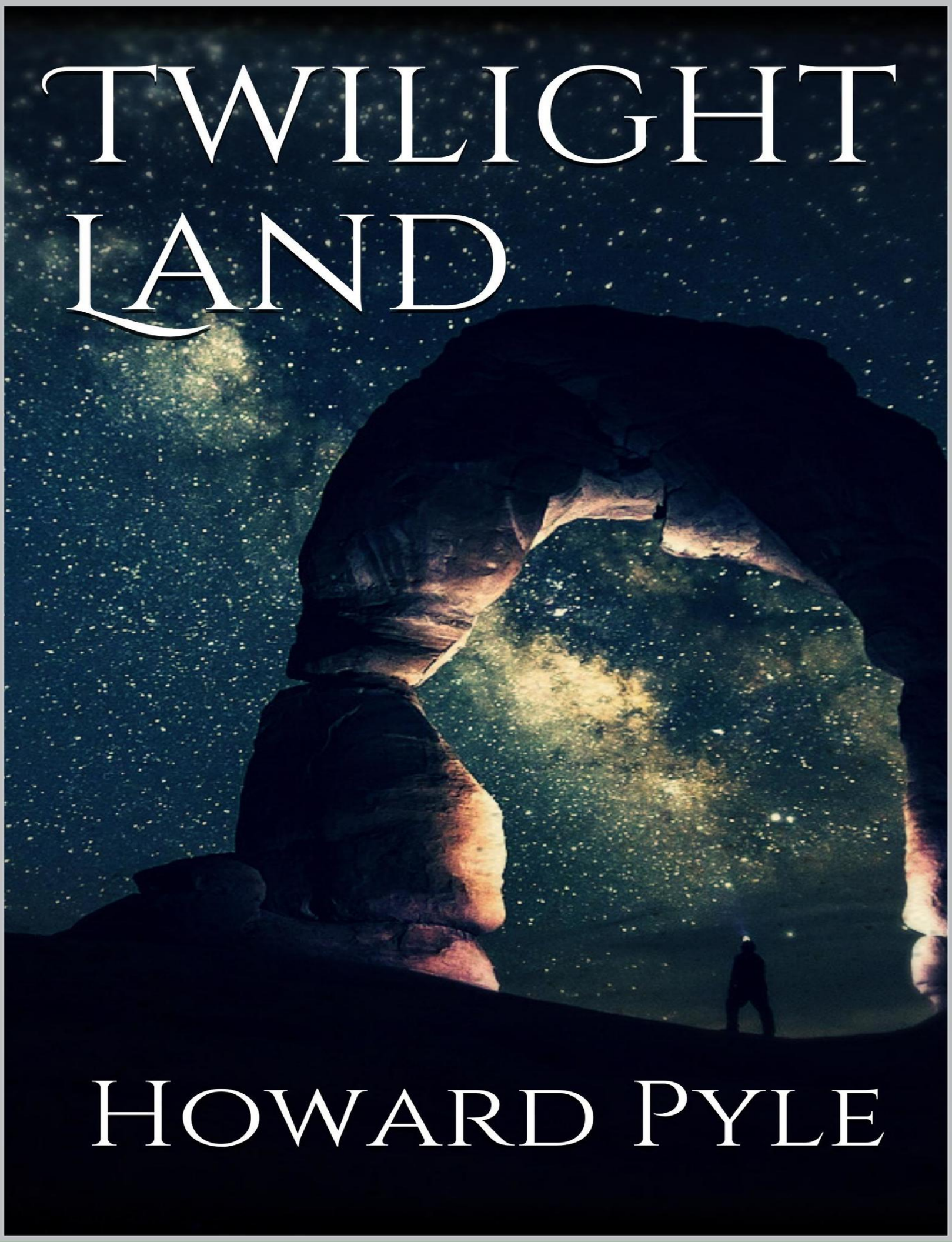
TWILIGHT LAND



HOWARD PYLE

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Introduction

I found myself in Twilight Land.
How I ever got there I cannot tell, but there I was in Twilight Land.
What is Twilight Land? It is a wonderful, wonderful place where no sun shines to scorch your back as you jog along the way, where no rain falls to make the road muddy and hard to travel, where no wind blows the dust into your eyes or the chill into your marrow. Where all is sweet and quiet and ready to go to bed.
Where is Twilight Land? Ah! that I cannot tell you. You will either have to ask your mother or find it for yourself.
There I was in Twilight Land. The birds were singing their goodnight song, and the little frogs were piping "peet, peet." The sky overhead was full of still brightness, and the moon in the east hung in the purple gray like a great bubble as yellow as gold. All the air was full of the smell of growing things. The high road was gray, and the trees were dark.
I drifted along the road as a soap bubble floats before the wind, or as a body floats in a dream. I floated along and I floated along past the trees, past the bushes, past the mill pond, past the mill where the old miller stood at the door looking at me.
I floated on, and there was the Inn, and it was the Sign of Mother Goose.
The sign hung on a pole, and on it was painted a picture of

Mother Goose with her gray gander.
It was to the Inn I wished to come.
I floated on, and I would have floated past the Inn, and perhaps have gotten into the Land of Never-Come-Back-Again, only I caught at the branch of an apple-tree, and so I stopped myself, though the apple-blossoms came falling down like pink and white snowflakes.
The earth and the air and the sky were all still, just as it is at twilight, and I heard them laughing and talking in the tap-room of the Inn of the Sign of Mother Goose—the clinking of glasses, and the rattling and clatter of knives and forks and plates and dishes. That was where I wished to go.
So in I went. Mother Goose herself opened the door, and there I was.
The room was all full of twilight; but there they sat, every one of them. I did not count them, but there were ever so many: Aladdin, and Ali Baba, and Fortunatis, and Jack-the-Giant-Killer, and Doctor Faustus, and Bidpai, and Cinderella, and Patient Grizzle, and the Soldier who cheated the Devil, and St. George, and Hans in Luck, who traded and traded his lump of gold until he had only an empty churn to show for it; and there was Sindbad the Sailor, and the Tailor who killed seven flies at a blow, and the Fisherman who fished up the Genie, and the Lad who fiddled for the Jew in the bramble-bush, and the Blacksmith who made Death sit in his apple-tree, and Boots, who always marries the Princess, whether he wants to or not—a rag-tag lot as ever you saw in your life, gathered from every place, and brought together in Twilight Land.
Each one of them was telling a story, and now it was the turn of the Soldier who cheated the Devil.
“ I WILL tell you,” said the Soldier who cheated the Devil, “a story of a friend of mine.”
“ Take a fresh pipe of tobacco,” said St. George.
“ Thank you, I will,” said the Soldier who cheated the Devil.

He filled his long pipe full of tobacco, and then he tilted it upside down and sucked in the light of the candle. Puff! puff! puff! and a cloud of smoke went up about his head, so that you could just see his red nose shining through it, and his bright eyes twinkling in the midst of the smoke-wreath, like two stars through a thin cloud on a summer night.

“ I’ll tell you,” said the Soldier who cheated the Devil, “the story of a friend of mine. ’Tis every word of it just as true as that I myself cheated the Devil.”

He took a drink from his mug of beer, and then he began.

“’ Tis called,” said he —

The Stool of Fortune

Once upon a time there came a soldier marching along the road, kicking up a little cloud of dust at each step—as strapping and merry and bright-eyed a fellow as you would wish to see in a summer day. Tramp! tramp! tramp! he marched, whistling as he jogged along, though he carried a heavy musket over his shoulder and though the sun shone hot and strong and there was never a tree in sight to give him a bit of shelter.

At last he came in sight of the King's Town and to a great field of stocks and stones, and there sat a little old man as withered and brown as a dead leaf, and clad all in scarlet from head to foot.

"Ho! soldier," said he, "are you a good shot?"

"Aye," said the soldier, "that is my trade."

"Would you like to earn a dollar by shooting off your

musket for me?”
“Aye,” said the soldier, “that is my trade also.”
“Very well, then,” said the little man in red, “here is a silver button to drop into your gun instead of a bullet. Wait you here, and about sunset there will come a great black bird flying. In one claw it carries a feather cap and in the other a round stone. Shoot me the silver button at that bird, and if your aim is good it will drop the feather cap and the pebble. Bring them to me to the great town-gate and I will pay you a dollar for your trouble.”
“Very well,” said the soldier, “shooting my gun is a job that fits me like an old coat.” So, down he sat and the old man went his way.
Well, there he sat and sat and sat and sat until the sun touched the rim of the ground, and then, just as the old man said, there came flying a great black bird as silent as night. The soldier did not tarry to look or to think. As the bird flew by up came the gun to his shoulder, squint went his eye along the barrel—Puff! Bang!—

I vow and declare that if the shot he fired had cracked the sky he could not have been more frightened. The great black bird gave a yell so terrible that it curdled the very

blood in his veins and made his hair stand upon end. Away it flew like a flash—a bird no longer, but a great, black demon, smoking and smelling most horribly of brimstone, and when the soldier gathered his wits, there lay the feather cap and a little, round, black stone upon the ground.

“Well,” said the soldier, “it is little wonder that the old man had no liking to shoot at such game as that.” And thereupon he popped the feather cap into one pocket and the round stone into another, and shouldering his musket marched away until he reached the town-gate, and there was the old man waiting for him.

“Did you shoot the bird?” said he.

“I did,” said the soldier.

“And did you get the cap and the round stone?”

“I did.”

“Then here is your dollar.”

“Wait a bit,” said the soldier, “I shot greater game that time than I bargained for, and so it’s ten dollars and not one you shall pay me before you lay finger upon the feather cap and the little stone.”

“Very well,” said the old man, “here are ten dollars.”

“Ho! ho!” thought the soldier, “is that the way the wind blows?”—“Did I say ten dollars?” said he; “’twas a hundred dollars I meant.”

At that the old man frowned until his eyes shone green.

“Very well,” said he, “if it is a hundred dollars you want, you will have to come home with me, for I have not so much with me.” Thereupon he entered the town with the soldier at his heels.

Up one street he went and down another, until at last he came to a great, black, ancient, ramshackle house; and that was where he lived. In he walked without so much as a rap at the door, and so led the way to a great room with furnaces and books and bottles and jars and dust and cobwebs, and three grinning skulls upon the mantelpiece,

each with a candle stuck atop of it, and there he left the soldier while he went to get the hundred dollars.
The soldier sat him down upon a three-legged stool in the corner and began staring about him; and he liked the looks of the place as little as any he had seen in all of his life, for it smelled musty and dusty, it did: the three skulls grinned at him, and he began to think that the little old man was no better than he should be. “I wish,” says he, at last, “that instead of being here I might be well out of my scrape and in a safe place.”

Now the little old man in scarlet was a great magician, and there was little or nothing in that house that had not some magic about it, and of all things the three-legged stool had been conjured the most.
“I wish that instead of being here I might be well out of my scrape, and in a safe place.” That was what the soldier said; and hardly had the words left his lips when—whisk! whir!—away flew the stool through the window, so suddenly that the soldier had only just time enough to gripe it tight by the legs to save himself from falling. Whir! whiz!—away it flew like a bullet. Up and up it went—so high in the air that the earth below looked like a black blanket spread out in the night; and then down it came again, with the soldier still griping tight to the legs, until at last it settled as light as a

feather upon a balcony of the king’s palace; and when the soldier caught his wind again he found himself without a hat, and with hardly any wits in his head.

There he sat upon the stool for a long time without daring to move, for he did not know what might happen to him next. There he sat and sat, and by-and-by his ears got cold in the night air, and then he noticed for the first time that he had lost his head gear, and bethought himself of the feather cap in his pocket. So out he drew it and clapped it upon his head, and then—lo and behold!—he found he had become as invisible as thin air—not a shred or a hair of him could be seen. “Well!” said he, “here is another wonder, but I am safe now at any rate.” And up he got to find some place not so cool as where he sat.

He stepped in at an open window, and there he found himself in a beautiful room, hung with cloth of silver and blue, and with chairs and tables of white and gold; dozens and scores of waxlights shone like so many stars, and lit every crack and cranny as bright as day, and there at one end of the room upon a couch, with her eyelids closed and fast asleep, lay the prettiest princess that ever the sun shone upon. The soldier stood and looked and looked at her, and looked and looked at her, until his heart melted within him like soft butter, and then he kissed her.

“Who is that?” said the princess, starting up, wide-awake, but not a soul could she see, because the soldier had the feather cap upon his head.
“Who is that?” said she again; and then the soldier answered, but without taking the feather cap from his head.
“It is I,” said he, “and I am King of the Wind, and ten times greater than the greatest of kings here below. One day I saw you walking in your garden and fell in love with you, and now I have come to ask you if you will marry me and be my wife?”
“But how can I marry you?” said the princess, “without seeing you?”
“You shall see me,” said the soldier, “all in good time. Three days from now I will come again, and will show myself to you, but just now it cannot be. But if I come, will you marry me?”
“Yes I will,” said the princess, “for I like the way you talk—that I do!”
Thereupon the soldier kissed her and said good-bye, and then stepped out of the window as he had stepped in. He sat him down upon his three-legged stool. “I wish,” said he, “to be carried to such and such a tavern.” For he had been in that town before, and knew the places where good living was to be had.
Whir! whiz! Away flew the stool as high and higher than it had flown before, and then down it came again, and down and down until it lit as light as a feather in the street before the tavern door. The soldier tucked his feather cap in his pocket, and the three-legged stool under his arm, and in he went and ordered a pot of beer and some white bread and cheese.
Meantime, at the king’s palace was such a gossiping and such a hubbub as had not been heard there for many a day; for the pretty princess was not slow in telling how the invisible King of the Wind had come and asked her to marry

him; and some said it was true and some said it was not true, and everybody wondered and talked, and told their own notions of the matter. But all agreed that three days would show whether what had been told was true or no.
As for the soldier, he knew no more how to do what he had promised to do than my grandmother's cat; for where was he to get clothes fine enough for the King of the Wind to wear? So there he sat on his three-legged stool thinking and thinking, and if he had known all that I know he would not have given two turns of his wit upon it. "I wish," says he, at last—"I wish that this stool could help me now as well as it can carry me through the sky. I wish," says he, "that I had a suit of clothes such as the King of the Wind might really wear."
The wonders of the three-legged stool were wonders indeed!
Hardly had the words left the soldier's lips when down came something tumbling about his ears from up in the air; and what should it be but just such a suit of clothes as he had in his mind—all crusted over with gold and silver and jewels.
"Well," says the soldier, as soon as he had got over his wonder again, "I would rather sit upon this stool than any I ever saw." And so would I, if I had been in his place, and had a few minutes to think of all that I wanted.
So he found out the trick of the stool, and after that wishing and having were easy enough, and by the time the three days were ended the real King of the Wind himself could not have cut a finer figure. Then down sat the soldier upon his stool, and wished himself at the king's palace. Away he flew through the air, and by-and-by there he was, just where he had been before. He put his feather cap upon his head, and stepped in through the window, and there he found the princess with her father, the king, and her mother, the queen, and all the great lords and nobles waiting for his coming; but never a stitch nor a hair did

they see of him until he stood in the very midst of them all. Then he whipped the feather cap off of his head, and there he was, shining with silver and gold and glistening with jewels—such a sight as man's eyes never saw before.
"Take her," said the king, "she is yours." And the soldier looked so handsome in his fine clothes that the princess was as glad to hear those words as any she had ever listened to in all of her life.
"You shall," said the king, "be married to-morrow."
"Very well," said the soldier. "Only give me a plot of ground to build a palace upon that shall be fit for the wife of the King of the Wind to live in."
"You shall have it," said the king, "and it shall be the great parade ground back of the palace, which is so wide and long that all my army can march round and round in it without getting into its own way; and that ought to be big enough."
"Yes," said the soldier, "it is." Thereupon he put on his feather cap and disappeared from the sight of all as quickly as one might snuff out a candle.
He mounted his three-legged stool and away he flew through the air until he had come again to the tavern where he was lodging. There he sat him down and began to churn his thoughts, and the butter he made was worth the having, I can tell you. He wished for a grand palace of white marble, and then he wished for all sorts of things to fill it—the finest that could be had. Then he wished for servants in clothes of gold and silver, and then he wished for fine horses and gilded coaches. Then he wished for gardens and orchards and lawns and flower-plats and fountains, and all kinds and sorts of things, until the sweat ran down his face from hard thinking and wishing. And as he thought and wished, all the things he thought and wished for grew up like soap-bubbles from nothing at all. Then, when day began to break, he wished himself with his fine clothes to be in the palace that his own wits had made,

and away he flew through the air until he had come there safe and sound.
But when the sun rose and shone down upon the beautiful palace and all the gardens and orchards around it, the king and queen and all the court stood dumb with wonder at the sight. Then, as they stood staring, the gates opened and out came the soldier riding in his gilded coach with his servants in silver and gold marching beside him, and such a sight the daylight never looked upon before that day.

Well, the princess and the soldier were married, and if no couple had ever been happy in the world before, they were then. Nothing was heard but feasting and merrymaking, and at night all the sky was lit with fireworks. Such a wedding had never been before, and all the world was glad that it had happened.
That is, all the world but one; that one was the old man dressed in scarlet that the soldier had met when he first came to town. While all the rest were in the hubbub of rejoicing, he put on his thinking-cap, and by-and-by began to see pretty well how things lay, and that, as they say in our town, there was a fly in the milk-jug. “Ho, ho!” thought he, “so the soldier has found out all about the three-legged stool, has he? Well, I will just put a spoke into his wheel for

him.” And so he began to watch for his chance to do the soldier an ill turn.

Now, a week or two after the wedding, and after all the gay doings had ended, a grand hunt was declared, and the king and his new son-in-law and all the court went to it. That was just such a chance as the old magician had been waiting for; so the night before the hunting-party returned he climbed the walls of the garden, and so came to the wonderful palace that the soldier had built out of nothing at all, and there stood three men keeping guard so that no one might enter.

But little that troubled the magician. He began to mutter spells and strange words, and all of a sudden he was gone, and in his place was a great black ant, for he had changed himself into an ant. In he ran through a crack of the door (and mischief has got into many a man’s house through a smaller hole for the matter of that). In and out ran the ant through one room and another, and up and down and here and there, until at last in a far-away part of the magic palace he found the three-legged stool, and if I had been in the soldier’s place I would have chopped it up into kindling-wood after I had gotten all that I wanted. But there it was, and in an instant the magician resumed his own shape. Down he sat him upon the stool. “I wish,” said he, “that this palace and the princess and all who are within it, together with its orchards and its lawns and its gardens and everything, may be removed to such and such a country, upon the other side of the earth.”

And as the stool had obeyed the soldier, so everything was done now just as the magician said.

The next morning back came the hunting-party, and as they rode over the hill—lo and behold hold!—there lay stretched out the great parade ground in which the king’s armies used to march around and around, and the land was as bare as the palm of my hand. Not a stick or a stone of the palace was left; not a leaf or a blade of the orchards or

gardens was to be seen.
The soldier sat as dumb as a fish, and the king stared with eyes and mouth wide open. “Where is the palace, and where is my daughter?” said he, at last, finding words and wit.
“I do not know,” said the soldier.
The king’s face grew as black as thunder. “You do not know?” he said, “then you must find out. Seize the traitor!” he cried.
But that was easier said than done, for, quick as a wink, as they came to lay hold of him, the soldier whisked the feather cap from his pocket and clapped it upon his head, and then they might as well have hoped to find the south wind in winter as to find him.
But though he got safe away from that trouble he was deep enough in the dumps, you may be sure of that. Away he went, out into the wide world, leaving that town behind him. Away he went, until by-and-by he came to a great forest, and for three days he travelled on and on—he knew not whither. On the third night, as he sat beside a fire which he had built to keep him warm, he suddenly bethought himself of the little round stone which had dropped from the bird’s claw, and which he still had in his pocket. “Why should it not also help me,” said he, “for there must be some wonder about it.” So he brought it out, and sat looking at it and looking at it, but he could make nothing of it for the life of him. Nevertheless, it might have some wishing power about it, like the magic stool. “I wish,” said the soldier, “that I might get out of this scrape.” That is what we have all wished many and many a time in a like case; but just now it did the soldier no more good to wish than it does good for the rest of us. “Bah!” said he, “it is nothing but a black stone after all.” And then he threw it into the fire.
Puff! Bang! Away flew the embers upon every side, and back tumbled the soldier, and there in the middle of the

flame stood just such a grim, black being as he had one time shot at with the silver button.
As for the poor soldier, he just lay flat on his back and stared with eyes like saucers, for he thought that his end had come for sure.
“What are my lord’s commands?” said the being, in a voice that shook the marrow of the soldier’s bones.
“Who are you?” said the soldier.

“I am the spirit of the stone,” said the being. “You have heated it in the flame, and I am here. Whatever you command I must obey.”
“Say you so?” cried the soldier, scrambling to his feet. “Very well, then, just carry me to where I may find my wife and my palace again.”
Without a word the spirit of the stone snatched the soldier up, and flew away with him swifter than the wind. Over forest, over field, over mountain and over valley he flew, until at last, just at the crack of day, he set him down in front of his own palace gate in the far country where the

magician had transported it.
After that the soldier knew his way quickly enough. He clapped his feather cap upon his head and into the palace he went, and from one room to another, until at last he came to where the princess sat weeping and wailing, with her pretty eyes red from long crying.
Then the soldier took off his cap again, and you may guess what sounds of rejoicing followed. They sat down beside one another, and after the soldier had eaten, the princess told him all that had happened to her; how the magician had found the stool, and how he had transported the palace to this far-away land; how he came every day and begged her to marry him—which she would rather die than do.
To all this the soldier listened, and when she had ended her story he bade her to dry her tears, for, after all, the jug was only cracked, and not past mending. Then he told her that when the sorcerer came again that day she should say so and so and so and so, and that he would be by to help her with his feather cap upon his head.
After that they sat talking together as happy as two turtle-doves, until the magician's foot was heard on the stairs. And then the soldier clapped his feather cap upon his head just as the door opened.
"Snuff, snuff!" said the magician, sniffing the air, "here is a smell of Christian blood."
"Yes," said the princess, "that is so; there came a peddler to-day, but after all he did not stay long."
"He'd better not come again," said the magician, "or it will be the worse for him. But tell me, will you marry me?"
"No," said the princess, "I shall not marry you until you can prove yourself to be a greater man than my husband."
"Pooh!" said the magician, "that will be easy enough to prove; tell me how you would have me do so and I will do it."
"Very well," said the princess, "then let me see you change yourself into a lion. If you can do that I may perhaps

believe you to be as great as my husband.”
“It shall,” said the magician, “be as you say.” He began to mutter spells and strange words, and then all of a sudden he was gone, and in his place there stood a lion with bristling mane and flaming eyes—a sight fit of itself to kill a body with terror.
“That will do!” cried the princess, quaking and trembling at the sight, and thereupon the magician took his own shape again.
“Now,” said he, “do you believe that I am as great as the poor soldier?”
“Not yet,” said the princess; “I have seen how big you can make yourself, now I wish to see how little you can become. Let me see you change yourself into a mouse.”
“So be it,” said the magician, and began again to mutter his spells. Then all of a sudden he was gone just as he was gone before, and in his place was a little mouse sitting up and looking at the princess with a pair of eyes like glass beads.
But he did not sit there long. This was what the soldier had planned for, and all the while he had been standing by with his feather hat upon his head. Up he raised his foot, and down he set it upon the mouse.
Crunch!—that was an end of the magician.

After that all was clear sailing; the soldier hunted up the three-legged stool and down he sat upon it, and by dint of no more than just a little wishing, back flew palace and garden and all through the air again to the place whence it

came.
I do not know whether the old king ever believed again that his son-in-law was the King of the Wind; anyhow, all was peace and friendliness thereafter, for when a body can sit upon a three-legged stool and wish to such good purpose as the soldier wished, a body is just as good as a king, and a good deal better, to my mind.

The Soldier who cheated the Devil looked into his pipe; it was nearly out. He puffed and puffed and the coal glowed brighter, and fresh clouds of smoke rolled up into the air. Little Brown Betty came and refilled, from a crock of brown foaming ale, the mug which he had emptied. The Soldier who had cheated the Devil looked up at her and winked one eye.
“ Now,” said St. George, “it is the turn of yonder old man,” and he pointed, as he spoke, with the stem of his pipe towards old Bidpai, who sat with closed eyes meditating inside of himself.
The old man opened his eyes, the whites of which were as yellow as saffron, and wrinkled his face into innumerable cracks and lines. Then he closed his eyes again; then he opened them again; then he cleared his throat and began :
“There was once upon a time a man whom other men called Aben Hassen the Wise—”
“ One moment,” said Ali Baba; “will you not tell us what the story is about?”
Old Bidpai looked at him and stroked his long white beard. “It is,” said he, “about—”

The Talisman of Solomon.

There was once upon a time a man whom other men called Aben Hassen the Wise. He had read a thousand books of magic, and knew all that the ancients or moderns had to tell of the hidden arts.

The King of the Demons of the Earth, a great and hideous monster, named Zadok, was his servant, and came and went as Aben Hassen the Wise ordered, and did as he bade.

After Aben Hassen learned all that it was possible for man to know, he said to himself, “Now I will take my ease and enjoy my life.” So he called the Demon Zadok to him, and said to the monster, “I have read in my books that there is a treasure that was one time hidden by the ancient kings of Egypt—a treasure such as the eyes of man never saw before or since their day. Is that true?”

“It is true,” said the Demon.

“Then I command thee to take me to that treasure and to show it to me,” said Aben Hassen the Wise.
“It shall be done,” said the Demon; and thereupon he caught up the Wise Man and transported him across mountain and valley, across land and sea, until he brought him to a country known as the “Land of the Black Isles,” where the treasure of the ancient kings was hidden. The Demon showed the Magician the treasure, and it was a sight such as man had never looked upon before or since the days that the dark, ancient ones hid it. With his treasure Aben Hassen built himself palaces and gardens and paradises such as the world never saw before. He lived like an emperor, and the fame of his doings rang through all the four corners of the earth.
Now the queen of the Black Isles was the most beautiful woman in the world, but she was as cruel and wicked and cunning as she was beautiful. No man that looked upon her could help loving her; for not only was she as beautiful as a dream, but her beauty was of that sort that it bewitched a man in spite of himself.
One day the queen sent for Aben Hassen the Wise. “Tell me,” said she, “is it true that men say of you that you have discovered a hidden treasure such as the world never saw before?” And she looked at Aben Hassen so that his wisdom all crumbled away like sand, and he became just as foolish as other men.
“Yes,” said he, “it is true.”
Aben Hassen the Wise spent all that day with the queen, and when he left the palace he was like a man drunk and dizzy with love. Moreover, he had promised to show the queen the hidden treasure the next day.
As Aben Hassen, like a man in a dream, walked towards his own house, he met an old man standing at the corner of the street. The old man had a talisman that hung dangling from a chain, and which he offered for sale. When Aben Hassen saw the talisman he knew very well what it was—that it

was the famous talisman of King Solomon the Wise. If he who possessed the talisman asked it to speak, it would tell that man both what to do and what not to do.

The Wise Man bought the talisman for three pieces of silver (and wisdom has been sold for less than that many a time), and as soon as he had the talisman in his hands he hurried home with it and locked himself in a room.

“Tell me,” said the Wise Man to the Talisman, “shall I marry the beautiful queen of the Black Isles?”

“Fly, while there is yet time to escape!” said the Talisman; “but go not near the queen again, for she seeks to destroy thy life.”

“But tell me, O Talisman!” said the Wise Man, “what then shall I do with all that vast treasure of the kings of Egypt?”

“Fly from it while there is yet chance to escape!” said the Talisman; “but go not into the treasure-house again, for in the farther door, where thou hast not yet looked, is that which will destroy him who possesses the treasure.”

“But Zadok,” said Aben Hassen; “what of Zadok?”

“Fly from the monster while there is yet time to escape,” said the Talisman, “and have no more to do with thy Demon slave, for already he is weaving a net of death and destruction about thy feet.”

The Wise Man sat all that night pondering and thinking upon what the Talisman had said. When morning came he washed and dressed himself, and called the Demon Zadok to him. “Zadok,” said he, “carry me to the palace of the queen.” In the twinkling of an eye the Demon transported him to the steps of the palace.

“Zadok,” said the Wise Man, “give me the staff of life and death;” and the Demon brought from under his clothes a wand, one-half of which was of silver and one-half of which was of gold. The Wise Man touched the steps of the palace with the silver end of the staff. Instantly all the sound and hum of life was hushed. The thread of life was cut by the knife of silence, and in a moment all was as still as death.

“Zadok,” said the Wise Man, “transport me to the treasure-house of the king of Egypt.” And instantly the Demon had transported him thither. The Wise Man drew a circle upon the earth. “No one,” said he, “shall have power to enter here but the master of Zadok, the King of the Demons of the Earth.”

“And now, Zadok,” said he, “I command thee to transport me to India, and as far from here as thou canst.” Instantly the Demon did as he was commanded; and of all the treasure that he had, the Wise Man took nothing with him but a jar of golden money and a jar of silver money. As soon as the Wise Man stood upon the ground of India, he drew from beneath his robe a little jar of glass.

“Zadok,” said he, “I command thee to enter this jar.”

Then the Demon knew that now his turn had come. He besought and implored the Wise Man to have mercy upon him; but it was all in vain. Then the Demon roared and

bellowed till the earth shook and the sky grew dark overhead. But all was of no avail; into the jar he must go, and into the jar he went. Then the Wise Man stoppered the jar and sealed it. He wrote an inscription of warning upon it, and then he buried it in the ground.

“Now,” said Aben Hassen the Wise to the Talisman of Solomon, “have I done everything that I should?”

“No,” said the Talisman, “thou shouldst not have brought the jar of golden money and the jar of silver money with thee; for that which is evil in the greatest is evil in the least. Thou fool! The treasure is cursed! cast it all from thee while there is yet time.”

“Yes, I will do that, too,” said the Wise Man. So he buried in the earth the jar of gold and the jar of silver that he had brought with him, and then he stamped the mould down upon it. After that the Wise Man began his life all over again. He bought, and he sold, and he traded, and by-and-by he became rich. Then he built himself a great house, and in the foundation he laid the jar in which the Demon was bottled.

Then he married a young and handsome wife. By-and-by the wife bore him a son, and then she died.

This son was the pride of his father’s heart; but he was as vain and foolish as his father was wise, so that all men called him Aben Hassen the Fool, as they called the father Aben Hassen the Wise.

Then one day death came and called the old man, and he left his son all that belonged to him—even the Talisman of Solomon.

Young Aben Hassen the Fool had never seen so much money as now belonged to him. It seemed to him that there was nothing in the world he could not enjoy. He found friends by the dozens and scores, and everybody seemed to be very fond of him.