

A Tale

Once upon a time in a far away place lived a royal family made up of a powerful king, a loving queen, and a rebellious young princess. Because of the King's fear of the unknown, the young princess was forbidden to leave the protective walls of the palace. The King wanted to protect his daughter from the incurable and evil spirits that lurked beyond the borders of his home. Like many young people, however, the princess was curious. She would often sneak away from the castle, defying her father's rule and satisfying her own curiosity about the world outside. She would spend her time away from the castle, talking to the animals of the forest and daydreaming about what her life would be like when she inherited the rule of the kingdom.

One day, as the princess sneaked away from the palace grounds, she came upon a poor and shabby looking beggar dressed in rags. Shocked by his appearance, she stared at the man. He stared back at her. He held out his hand in a friendly manner, introduced himself, and explained that he had not eaten in days and was practically dying of starvation. Immediately, the young princess scurried back through the crack in the wall through which she had escaped and brought back a silver nugget. She handed it to the man. Astonished by his sudden wealth, the man begged the girl for more. Agreeing to meet the following day, the princess entered back through the crack in the palace wall.

Her father, looking from his chamber window, spotted his daughter. He immediately sent the house guard to bring her to him. After several minutes of intense interrogation, the young princess admitted to the King why she had been outside the palace walls. She told him about the gift of silver that she gave the beggar. Angrily, the King issued a warning to the princess:

"From now on, a guard will be stationed at the opening in the wall. He will be commanded to follow you in order that he might learn the identity of this thief that steals away my riches. I will then have the beggar put to death by the firing squad."

The next day, the princess decided to take a couple more silver nuggets to the beggar who awaited her on the other side of the palace wall. She ended up taking a silver and a gold nugget from her father's safe. As the princess approached the crack in the wall, she saw the guard stationed there. The guard said to her, "Princess, I must tell you that if you leave the palace grounds, I must follow you and identify the beggar to your father."

The princess took the one gold nugget from her pocket and offered it to the guard as a bribe. Quietly she said, "Here, take this and keep quiet. You must tell no one of my actions." Delighted by his new-found wealth, the guard agreed and cleared the opening through the crack in the wall for the princess to sneak through. Unbeknownst to the princess, the guard followed her. Hiding in the bushes, he watched as the princess handed the beggar the silver nugget. He heard the princess explain to the beggar the reasons why she would not be able to meet him anymore. She told him of the fate that awaited him if she or he were caught. Willing to risk death in order to grow rich, the beggar asked the princess to meet one final time the following day. This time he whispered to her, "Bring me not a silver nugget but a gold one." The princess agreed.

The next day, she sneaked back in to her father's safe. She took one gold nugget for the beggar and one for the guard to keep him quiet. After bribing the guard at the wall, she met the beggar on the other side. Once again, the guard watched secretly from the bushes. After the nugget was handed to the beggar, the beggar ran off. Astonished that the beggar received the same amount as himself, the guard, filled with jealousy, thought of a plan to avenge his honor and the princess' lack of respect for him as a member of the King's court.

The guard went immediately to the King and told him what he had witnessed. The King sent for his elite forest brigade to find the beggar and drag him to the castle to meet his fate before the firing squad. The beggar begged for his life; however, the King's orders were issued and the firing squad obeyed. They executed the beggar.

Who is responsible for the death of the beggar? Why?

Rank the characters in the order of their degree of responsibility from 1-6 with 1 being the character most responsible and 6 being the character least responsible.

Characters

	Individual	Group
King	_____	_____
Princess	_____	_____
Queen	_____	_____
Guard	_____	_____
Beggar	_____	_____
Firing Squad	_____	_____