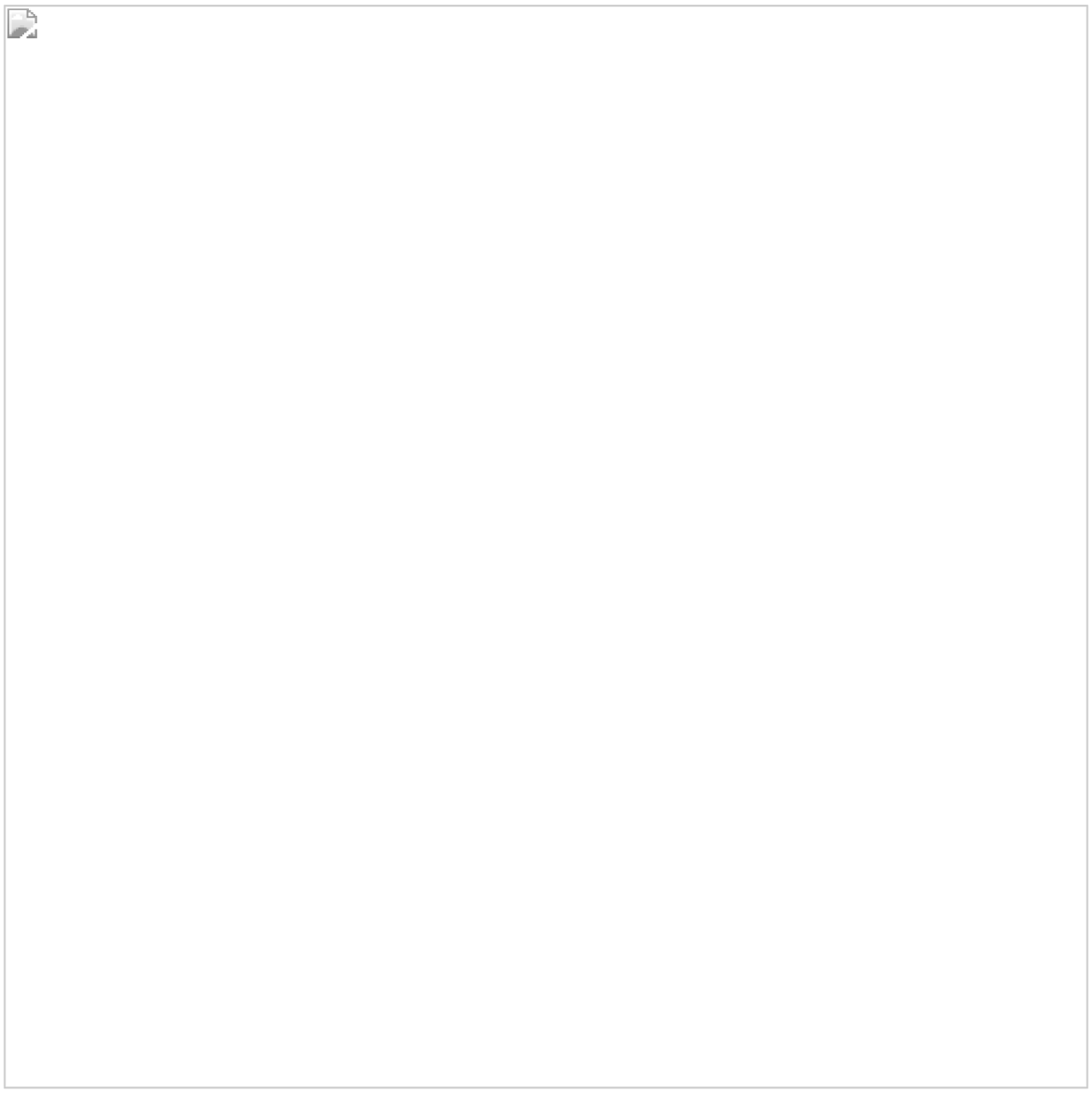
COLORING THE CLASSICS

Tom Thumb

An English Fairy Tale



In the days of the great Prince Arthur, there lived a mighty magician called Merlin. He could take any form he pleased.

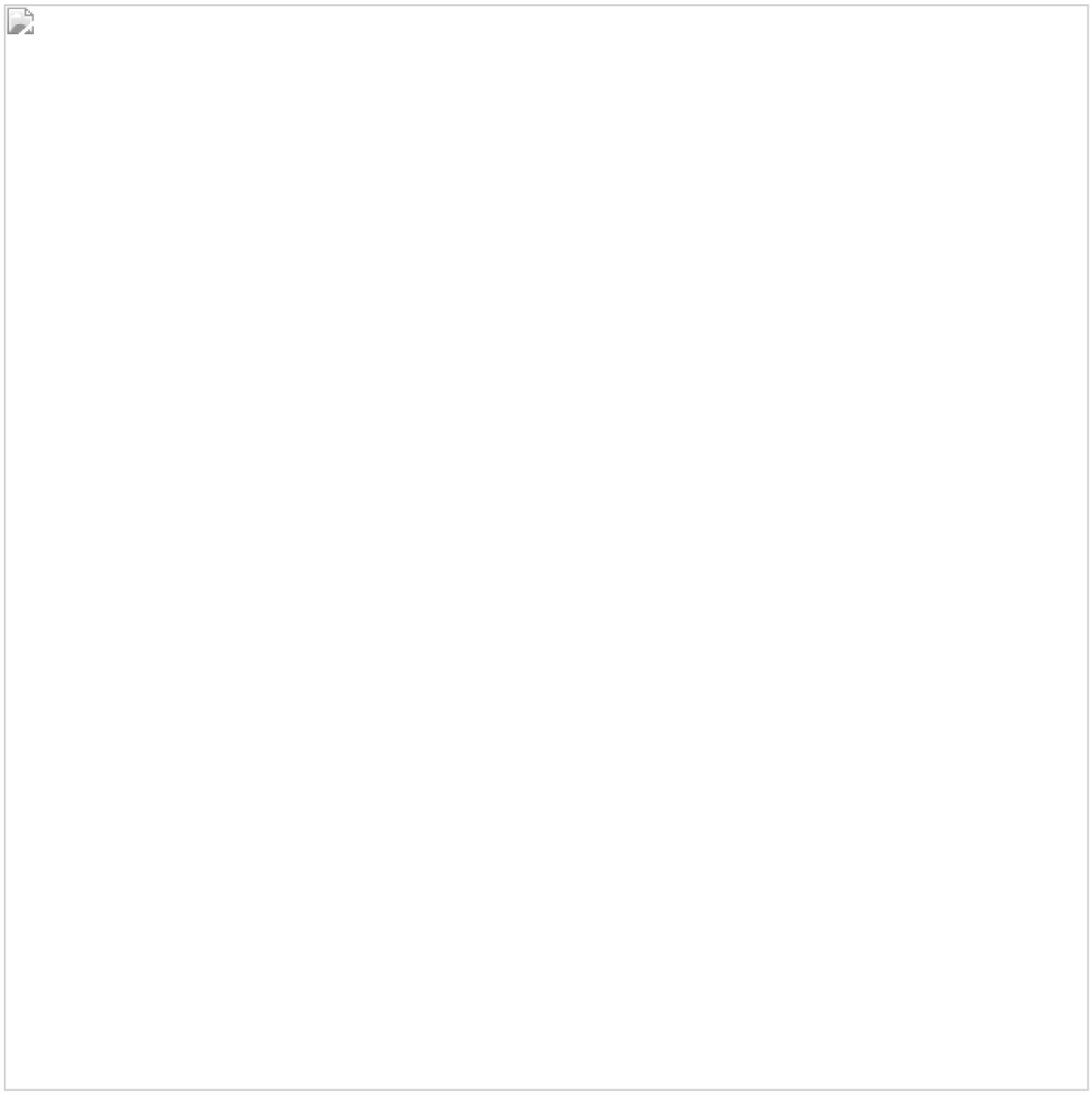
One day he was travelling about as a poor beggar, and being very tired, he stopped at the cottage of a ploughman to rest, and asked for some food.

TALK ABOUT IT

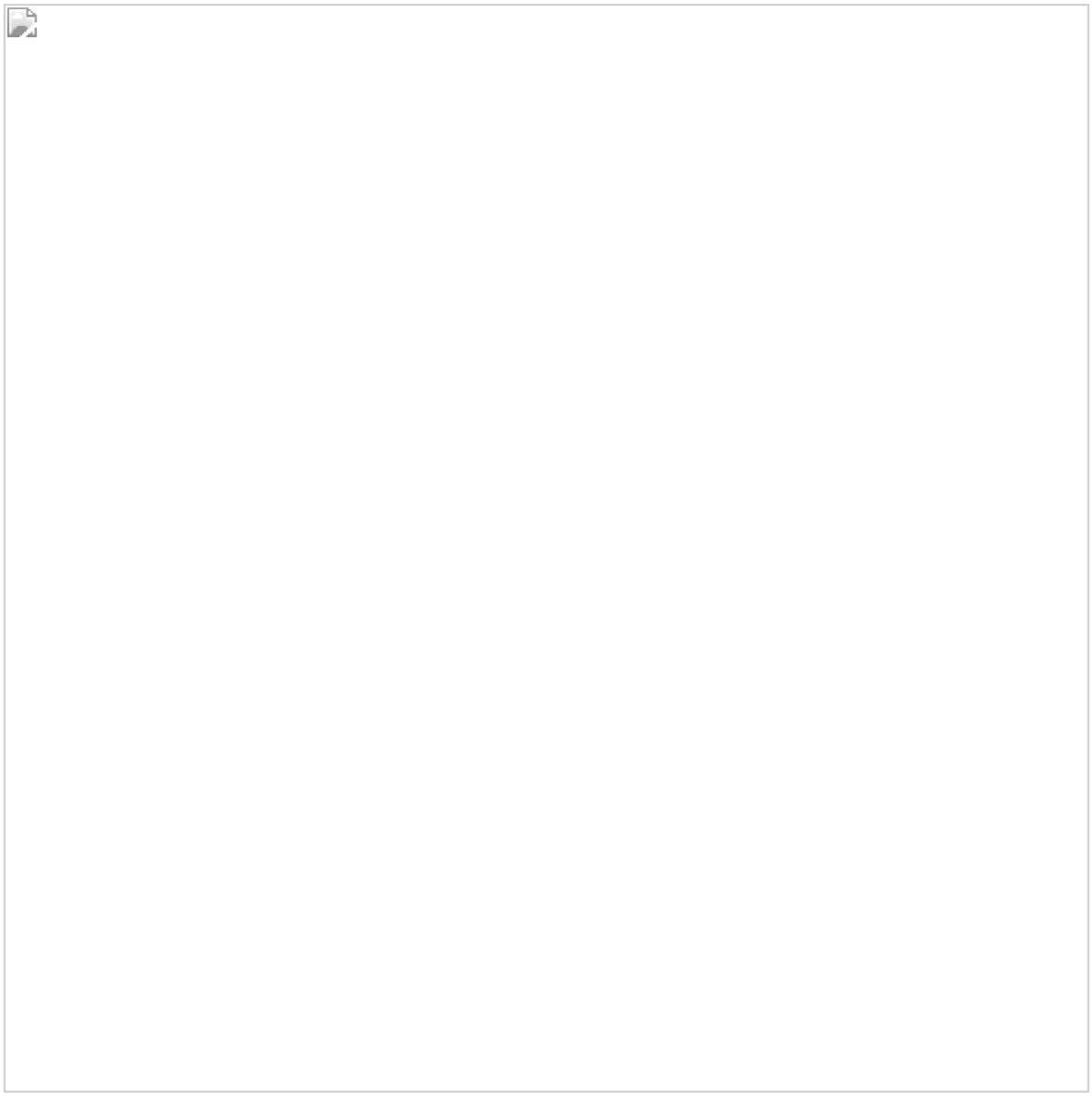
Merlin was dressed as a poor beggar. Why do you think a magician would do that?

This book belongs to _____

Tom Thumb · another picture



A Wish at the Cottage



The ploughman bade him welcome, and his good-hearted wife brought him some milk in a wooden bowl, and some coarse brown bread on a platter.

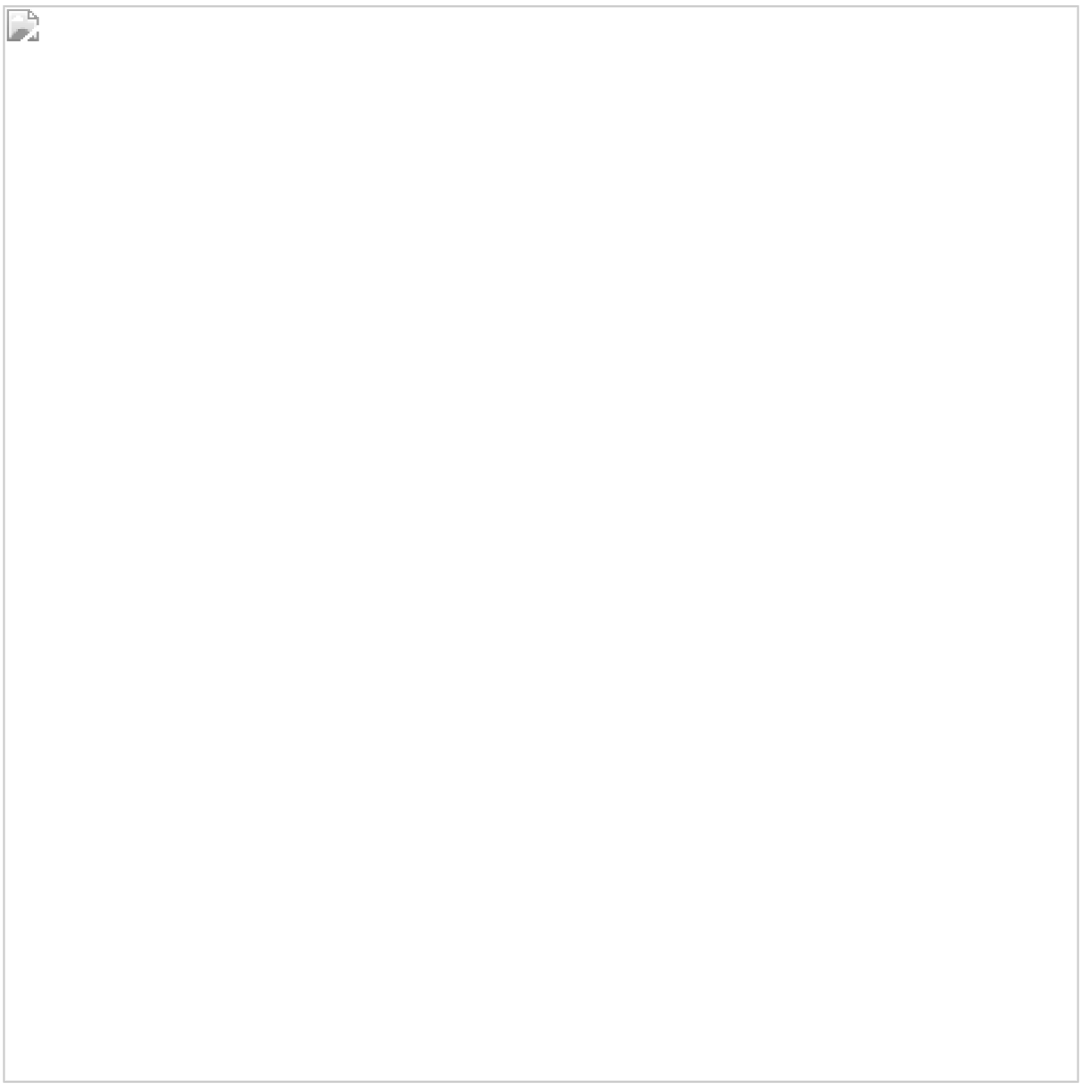
Merlin saw that though everything in the cottage was neat and comfortable, the ploughman and his wife were both unhappy. They were miserable because they had no children.

The poor woman said, with tears in her eyes: "I should be the happiest creature in the world if I had a son; although he was no bigger than my husband's thumb, I would be satisfied."

TALK ABOUT IT

The woman wanted a child very much. What do you think it was like in that cottage?

A Wish at the Cottage · another picture

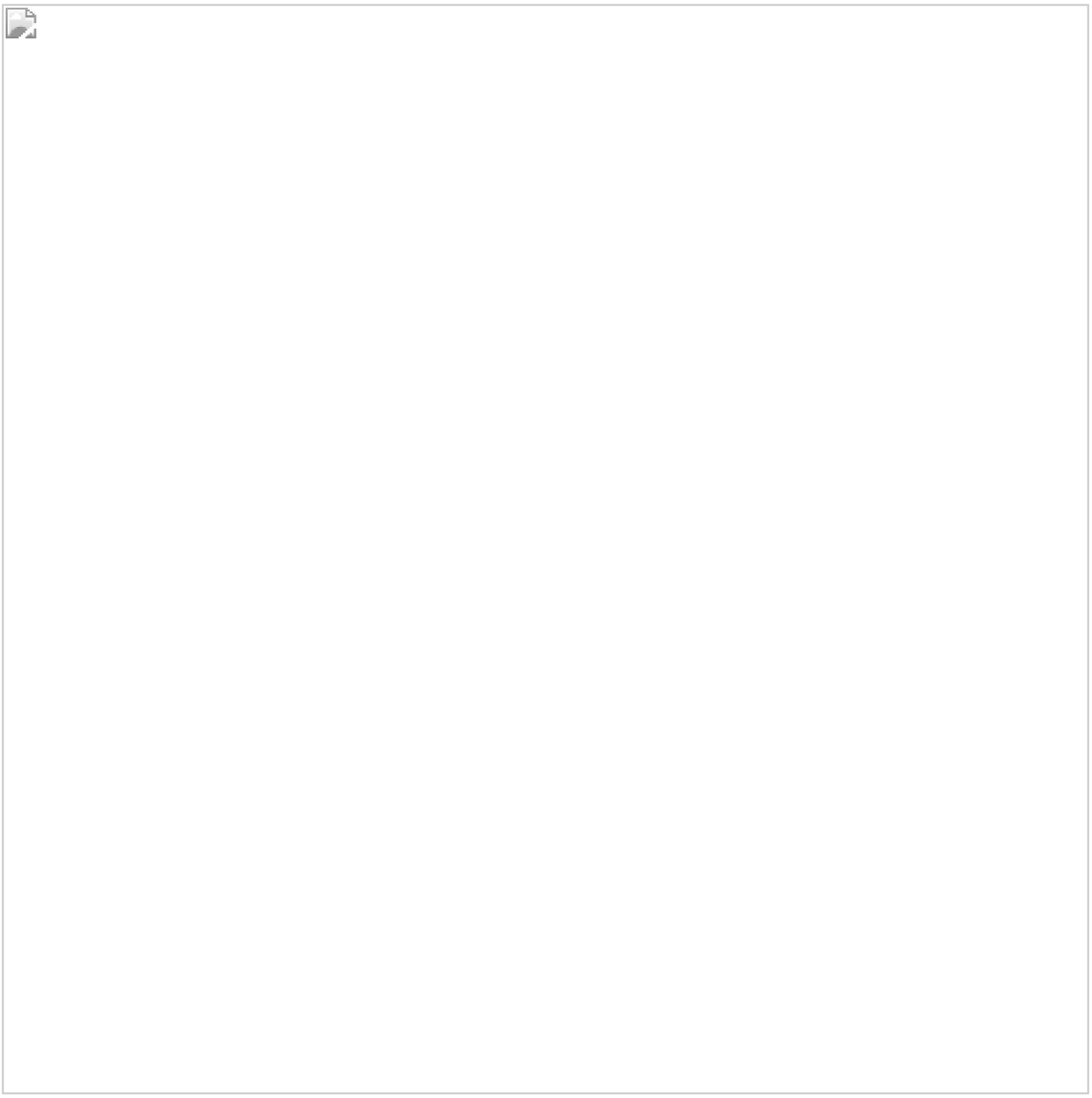


Think about it

1. What did the ploughman's wife wish for?

- ○ A son, even if as small as a thumb
- ○ A new cottage
- ○ A great deal of gold

A Son No Bigger Than a Thumb



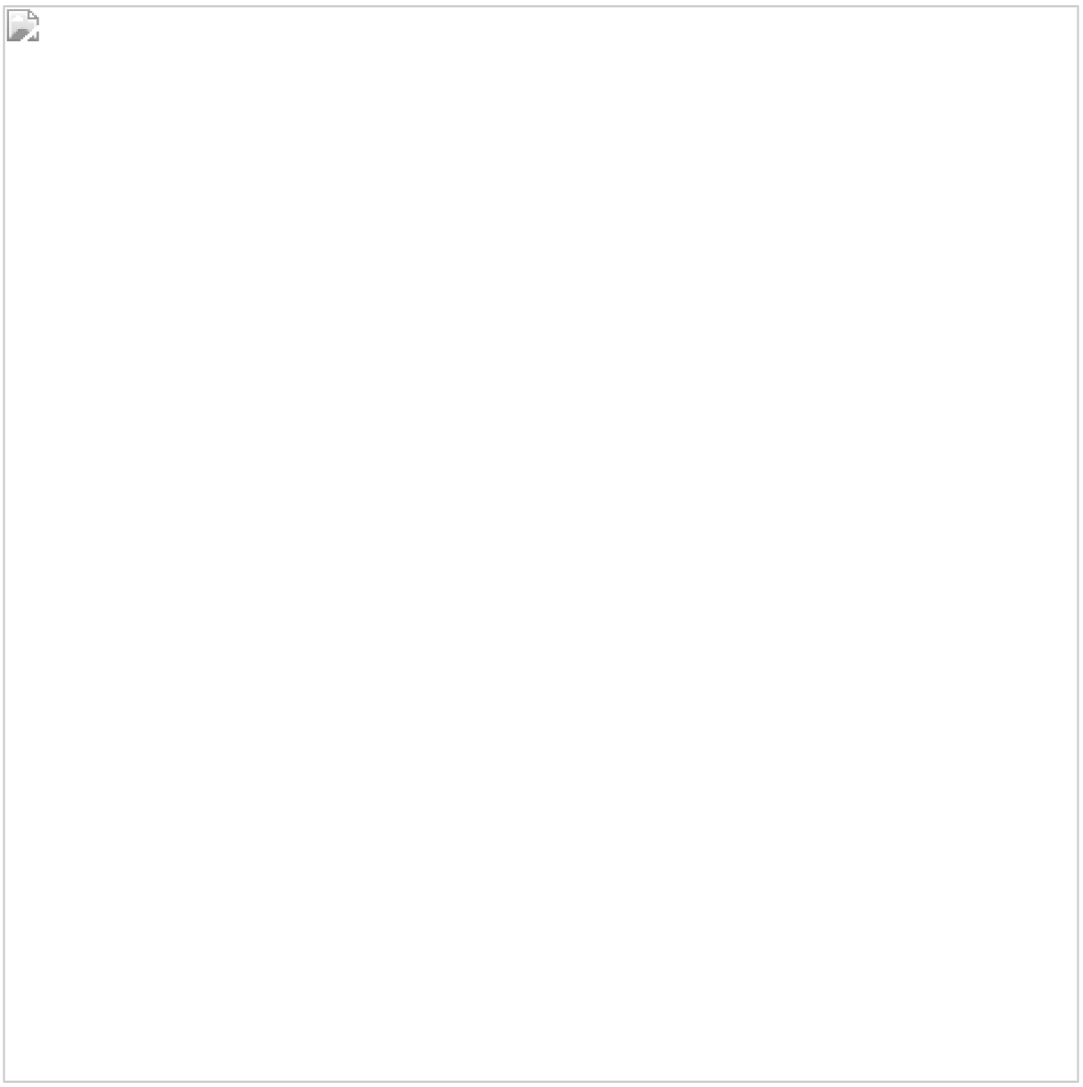
Merlin was so amused by the idea of a boy no bigger than a man's thumb that he decided to grant the wish. In a short time the ploughman's wife had a son, who, wonderful to say, was not a bit bigger than his father's thumb!

The queen of the fairies came in at the window to see him. She kissed the child and gave him the name Tom Thumb. Then she sent for some fairies, who dressed her little godson:

"An oak-leaf hat he had for his crown; His shirt of web by spiders spun; With jacket wove of thistle's down; His trowsers were of feathers done."

TALK ABOUT IT

Tom's hat was an oak-leaf and his shirt was a spider's web. What would you make a tiny coat from?

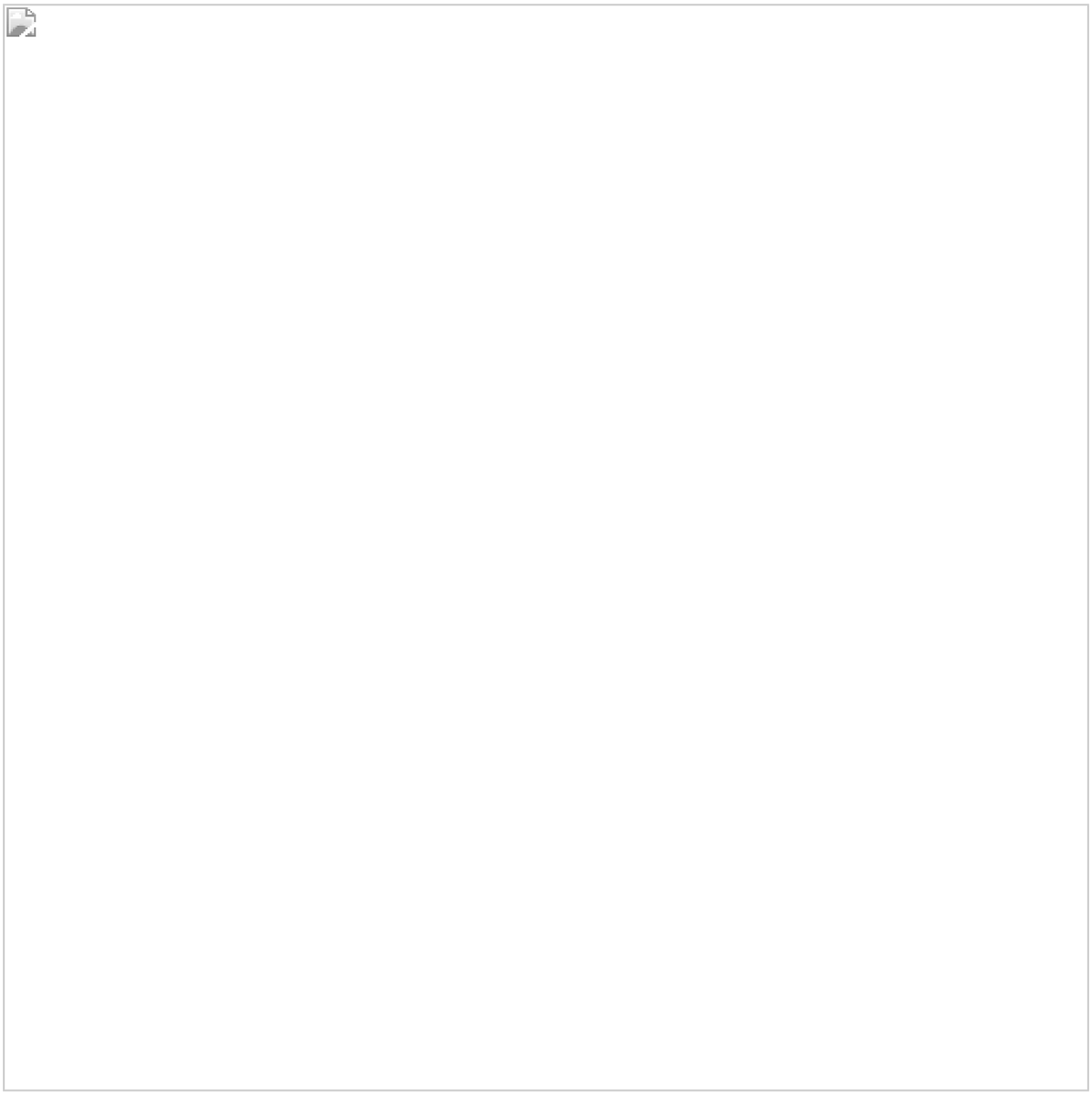


Think about it

1. What was Tom's hat made of?

- ○ An oak-leaf
- ○ A thimble
- ○ A snail shell

Cherry-Stones

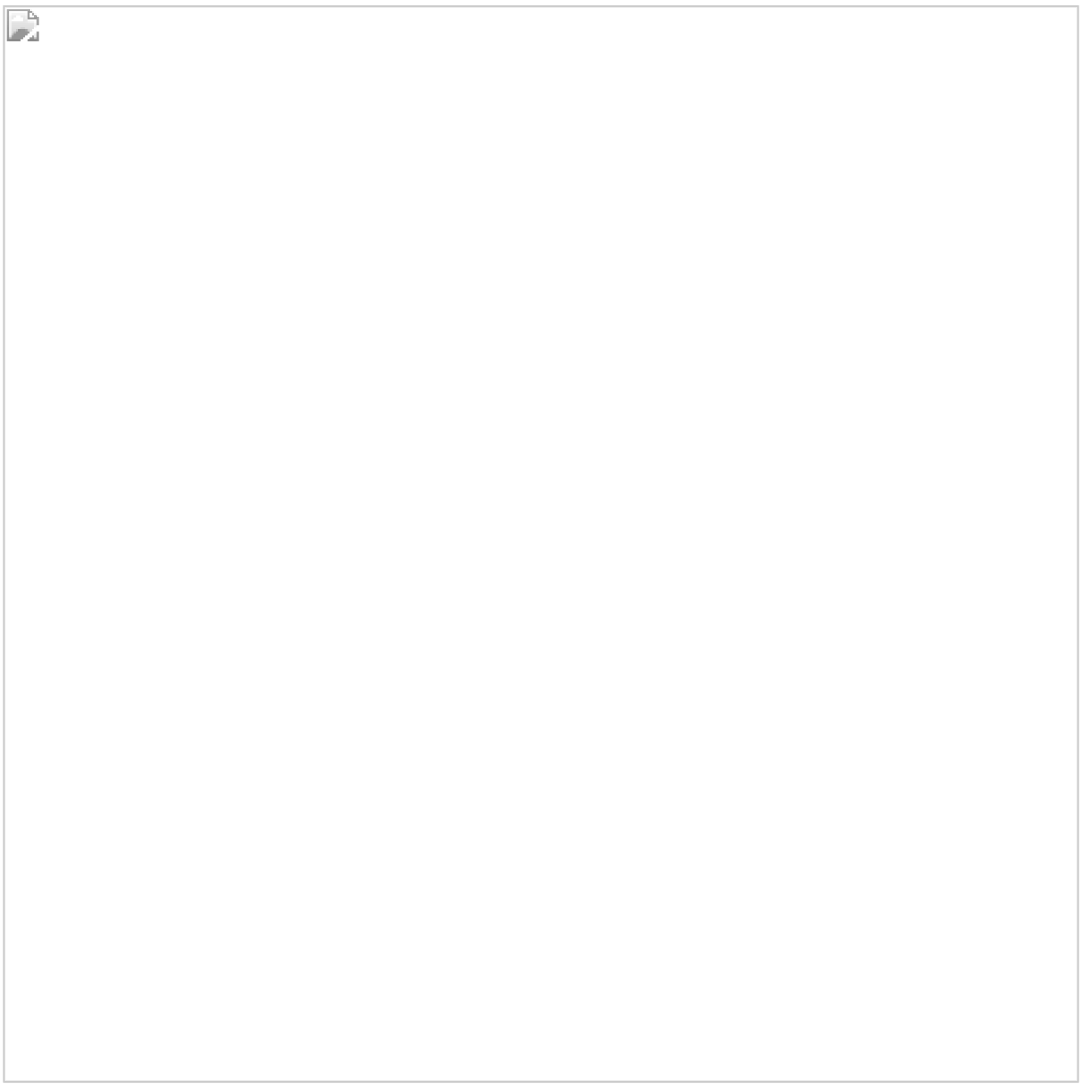


Tom never grew any larger than his father's thumb, but as he got older he became very cunning and full of tricks. When he played games with the boys and had lost all his own cherry-stones, he used to creep into the other boys' bags and fill his pockets.

One day the boy whose bag it was saw him. "Ah, ah! my little Tommy," said the boy, "so I have caught you stealing my cherry-stones at last." He pulled the string tight round the bag and shook it hard. Tom roared and begged to be let out, promising never to steal again.

TALK ABOUT IT

Tom promised never to take cherry-stones again. What do you think made him say that?

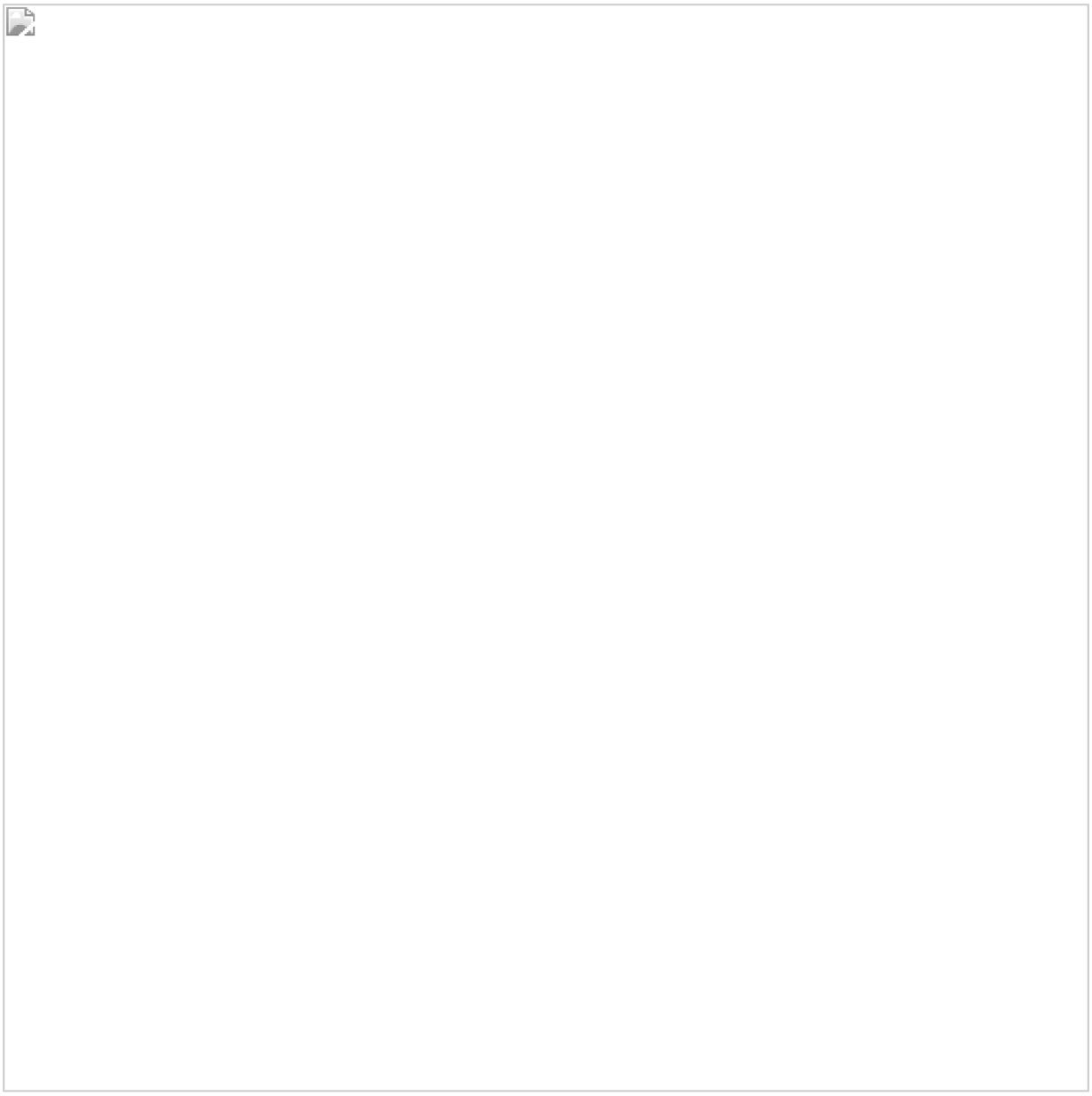


Think about it

1. What was Tom taking from the other boys' bags?

- ○ Marbles
- ○ Cherry-stones
- ○ Pennies

The Batter-Pudding



A short time afterwards his mother was making a batter-pudding. Tom was very anxious to see how it was made, so he climbed up to the edge of the bowl. But his foot slipped, and he plumped over head and ears into the batter.

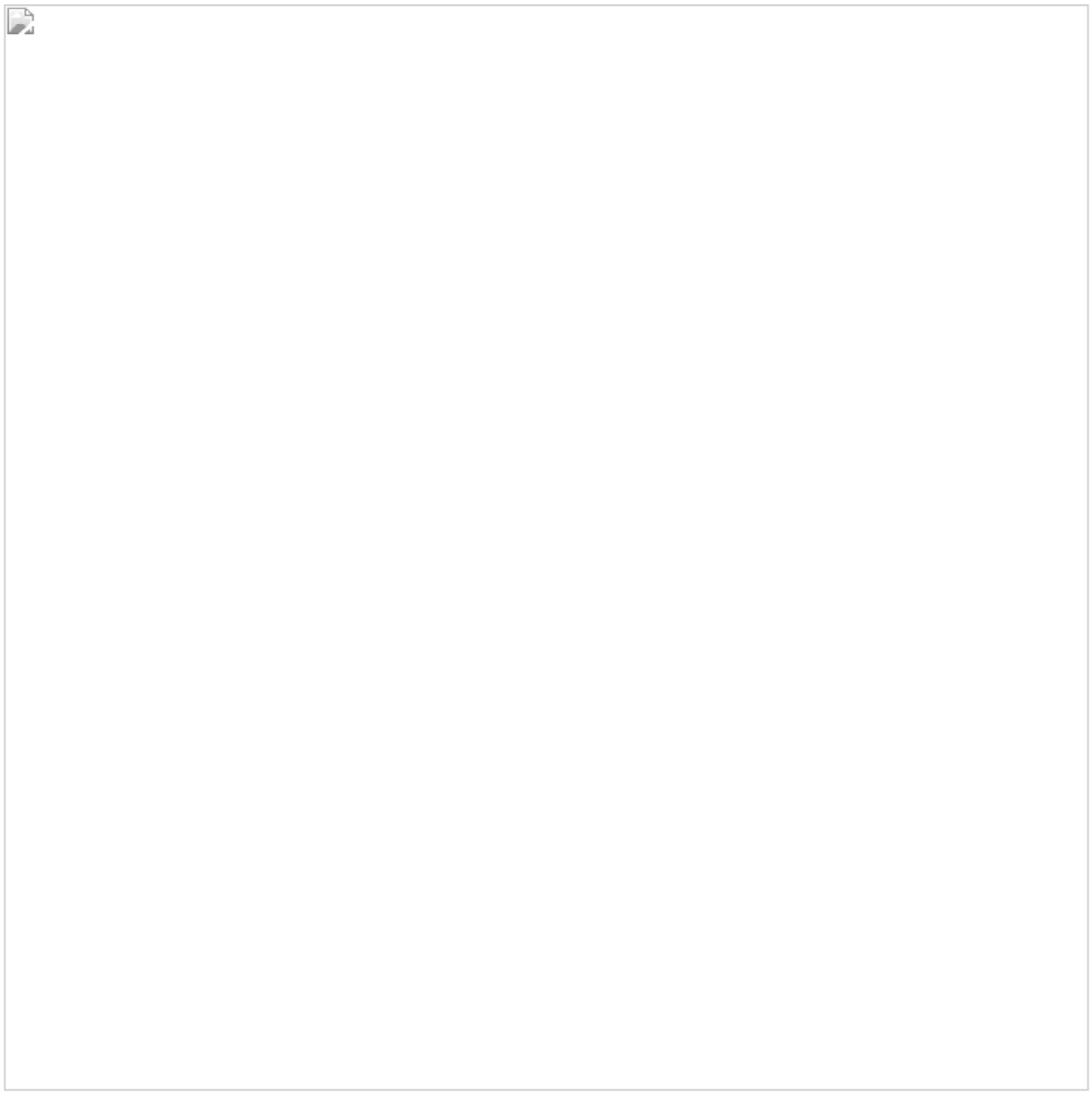
His mother did not notice him. She stirred him into the pudding-bag and put him in the pot to boil.

Tom kicked and struggled so much in the pot that his mother thought the pudding was bewitched. She pulled it out and threw it outside the door.

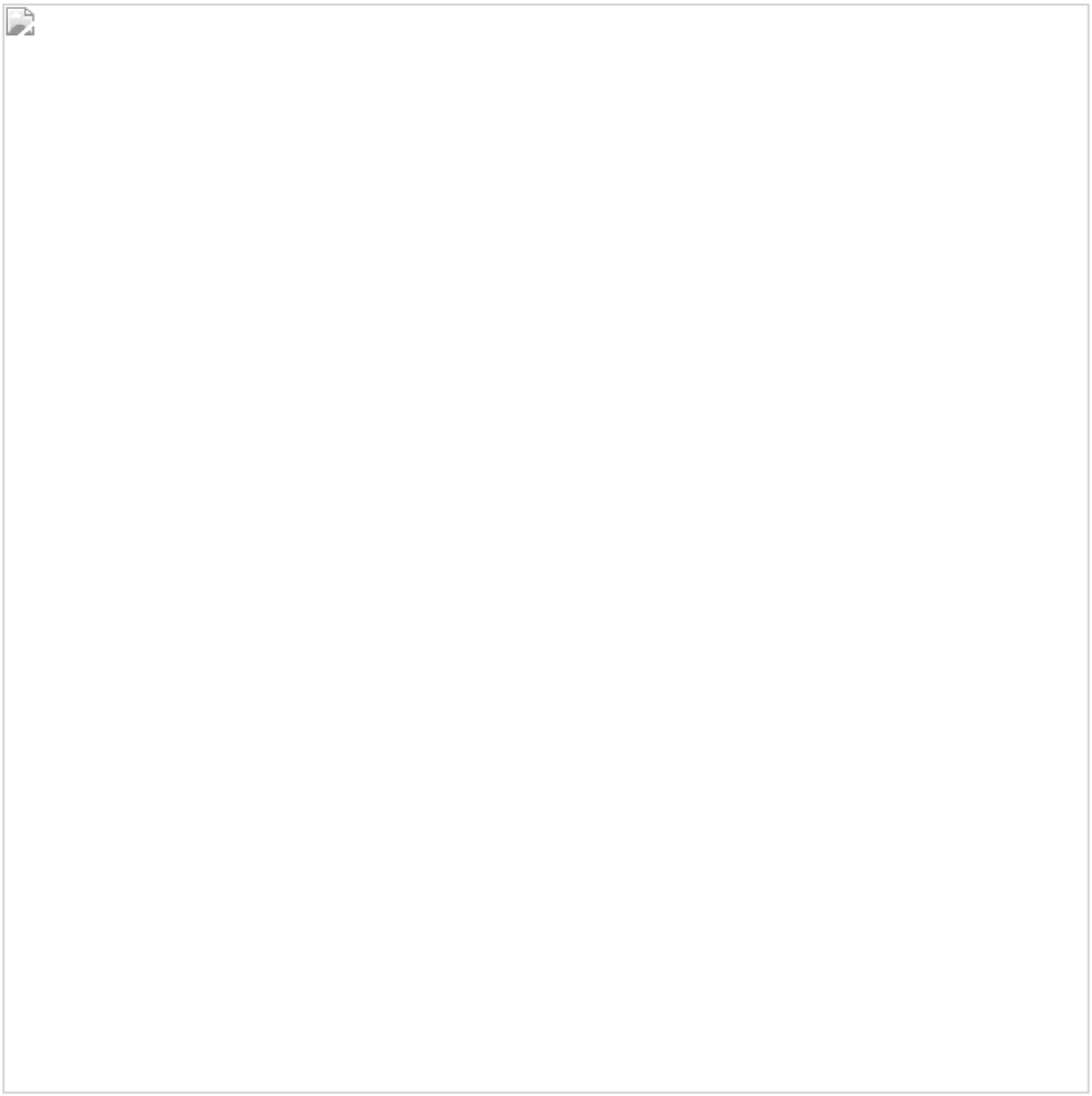
TALK ABOUT IT

Tom fell into a pudding! What would you do first if you were in his place?

The Batter-Pudding · another picture



The Tinker

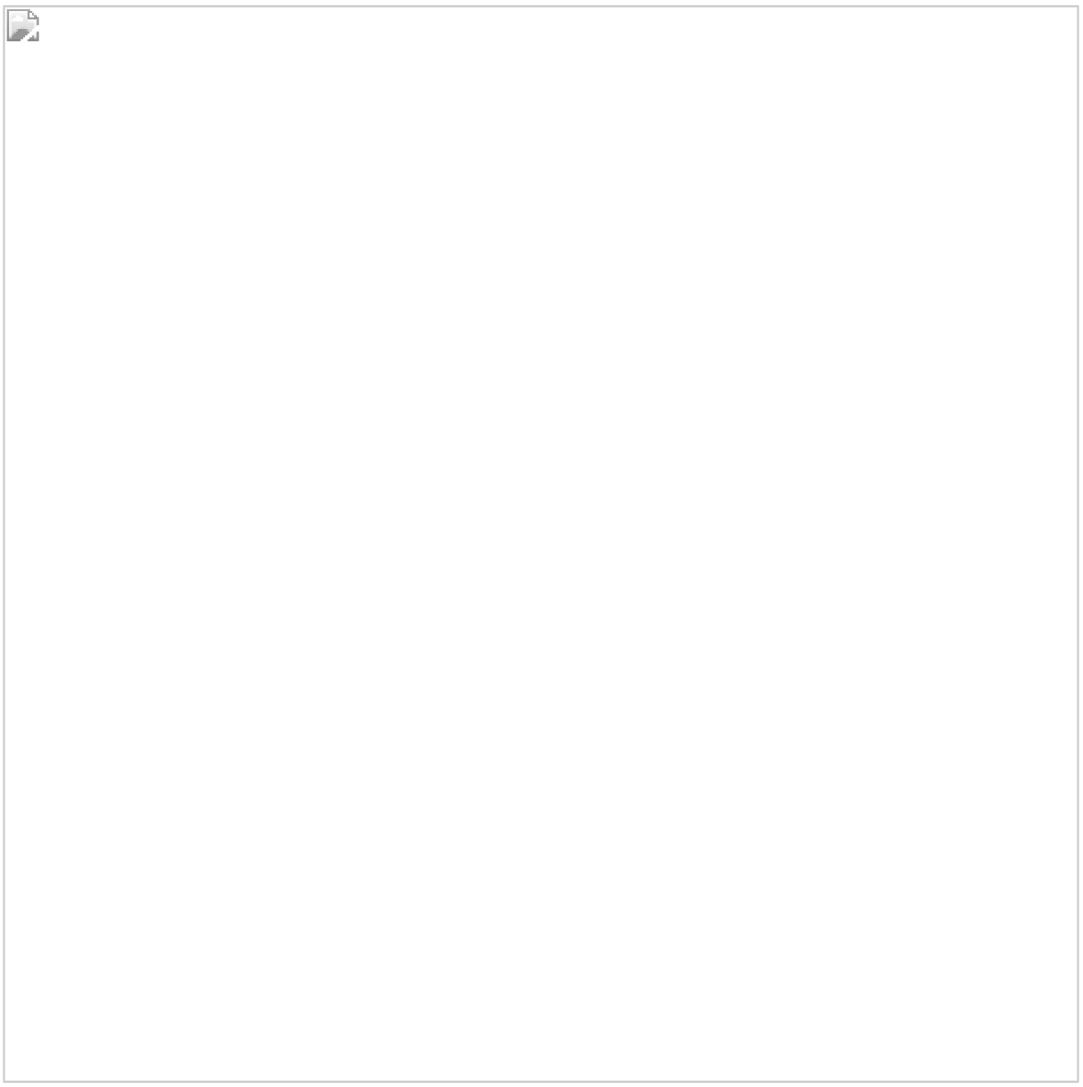


A poor tinker who was passing by picked up the pudding and put it into his bag. But Tom had got his mouth clear of the batter, and he began to cry aloud. This so frightened the tinker that he flung down the pudding and ran away.

The pudding broke to pieces, and Tom crept out covered all over with batter and walked home. His mother was very sorry to see her darling in such a woeful state. She put him into a teacup and soon washed off the batter, and after that she kissed him and laid him in bed.

TALK ABOUT IT

Why do you think the tinker ran away from a pudding that cried?

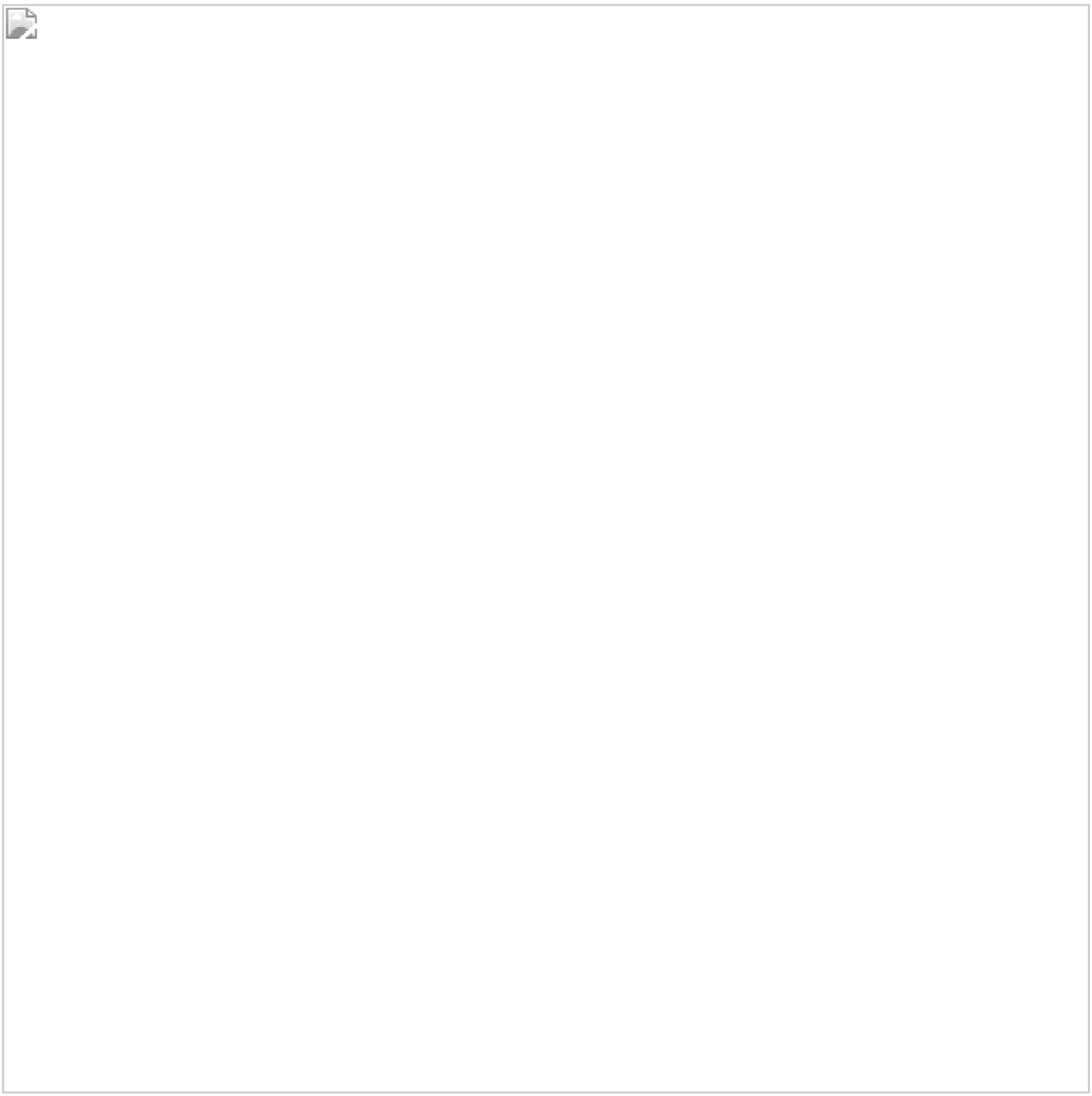


Think about it

1. Where did Tom's mother wash him clean?

- ○ In a teacup
- ○ In a river
- ○ In a bathtub

The Red Cow



Soon after, Tom's mother went to milk her cow in the meadow and took him along. The wind was very high, so for fear of his being blown away she tied him to a thistle with a piece of fine thread.

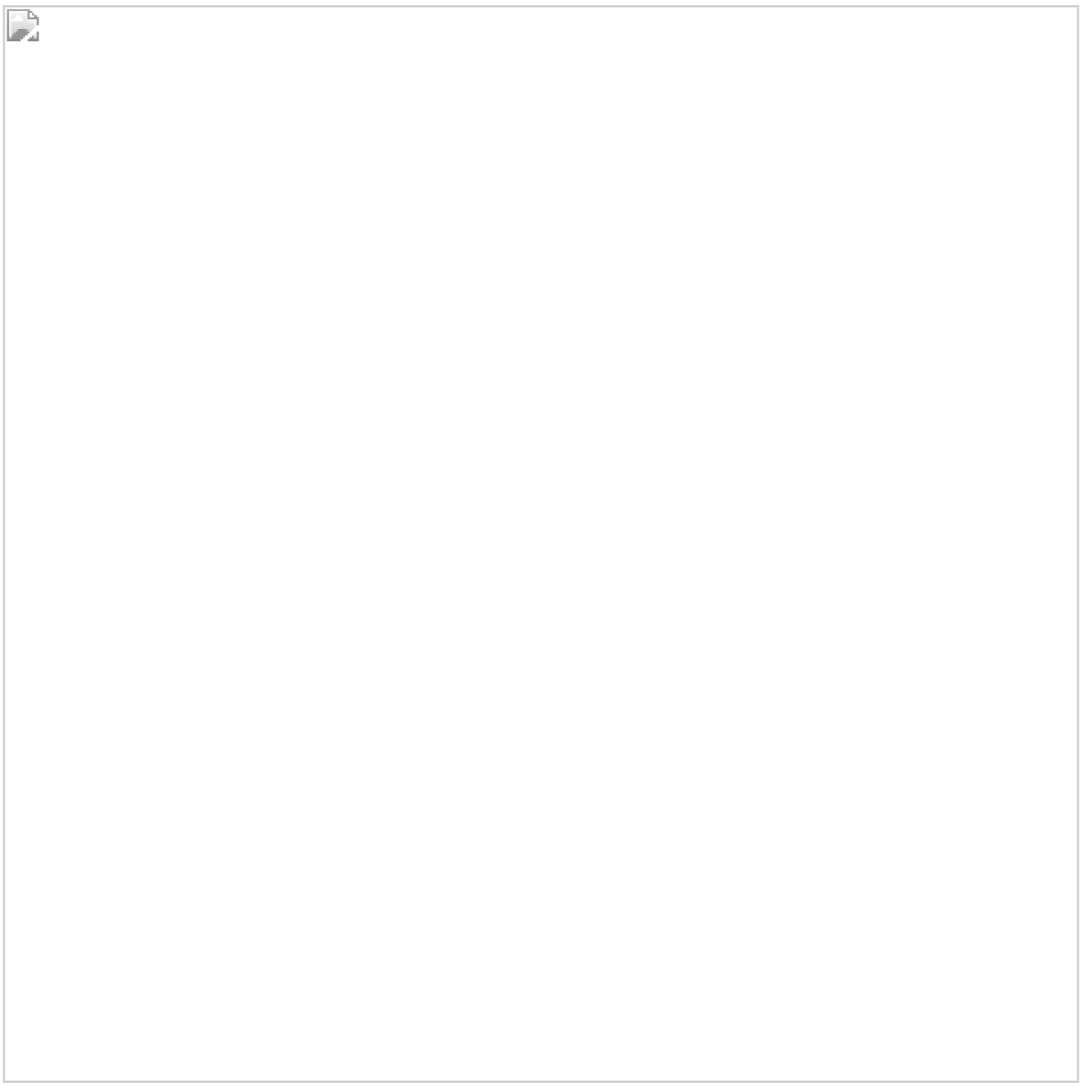
The cow liked the look of Tom's oak-leaf hat, and she took poor Tom and the thistle at one mouthful. Tom was afraid of her great teeth, and he roared out as loud as he could: "Mother, mother!"

"Where are you, Tommy, my dear Tommy?" said his mother.

"Here, mother," replied he, "in the red cow's mouth."

TALK ABOUT IT

Tom shouted so his mother could find him. What do you do when you want someone to hear you?

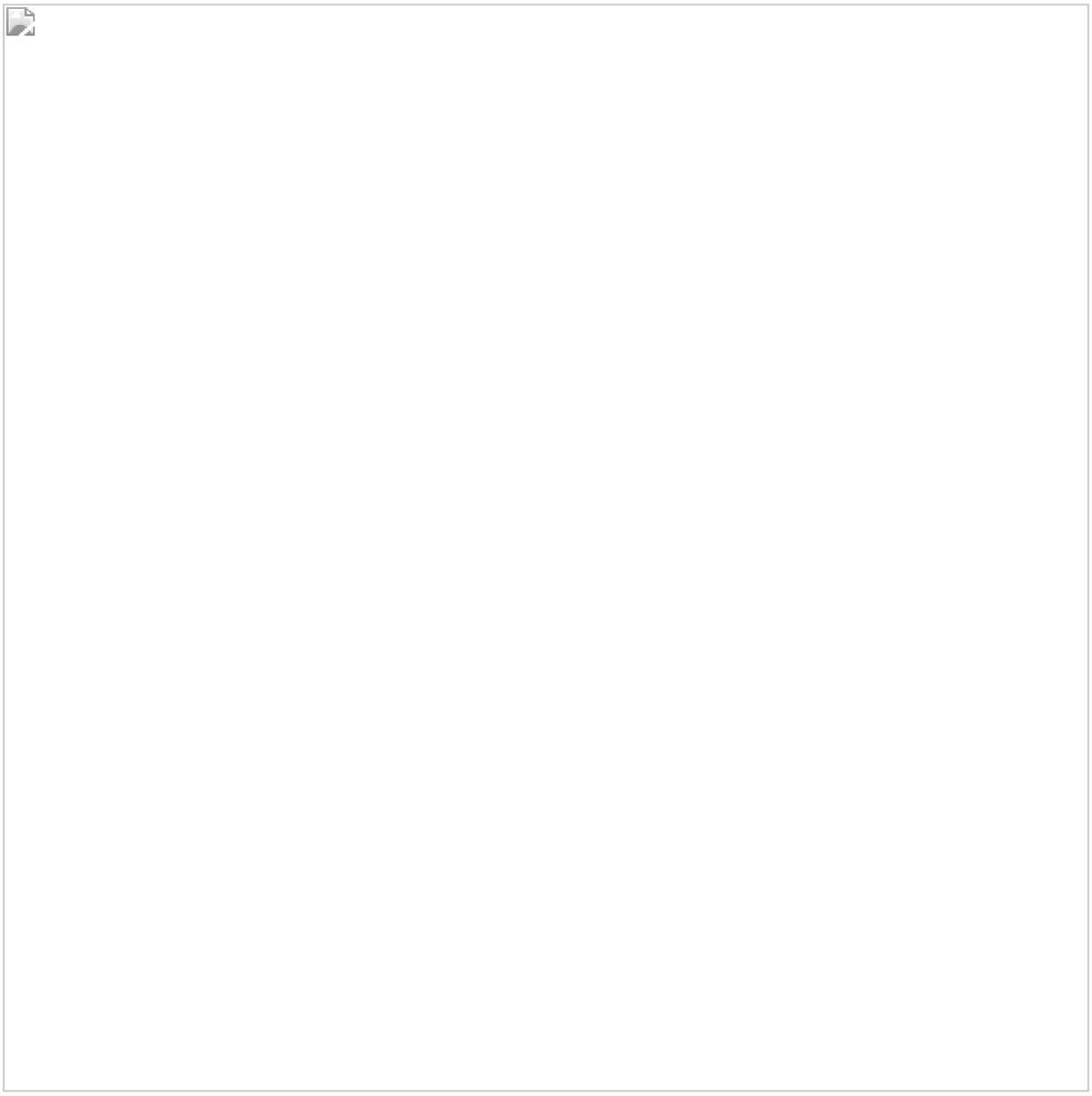


Think about it

1. Where was Tom, said Tom?

- ○ In the red cow's mouth
- ○ In the haystack
- ○ In a boot

The Raven and the Fish



The cow, surprised at the odd noise in her throat, opened her mouth and let Tom drop out. His mother caught him in her apron as he fell, put him in her bosom, and ran home with him.

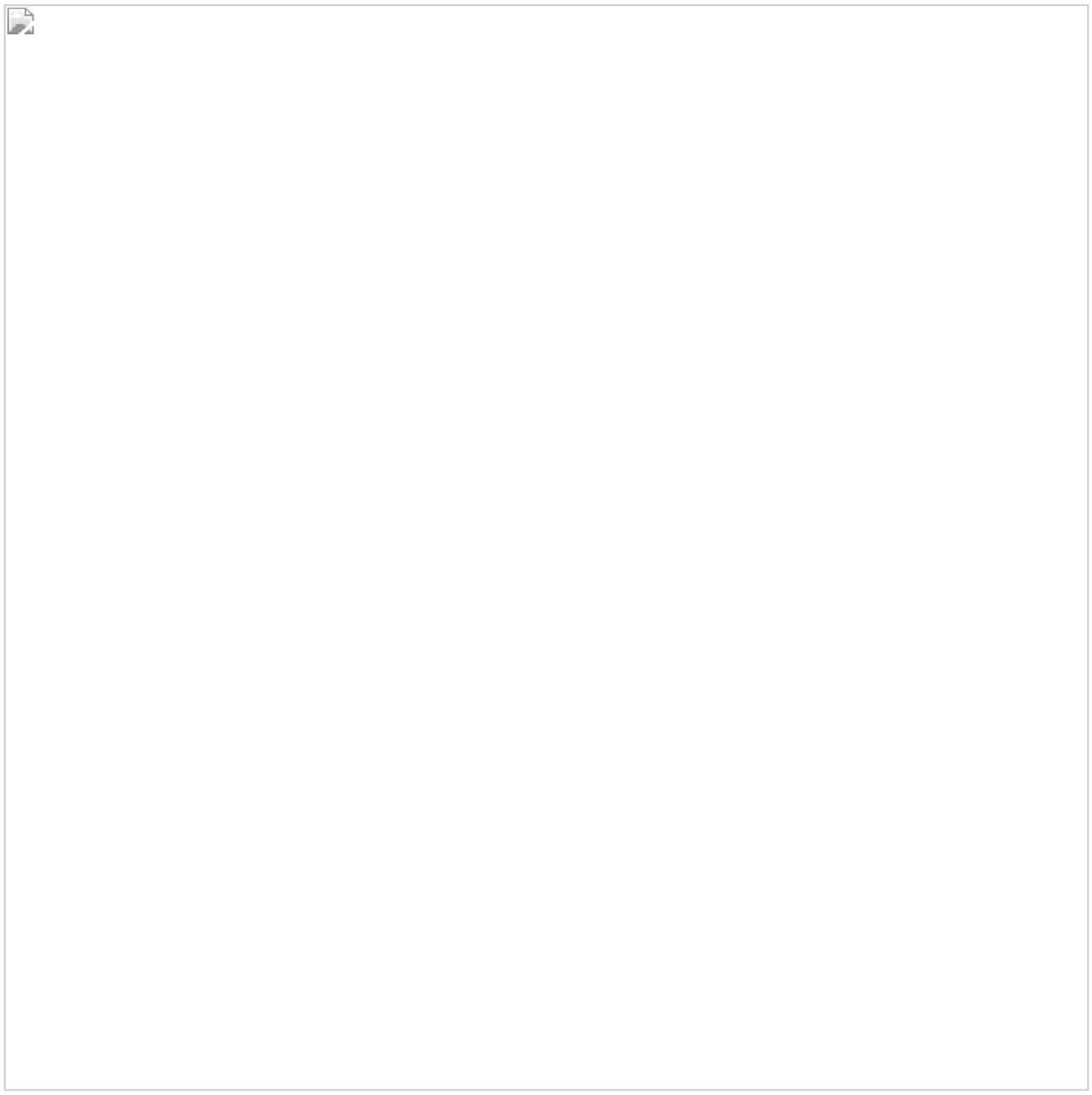
Another day Tom's father made him a whip of a barley straw to drive the cattle with. Tom went into the fields, slipped, and rolled into a furrow. A raven flying over picked him up and flew with him over the sea, and there dropped him.

A large fish swallowed Tom the moment he fell into the sea.

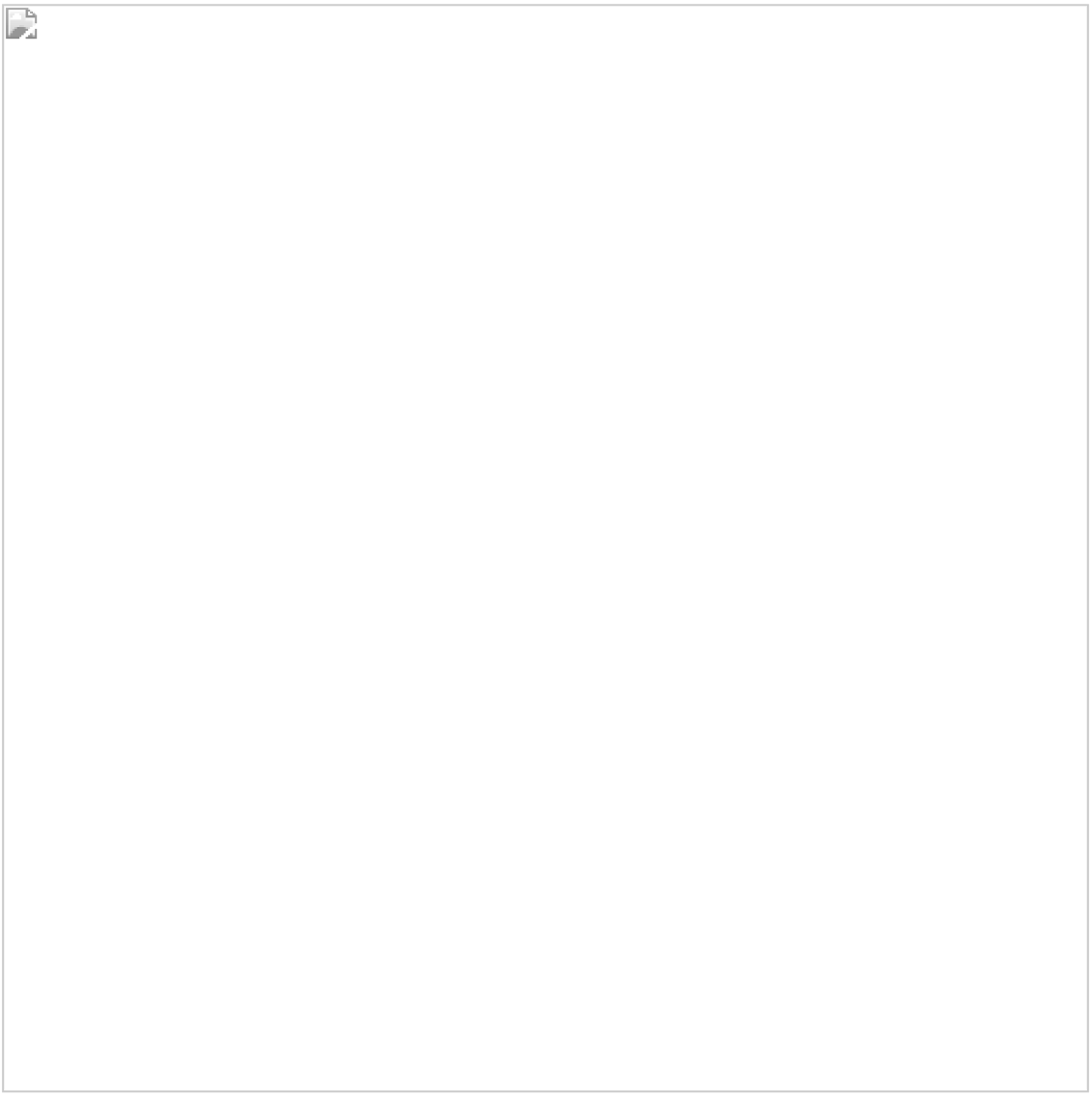
TALK ABOUT IT

Tom has gone on quite a trip, from a cow to a raven to a fish! Which was the oddest?

The Raven and the Fish · another picture



At King Arthur's Court



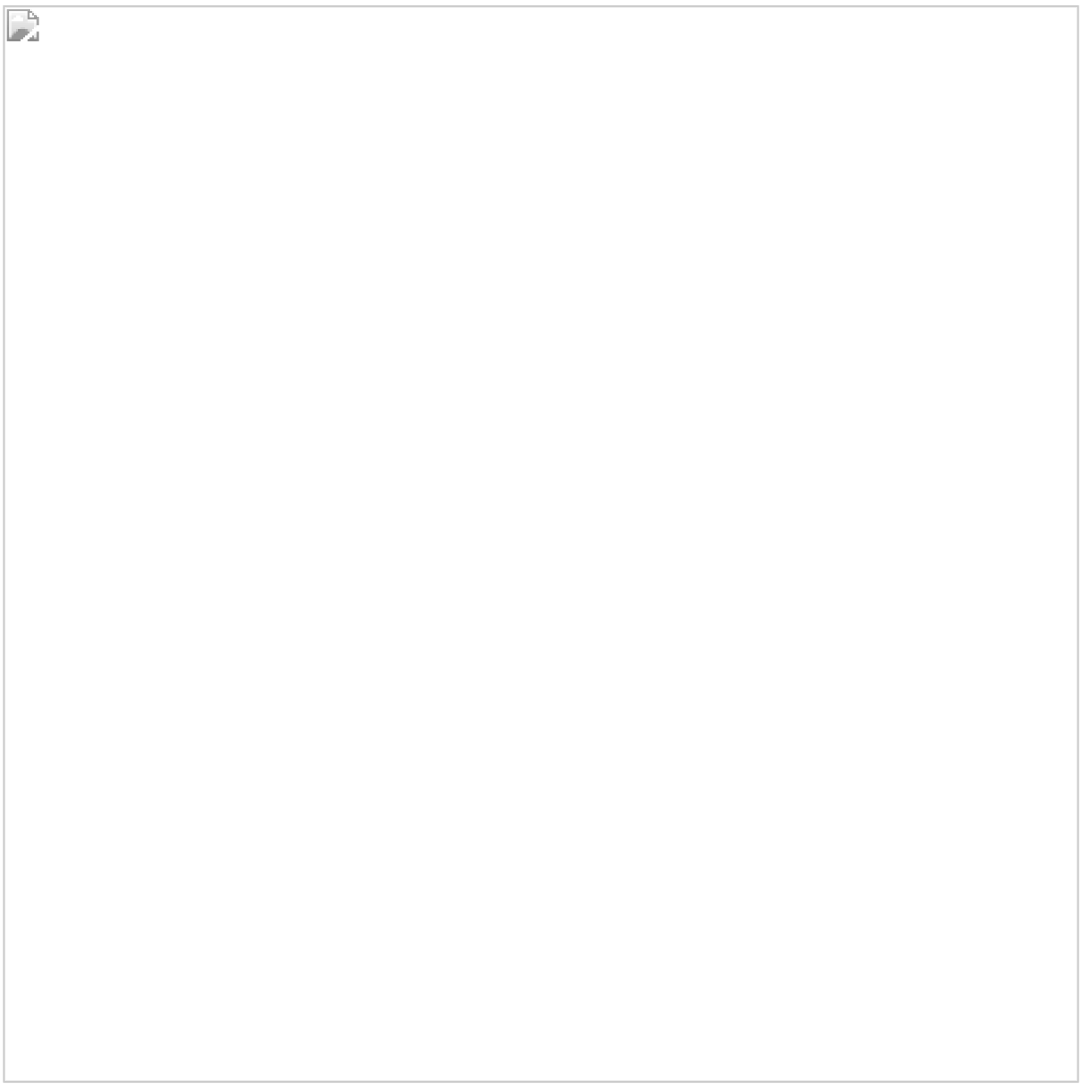
The fish was caught and bought for the table of King Arthur. When they opened it to cook it, everyone was astonished to find such a little boy inside, and Tom was quite delighted to be free again.

They carried him to the king, who took him in at court. By his tricks and gambols Tom amused the king and queen and all the Knights of the Round Table, and he soon became a great favourite.

When the king rode out on horseback he often took Tom along, and if a shower came on, Tom crept into his majesty's waistcoat-pocket and slept till the rain was over.

TALK ABOUT IT

Tom found a home at court. What do you think made everyone like him?

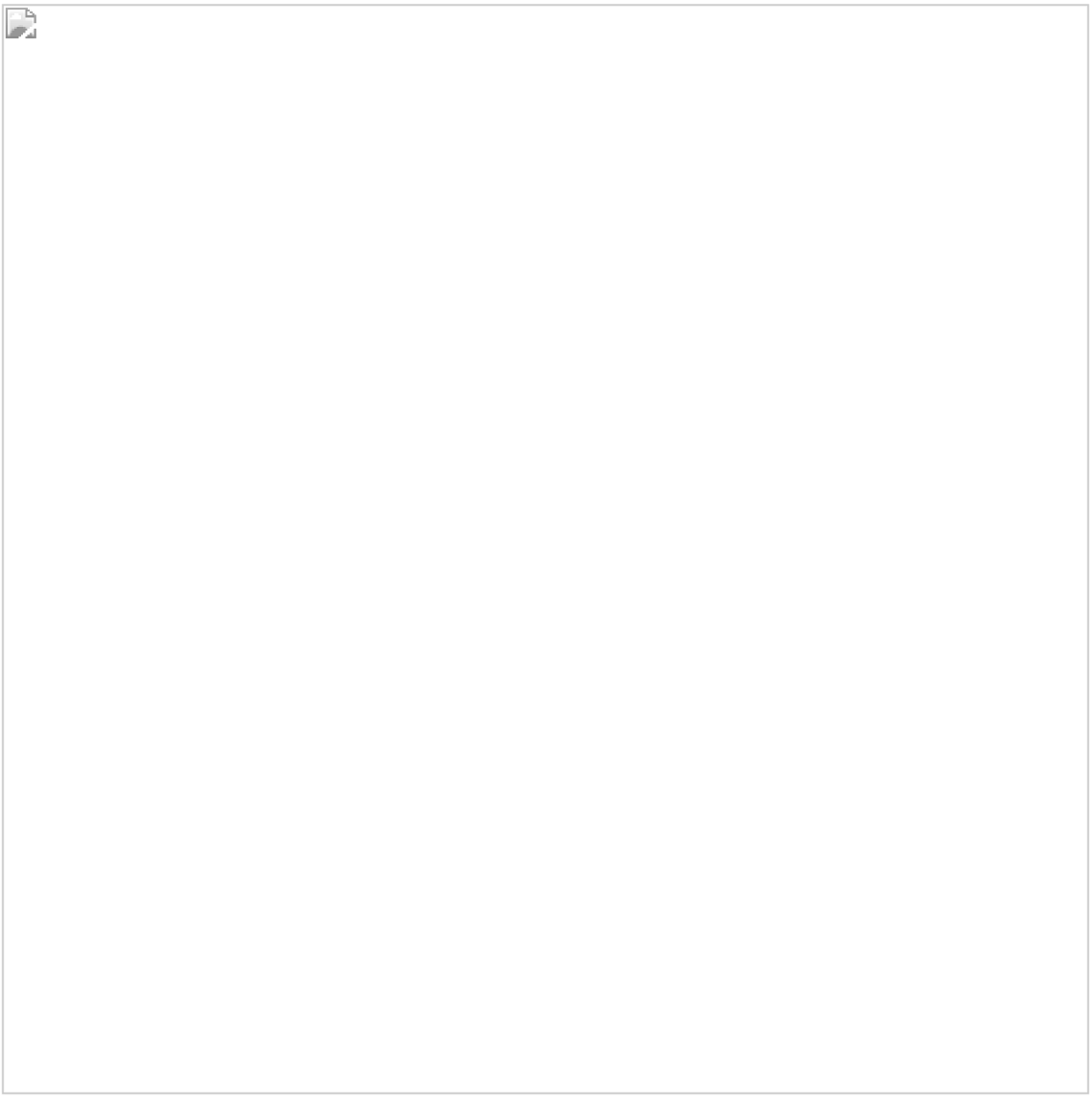


Think about it

1. Where did Tom sleep when it rained?

- ○ In the king's waistcoat-pocket
- ○ Under a leaf
- ○ In a mouse hole

A Silver Threepenny-Piece



One day King Arthur asked Tom about his parents. Tom said that his father and mother were as tall as anybody about the court, but rather poor.

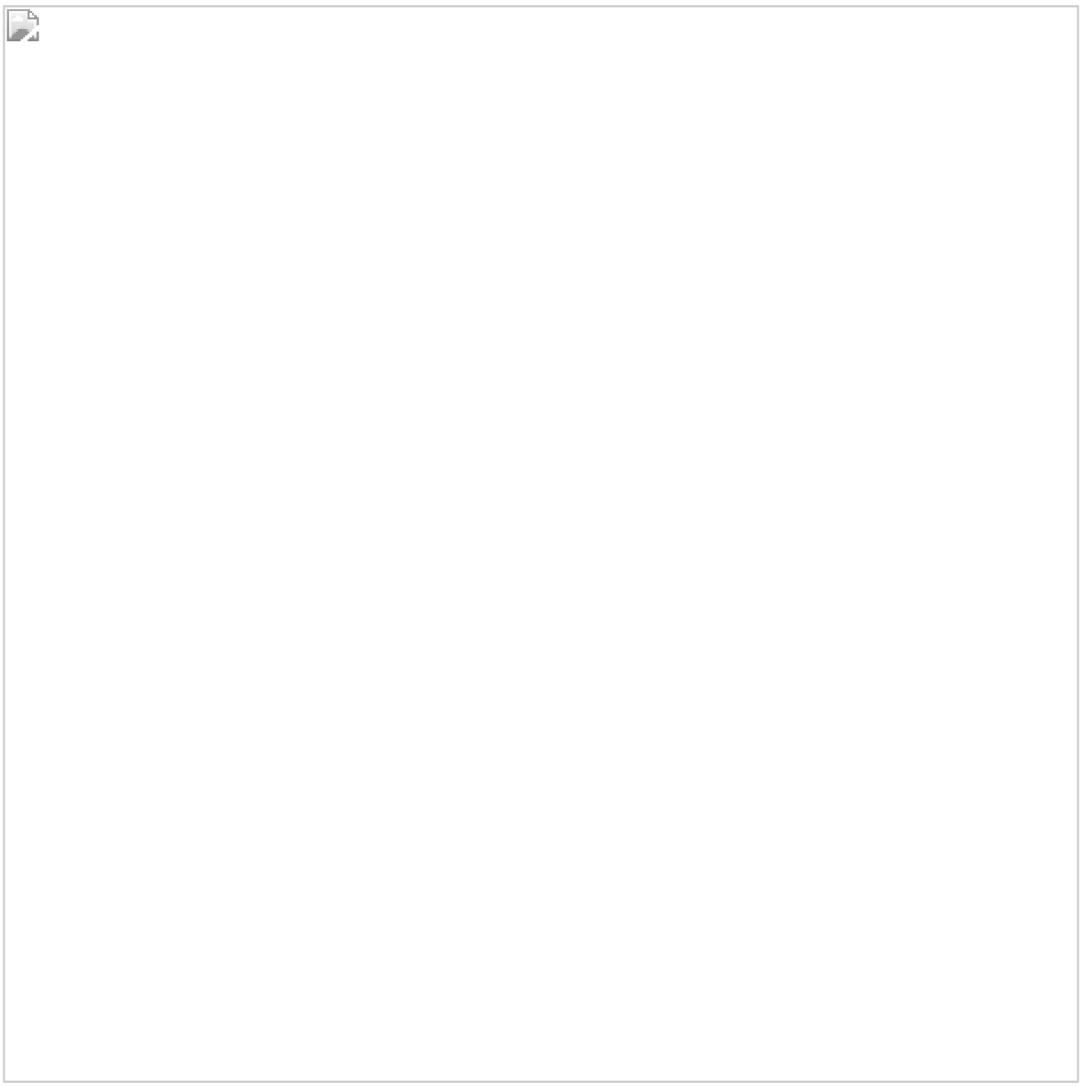
On hearing this, the king carried Tom to his treasury and told him to take as much money as he could carry home to his parents. Tom made himself a purse out of a water-bubble, and received a silver threepenny-piece to put into it.

He had some difficulty lifting the burden onto his back. He rested himself more than a hundred times by the way, and in two days and two nights he reached his father's house.

TALK ABOUT IT

A threepenny-piece was a giant load for Tom! What is something heavy you have helped carry?

A Silver Threepenny-Piece · another picture

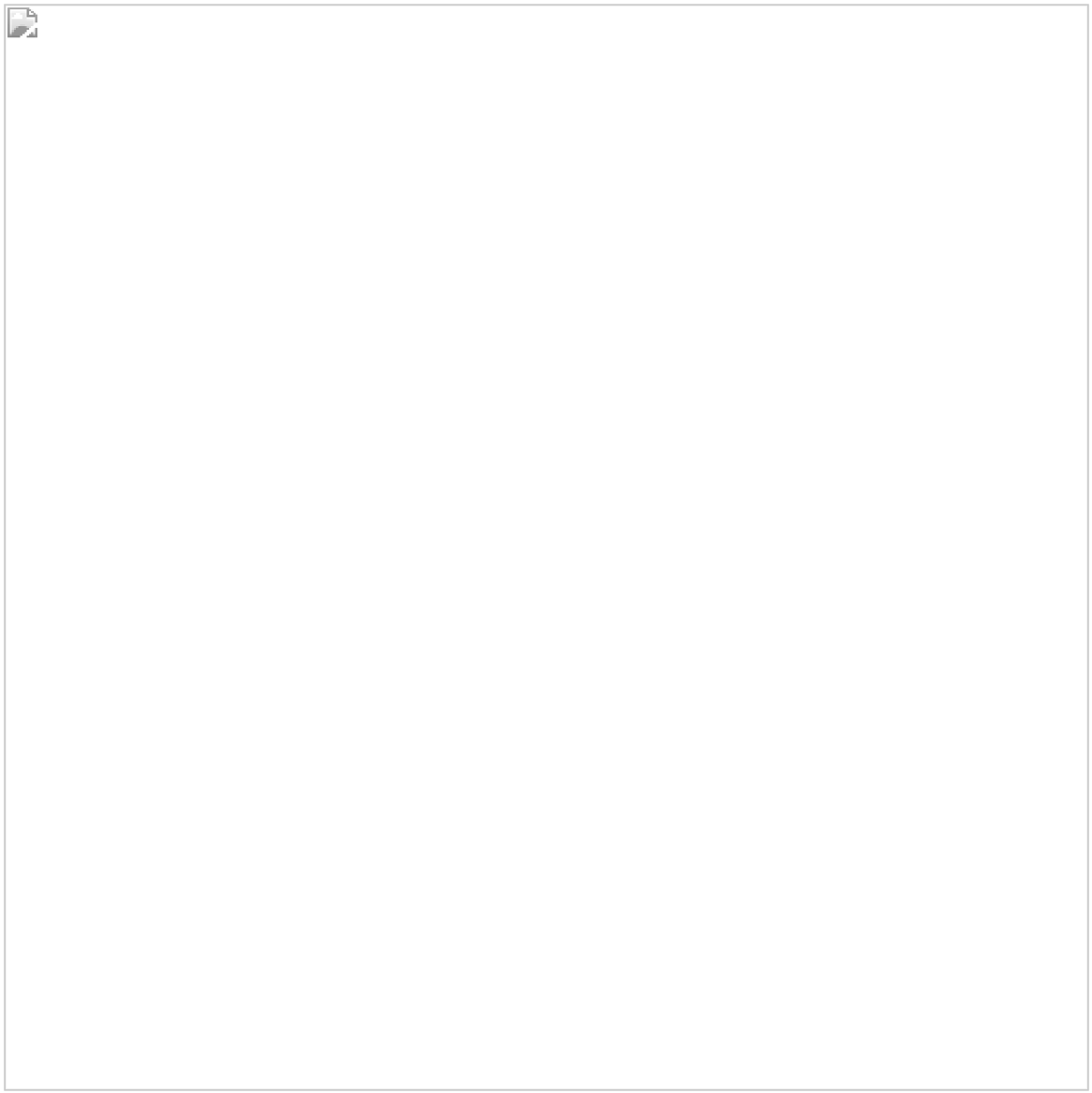


Think about it

1. What did the king give Tom to take to his parents?

- ○ A silver threepenny-piece
- ○ A bag of jewels
- ○ A golden crown

Sir Thomas on a Mouse



Tom's mother carried him into the house, but he soon returned to court.

His clothes had suffered much in the batter-pudding and the fish, so the king ordered him a new suit, and had him mounted as a knight on a mouse.

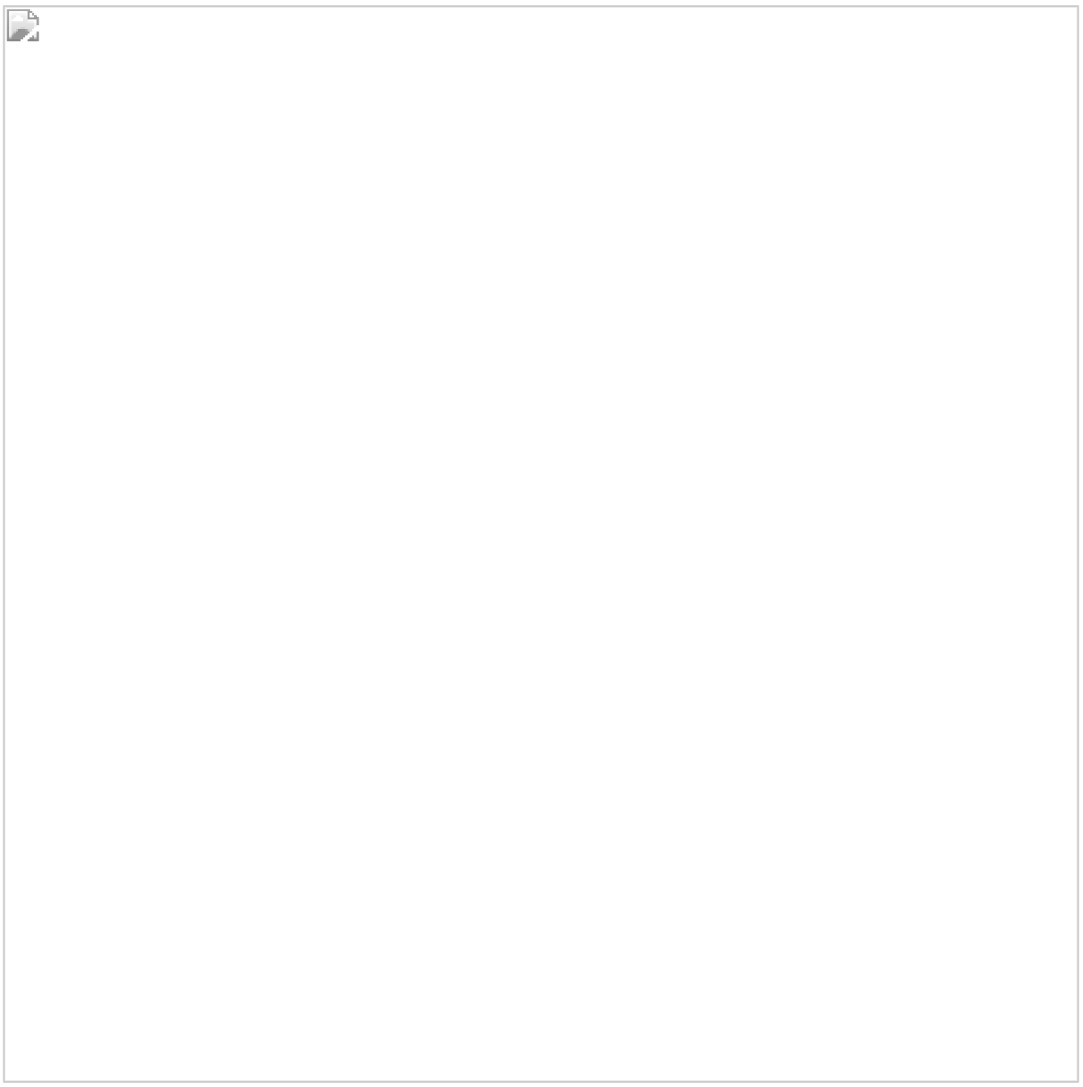
"Of Butterfly's wings his shirt was made, His boots of chicken's hide." On his dapper mouse he rode out a-hunting with the king and nobility, who were all ready to expire with laughter at Tom and his fine prancing charger.

The king gave him a palace of gold, a span high, with a door an inch wide, and a coach drawn by six small mice.

TALK ABOUT IT

Tom had a palace and a mouse to ride. What would you ride, if you were that small?

Sir Thomas on a Mouse · another picture

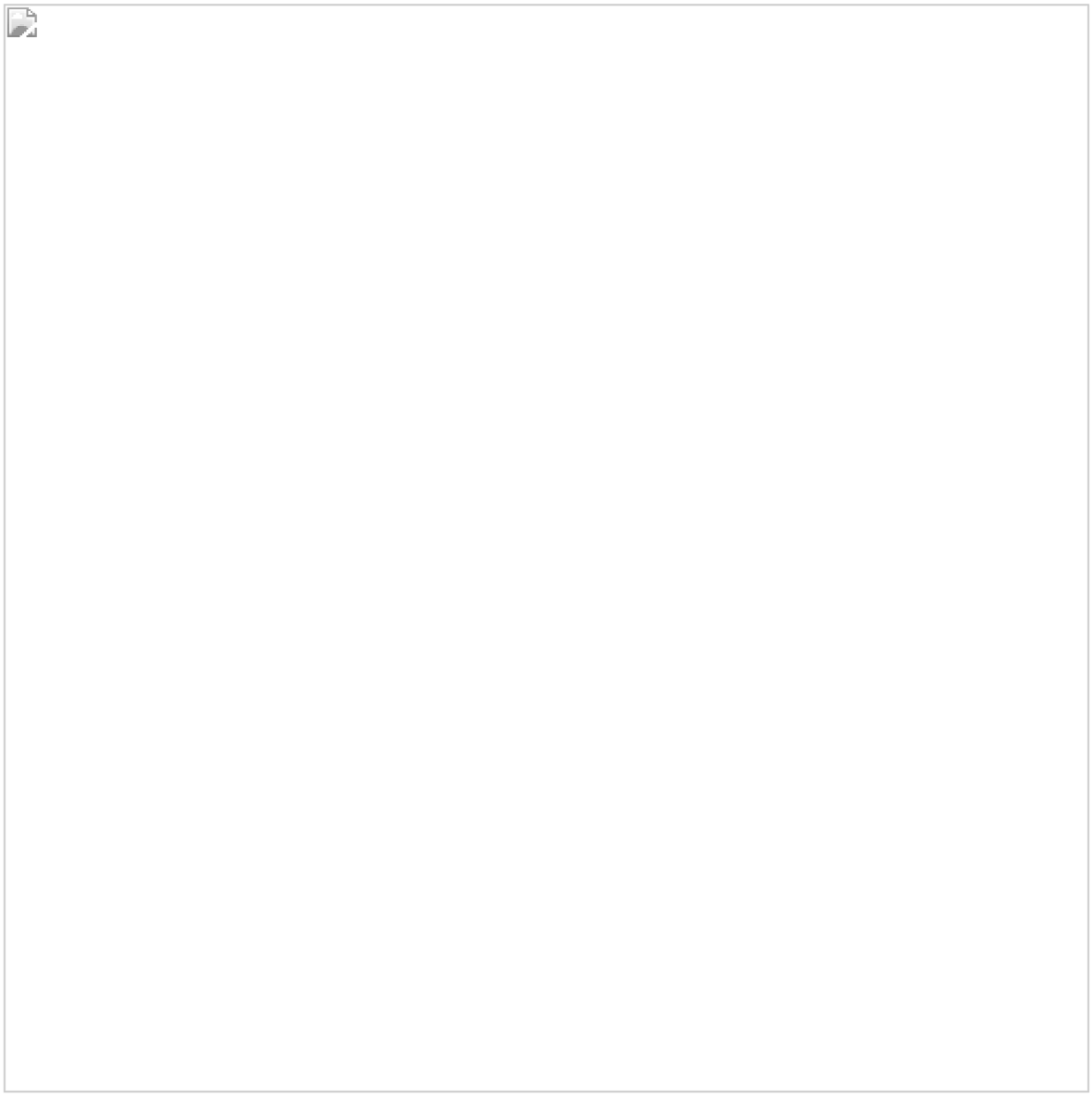


Think about it

1. What did Tom ride when he went hunting?

- ○ A mouse
- ○ A horse
- ○ A butterfly

The Snail-Shell and the Butterfly



The queen was so angry at the honours given to Sir Thomas that she told the king the little knight had been saucy to her.

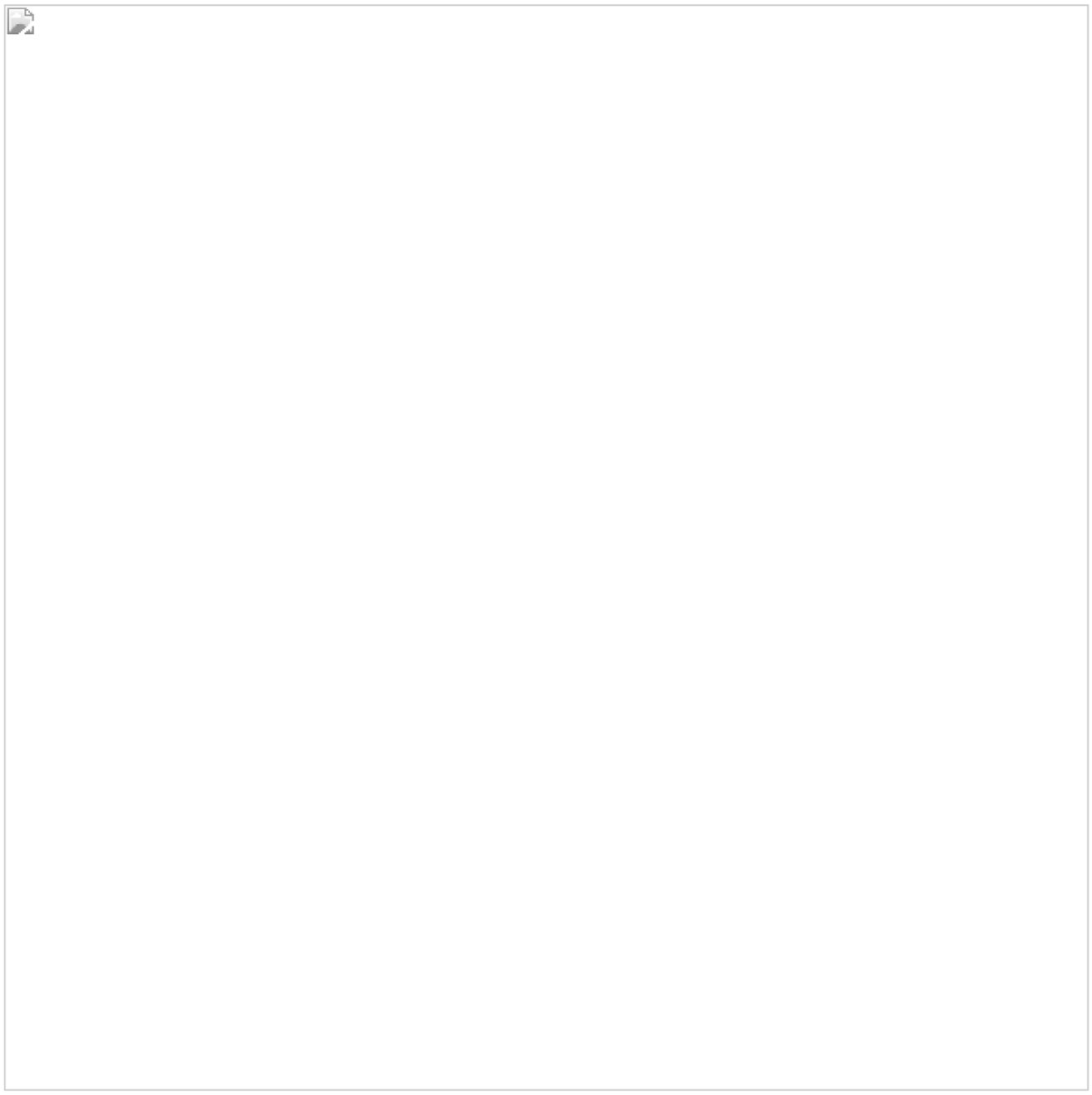
The king sent for Tom in great haste. Fearing the king's anger, Tom crept into an empty snail-shell, and lay there till he was almost starved.

At last he peeped out and saw a fine large butterfly. He jumped astride, and it carried him from tree to tree and field to field, and back to the court. Everyone strove to catch him, and poor Tom fell into a watering-pot and was almost drowned.

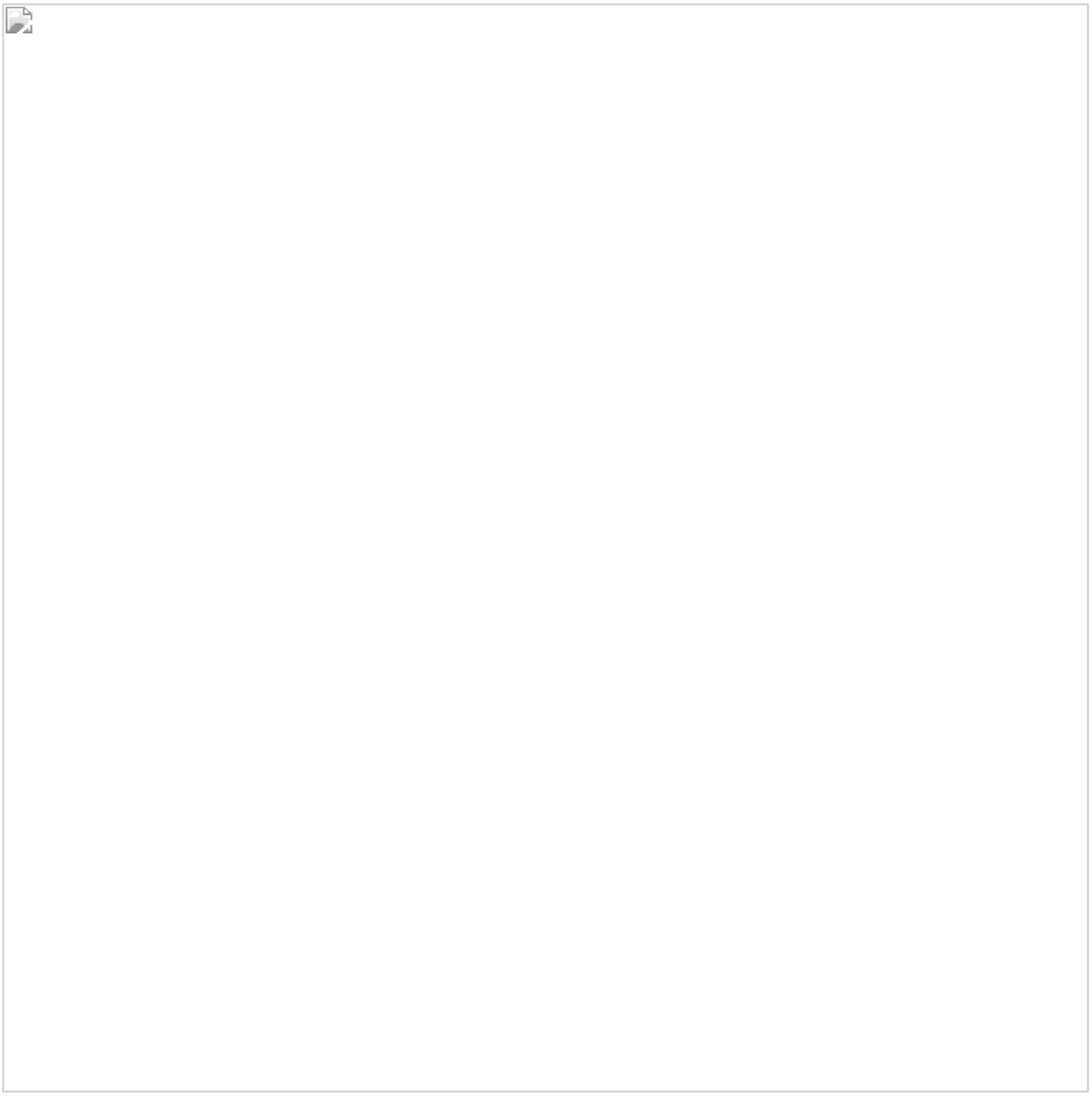
TALK ABOUT IT

Tom hid in a snail-shell. Where would you hide if you were that small?

The Snail-Shell and the Butterfly · another picture



The Mouse-Trap and the Cat



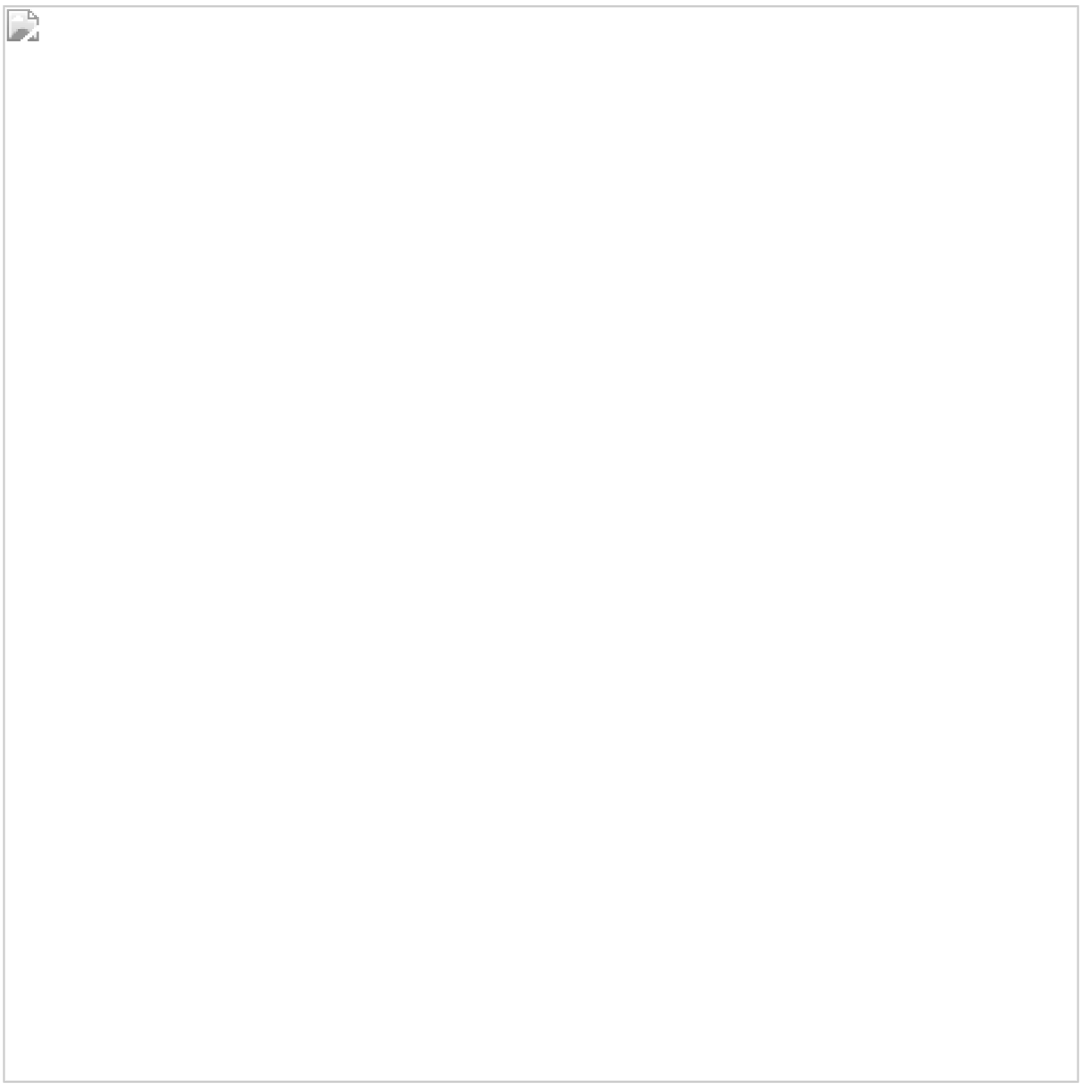
When the queen saw him she was in a rage, and said he should be punished. He was put into a mouse-trap until the time of his punishment.

However, a cat noticed something alive in the trap and patted it about till the wires broke, and Tom was set at liberty.

The king received Tom into favour again.

TALK ABOUT IT

The cat did not mean to help, but it set Tom free. What do you think of that?

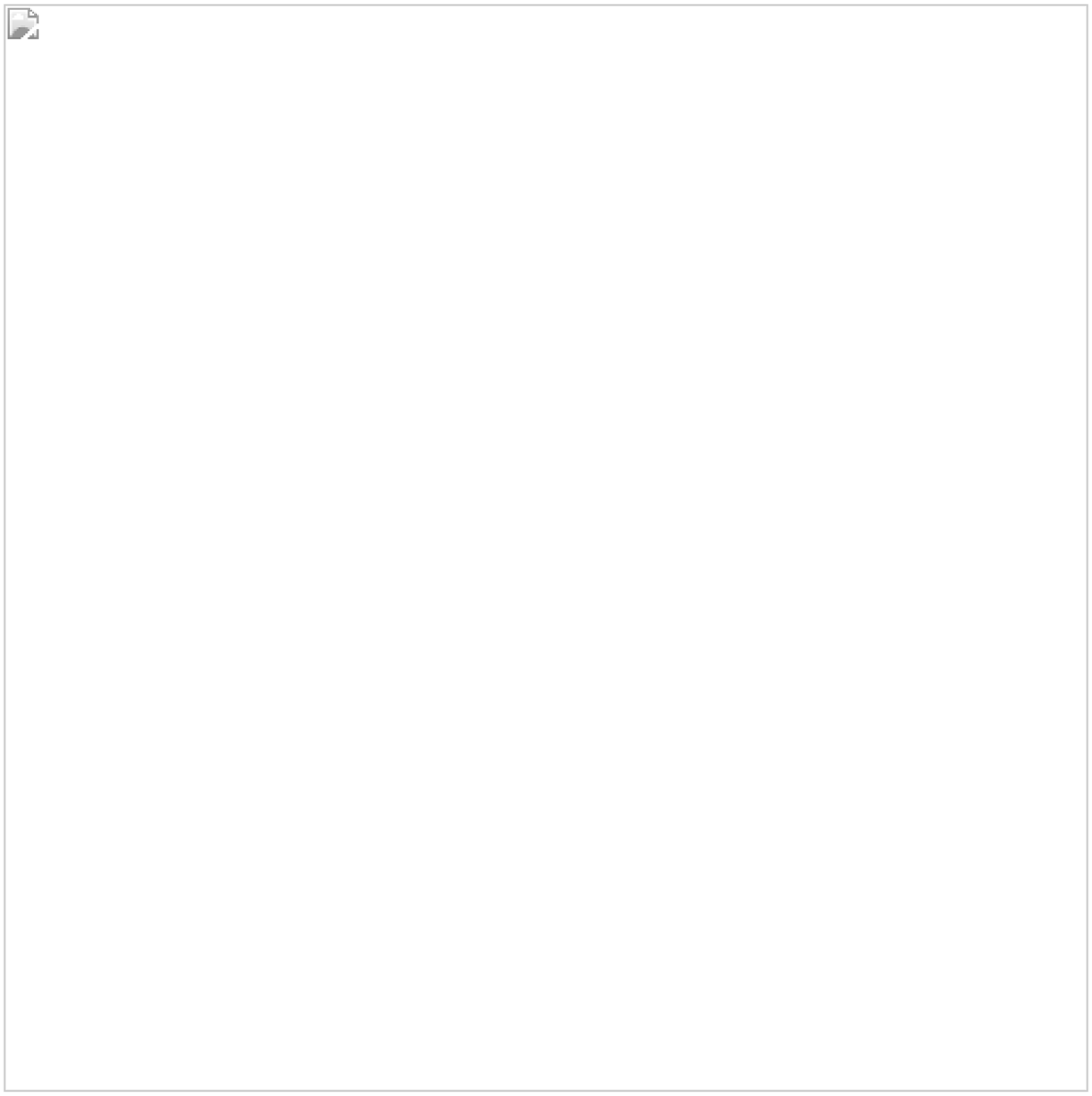


Think about it

1. Who set Tom free from the mouse-trap?

- ○ A cat
- ○ The king
- ○ A raven

Here Lies Tom Thumb



But Tom did not enjoy the king's favour long. A large spider attacked him, and though he fought it with his sword, Tom Thumb died.

King Arthur's court went into mourning, and raised a white marble monument over his grave, with these words:

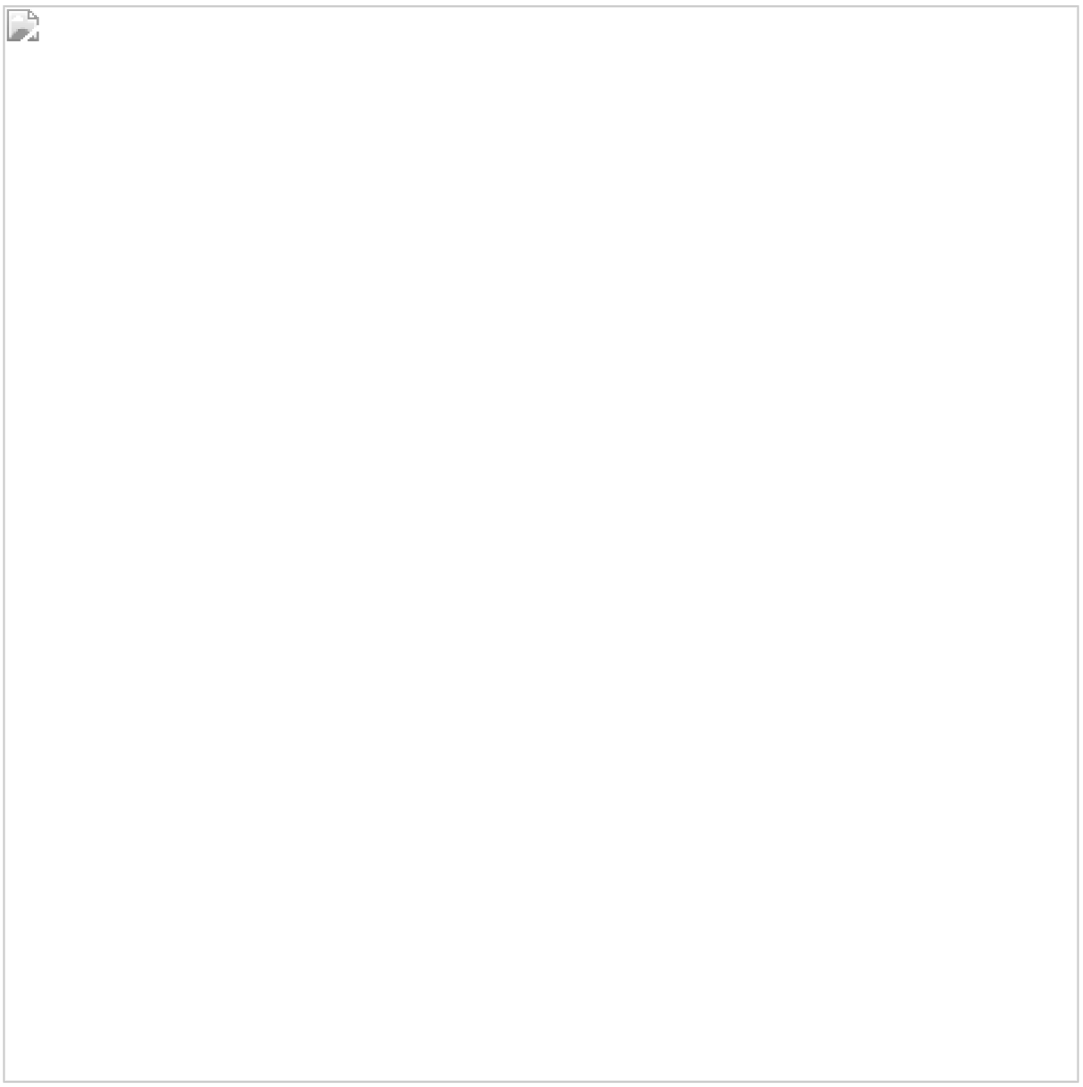
"Here lies Tom Thumb, King Arthur's knight, Who died by a spider's cruel bite. He was well known in Arthur's court, Where he afforded gallant sport; He rode at tilt and tournament, And on a mouse a-hunting went."

"Alive he filled the court with mirth; His death to sorrow soon gave birth. Wipe, wipe your eyes, and shake your head And cry,--Alas! Tom Thumb is dead!"

TALK ABOUT IT

The whole court was sad to lose Tom. What do you think they remembered about him?

Here Lies Tom Thumb · another picture



Think about it

1. How did the court show how much they would miss Tom?

- ○ They raised a marble monument
- ○ They held a feast
- ○ They sailed to sea

2. What is one thing you will remember about Tom Thumb?

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

— Yeshua HaMashiach

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