

READER 2: To the people of Kennerly, King Landor seemed to have everything he could ever want. And for many years it was true.

(READER 3 SMILES AND NODS HIS HEAD).

READER 5: He had a robust family of three sons and three daughters, and he loved his wife, Queen Lucinda.

READER 4: The king was a kind ruler who often strolled through town talking to the tradesmen and workers. It was nothing to see a family enjoying a picnic supper on one of the many green lawns surrounding the palace.

READER 1: So it came as a great surprise to all when the news went out that something was very wrong in the royal household.

(READERS 1 & 2 AND 4 & 5 PUT THEIR HEADS TOGETHER FOR A MOMENT AND PRETEND TO BE TALKING OVER THE SURPRISING NEWS).

READER 5: The problem was Prince William, the king's youngest son.

READER 2: William had always been hale and hearty. He had practically grown up on horseback and was an excellent athlete.

READER 1: He had lots of friends and often threw parties where everyone danced and acted the fool. Most of the girls in the kingdom had a crush on William.

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READER 4: All this changed the summer William turned seventeen. Suddenly, without explanation, he became listless.

(READERS 1, 2, 3, & 5 NOD SLIGHTLY TO CONFIRM THIS).

READER 2: He no longer galloped through the woods with the wind blowing through his hair. Instead, he stayed in his room and stared out the window.

READER 5: King Landor and Queen Lucinda were alarmed. They tried everything they could think of to make William the happy, young prince he had been before.

READER 1: They held a costume ball, but William would not dress up. They brought in dancing bears and trained seals, but William was not amused.

READER 5: All of Kennerly worried about the prince. Scores of citizens travelled to the palace, knocked on the great door, and offered to try to cheer up William.

READER 1: Storytellers came with clever tales and funny jokes. William did not smile.

READER 2: Cooks prepared his favorite foods. He said he wasn't hungry.

READER 4: Artists painted beautiful pictures. He preferred to look out the window.

READER 5: Musicians played sweet music. He claimed it hurt his ears.

READER 2: All efforts were to no avail. Prince William remained in his room, and summer marched into fall.

READER 4: Eventually, King Landor and Queen Lucinda could think of nothing else to try.

(READER 3 SHAKES HIS HEAD IN DEFEAT).

A cloud seemed to hang over the whole kingdom.

(ALL READERS LOOK SAD AND CAST THEIR EYES TO THE GROUND).

READER 1: And then Old Jack appeared.

(ALL READERS STRAIGHTEN UP WITH AWE).

READER 5: Although everyone knew of Old Jack, very few people had actually seen him. He lived alone in a small hut high in the hills. Even he didn't know how old he was.

READER 1: Many people thought Old Jack had magical powers. Others thought he just used common sense.

READER 5: Either way, he usually had a solution for even the most difficult of problems.

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READER 2: Old Jack climbed to William's room, and the two were seen sitting side by side, gazing out the window for over an hour.

READER 5: If words were spoken, no one knew what they were.

READER 4: When Old Jack emerged from William's room, King Landor was waiting.

(READERS 1 AND 3 STAND).

3/KING: Now you have seen him with your own eyes. What are we to do? Shall I send for more magicians?

1/OLD JACK: All the magicians and musicians and celebrations in the world will not cure your son. He has lost the will to live. There is only one way to save him.

3/KING: Tell me, and I will do it.

1/OLD JACK: Find a truly happy man and have him change shirts with your son.

3/KING: Then what?

1/OLD JACK: Nothing. That is all that is needed. If your son puts on the shirt of a happy man, your son, too, will be happy. He will begin to live again. It is that simple.

(READER 1 SITS).

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READER 4: The next day King Landor set out on his quest. He rode many miles and talked with many men, but none was truly happy.

READER 2: Late one morning he came across a fine farm. Its fences were in good repair, and its fields were laid out in a pleasing pattern.

(READER 3 SURVEYS THE ROOM AS IF IT WERE THE FARM).

3/KING: This looks like the work of a happy man.

READER 5: The king approached the house and introduced himself to the farmer,

(READER 2 STANDS).

saying:

3/KING: I am most impressed with your farm.

2/FARMER: Thank you, sire. I have worked hard to get the result you see. It gives me great joy.

3/KING: I can well imagine that is true. Tell me, how is the rest of your life? Are you content?

2/FARMER: Oh, yes. I have a good life.

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3/KING: So there is nothing in the world I could give you which would make you happier?

2/FARMER: I didn't say that. The truth is I have always dreamed of having a farm ten times the size of this one.

3/KING: Why would you want a larger farm?

2/FARMER: Because then I would be respected by absolutely everyone. I would have the reputation of a gentleman.

3/KING: And that would make you happier?

2/FARMER: Much happier.

READER 1: King Landor realized this was not the man he was seeking. He wished the farmer well and departed.

(READER 2 SITS).

READER 4: The next day King Landor stopped at a crowded tavern for lunch.

(READER 5 STANDS AND MIMES SINGING OR JUGGLING).

The meal turned out to be quite enjoyable, mainly because of a jolly chap who sang, juggled, told stories, and generally kept everyone entertained.