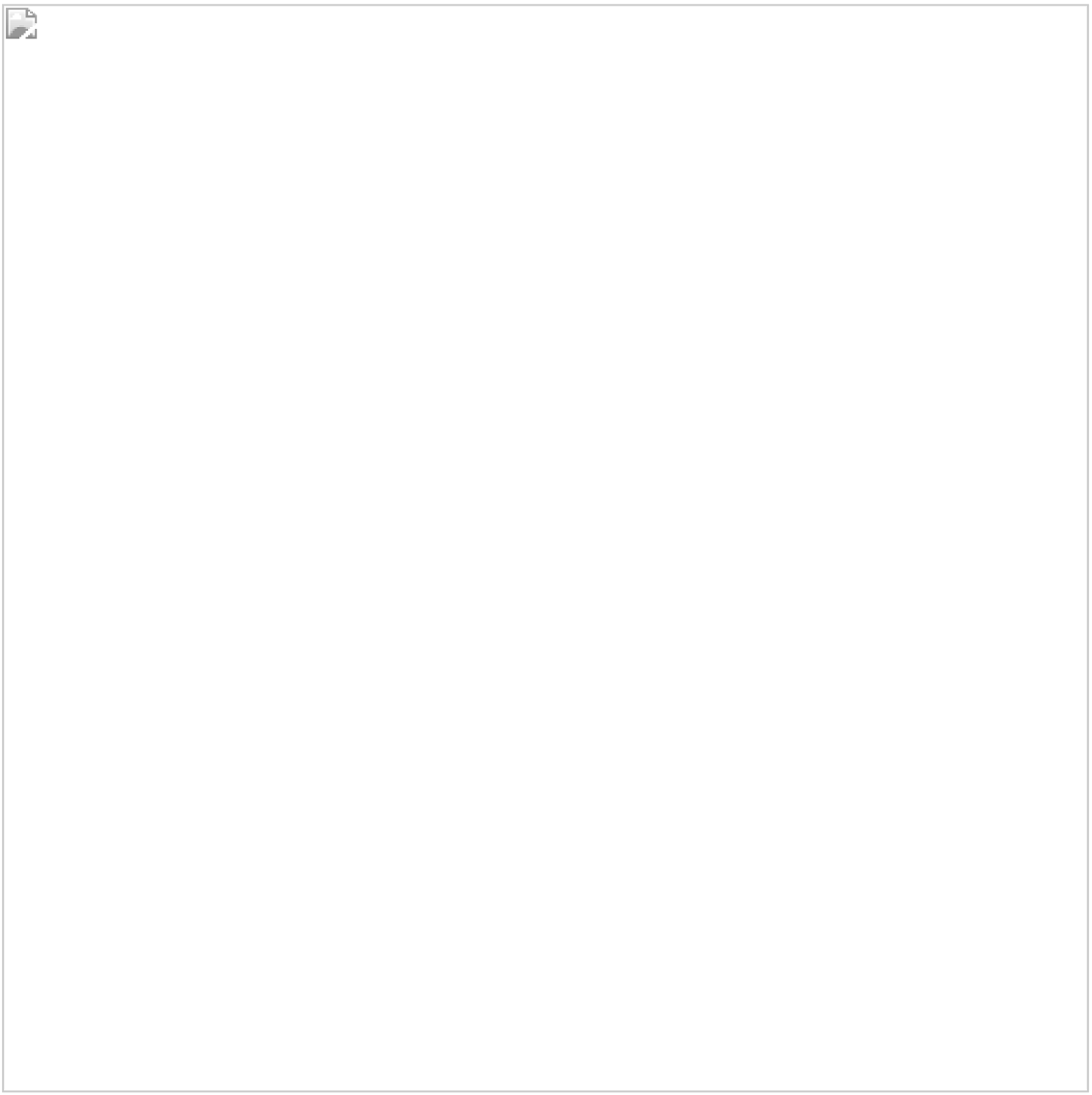


Think about it

1. How many times could the magic fishbone be used?

- ○ Once
- ○ Three times
- ○ Every day

The Queen Is Ill



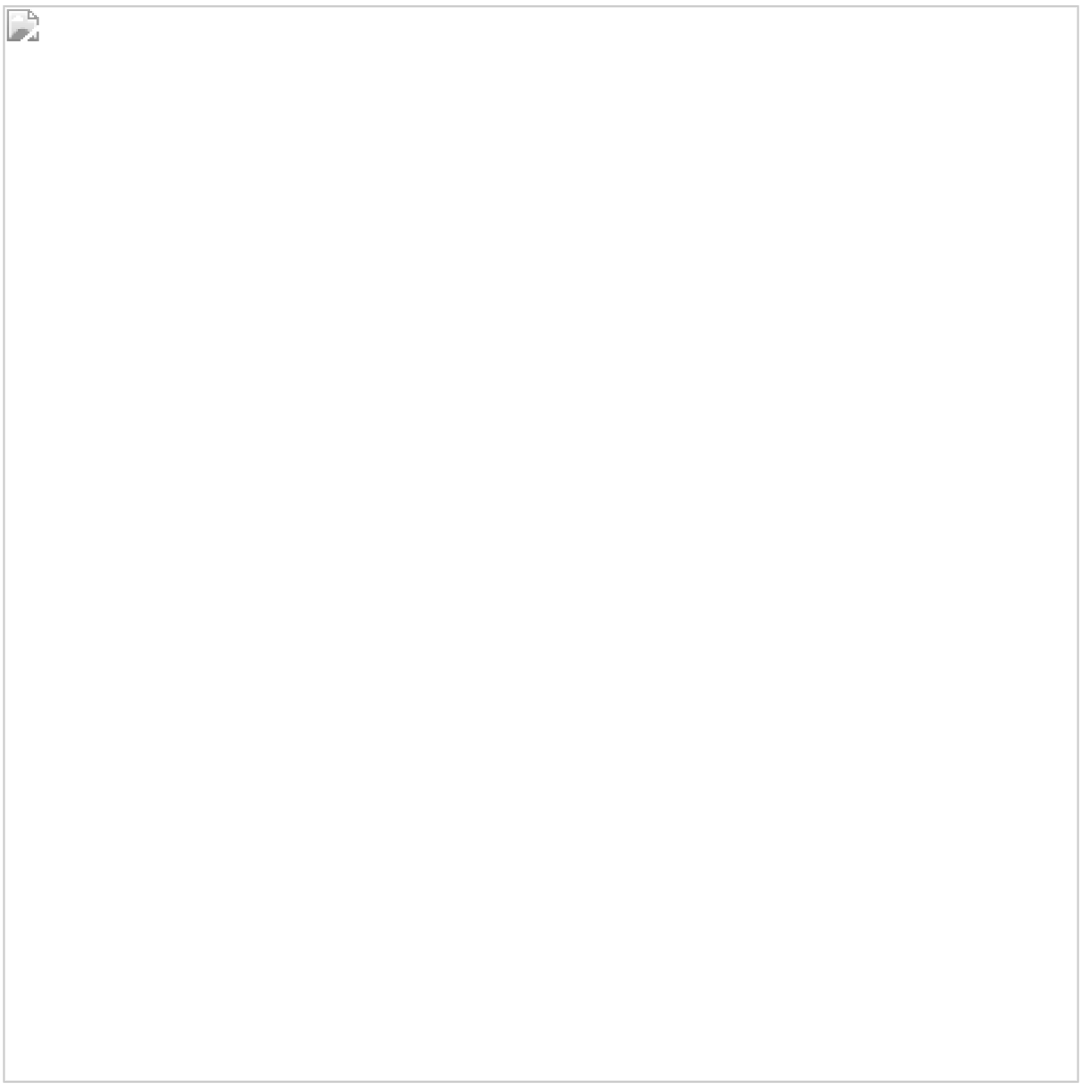
Alicia enjoyed the salmon. She dried the bone, and rubbed it, and polished it until it shone, and kept it safe in her pocket.

Then one morning the Queen cried, “O, dear me, dear me; my head, my head!” and fainted away. Alicia fetched the smelling-bottle and water, and wetted her mother's forehead. “What a Trot you are!” said the old nurse. “I couldn't have done it better myself!”

The Queen was ill a long time. Alicia kept the seventeen little ones quiet, danced the baby, made the kettle boil, heated the soup, swept the hearth and nursed the Queen, “busy busy busy, as busy could be.”

TALK ABOUT IT

Alicia did so many jobs while her mother was ill. Which one do you think was the hardest?

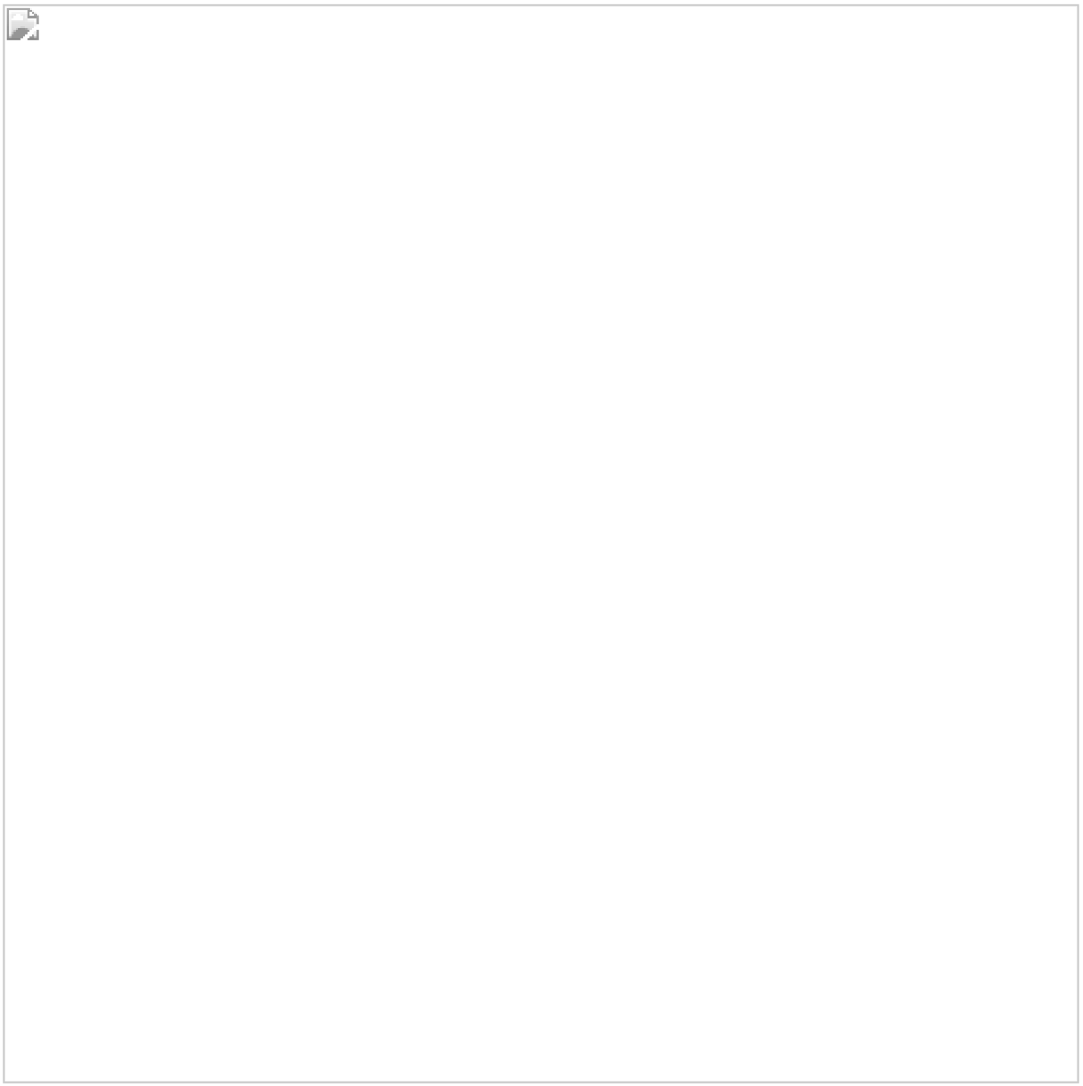


Think about it

1. Where did Alicia keep the magic fishbone?

- ○ In her pocket
- ○ Under her pillow
- ○ In the kitchen

Alicia's Secret



Alicia had a most particular secret about the fishbone. She told it only to her best friend, the Duchess. People thought the Duchess was a doll, but Alicia knew better. The Duchess always smiled and nodded.

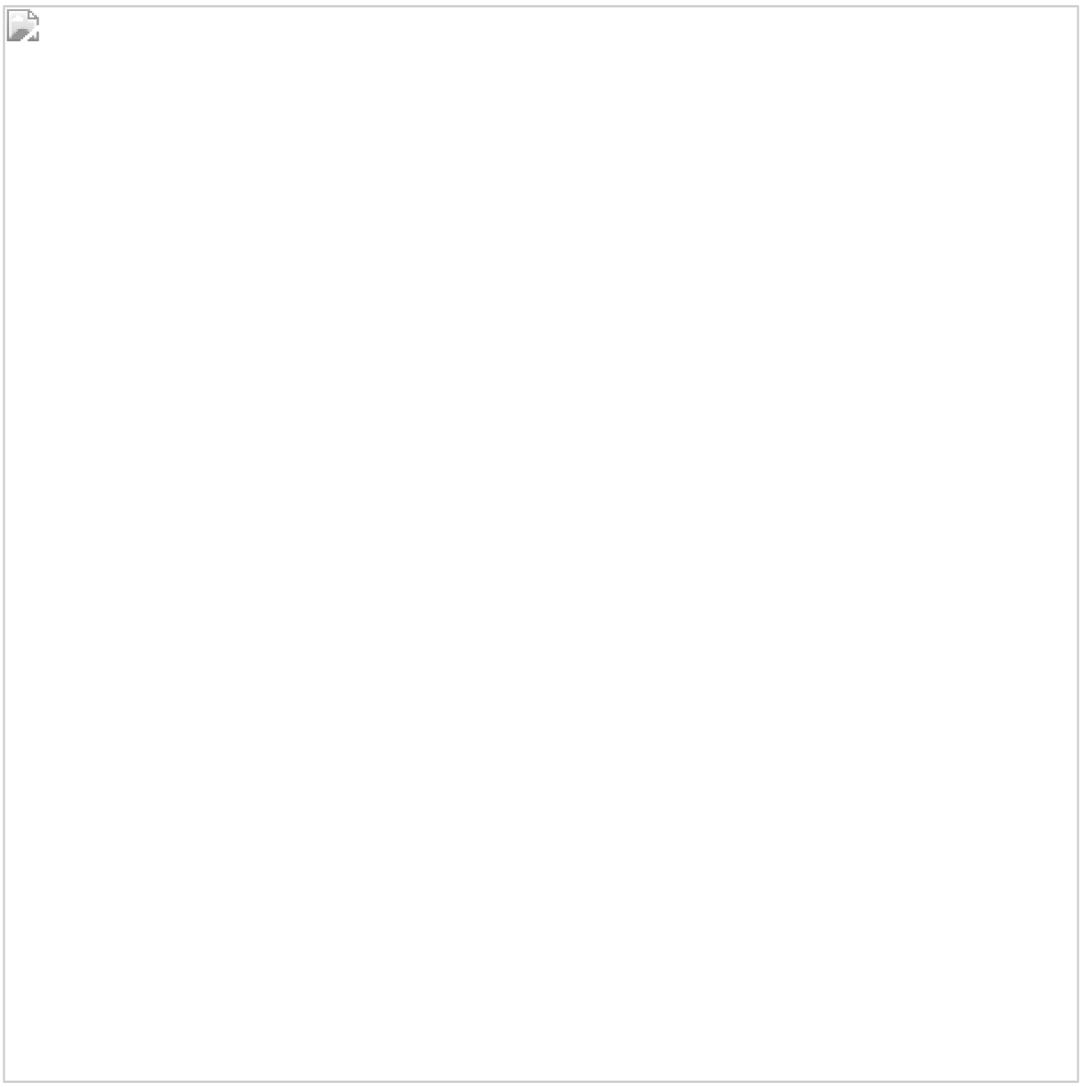
Every evening the King sat by the Queen's bed with Alicia, and gave her a cross look, wondering why she never used the magic fishbone.

“Where is the magic fish-bone?” he asked. “In my pocket, Papa.” “I thought you had lost it?” “O, no, Papa.” “Or forgotten it?” “No, indeed, Papa.”

Then Alicia ran upstairs and whispered to the Duchess, “They think we children never have a reason or a meaning!”

TALK ABOUT IT

Alicia kept her secret even when her father looked cross. What would you do if someone thought you had forgotten something, but you had not?

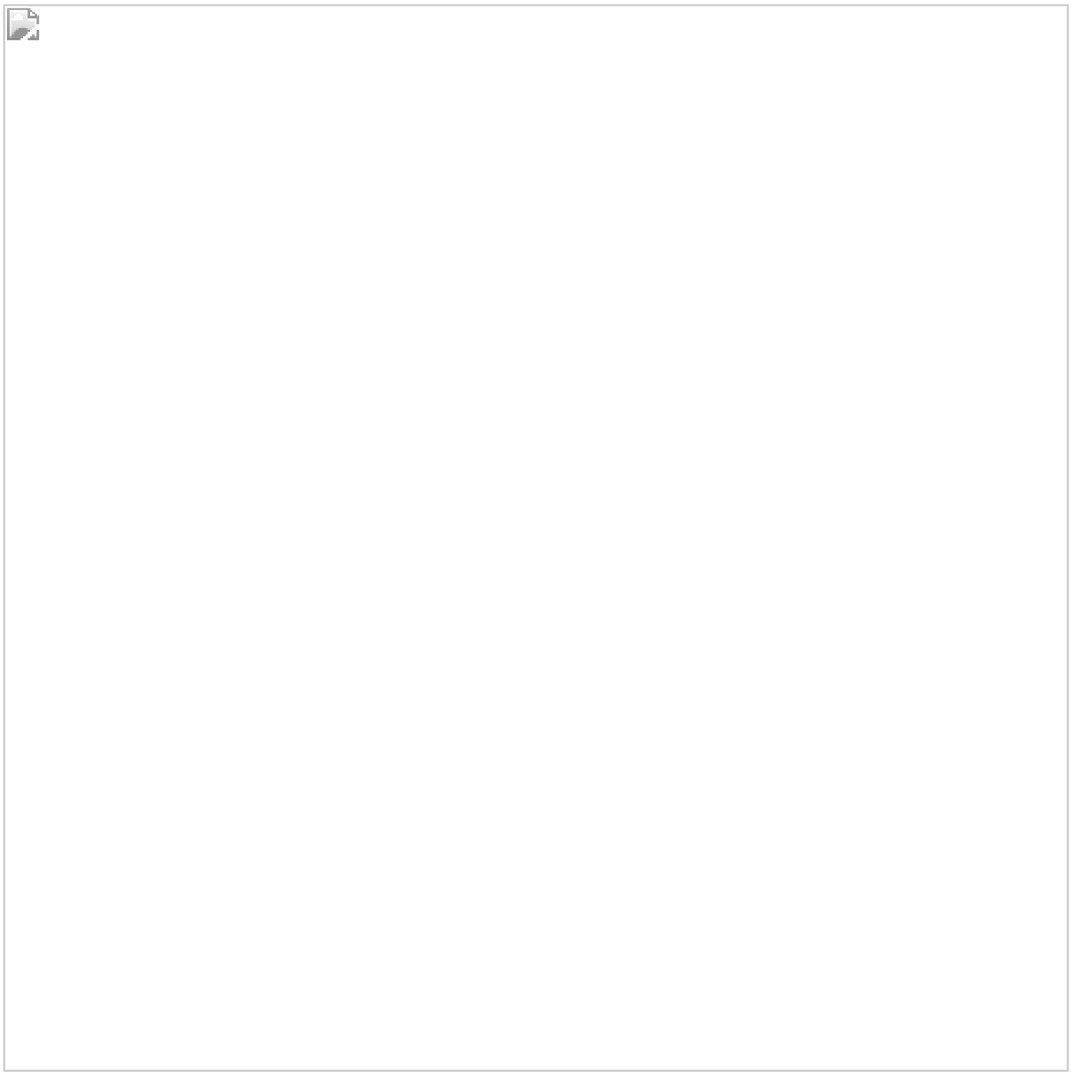


Think about it

1. Who did Alicia tell her secret to?

- ○ The baby
- ○ Her friend the Duchess, who looked like a doll
- ○ The fishmonger

Snipping and Stitching



One day the snappish little pug-dog next door rushed at a young Prince, who was so frightened that he put his hand through a window pane. It bled, and the other children screamed.

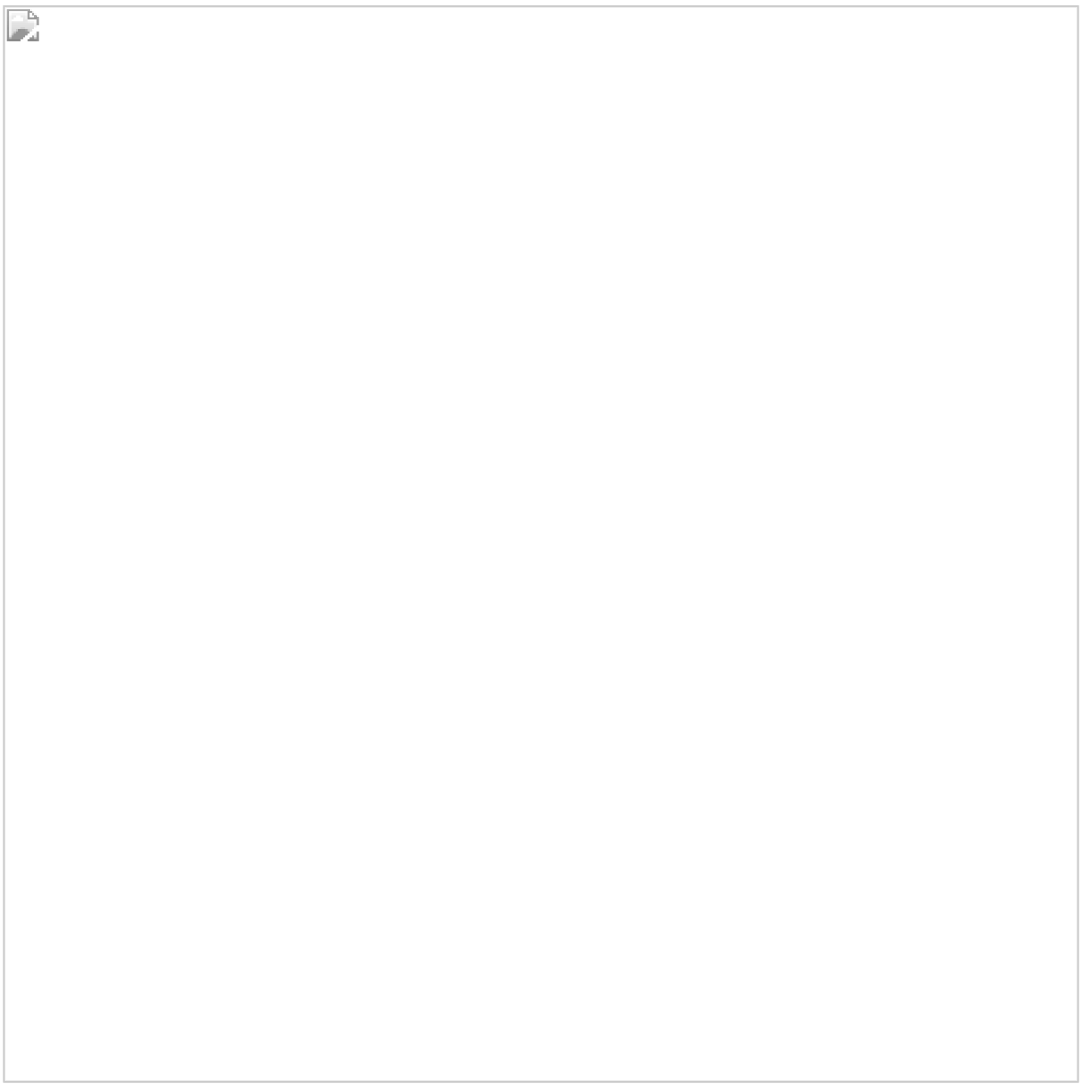
Alicia hushed them one by one, so as not to wake the Queen. She put the hurt hand in cold water; luckily there was no glass in it.

Then she sent for the Royal rag-bag and, with scissors, needle and thread, made a bandage that fitted beautifully.

The King was watching at the door. “What have you been doing?” “Snipping stitching cutting and contriving, Papa.” “Where is the magic fish-bone?” “In my pocket, Papa.”

TALK ABOUT IT

Alicia could have used the fishbone to fix this at once. Why do you think she fixed it herself?

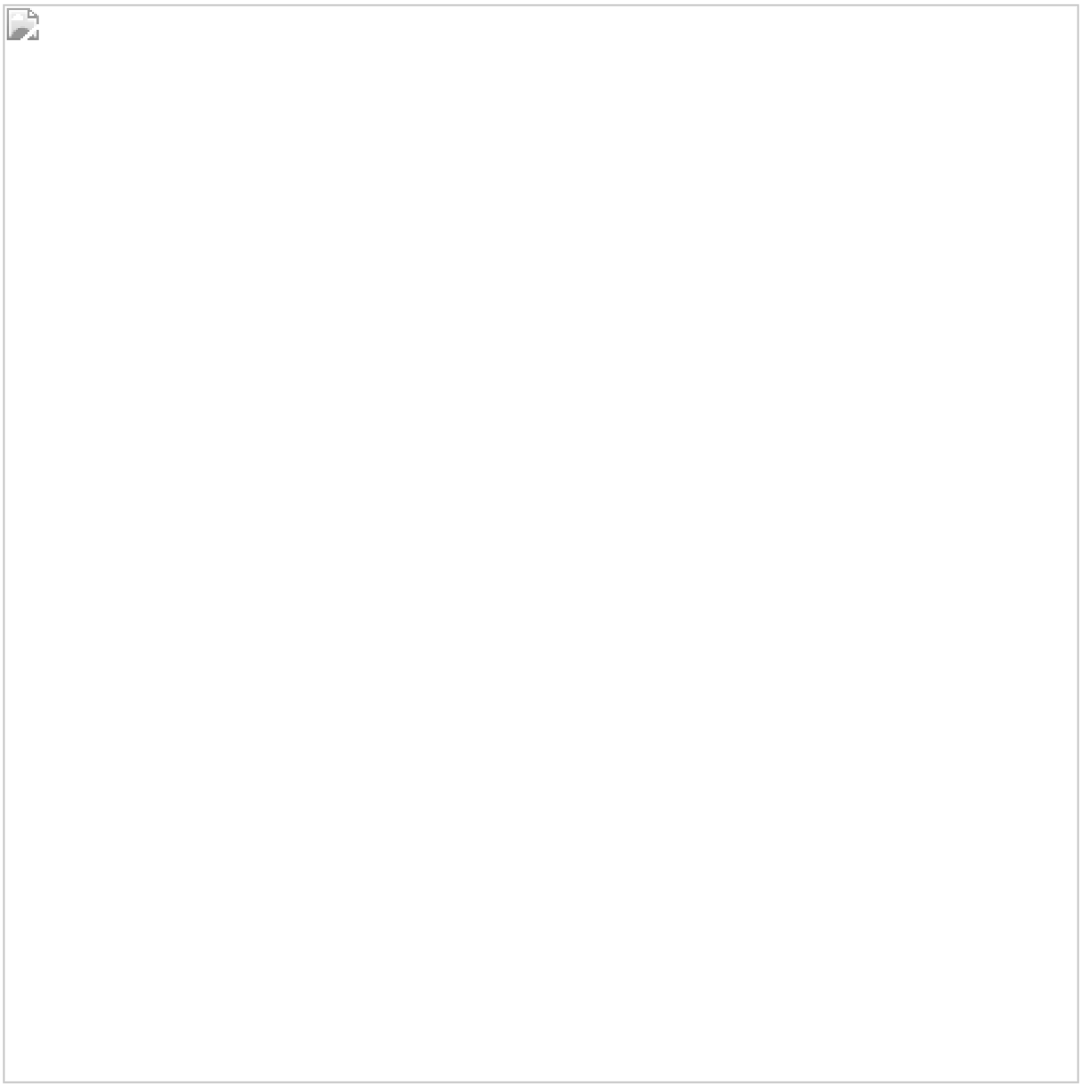


Think about it

1. What did Alicia make from the rag-bag?

- ○ A bandage
- ○ A kite
- ○ A hat

The Dance of the Eighteen Cooks



Another day the cook ran away to marry a soldier. Alicia was peeling turnips when the baby slid off her lap and fell under the grate. He got a black eye, and the children roared.

Alicia, crying a little herself, calmed them.

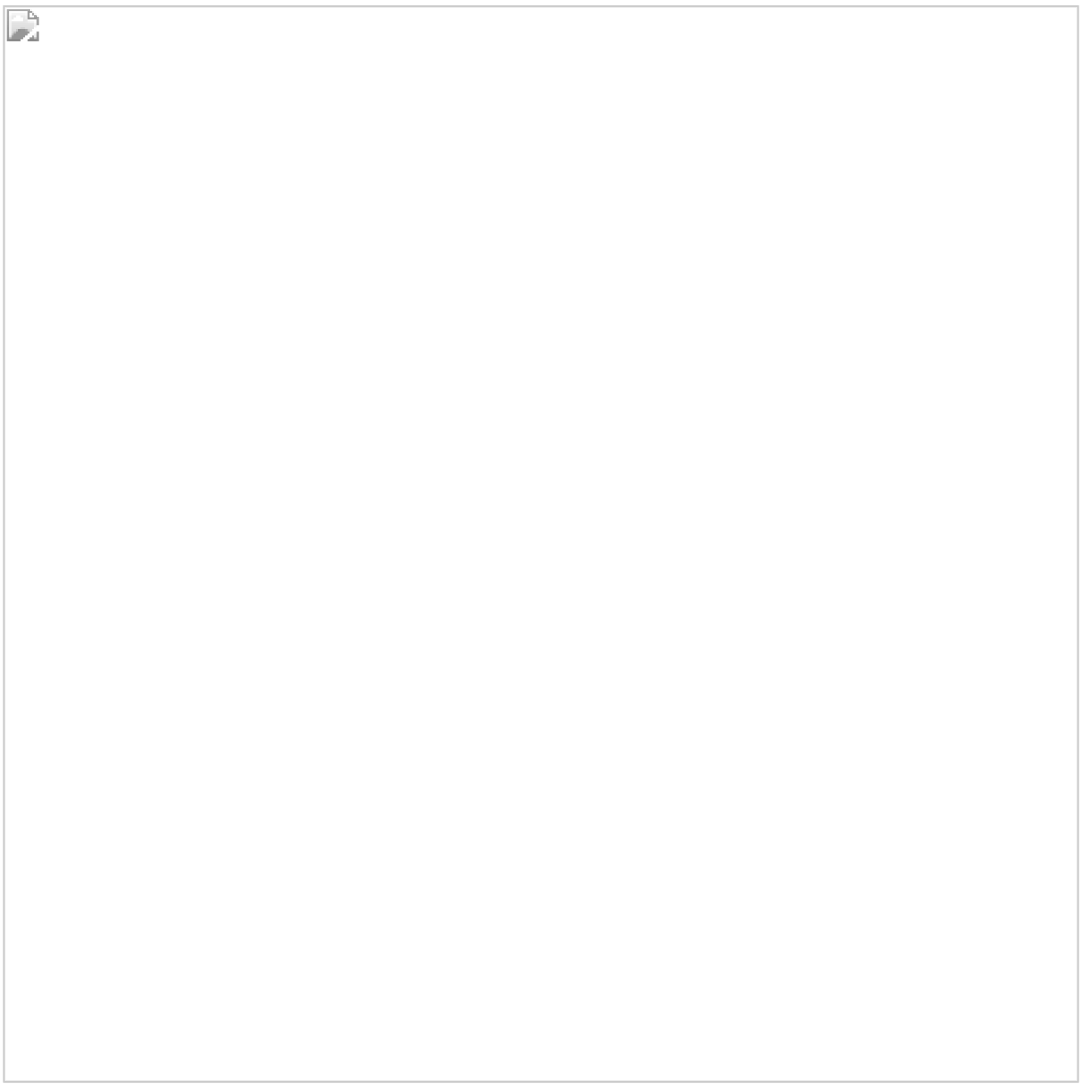
“Be good,” she said, “and you shall all be cooks.” In caps made of old newspaper, they cooked the broth together. Then came “a dance of eighteen cooks,” and the baby crowed with joy.

The King looked in. “What have you been doing, Alicia?” “Cooking and contriving, Papa.” “What else?” “Keeping the children light-hearted, Papa.”

TALK ABOUT IT

Alicia turned a sad, noisy kitchen into a dance. How could you help a sad moment feel lighter?

The Dance of the Eighteen Cooks · another picture

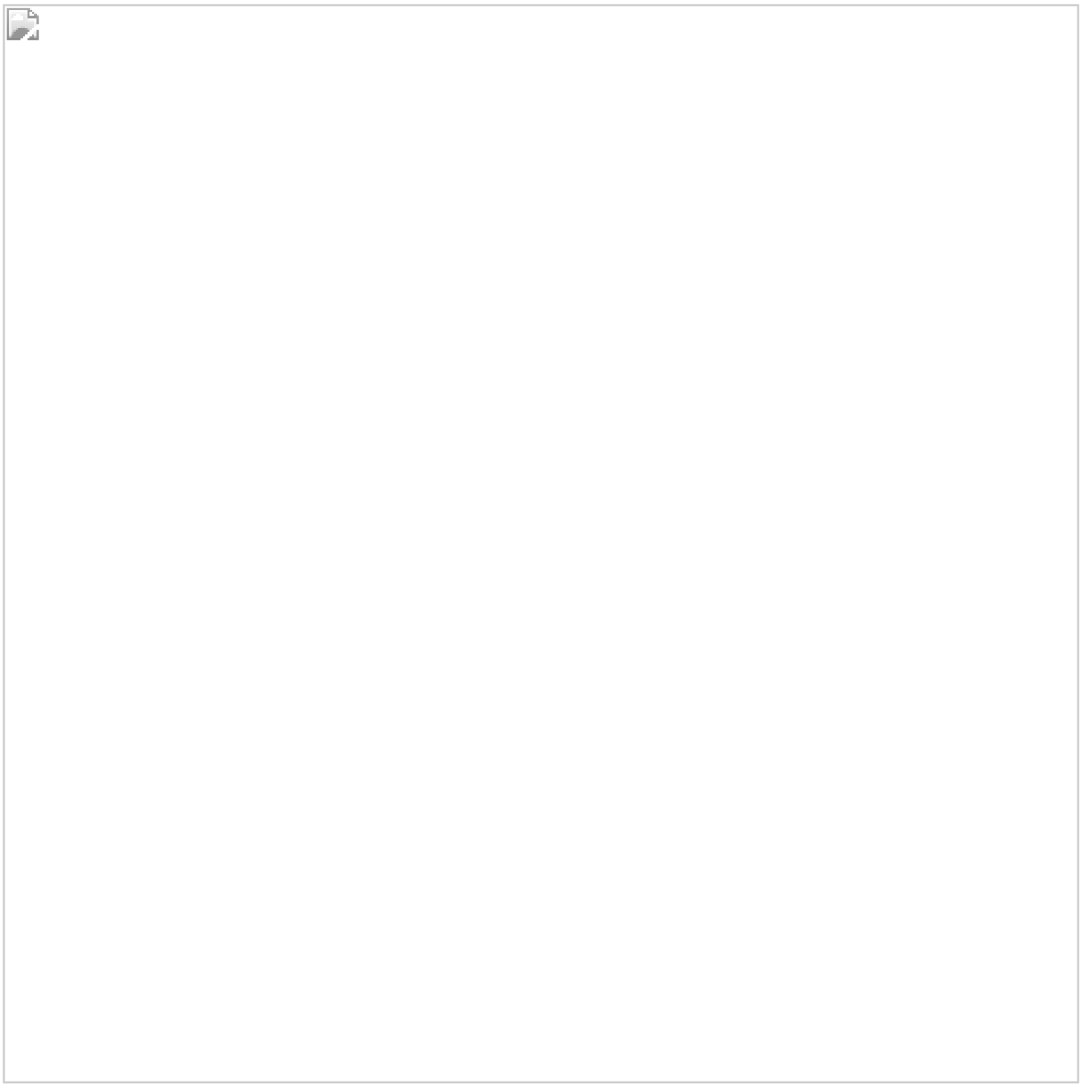


Think about it

1. What did the children wear when they became cooks?

- ○ Newspaper caps
- ○ Golden crowns
- ○ Woolly hats

Dreadfully Poor



The King sighed so heavily, and sat down so sadly with his head on his hand, that the other children crept quietly out of the kitchen. Only Alicia and the baby stayed.

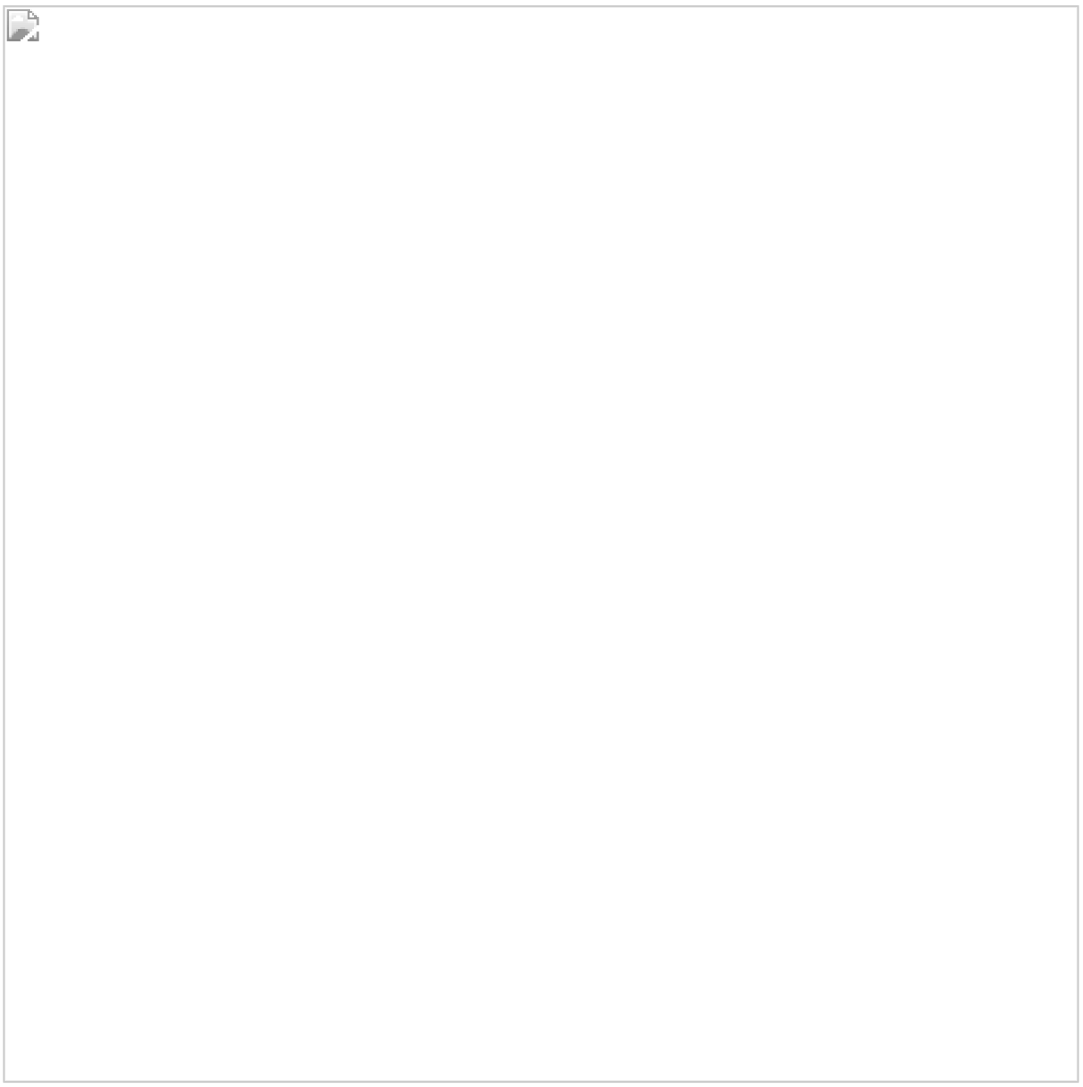
“What is the matter, Papa?” “I am dreadfully poor, my child.” “Have you no money at all, Papa?” “None my child.”

“Is there no way left of getting any, Papa?” “No way,” said the King. “I have tried very hard, and I have tried all ways.”

When Alicia heard those last words, she began to put her hand into the pocket where she kept the magic fishbone.

TALK ABOUT IT

The King had tried everything he could think of. How do you think he felt, and how do you think Alicia knew to stay with him?

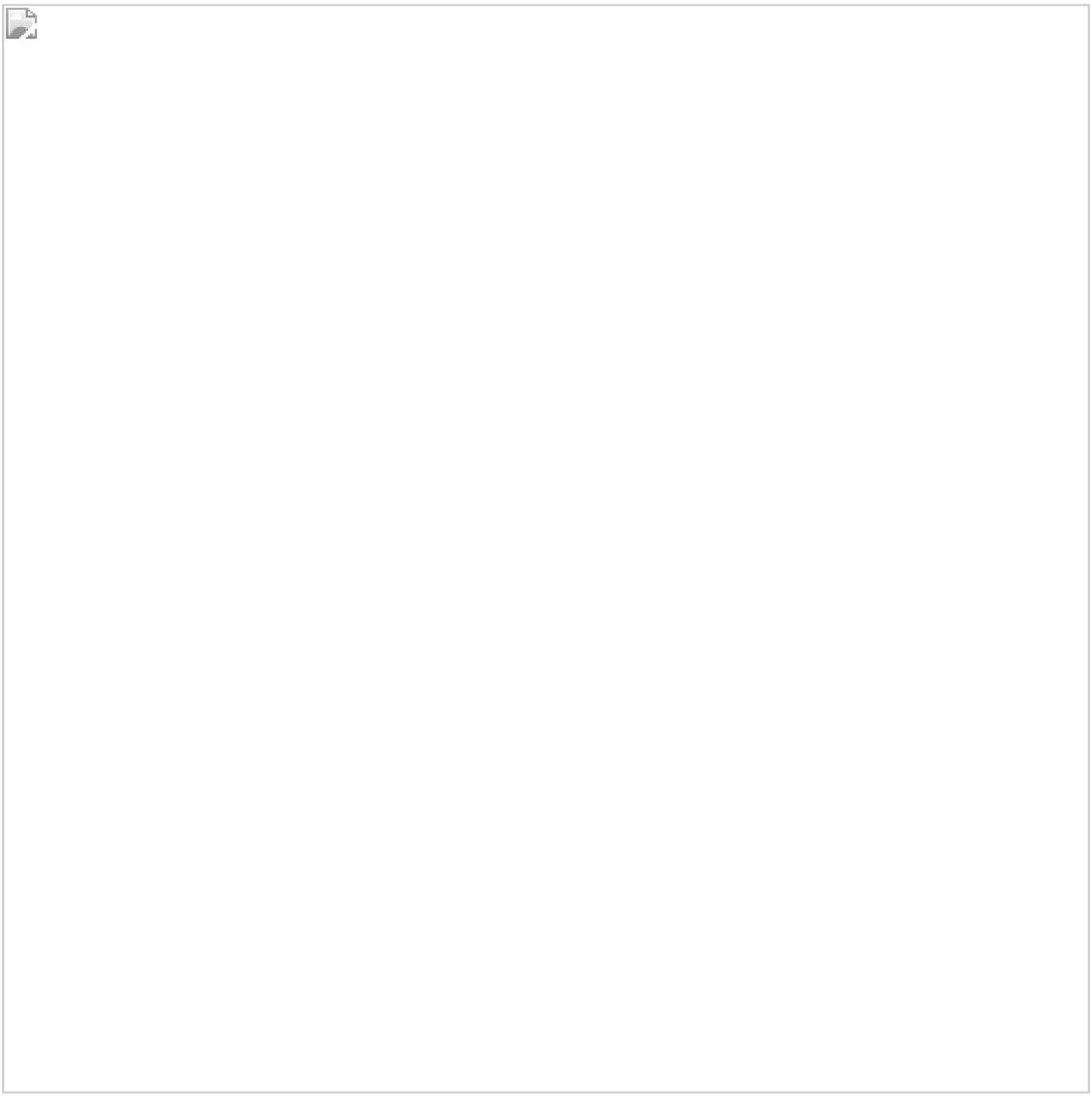


Think about it

1. What was the King's trouble?

- ○ He had lost his crown
- ○ He was dreadfully poor
- ○ He was lost in the woods

The Right Time



“Papa,” said Alicia, “when we have tried very hard, and tried all ways, we must have done our very very best?” “No doubt, Alicia.”

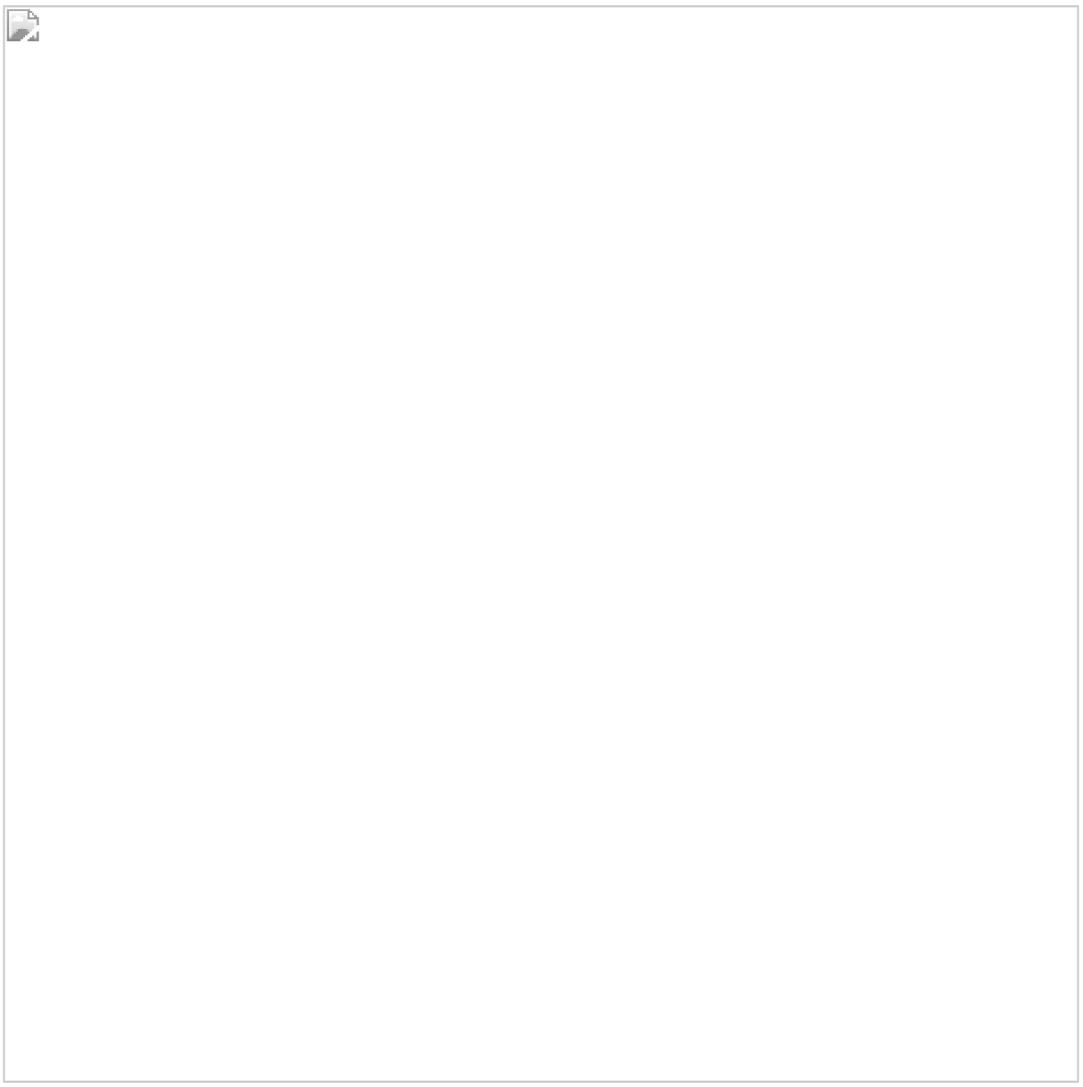
“When we have done our very very best, Papa, and that is not enough, then I think the right time must have come for asking help of others.”

That was Alicia's secret, worked out for herself from the Fairy's words.

She took out the shining fishbone, gave it one little kiss, and wished it was quarter day. Immediately it was! The King's quarter's salary came rattling down the chimney and bounced into the middle of the floor.

TALK ABOUT IT

Alicia waited until she had done her very best, and then she asked for help. When is a good time to ask someone for help?



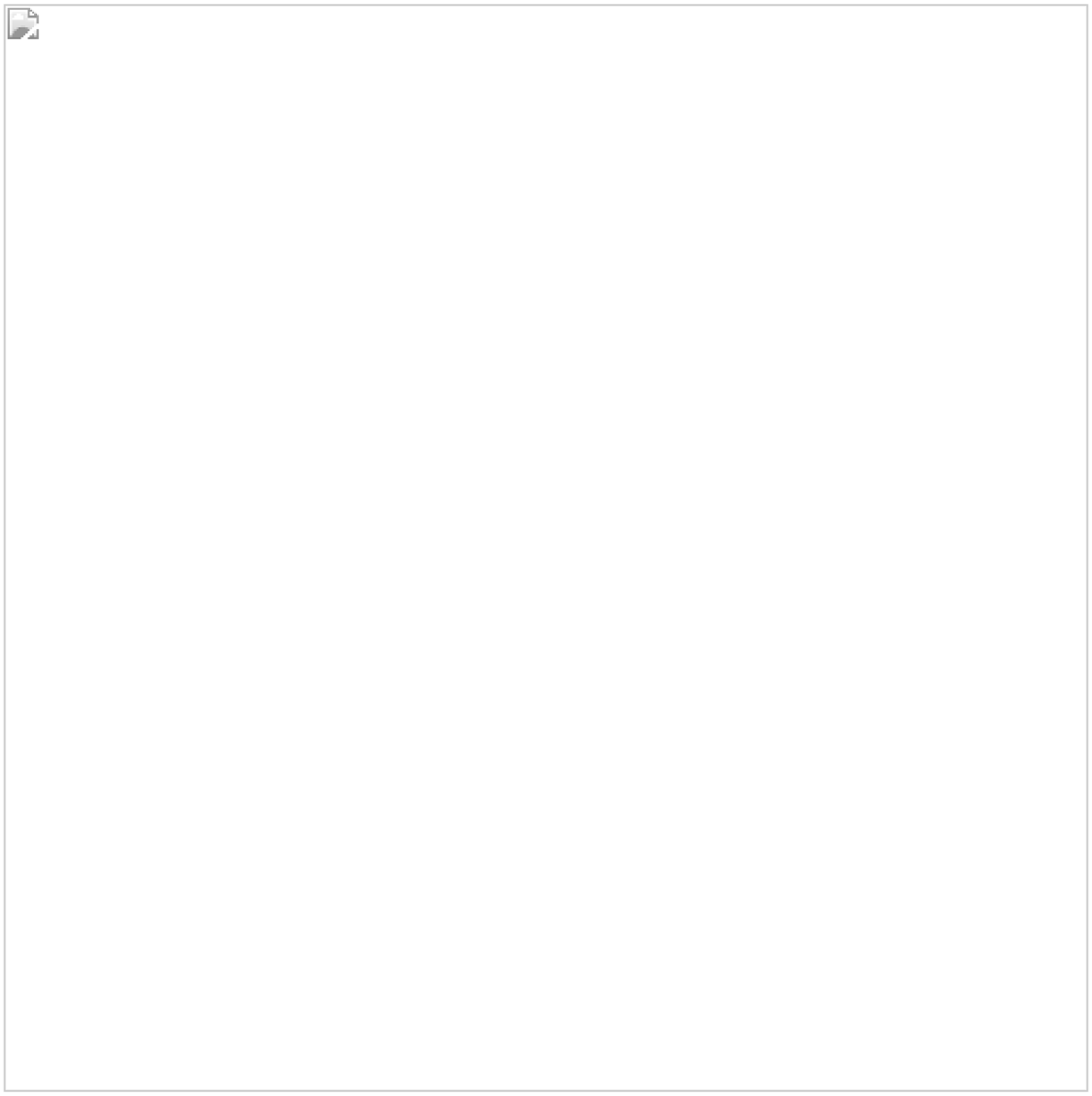
Think about it

1. When did Alicia decide the right time had come?

- ○ When she was bored
- ○ When she had done her very very best and it was not enough
- ○ As soon as she got the bone

2. Alicia used her one wish to help her father, not herself. Who might you use a wish to help?

Grandmarina Arrives



In came the Good Fairy Grandmarina, in a carriage pulled by four peacocks. The errand-boy rode behind, in silver and gold.

The Fairy greeted Alicia with a kiss. Then she turned to the King. “Are you good?” The King said he hoped so.

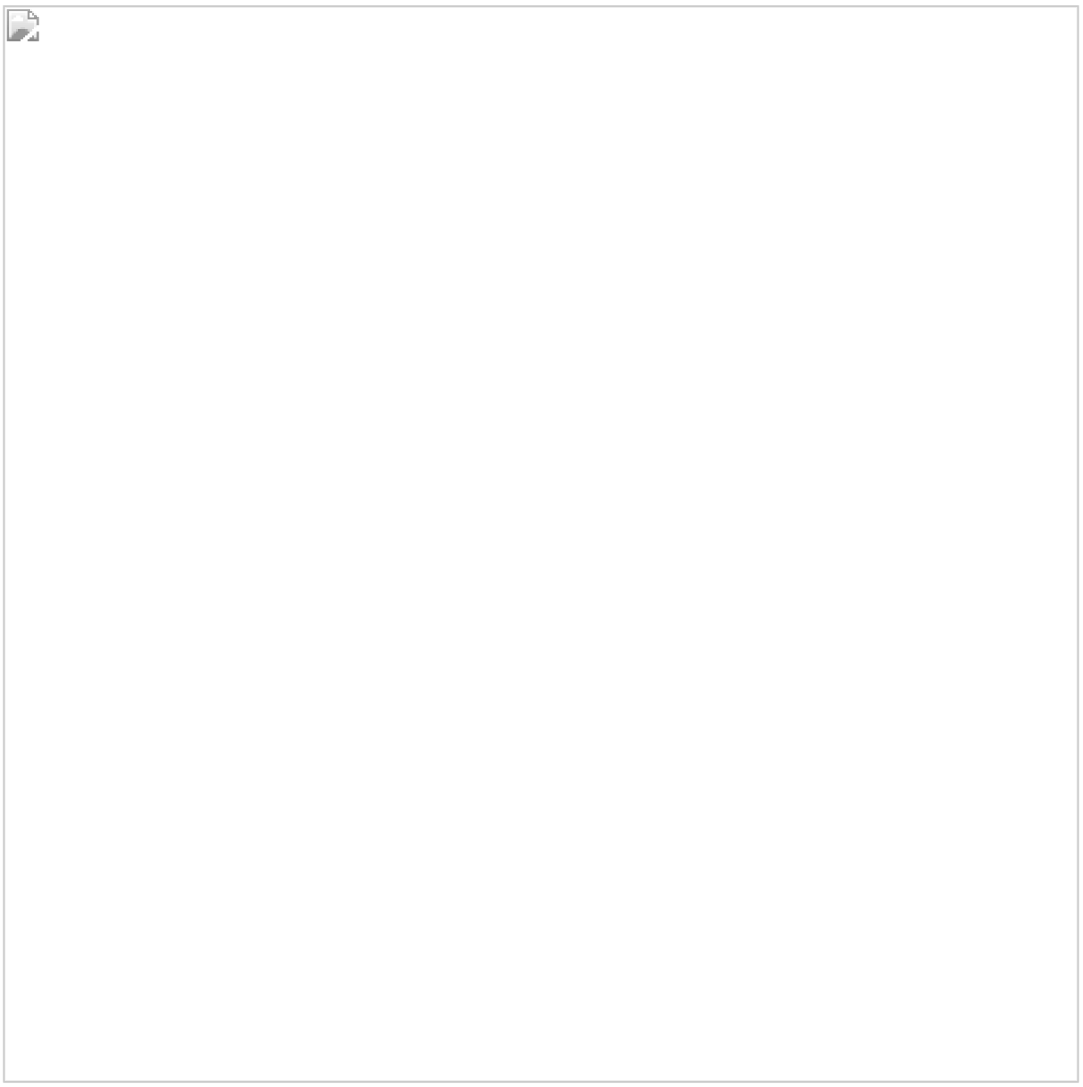
“Any more reasons to ask for?” The King said no, and he was very sorry. “Be good then,” said the Fairy, “and live happy ever afterwards.”

She waved her fan, and in came the Queen and the children, splendidly dressed from top to toe. Alicia's apron flew away, and she was dressed like a little bride. The baby ran in, his face better than ever.

TALK ABOUT IT

Alicia worked hard before the magic came. How do you think she felt when it did?

Grandmarina Arrives · another picture

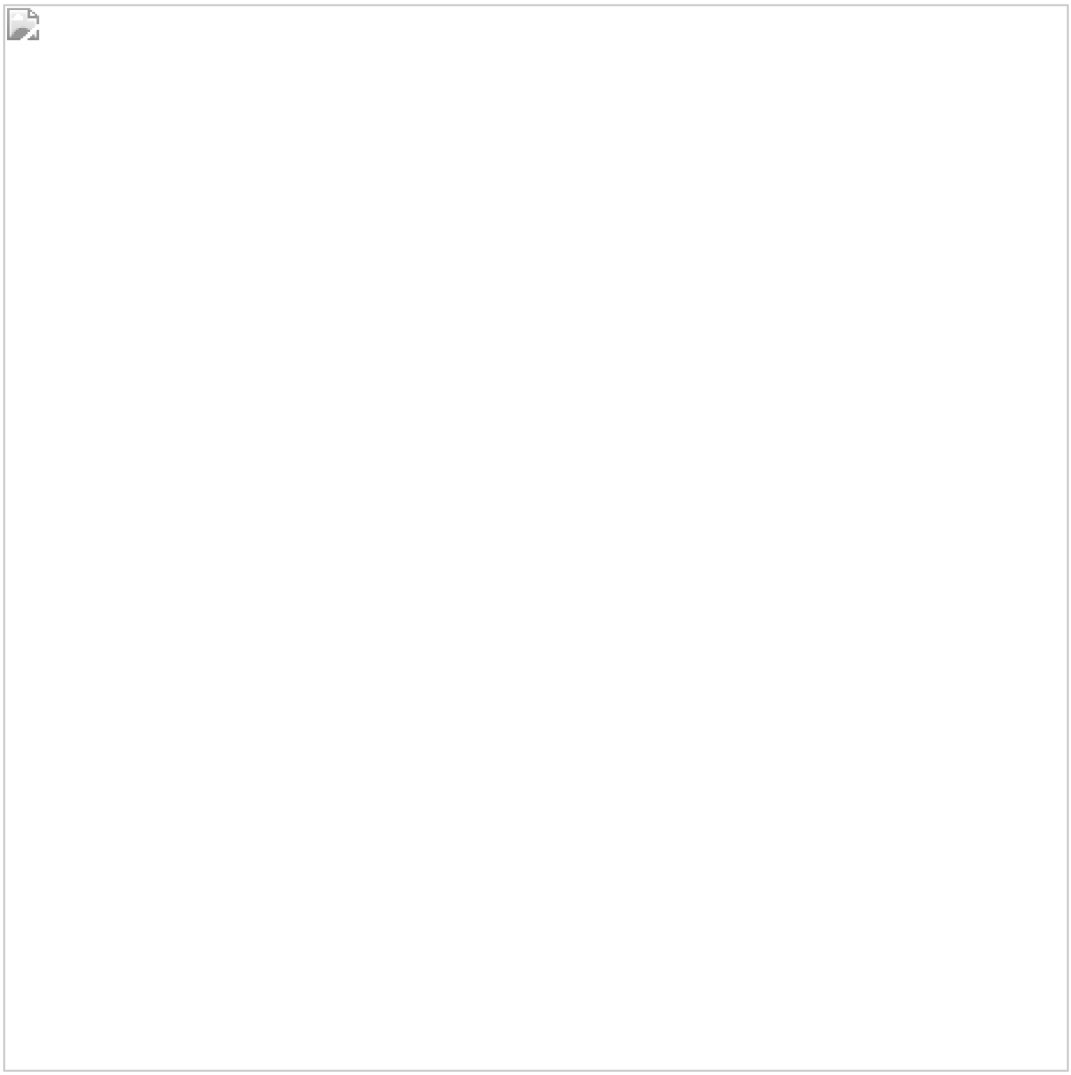


Think about it

1. What pulled the Fairy's carriage?

- ○ Four peacocks
- ○ Two horses
- ○ A pair of swans

Prince Certainpersonio



“We are going in search of Prince Certainpersonio,” said Grandmarina. So she, Alicia and the Duchess got into the carriage, and the peacocks flew away with their tails spread.

Prince Certainpersonio was sitting by himself, “eating barley-sugar and waiting to be ninety.” When he saw the carriage come in at the window, he knew something uncommon was going to happen.

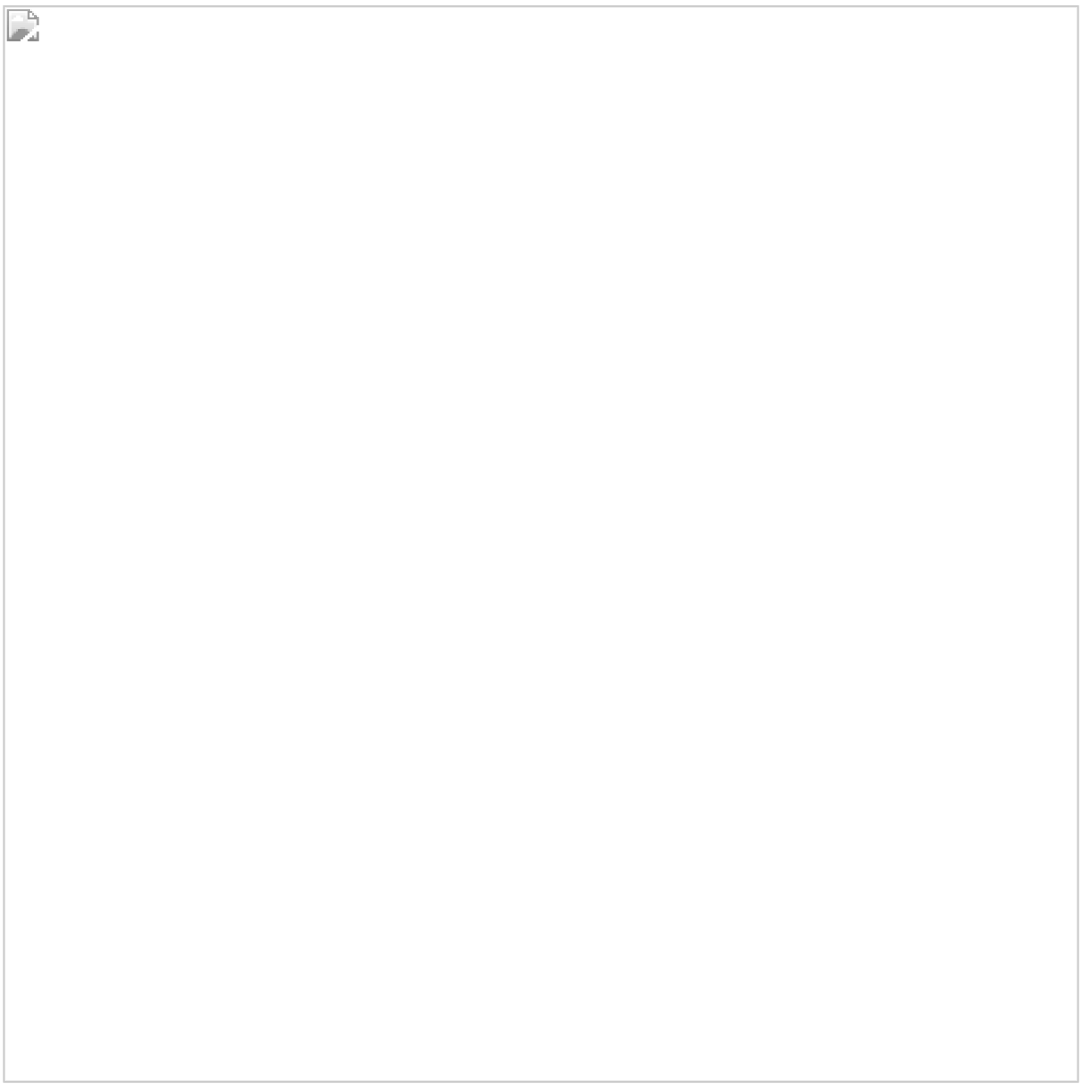
“Prince,” said Grandmarina, “I bring you your Bride.”

At once his sticky face was clean, his clothes were peach-coloured velvet, and a cap with a feather flew in like a bird and settled on his head. The wedding was beautiful. The Duchess was bridesmaid, and she watched from the pulpit.

TALK ABOUT IT

The Prince was waiting to be ninety! What do you think he had been waiting for?

Prince Certainpersonio · another picture

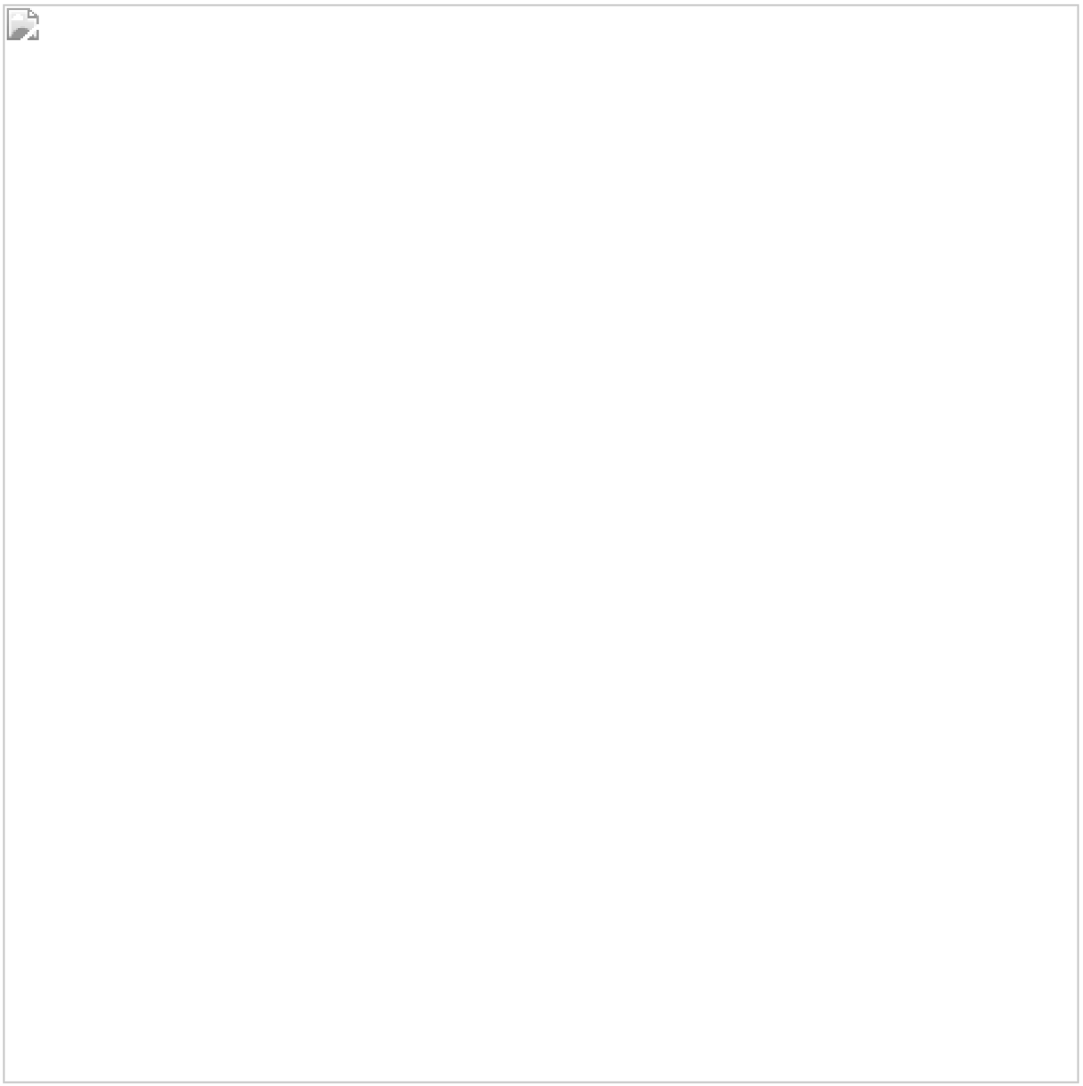


Think about it

1. Who did the Fairy bring to meet Prince Certainpersonio?

- ○ The Princess Alicia, his bride
- ○ The fishmonger
- ○ The Queen

The End of the Fishbone



Grandmarina gave a magnificent wedding feast, with a cake forty-two yards round! From now on, she said, there would be eight quarter days every year, so the King would never run short again.

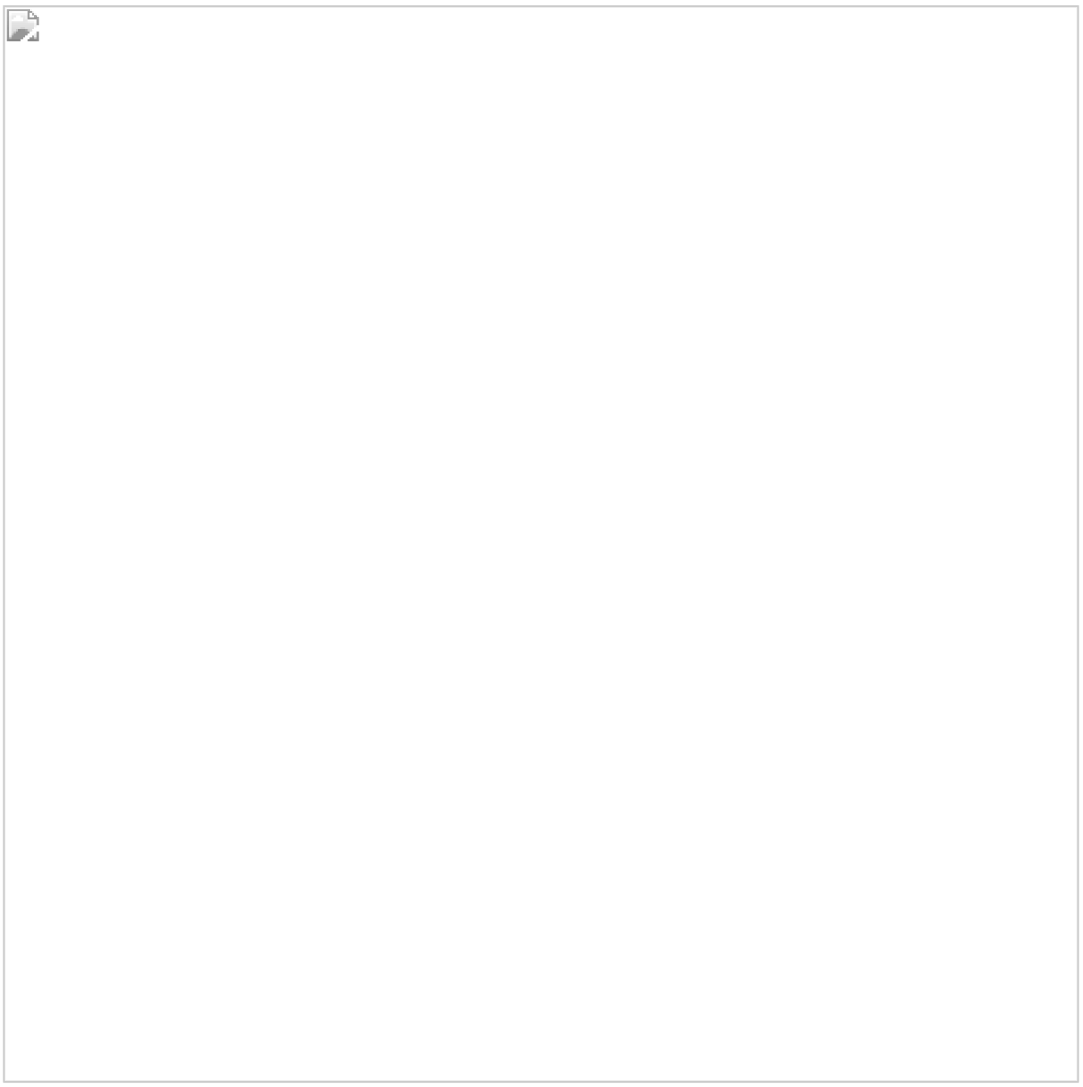
To Alicia and the Prince she said, “My dears, you will have thirty-five children, and they will all be good and beautiful.” Everyone cried, “Hip hip hip hurrah!”

“It only remains,” said Grandmarina, “to make an end of the fish-bone.”

She took it from Alicia's hand, and it flew down the throat of the snappish little pug-dog next door, and that was the end of him. And that is the end of the story, too.

TALK ABOUT IT

Alicia used her magic wish once, at the right time. If you had one wish to save for the right time, what might make you decide it had come?



Think about it

1. How did Grandmarina make an end of the fishbone?

- ○ She planted it in the garden
- ○ It flew down the pug-dog's throat
- ○ She gave it to the Duchess

2. Alicia helped everyone before she ever used the magic. Who helps you, and how could you help them back?

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

— Yeshua HaMashiach

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