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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

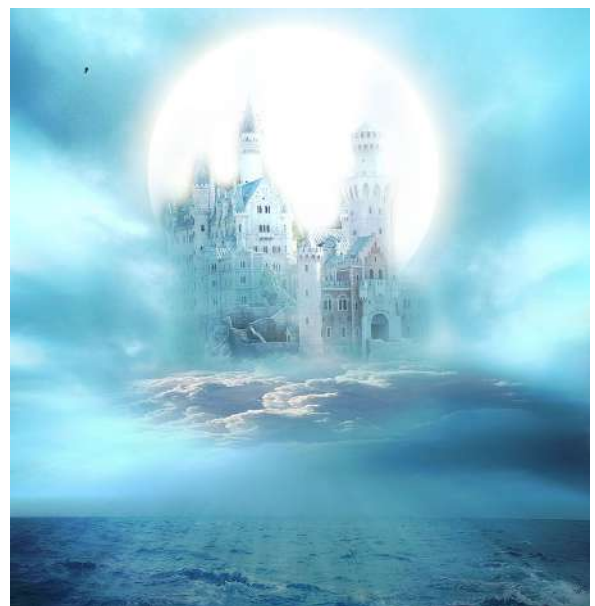
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The Treasure Castle

Once upon a time, a hunter was out hunting when he heard a voice coming from the ground. "Who's there?" asked the hunter. "Here I am," shouted the voice. The hunter walked in the direction of a pit that had been dug to trap wild animals. There was a dwarf in the pit. "Please free me from the pit," asked the dwarf. The hunter didn't hesitate and pulled the dwarf out of the pit.

"Oh, thank you kindly," said the dwarf. "Because you have helped me, I will tell you a secret. There is a castle where a treasure is so easy to grab. I'll tell you where to find it. You will find a room with a table on which there are many golden jewels. Help yourself to the treasure and go home immediately. But, listen carefully to what I am telling you now: never, ever go into the tower of the castle. If you do, evil will come."

The hunter thanked the dwarf and went home to pack enough bread and cheese in his bag and set off for the treasure castle. It was a day and a night's journey when he arrived at the



castle, exactly where the dwarf had said it would be. The castle looked abandoned. The grass grew in the courtyard and the oak door was falling apart.

The hunter soon discovered the treasure room in the castle. In the center stood a table loaded with gold. The hunter filled his pockets and as he did, he saw on the ground a kind of trail of jewels. The hunter followed the trail and discovered that it went up the stairs to the tower. He remembered the advice of the dwarf and did not climb the stairs, but hurried home. Once he arrived home, the hunter suddenly became a rich man. The news of his luck also reached the ears of the king. Now you must know that this king was a wicked rogue. Together with his two best friends, the chamberlain and the chancellor, they stole from the poor.

When the chamberlain heard of the hunter's wealth, he spoke to the king: "Sire, let us kill the hunter and claim his fortune." "No," said the king, "we will find out how the hunter came by his treasure. Perhaps there is more to be had. We can still kill the hunter and take his treasure."

The hunter was then locked up in a terrible prison. He was teased and starved until he finally told about the treasure castle.

The next day, the king, the chamberlain, and the chancellor rode to the castle. Their joy was great when they found the castle, exactly as the hunter had described it. They filled large linen bags to the brim with gold and jewels. Suddenly, the chamberlain saw the gems lying on the floor. "Look, there's a lot more," cried the chamberlain.

The trail of jewels led them to the door of the stairs to the tower. They all climbed the stairs as fast as they could. In the tower room was the same table with gold and jewels. They were busy collecting gems until they were suddenly startled by the sound of a copper bell.

"What is that?" cried the villains. There was an explosion and then the tower flew off from the castle into the air. They flew over the forest to another castle. The tower landed in the middle of the castle hall.

Strange-looking guys grabbed the villains and brought them to a dwarf king. Now you must know that this treasure belonged to this king. He was a brother of the dwarf who rescued the hunter from the well.

"What are these three men accused of?" asked the dwarf king. "Of robbing the treasure castle, Your Majesty," answered one of the attendants.

"Immediately bring the chief judge," said the dwarf king. The three men were put in a cage. A heavy voice announced the presence of the chief judge.

A messenger appeared in a red velvet suit. In his hand, he held a golden stick. He was followed by two squires. They were also dressed in red velvet and carried a black lacquered box on a velvet cushion. They were followed by an older man with a green parrot. The parrot took a seat on a stand near the throne of the dwarf king.

First, the king was taken out of the cage. "Reverend," said the dwarf king to the parrot, "this thief was caught red-handed robbing the treasure castle. What punishment do you suggest?"

The two squires lifted the lacquered box within reach of the parrot's beak. The parrot picked a card out of the box. The older man took the card and gave it to the dwarf king. "Prisoner," said the dwarf king, "the chief judge condemns you to be the chimney sweep of all the palace chimneys for the rest of your life."

Then the chancellor was brought out, and the bird picked a second card. "Prisoner," said the dwarf king, "the chief judge condemns you to be the window washer of the castle for the rest of your life."

The chamberlain was brought out, and his sentence was also pronounced. "Prisoner," said the dwarf king, "the chief judge condemns you to be the carpet cleaner of all the palace carpets for the rest of your life."

Now the palace has 596 chimneys, 8,753 windows, and 1,199 carpets. All chimneys, windows, and carpets must be cleaned at least once a week. It seems that the three villains are still cleaning them. The hunter was released from prison and crowned king since he was the richest and most powerful of all people.

The treasure is still in the treasure castle, packed in linen bags. You may find it someday. If you do, don't be too greedy and don't go to the tower room.