



THE GOLDEN TOUCH

King Midas was one of the richest kings in all the lands. He loved entertaining his guests and treating them to lavish parties. He loved gold and all the possessions he could buy with it. The only thing in the world that King Midas loved more than his wealth was his daughter Marigold.

One day, King Midas was sitting in his palace. He was contemplating what treasures he should buy next. A noise outside disturbed his thoughts. He looked up to see his guards escorting a creature toward his golden throne. This creature, half man and half goat, had been caught taking a nap in the king's vineyard. King Midas carefully studied the creature. He quickly realized that this was Silenus, who served the god Dionysus.

"Set him free at once," ordered King Midas. "See that he gets whatever he needs . . .

food, clothes, anything he wants."

Silenus was pleased to be treated with such courtesy. He praised King Midas when he was reunited with Dionysus. The god decided to repay the king for treating his companion so well.

"King Midas, you have honored me well. I wish to show you my gratitude," said Dionysus. "Wish for anything you please, and I will make your wish come true."

DID YOU KNOW?

There really was a Greek king called **Midas**. However, he did not really have the ability to turn things into gold with his hands.



The king didn't take long to think about his wish before he said, "I wish that anything I touch will turn to gold." Dionysus waved his hand and the wish was granted.

King Midas could not wait to act on his wish. He touched a marble column and it turned to gold. Filled with delight, he walked through the garden, touching roses, twigs, and stones. He squealed with joy as each one turned to gold at his touch.

Just then, the scent of dinner caught his attention and he sat down to eat. He put several plump grapes in his mouth, but quickly spat out a lump of gold. One by one, he picked up pieces of cheese and bread, but they each turned to gold, and he spat them out in disgust.

Little Marigold was confused by what she saw and ran to her father. As she flung her arms around him, her body immediately stiffened and grew hard. King Midas was horrified when he realized that his precious daughter was now a golden statue.

**DID YOU
KNOW?**

The myth of King Midas includes a **moral**, or lesson. The story shows that people and their love for one another are more valuable than gold or possessions.

"Dionysus," he cried, "please remove this curse and bring my daughter back to me. I have made a foolish mistake."

The god told King Midas to go to the river and wash himself. The wish was undone and the king's most important treasure, his daughter, was restored to him.

Today you might hear adults say that someone has the Midas touch. For example, "Brett has a very successful business; he really has the Midas touch." This term is used to describe someone who is successful and has the ability to easily make a lot of money.

