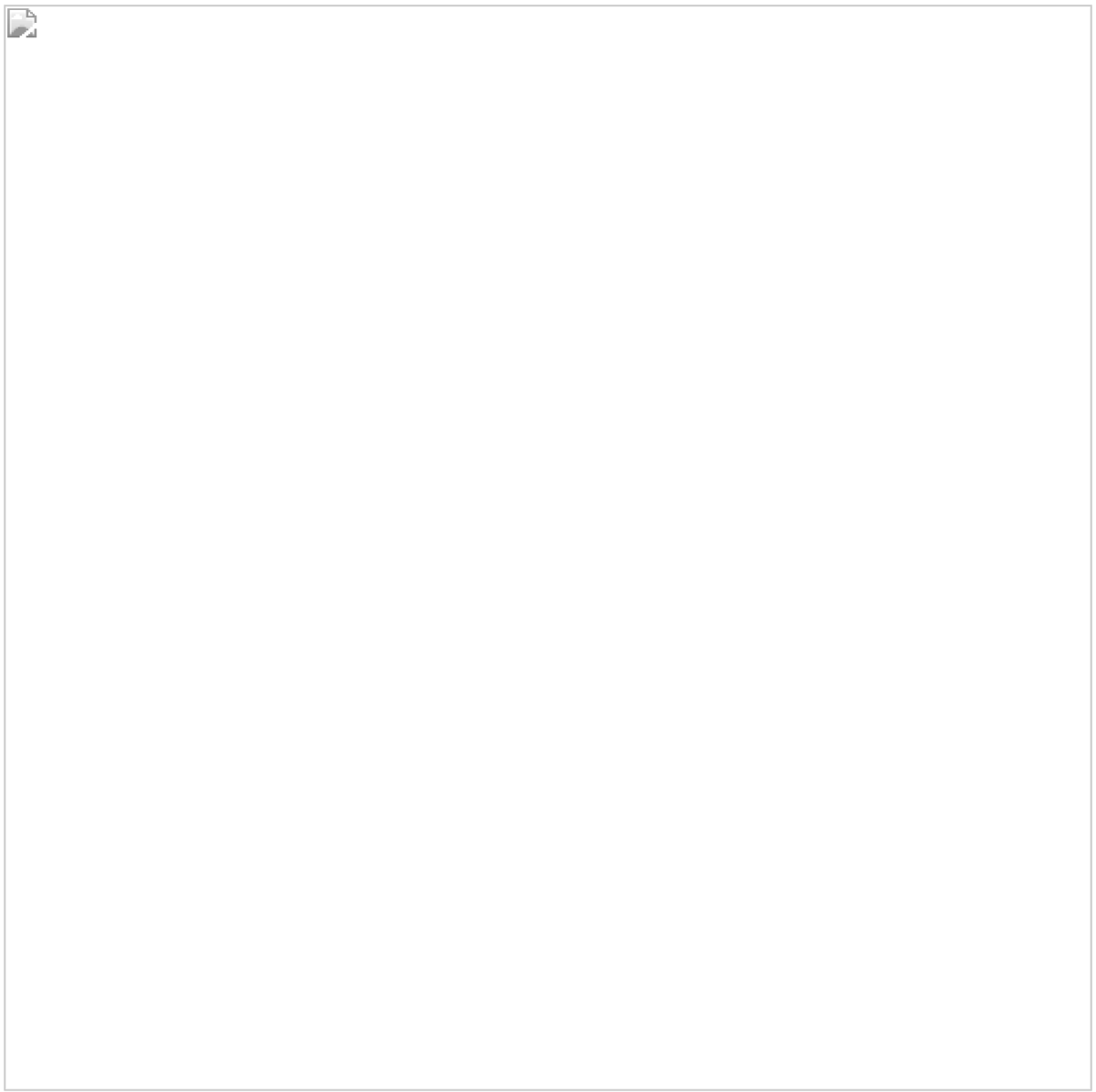
COLORING THE CLASSICS

The Princess Labam

A Tale from India



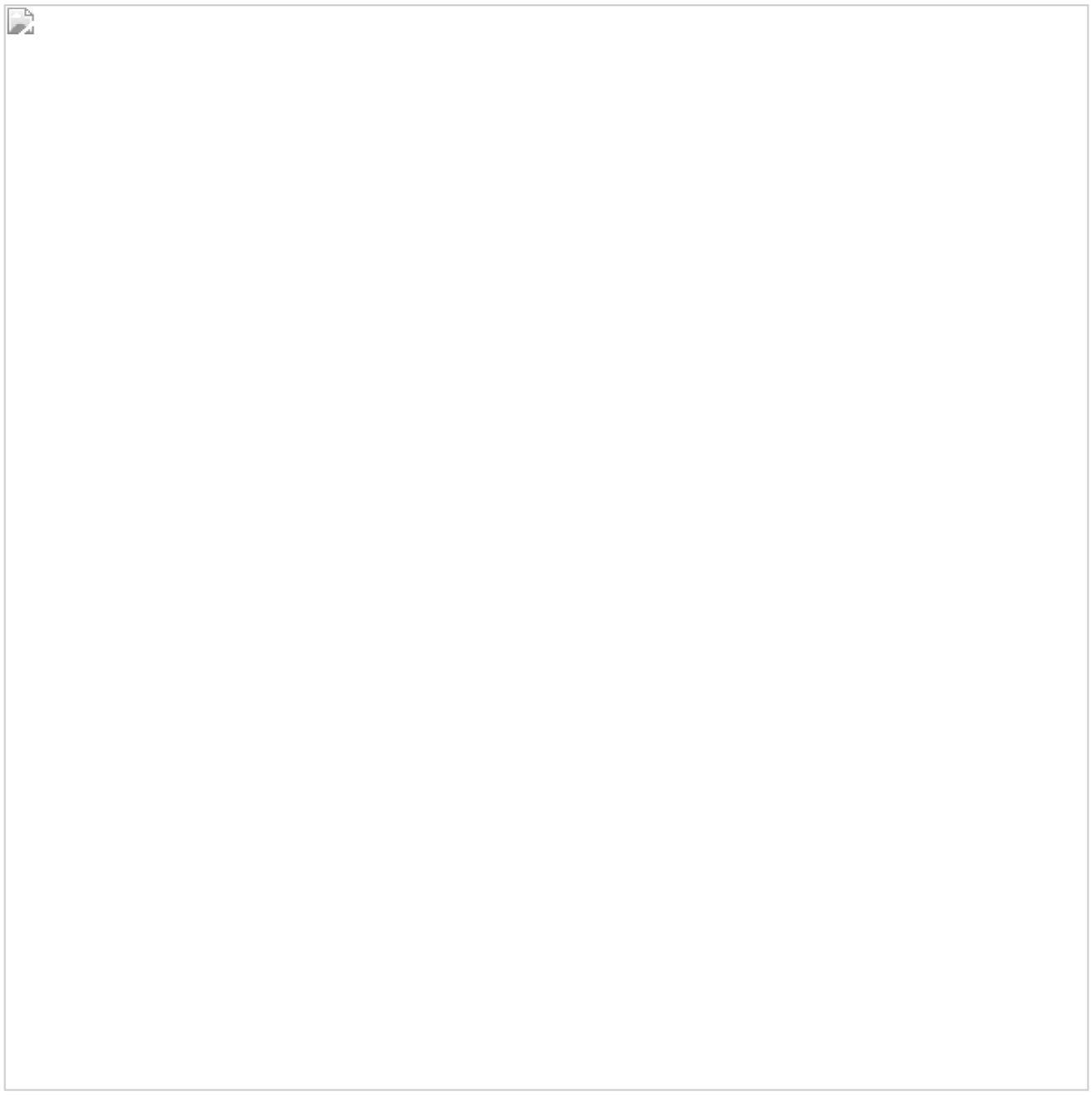
In a faraway country, a Rajah had one son, and every day the young Prince rode out to hunt.

TALK ABOUT IT

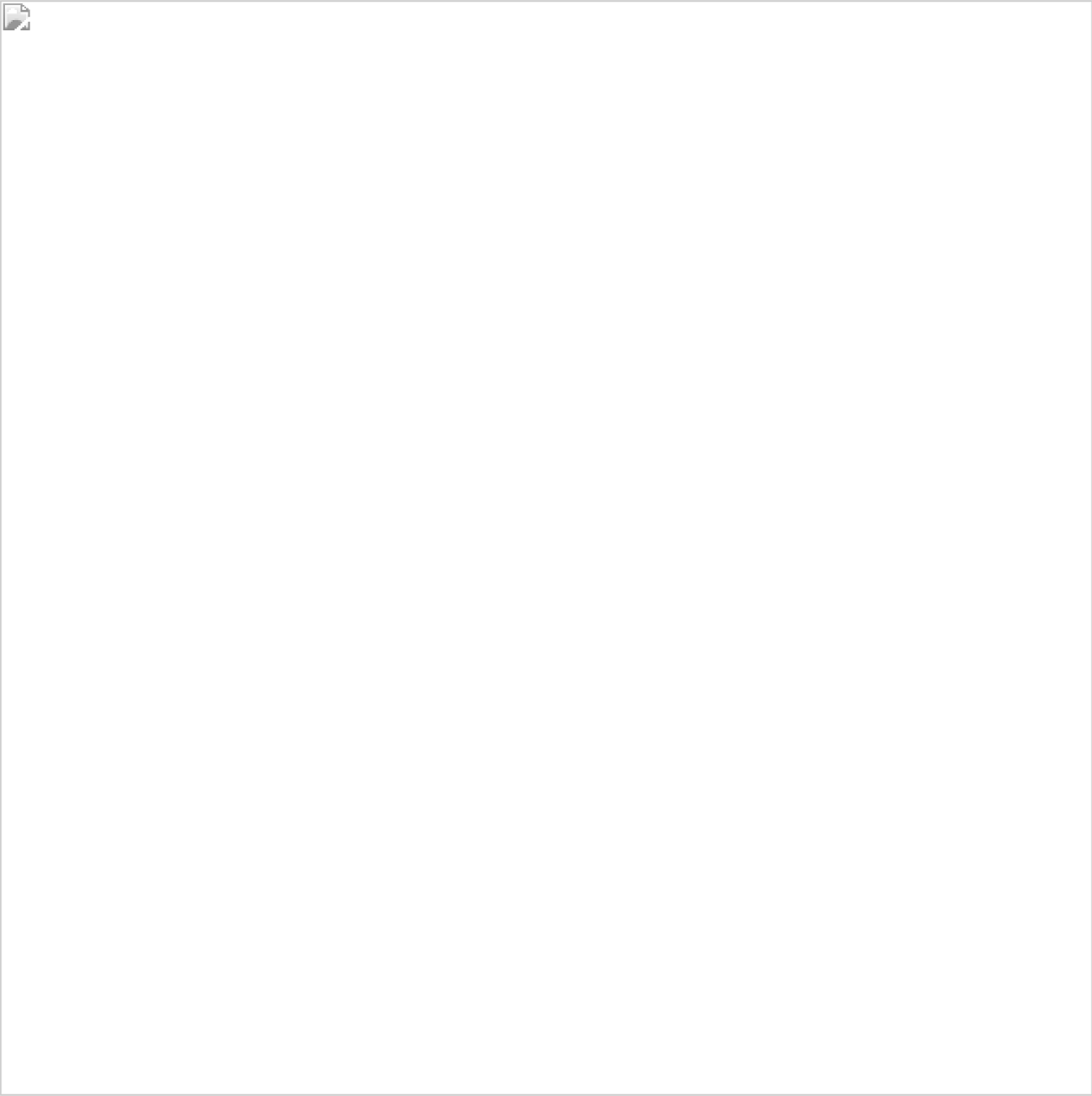
The Prince went hunting every single day. What is something you like to do every day?

This book belongs to _____

The Princess Labam · another picture



The Fourth Side

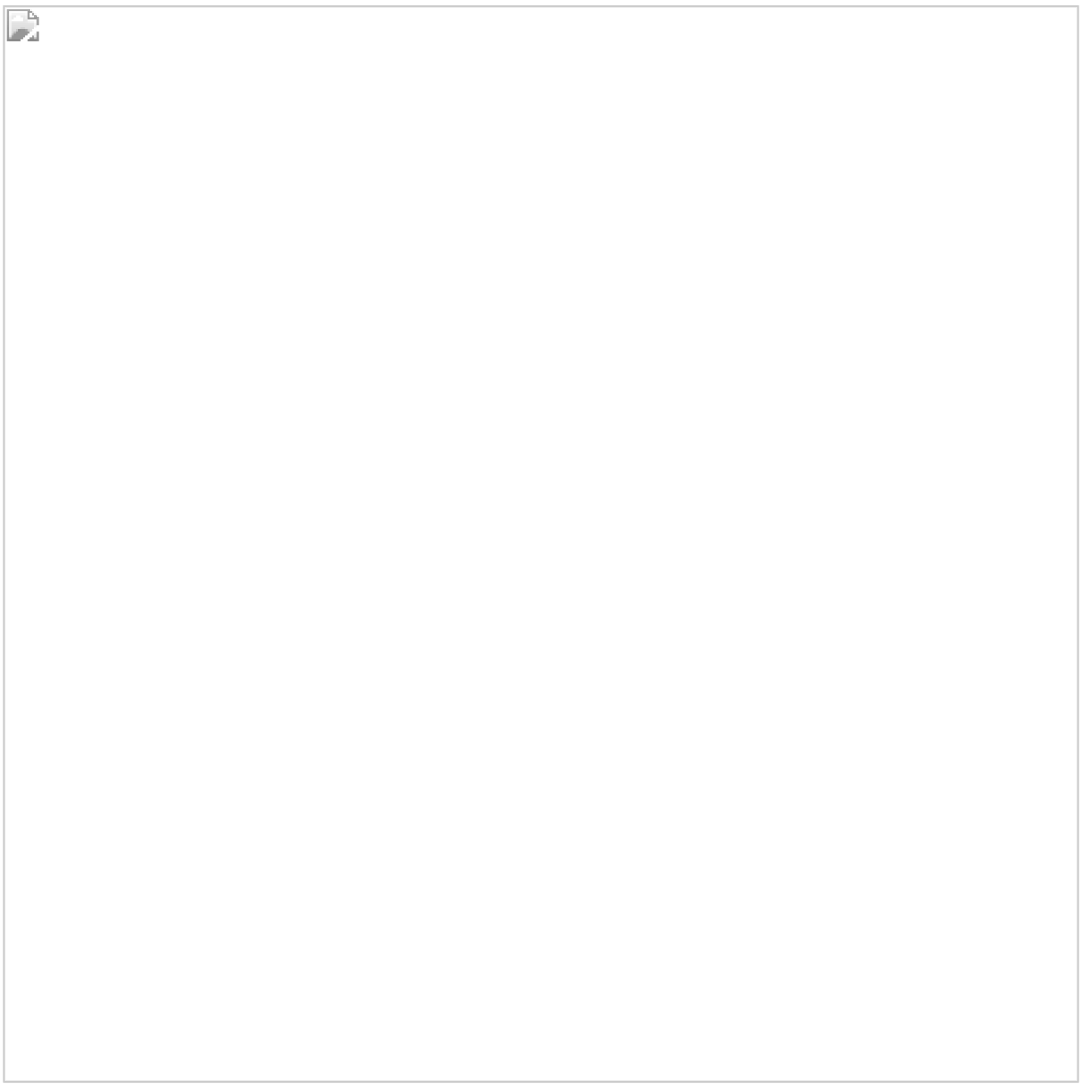


His mother, the Ranee, told him, “You can hunt wherever you like on these three sides; but you must never go to the fourth side.”

The Prince obeyed for a while. But one day he wondered why she had said it, and he rode off to the fourth side to see.

TALK ABOUT IT

The Prince wanted to know why he was told not to go. Have you ever wondered about a rule? What did you do?

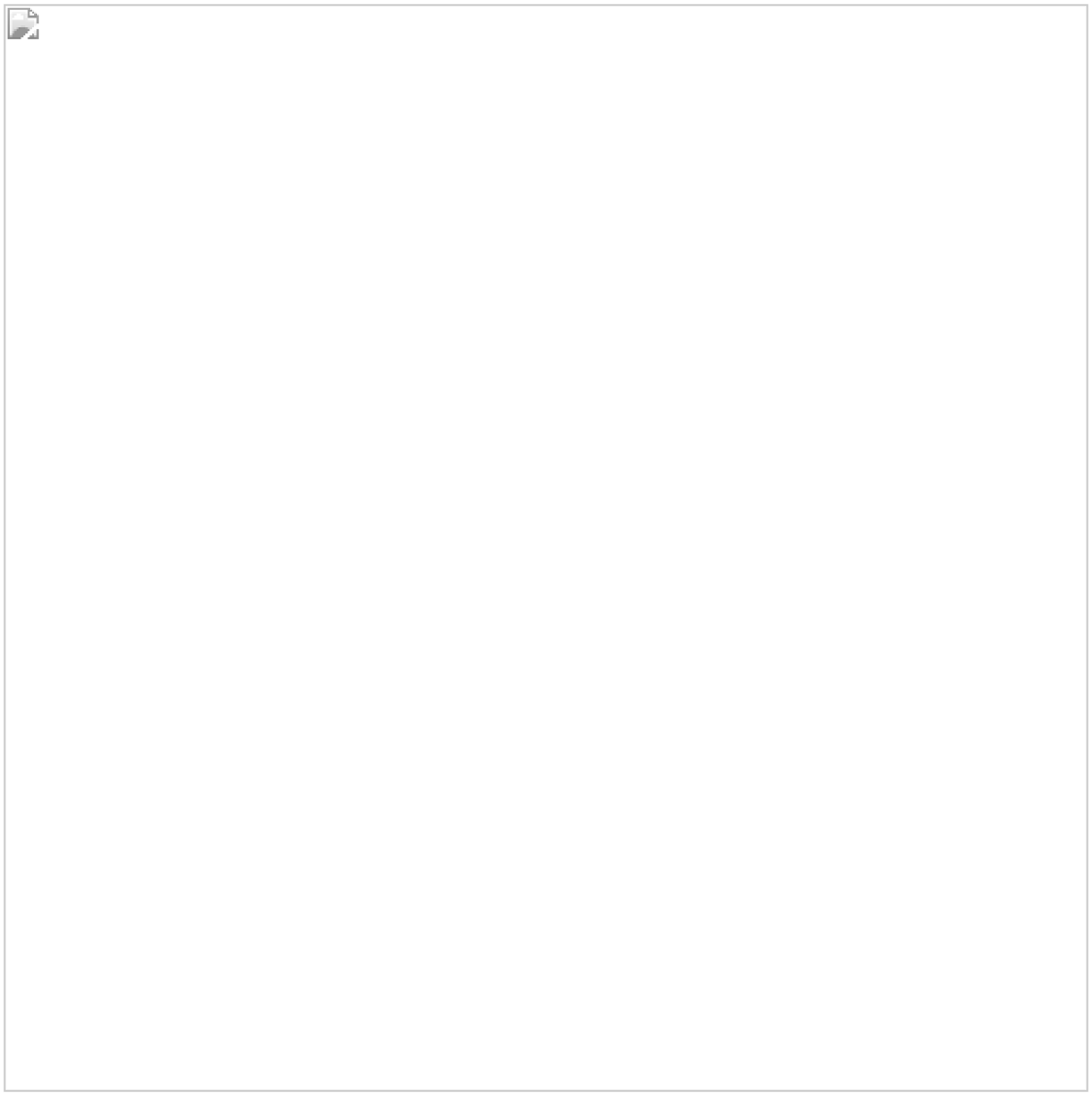


Think about it

1. Where did the Ranee say her son must never hunt?

- ○ The first side
- ○ The fourth side
- ○ The river

The Parrots Who Could Talk



On the fourth side there was a jungle with nothing in it but parrots. The Prince shot at some, and they all flew up into the sky, all but one. That was their Rajah, Hiraman parrot.

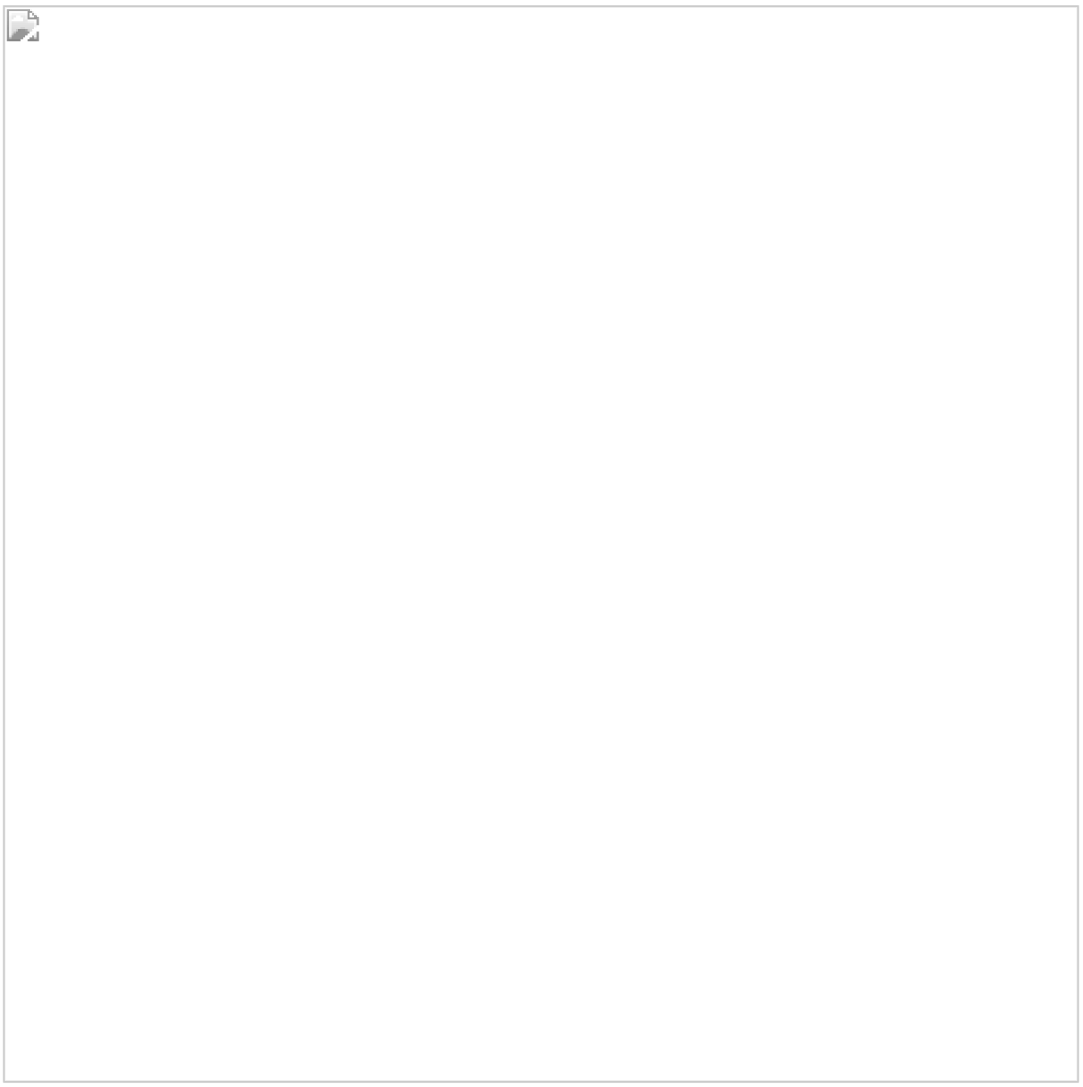
“Don't fly away and leave me alone when the Rajah's son shoots,” he called. “If you desert me like this, I will tell the Princess Labam.”

The Prince was surprised. “Why, these birds can talk!” he said. “Who is the Princess Labam? Where does she live?”

But the parrots would only say, “You can never get to the Princess Labam's country.”

TALK ABOUT IT

The Prince threw his gun away and went home sad. What do you think he wanted most?

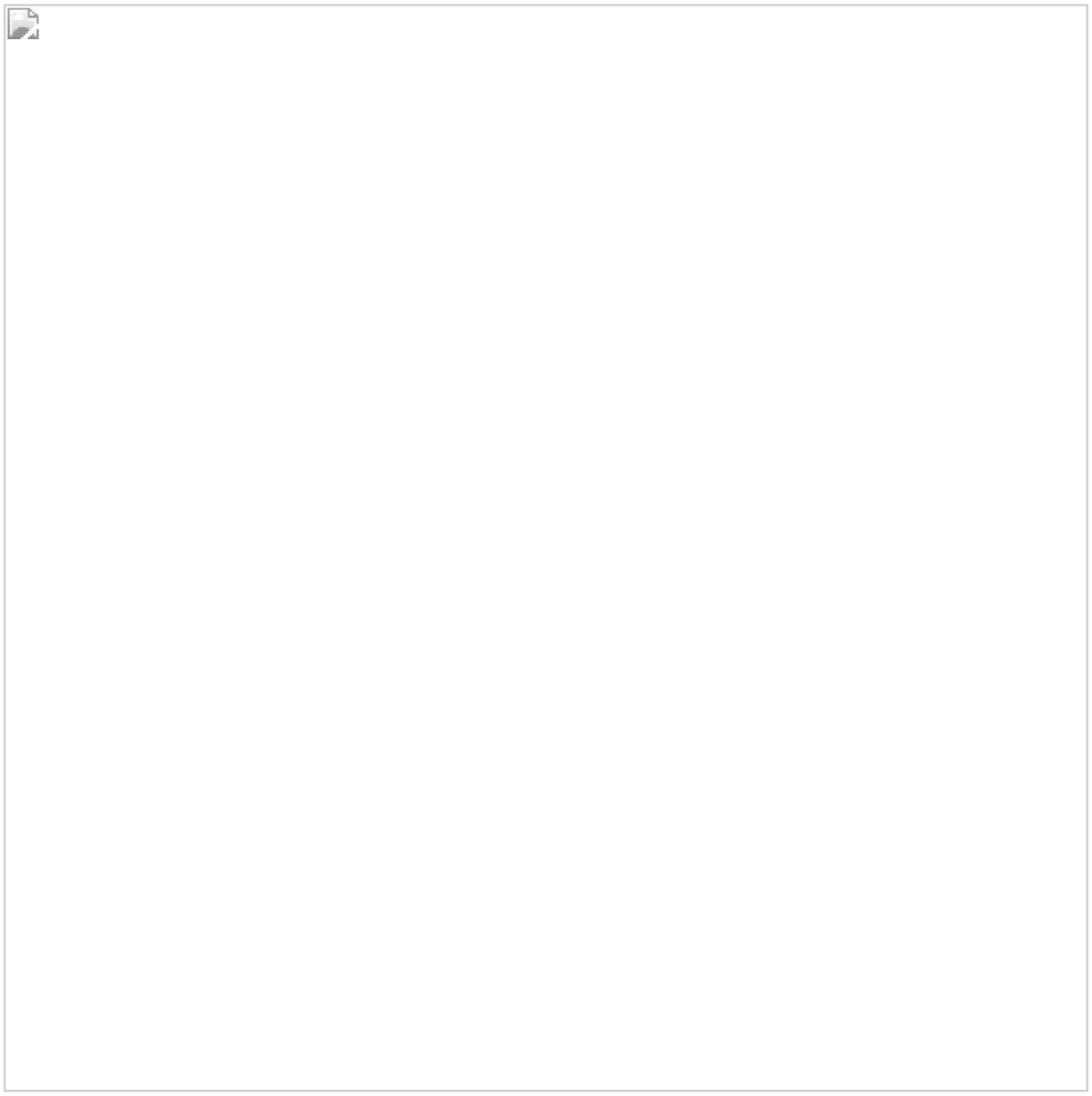


Think about it

1. What was strange about the parrots?

- ○ They were blue
- ○ They could talk
- ○ They could sing in tune

Saying Goodbye



At home the Prince would not speak or eat, and lay on his bed for four or five days.

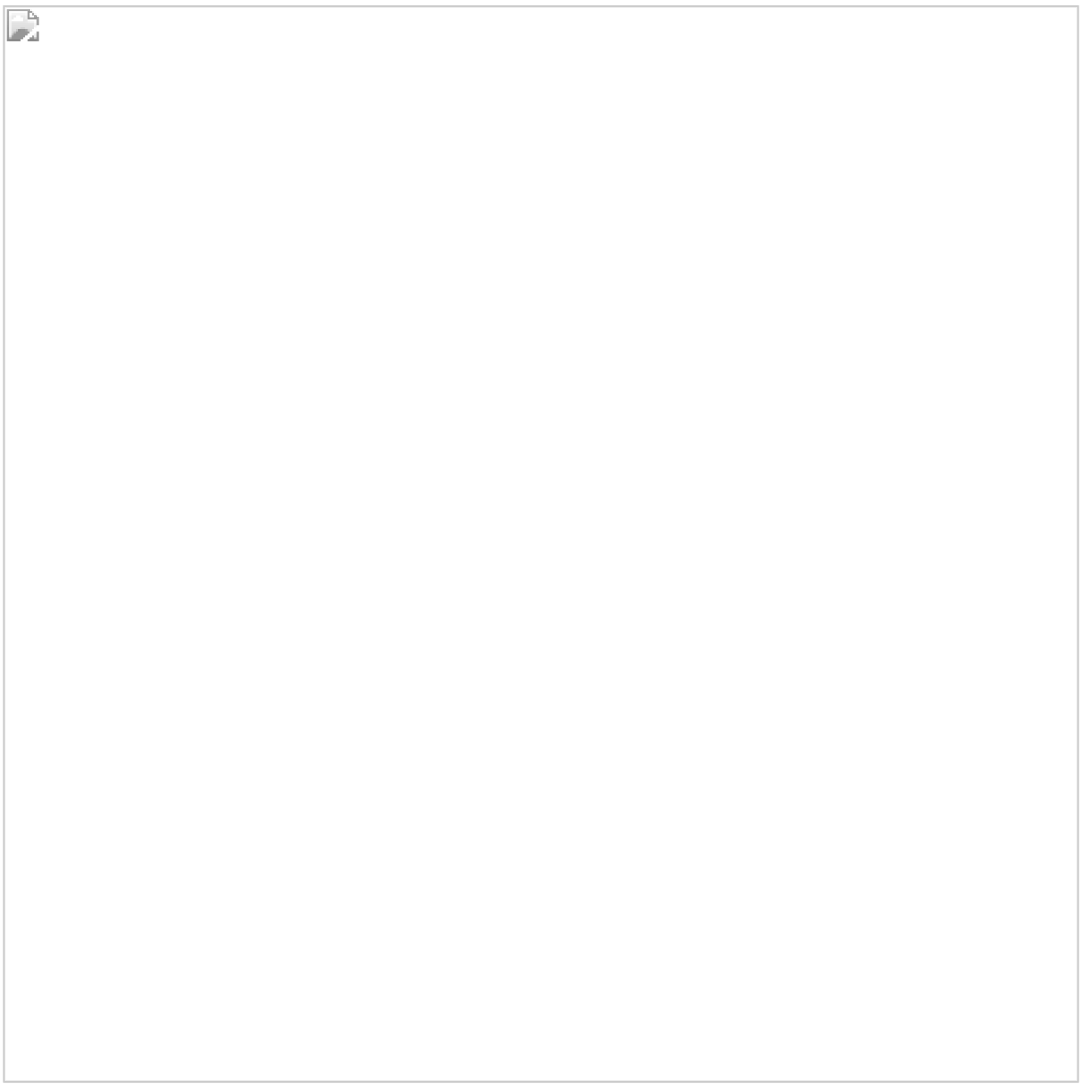
At last he told his father and mother that he wanted to find the Princess Labam. They did not know where her country was. “You must not leave us,” they said. “You are our only son.”

“I must try and find her,” said the Prince. “Perhaps God will show me the way.”

So they let him go, with tears. His father gave him fine clothes, a fine horse and a purse of rupees. His mother wrapped some sweetmeats in her handkerchief and said, “When you are hungry eat some of these.”

TALK ABOUT IT

His parents cried but let him go. What do you think that was like for them?

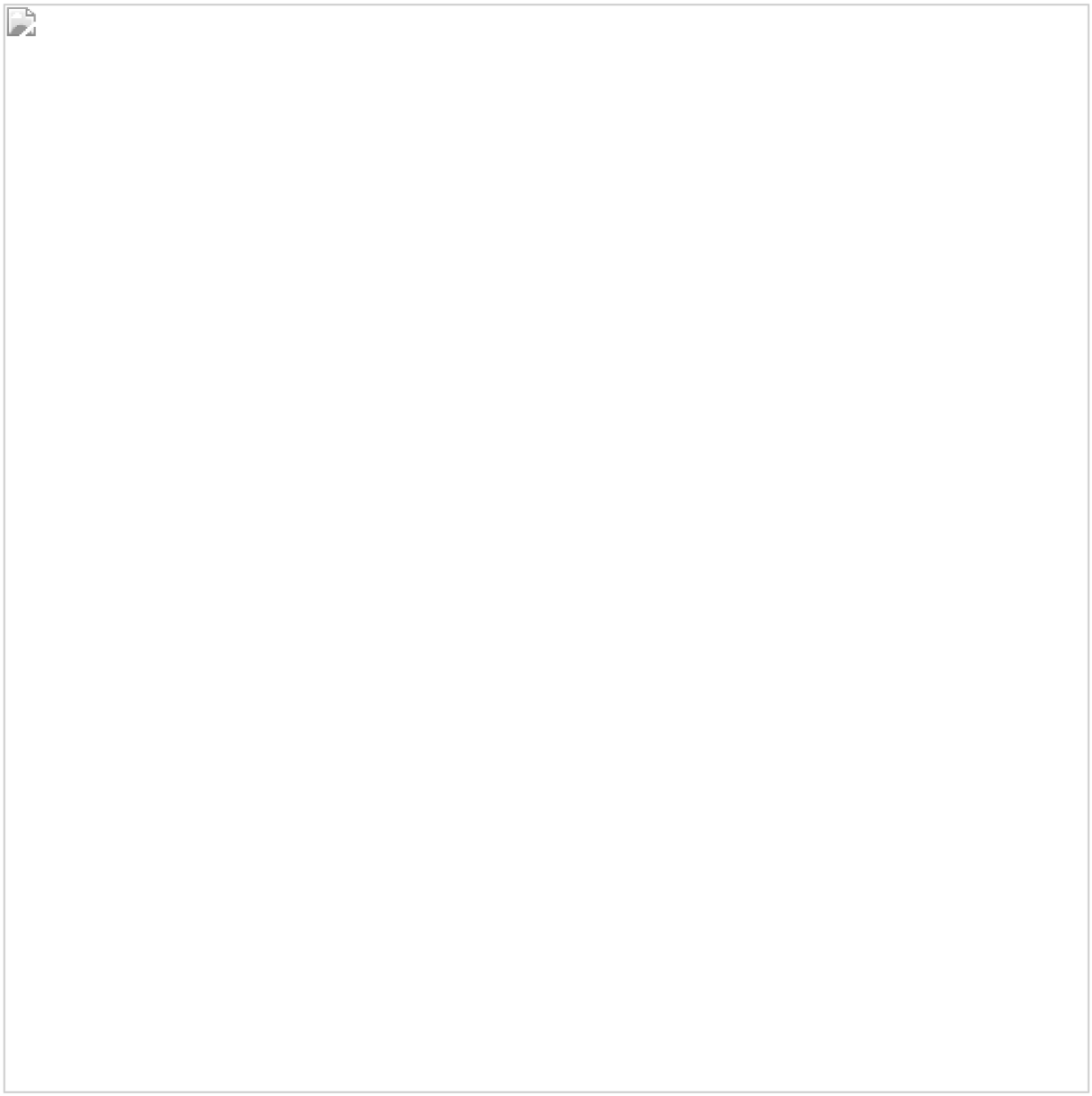


Think about it

1. What did the Prince's mother give him?

- ○ A map
- ○ Sweetmeats wrapped in a handkerchief
- ○ A magic ring

The Ants in the Sweetmeats



The Prince rode on until he came to a jungle with a tank of water and shady trees. He sat down to eat his mother's sweetmeats.

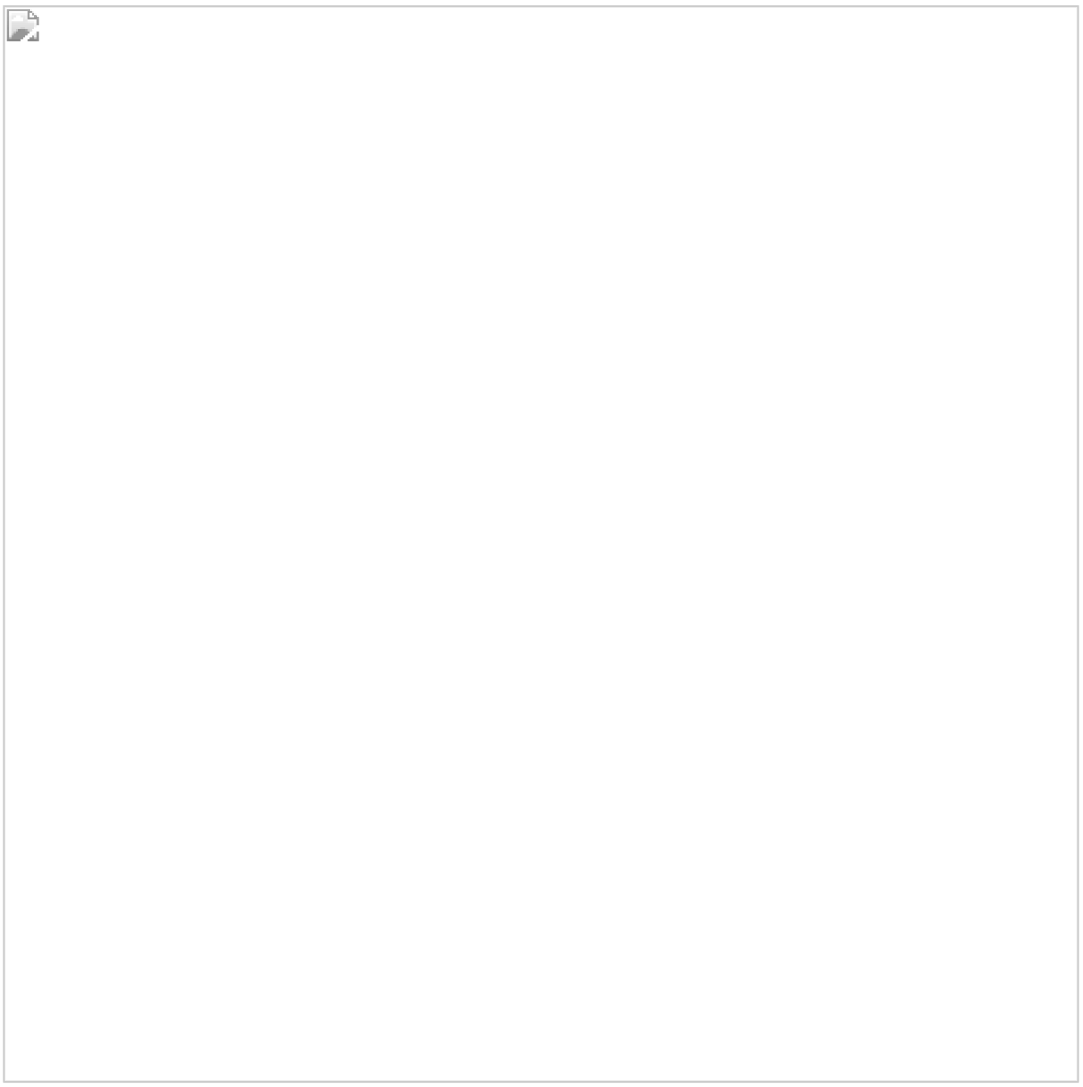
But in the first one there was an ant. In the second there was an ant too. He took them all out, and there was an ant in every one.

“Never mind,” he said, “I won't eat the sweetmeats; the ants shall eat them.”

Then the Ant-Rajah came and said, “You have been good to us. If ever you are in trouble, think of me and we will come to you.”

TALK ABOUT IT

The Prince was hungry, but he let the ants have his food. Why do you think he did?

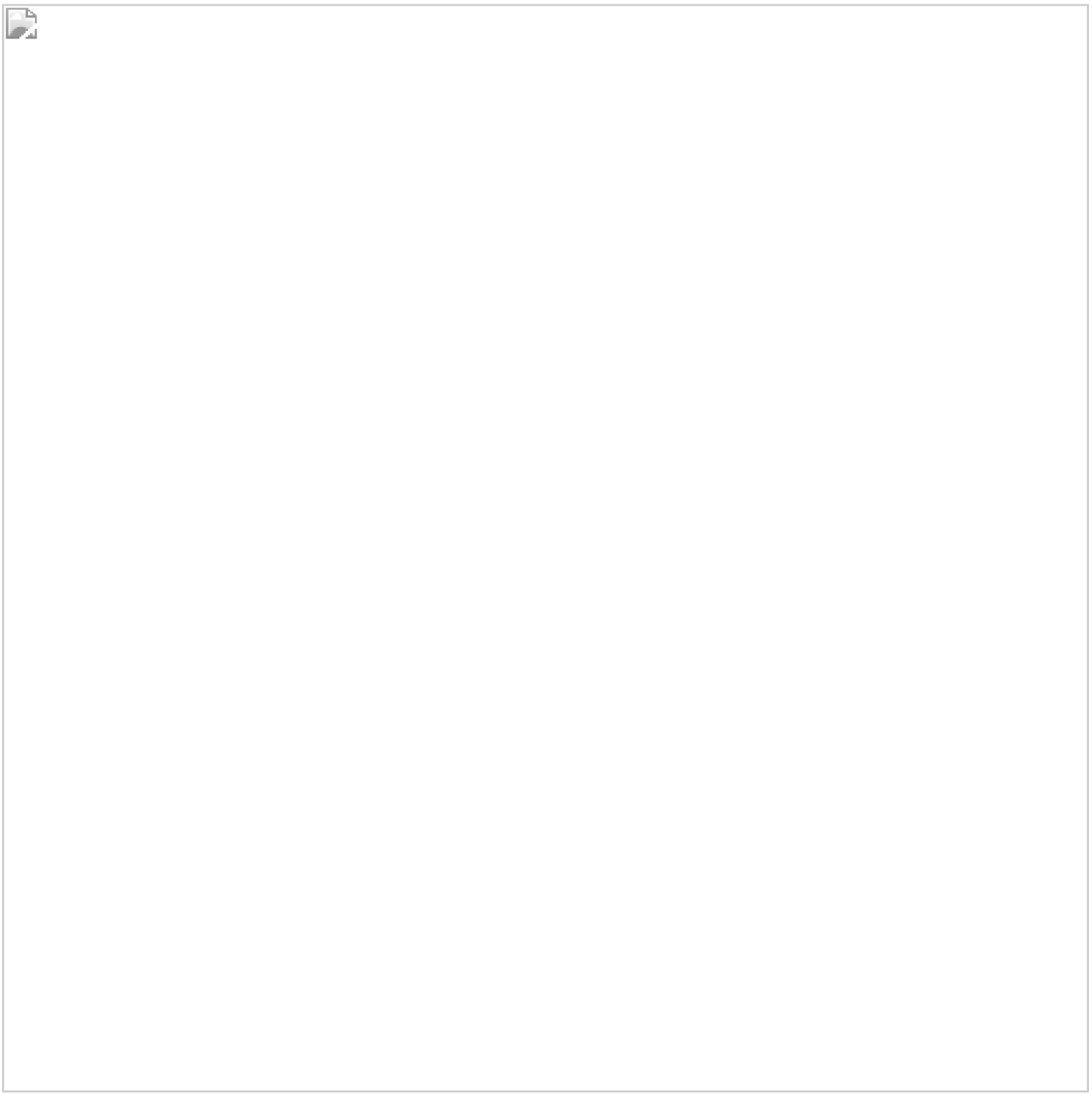


Think about it

1. What did the Prince do with the sweetmeats that had ants in them?

- ○ He ate them anyway
- ○ He let the ants eat them
- ○ He threw them away

The Tiger with a Thorn



In the next jungle a tiger was roaring in pain. “I have had a thorn in my foot for twelve years,” said the tiger.

“I will take it out for you,” said the Prince. “But perhaps, when I have made you well, you will eat me?” “Oh no,” said the tiger. “Do make me well.”

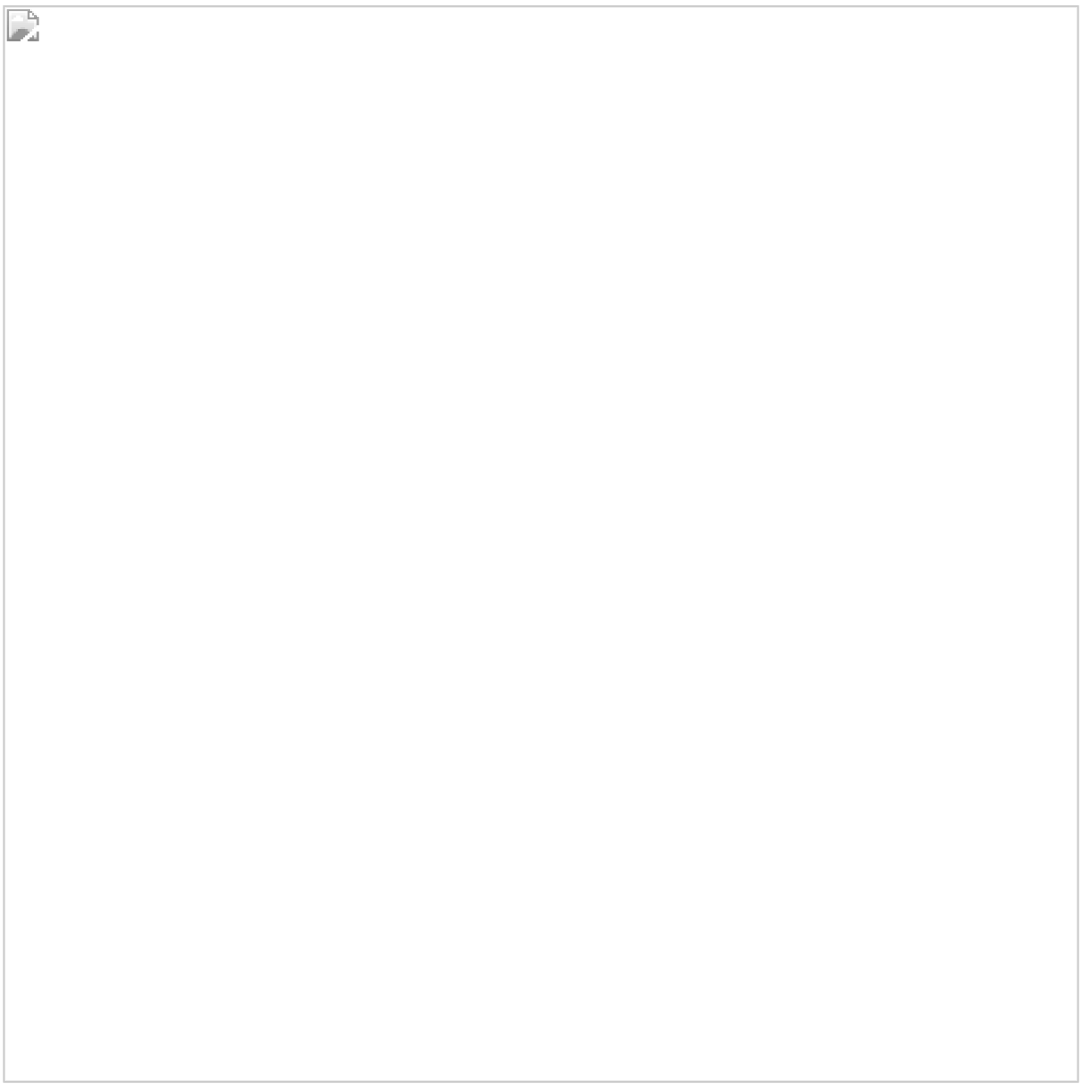
The Prince cut out the thorn. The tiger roared so loudly that his wife came running, but he made her promise not to hurt the Prince.

He stayed three days until the foot healed. “If ever you are in trouble,” said the tiger, “think of me, and we will come to you.”

TALK ABOUT IT

The Prince wasn't sure the tiger would keep his word, but he helped anyway. Why might that take courage?

The Tiger with a Thorn · another picture

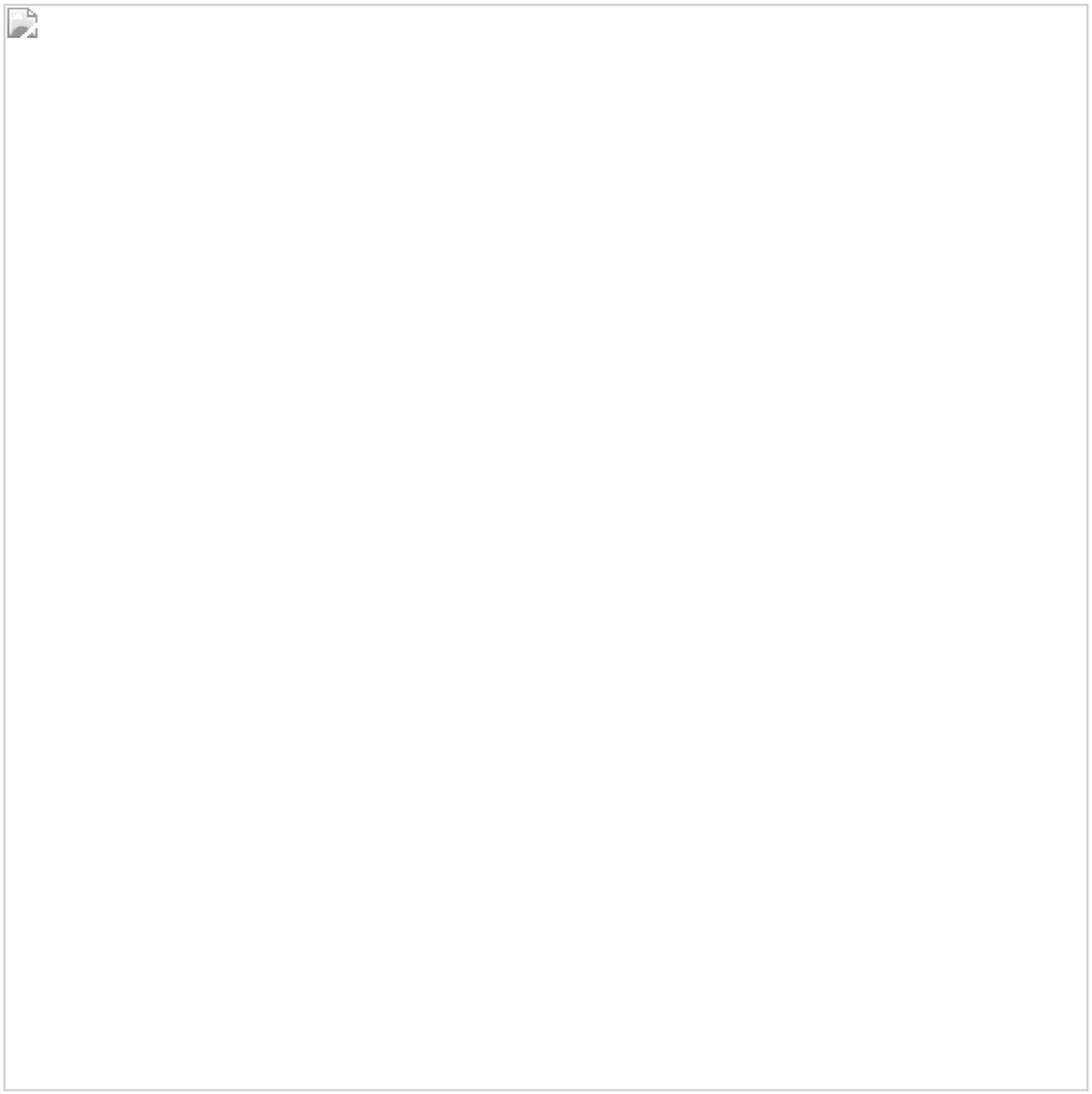


Think about it

1. What was wrong with the tiger?

- ○ He was lost
- ○ He had a thorn in his foot
- ○ He was hungry

Four Things Worth Quarreling Over

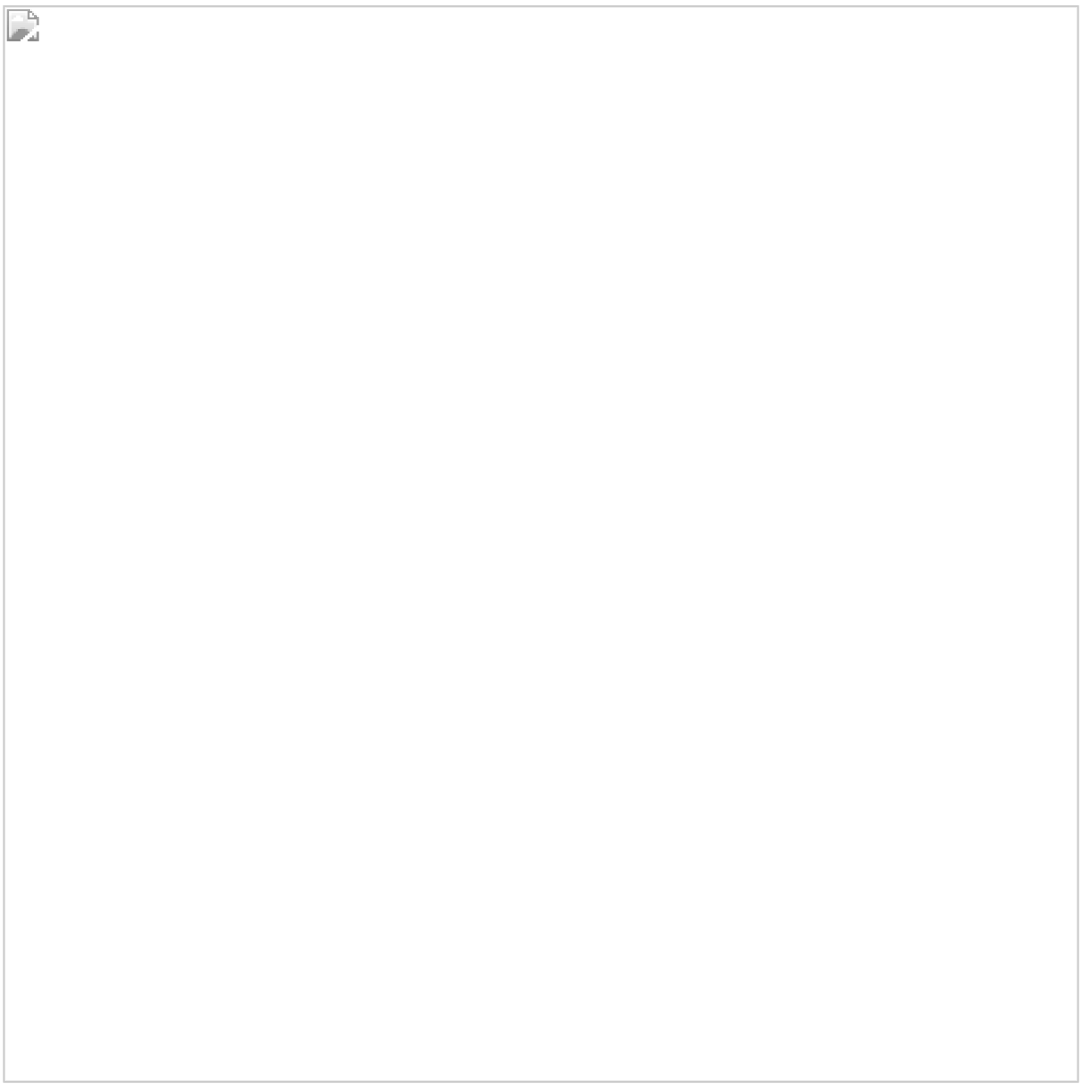


In a third jungle, four holy men, Fakeers, were quarreling. Their dead teacher had left four things: a bed that flew wherever you wished, a bag that gave whatever you wanted, a bowl that always had water, and a stick and rope that would beat and tie up any enemy.

“Do not quarrel for these things,” said the Prince. He shot four arrows in four directions, and the Fakeers raced after them. While they were gone, the Prince sat on the bed with all four things and said, “Bed, I wish to go to the Princess Labam's country.”

TALK ABOUT IT

The Prince ended up with all four things, and the Fakeers were left with none. Was that fair? What else could he have done?



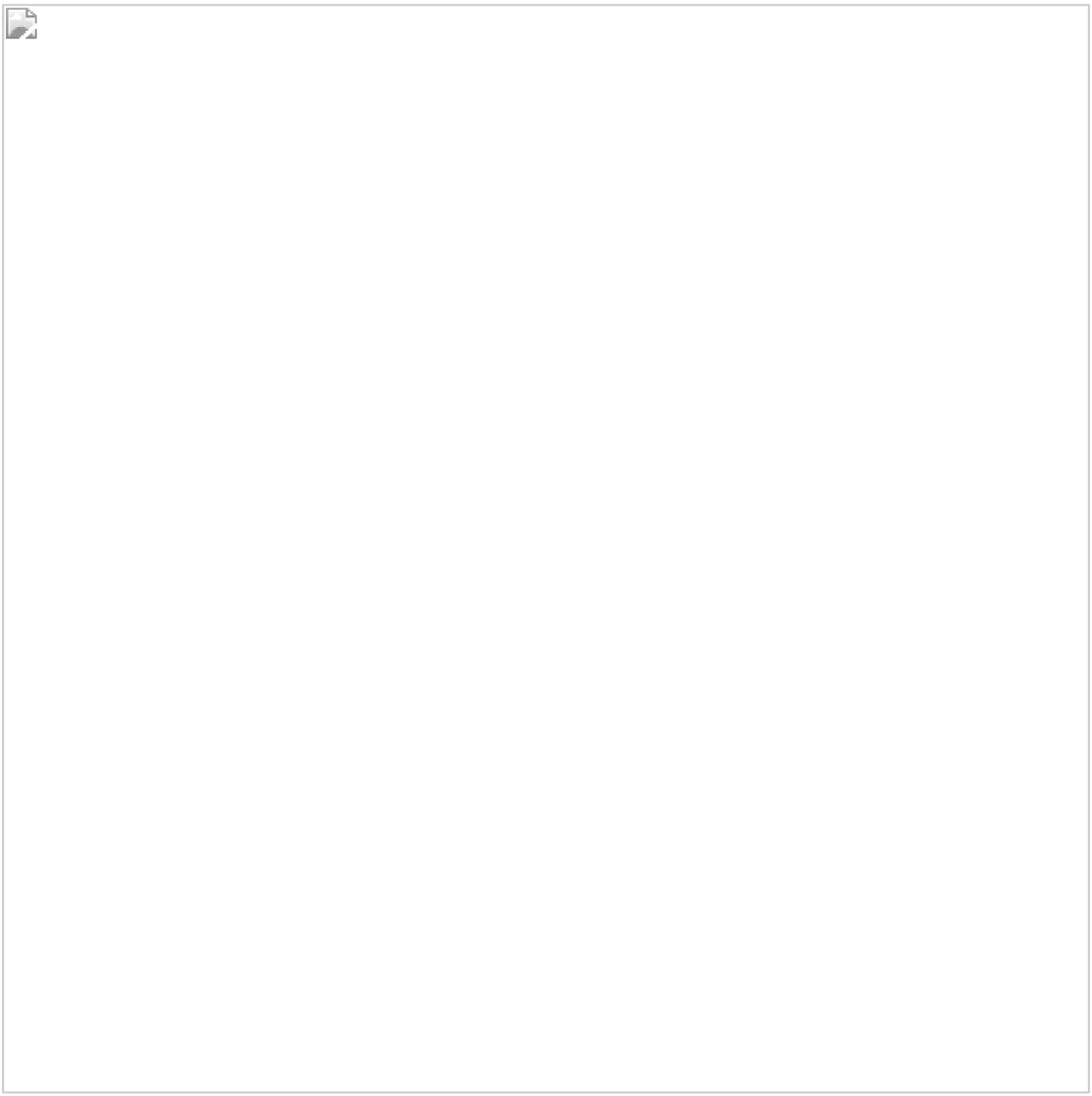
Think about it

1. What did the Prince do to stop the quarrel?

- ○ He shot four arrows and the Fakeers raced to fetch them
- ○ He ran away
- ○ He broke all the things

2. What would you have done if you found people quarreling over a gift like this?

Aunty's House



The flying bed took the Prince to the Princess Labam's country. He went to a little house and asked an old woman for a place to stay.

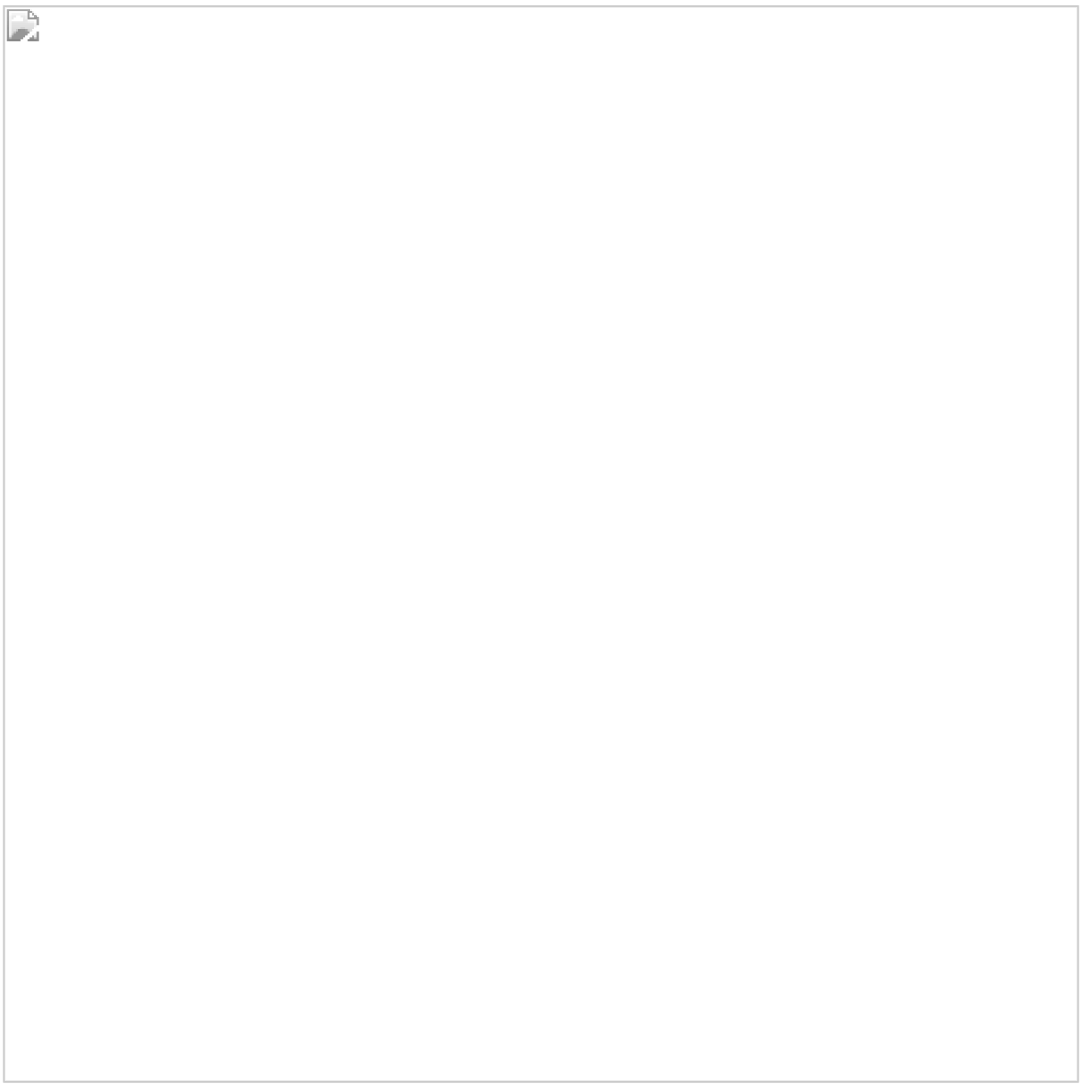
“I cannot let you stay with me,” she said, “for our King has ordered that men from other countries may not stay in his country.” But when the Prince called her “aunty” and said that wild beasts would eat him in the jungle, she let him stay one night.

“Aunty,” he said, “I will give you food.” The bag gave a delicious dinner on two gold plates. And the bowl filled with water for them. The old woman could hardly believe it.

TALK ABOUT IT

The old woman took a risk to let the stranger in. Why do you think she did?

Aunty's House · another picture

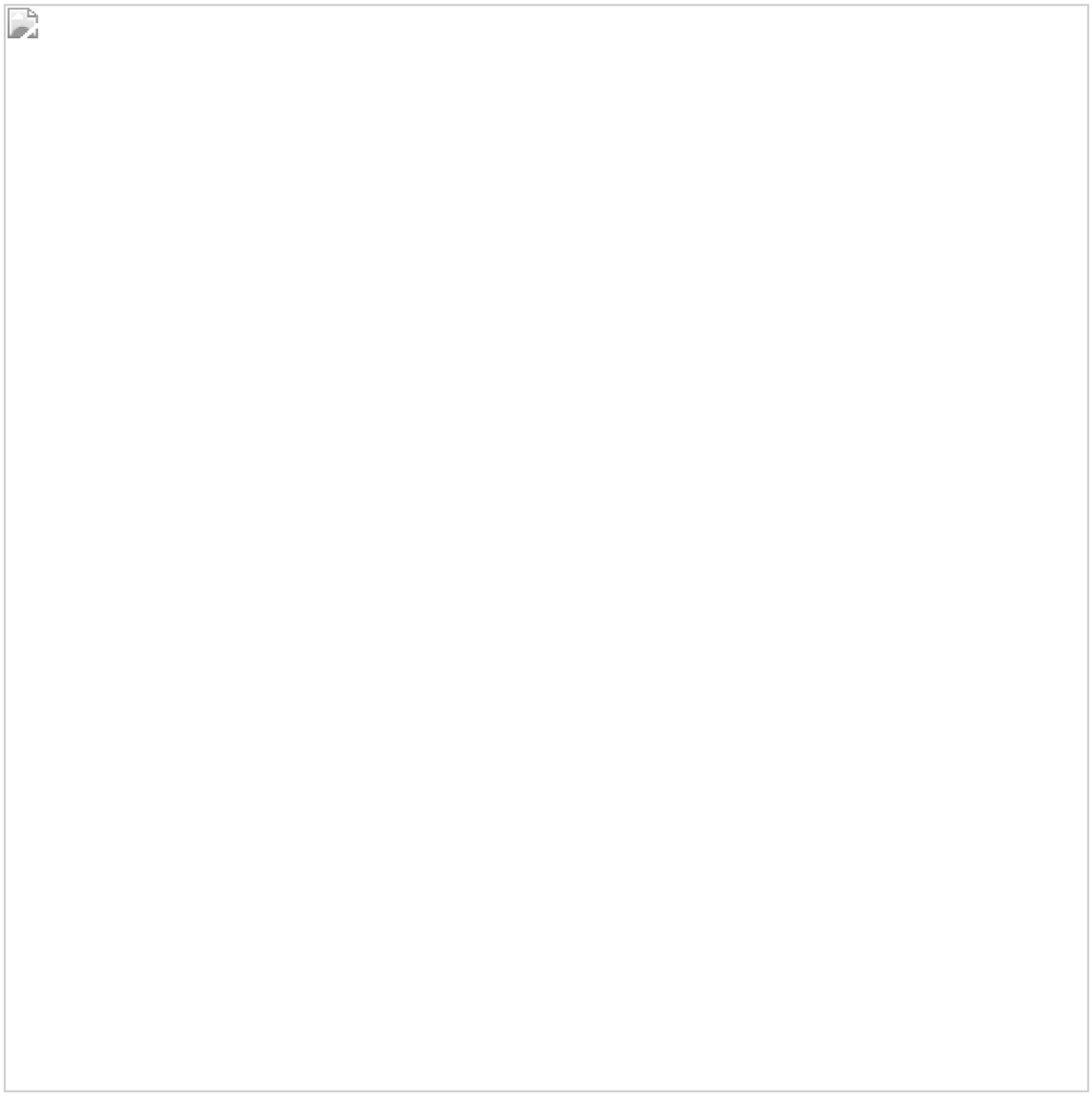


Think about it

1. What did the Prince call the old woman?

- ○ Aunty
- ○ Princess
- ○ Mother Ranee

The Princess Who Shone Like the Moon



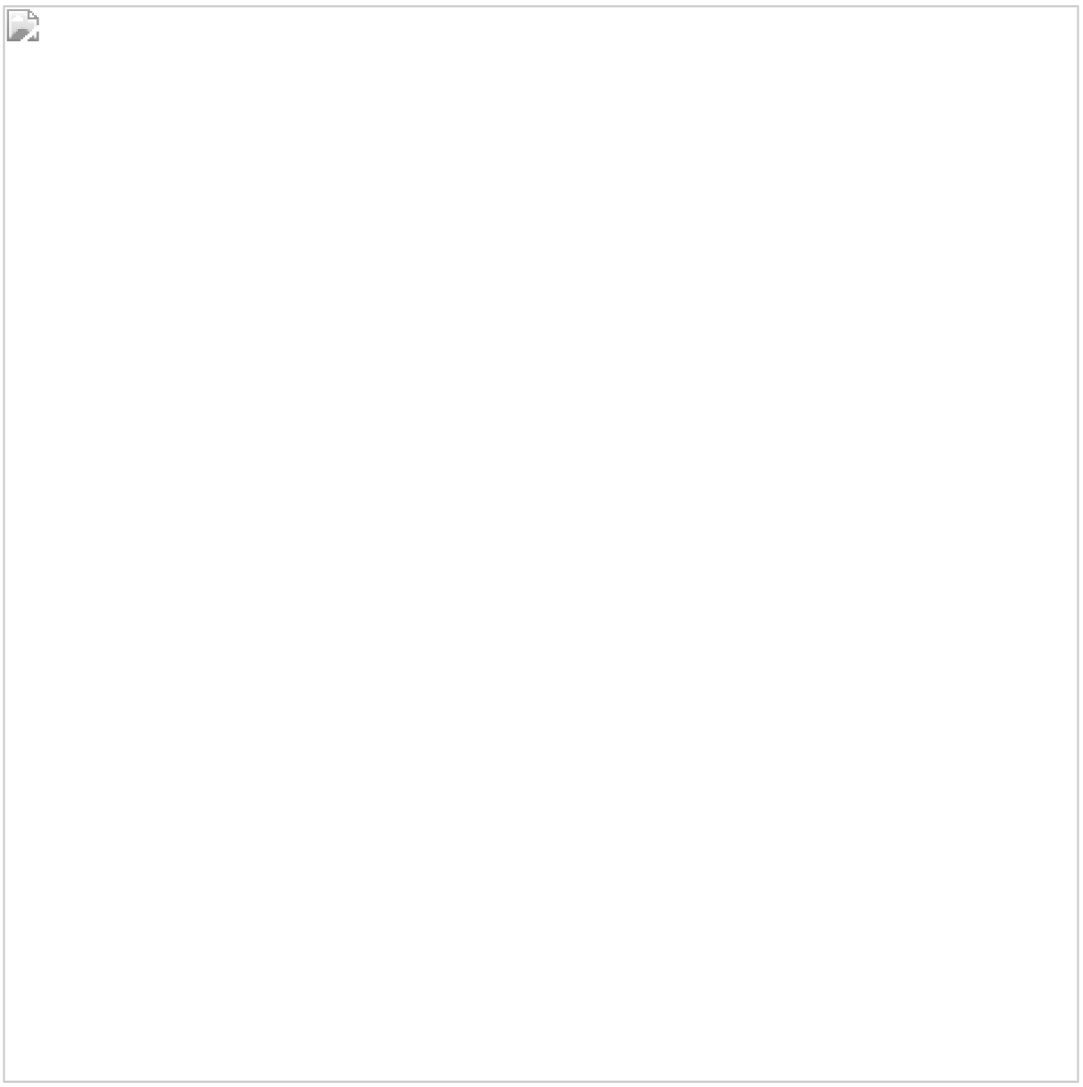
That night the Prince asked why the old woman lit no lamp. “Our king has forbidden the people in his country to light any lamps,” she said. “As soon as it is dark, his daughter, the Princess Labam, comes and sits on her roof, and she shines so that she lights up all the country.”

When it was black night the Princess came out in rich clothes and jewels, with diamonds and pearls on her head. She shone like the moon, and her beauty made night day.

The Prince watched her quietly. “How lovely she is!” he said.

TALK ABOUT IT

The Princess lit up a whole country. What is something that makes you shine for other people?

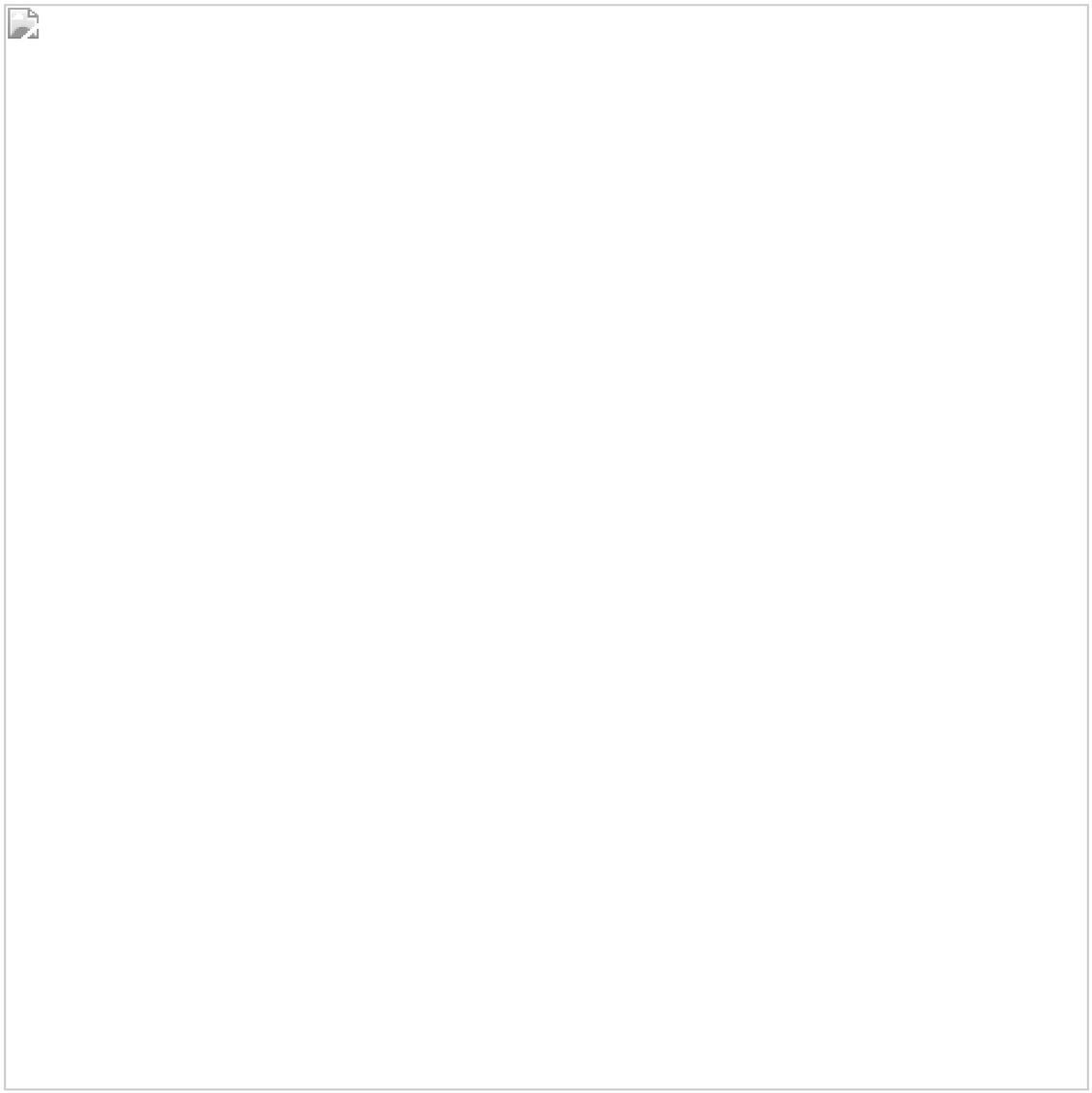


Think about it

1. Why did nobody light lamps in the country?

- ○ They had no oil
- ○ The Princess shone from her roof and lit up everything
- ○ It was against the law to read

Gifts in the Night



While the Princess slept, the Prince flew to her room on his bed and left a heap of betel leaves by her bed. Next morning her servants found them and ate them.

The next night he left a lovely shawl. “See, mother,” said the Princess, “Khuda must have given me this shawl, it is so beautiful.”

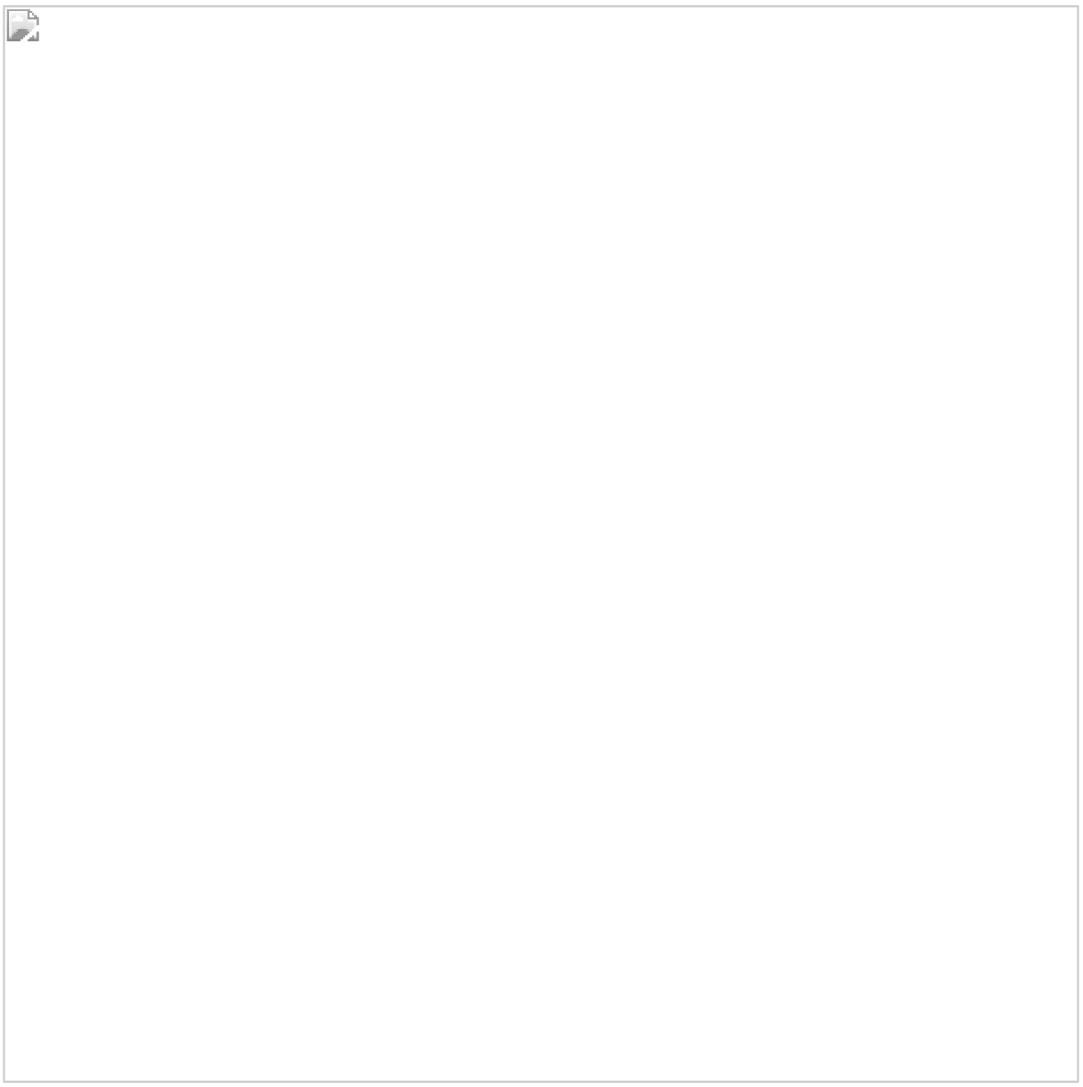
The third night he took a ring from his bag and gently touched her hand to put it on. She woke up frightened. “Who are you?” she said. “Why do you come to my room?”

“Do not be afraid, Princess,” he said; “I am no thief. I am a great Rajah's son.”

TALK ABOUT IT

The Prince left gifts and did not ask for anything. How do you think the Princess felt when she woke up?

Gifts in the Night · another picture

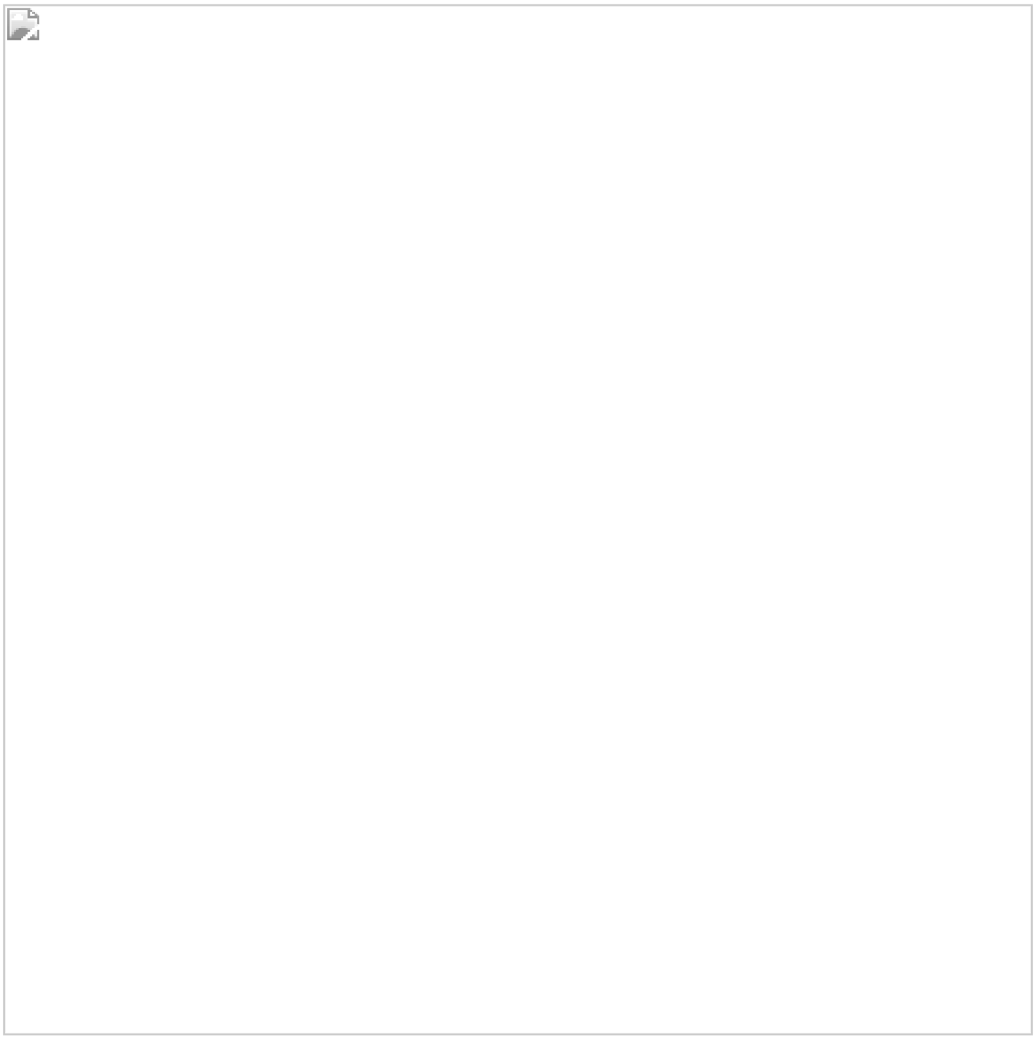


Think about it

1. What did the Prince say when the Princess woke up scared?

- ○ “I am no thief”
- ○ “Give me your jewels”
- ○ “I am a tiger”

The King's First Test



The Princess told her father and mother she wished to marry him. The King said, “if this Rajah's son wishes to marry my daughter, he must first do whatever I bid him.”

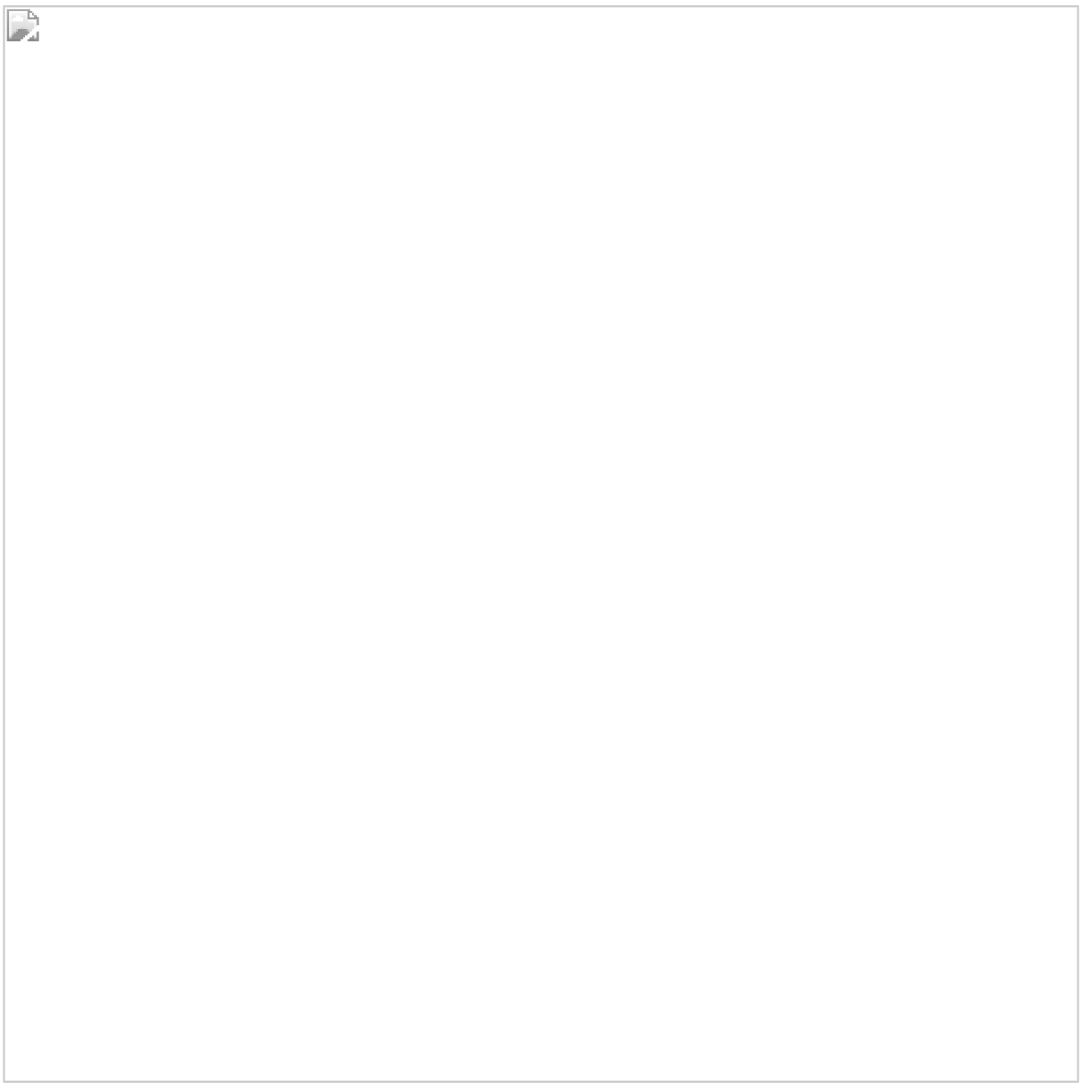
Many Rajahs' sons had tried before and failed. “Do go away,” said the old woman, but the Prince would not.

The first test: he must crush all the oil out of eighty pounds of mustard seed in a single day.

The Prince thought of the Ant-Rajah, and the ants came at once. “Be happy,” said the Ant-Rajah. “Lie down and sleep; we will crush all the oil out for you.” And they did.

TALK ABOUT IT

The Prince's kindness to the ants came back to him. Who has been kind to you when you needed it?

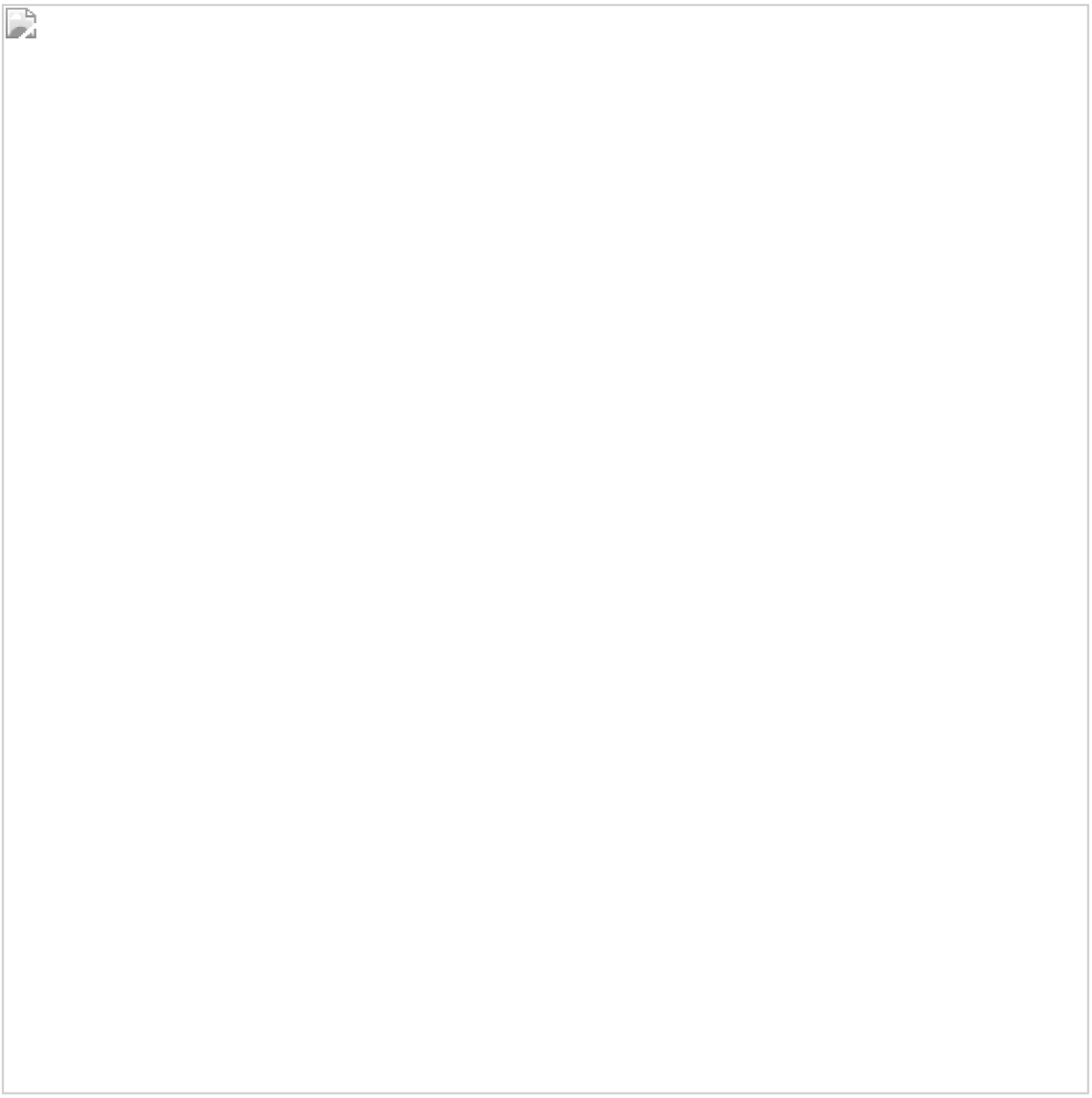


Think about it

1. Who crushed the mustard seed?

- ○ The Princess
- ○ The old woman
- ○ The Ant-Rajah and his ants

Tigers and a Drum in the Sky



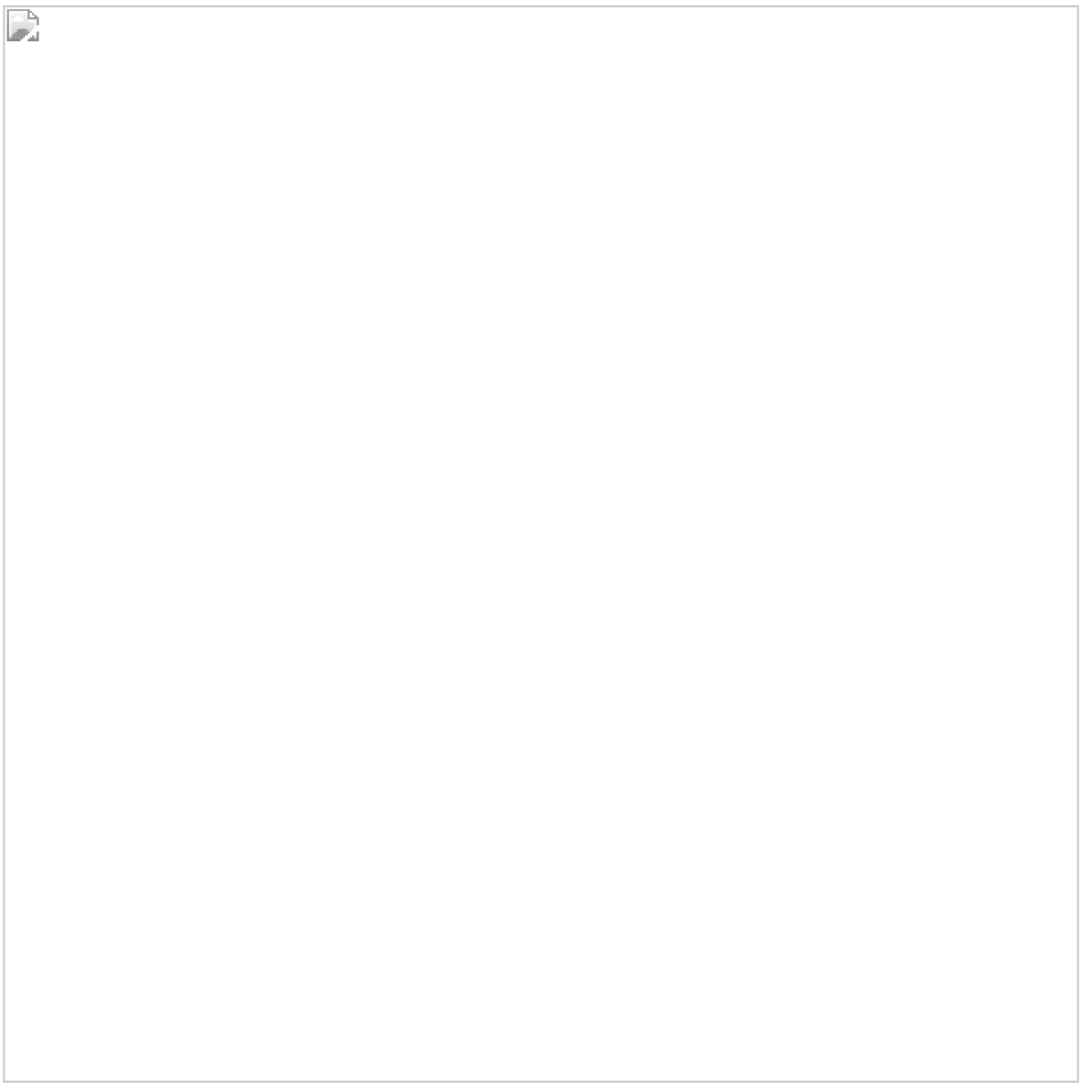
The King's next test was to fight two demons he kept shut in a cage. The Prince thought of the tiger, and the tiger and his wife came at once. “Do not be frightened,” said the tiger. “I and my wife will fight with them for you.”

The Prince took two splendid coats of gold and silver from his bag and put them on the tigers. Then the tigers went and fought the demons until the demons were gone.

The third test was to beat a kettle-drum up in the sky. The little bed flew him up, and he beat the drum, and the King heard it.

TALK ABOUT IT

Each time, the Prince asked friends for help. Is asking for help a weak thing or a strong thing? Why?

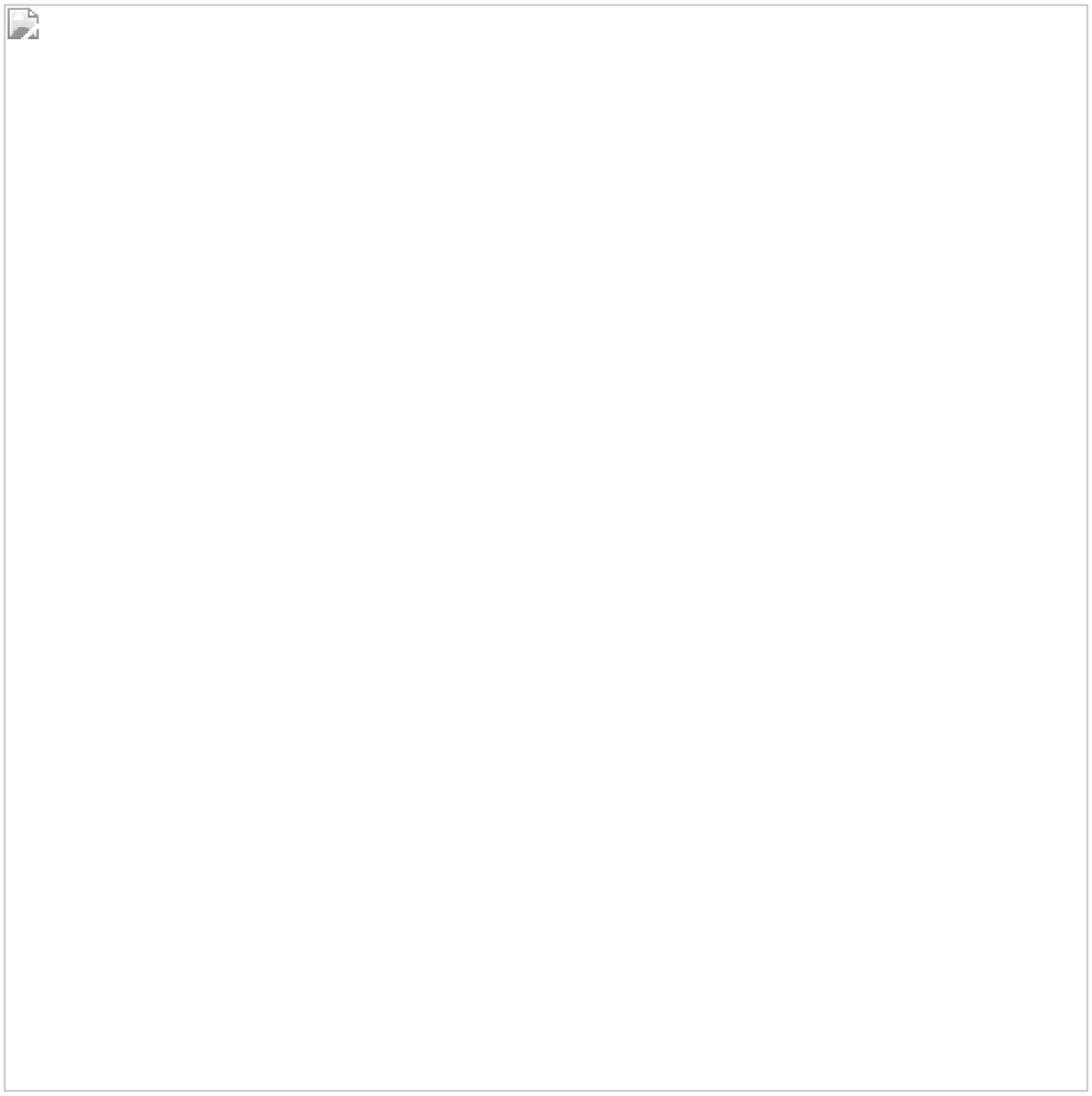


Think about it

1. Who fought the demons?

- ○ The Prince
- ○ The tiger and his wife
- ○ The ants

The Wax Hatchet



But the King said, “You must do one thing more.” He gave the Prince a hatchet made of wax and showed him a very thick tree trunk. “To-morrow morning you must cut this trunk in two.”

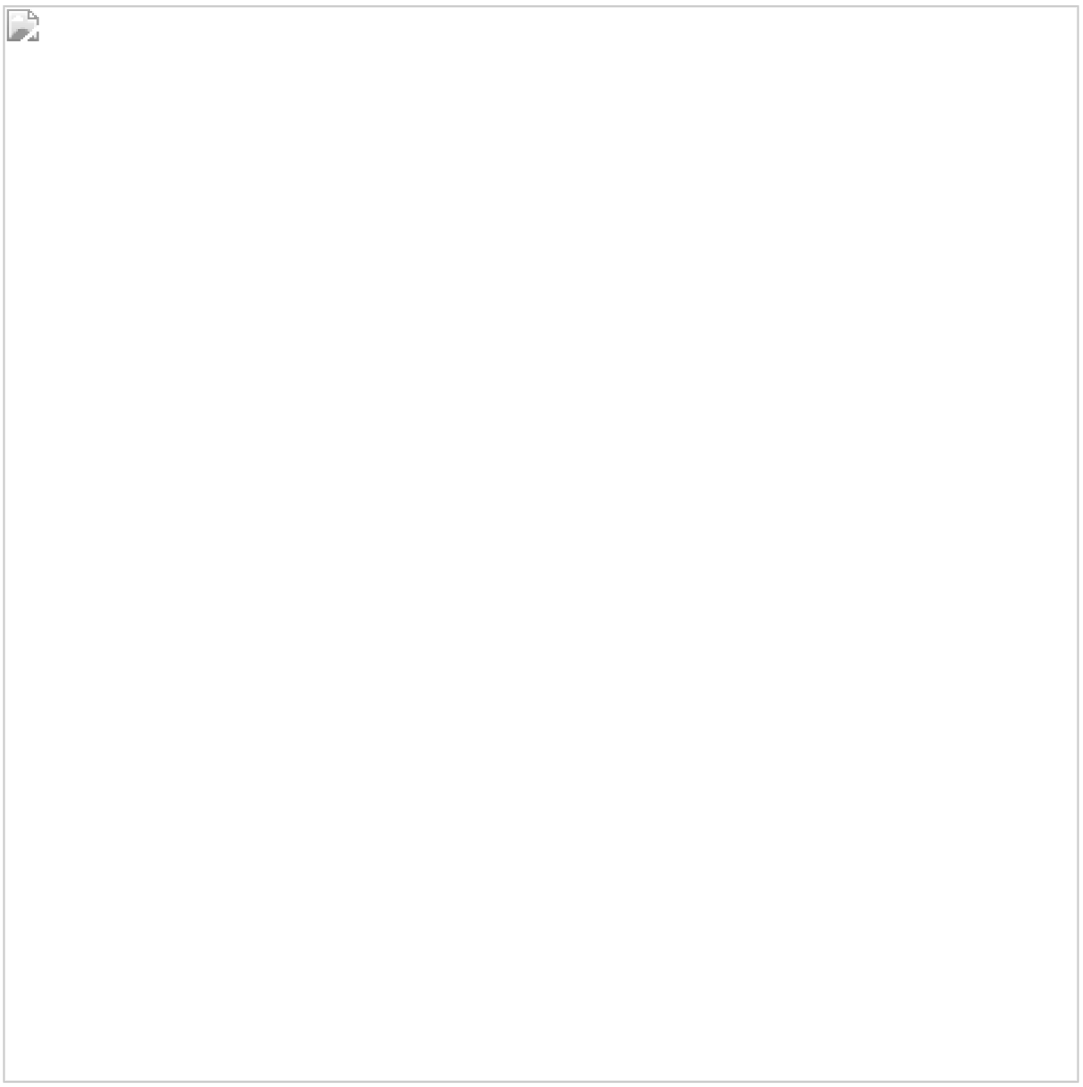
That night the Princess gave him a hair from her head. “Do not be afraid,” she said, “do as I bid you.”

“When no one is near you,” she said, “say to the tree-trunk, ‘The Princess Labam commands you to let yourself be cut in two by this hair.’ Then stretch the hair down the edge of the wax hatchet's blade.”

He did, and the trunk split in two.

TALK ABOUT IT

The Princess helped him. What does it tell you about her?

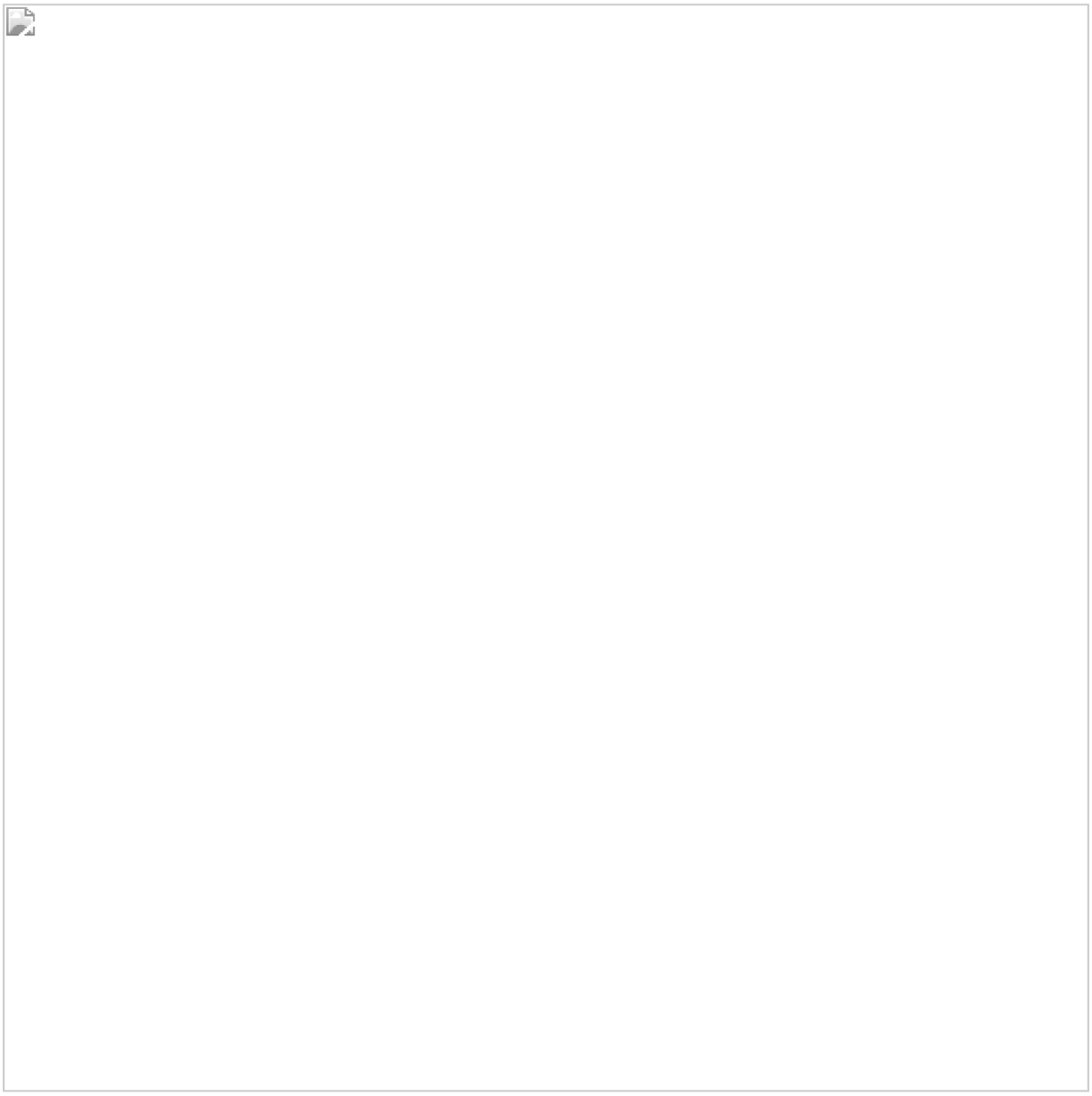


Think about it

1. What did the Princess give the Prince?

- ○ A silver sword
- ○ A hair from her head
- ○ A golden key

Home to the Prince's Country



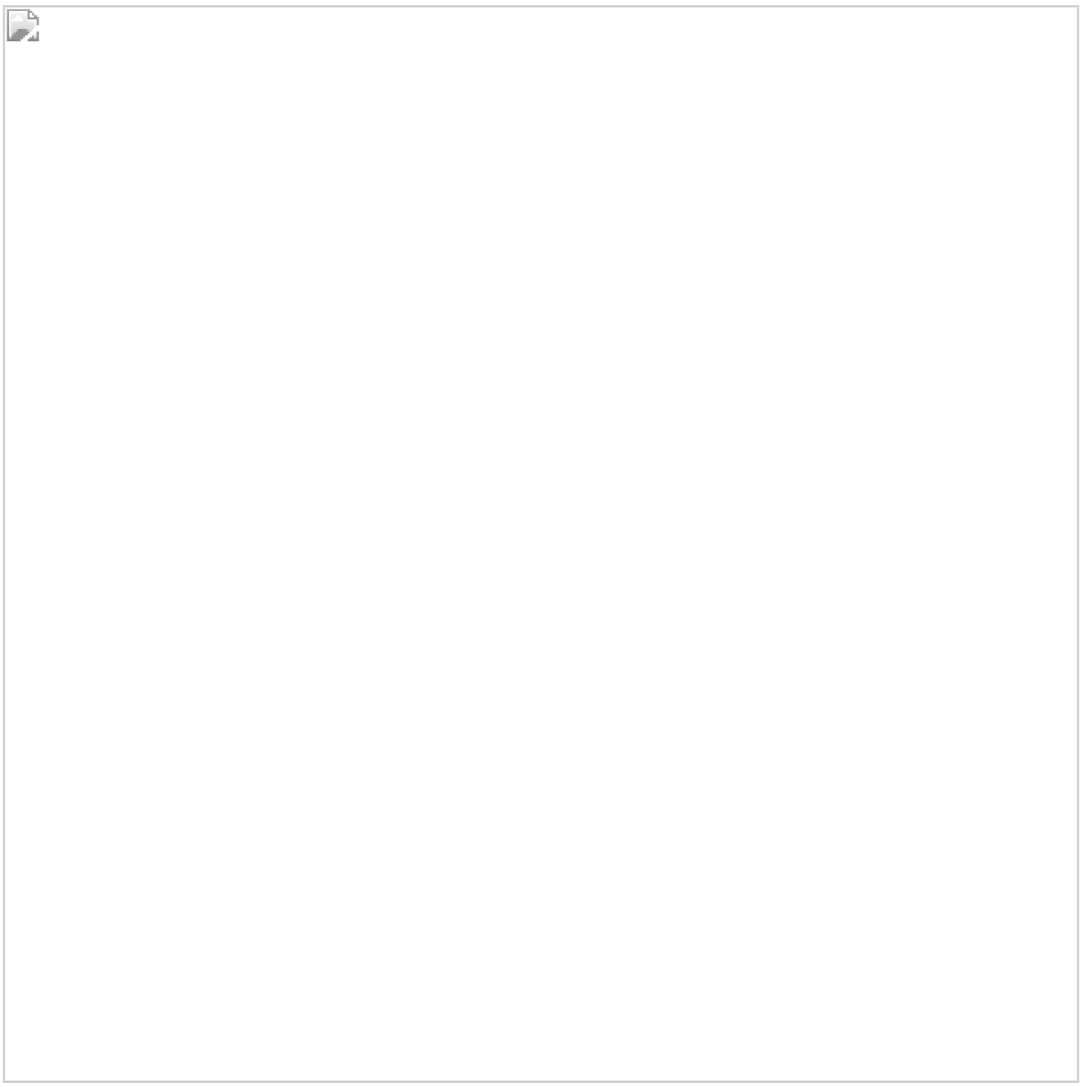
“Now you can marry my daughter,” said the King. There was a great wedding, and the Rajahs and Kings of all the countries round were asked to come.

After some days the Prince said to his bride, “Let us go to my father's country.” The King gave them camels and horses and servants, and they traveled in great state to the Prince's home, where they lived happily.

The Prince always kept his bag, bowl, bed, stick and rope. But no one ever came to make war on him, so he never needed the stick or the rope.

TALK ABOUT IT

Think about the whole trip. Who helped the Prince, and why?



Think about it

1. Why did the Prince never use the stick and rope?

- ○ He lost them
- ○ No one ever came to make war on him
- ○ They broke

2. Which of the Prince's kind acts do you think mattered most? Why?

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

— Yeshua HaMashiach

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