**Lesson: Quest for the Golden Feather**

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The Quest for the Golden Feather

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# Chapter One: The Stranger



Terrin wiped the never-ending droplets of sweat from his face with a piece of cloth he kept tucked in his belt. It was a pointless effort, but

one he repeated every couple of seconds. Apprenticing with the blacksmith was a dirty job that he did not care for. If he had been given the

choice, he might have picked the carpenter’s guild instead. They never seemed as filthy at the end of their day, nor did they have to hover over

a blazing fire for hours at a time. Not that it mattered much: Terrin’s choice of guild had been stripped from him the moment his parents had

died.

He knew he should feel grateful that his uncle took him in, gave him a roof over his head and a bed to sleep in. As much as he tried to think

positively of his circumstances, all it took was a dirty look from another villager or a degrading comment from his uncle to make him feel poorly

about himself again. Why did his parents have to die? Why was his uncle so cruel? Why couldn’t he remember anything about his parents?

These questions kept the twelve-year-old up at night.

Terrin used tongs to turn the metal piece over, letting it heat a bit longer. The craft of a blacksmith was precise, and his uncle took it upon

himself to be sure Terrin never made a mistake.

Terrin stared at the metal that would be formed into a sword. For a moment, despite himself, he was lost in the glow of liquid heat melting

the metal to a soft orange. It looked like both the sword and the fire were alive; their movements drew him toward the flame.

“Terrin, what are you doing?” His uncle ripped the tongs from his hands and pulled the sword out from the heat. Quickly, before it could

harden, he used his hammer to flatten and shape the sword. “You were about to put your hand in the fire! Have you lost your mind?”

Terrin gave his head a shake and shrugged at his riled uncle. Had he done such a thing? The fire looked so inviting and warm, like he could

crawl right inside of it and be protected. Such a fanciful thought had no place in a blacksmith’s mind. He mumbled something about being cold

and went to find a warm drink.

Standing outside their shop was a tall man, dressed unlike anyone Terrin had ever seen in the village before.

“I am looking for the boy, Terrin. Would you be him?” The man wore his hair long, past his shoulders and halfway down his back. His

overcoat was not fancy, in fact it was rather plain, but there was a quality about it that made him feel excited and anxious all at once. **Chapter Two: The Lost King**



“I am Terrin.”

“Who wants to know?” his uncle asked, standing with his powerful arms crossed over his chest. “If you are looking for the skill of a

blacksmith, there is none better than the boy and myself, but if you have other business, you best be on your way.”

The man offered a small, secretive smile. He took Terrin by the hand. "Say goodbye your uncle," he said. But Terrin barely processed these

words. The moment their flesh made contact, a flash of a memory tumbled through his mind. He knew this man!

His uncle reached for the sword mounted on the wall and pointed it at the stranger. "I said, you had better be on your way. We may be

mortal folk, but we don't take kindly to orders."

Ignoring the uncle, the man lifted Terrin's chin with a calloused finger and said, "The time has come, Terrin. Your people are in danger, and

they are ready to have their king back."

"You cannot have the boy. I need him."

It only took one kick for his uncle to be on the ground, his sword several feet away, with the stranger standing over him.

"The boy has stayed long enough. The Crystalline Elders chose you because we thought you would treat the future king as royalty,

especially after all we have done for you. You would not be such a great blacksmith were it not for our gifts."

Terrin followed the stranger. He was eager for more information and thrilled to leave his empty life behind.

“There is little time to waste, Terrin.” The man bowed low to him. “The Mortal Army marches toward the city as we speak. You have

remained hidden long enough. Now, we must find the golden feather and return it to the crystal caves. Only then will your powers be returned.”

Terrin's mind and body struggled to keep up. The stranger strode through the market in a rush he couldn’t match. By the time they reached

the edge of the Midnight Forest, Terrin's breath was coming in choppy gasps.

“I do not understand,” Terrin said. “Who am I? Who are you? And what is the golden feather?”

The man took a slow, steadying breath and said, “You are the boy king of the Crystallines, a group of gifted ones that remain hidden from

the mortals of this world. We had to hide you when you were eight years old.” He put his head down and sighed. “My name is Jeg, and it is my

job to care for you and bring you home.”

“Jeg,” Terrin said with slow deliberation, “why can I not remember any of this? What of the golden feather?”

“For your own protection, a spell was cast to make you forget everything until the right moment arrived.” Jeg smiled and then whistled. “That

moment is now.”

Terrin heard the sound of thunder and looked up in confusion to the bright blue sky. Suddenly, a horse appeared. The horse was white

except for a black diamond shape on his forehead.

“Place your hand on his head,” Jeg instructed.

# Chapter Three: The Silver Fairies



Despite his fear, Terrin did what he was told. The horse looked deep into his eyes, and everything else faded away. Suddenly, memory after

memory flooded his mind. He stood a little taller and thrust back his shoulders.

“Good to see you, Jeg.” This time he patted the older man and spoke with genuine affection. “I remember now. My father hid the golden

feather when the mortals became hostile and we were forced into hiding.”

“But you know where to look?” Jeg asked.

“Yes," Terrin replied, a smile creeping up the corners of his mouth. "I know where to look.”

They rode through the Midnight Forest on the white steed. Though the trees bore down upon them like an army, they moved with accuracy

and great speed. The horse knew just when to turn and duck, twist, and jump. Terrin pulled up on the reigns, and the horse stopped at the

edge of a lake of blue sparkling water, undisturbed but for a single swan.

“Not even *I* knew this place existed,” Jeg said, a note of wonder in his voice.

Terrin smiled. “There are not many who would risk the legends of the Midnight Forest. Ghosts, goblins, fairies and trolls wander these

woods, or so the villagers are told.”

Jeg stared at him with curiosity and asked, “And you, my king, do you believe in the stories?”

Terrin jumped from the horse and turned back to the older man. An hour before he was only an orphan, detested and abused. Now, his

memory had returned and the knowledge of his people, his parents and the loss they endured at the hands of their enemies was at the

forefront of his mind. His heart was a mixture of hope and renewed sadness at all he had lost. King he may be, but orphan he remained.

“Oh, yes, I believe in all the stories," Terrin replied. "My father told me long ago never to underestimate the magic of the Midnight Forest. It

is enchanted to keep out the mortals and protect its secrets.”

Terrin removed his tattered shirt and dove into the water. He kicked and pushed until he reached the bottom. Without his powers, he would

have to pray his lungs would have enough air in them to give him time to find the chest. With a weak kick, he paddled along the bottom. When

he thought he couldn’t hold on any longer, he saw something dark and bulky. He made it to the chest just in time. His lungs burned with a

painful fire that licked up his throat and threatened to smother him. He flicked open the latch on the chest and swam through the black tunnel

inside.

He could breathe again! Fresh damp air filled his chest, quenching the fire. He had never been to the Land of the Silver Fairies before. The

only time his father had introduced him to the silver fairies was beside the rainbow’s edge. He only knew of their existence from the old books

his parents made him study.

“One day,” his father had warned him, “we will not be here to care for you. The secrets of the magic world must be kept protected.”

Once out of the tunnel, he was greeted by flying sentries dressed in silver chainmail. Their swords were pointed at his throat until he spoke

the words carved into the ancient book.

“Silver dusts, fairy gold, wisdom from the men of old, find in me a heart that is true, bound forever in all of you.”

The sentry nodded and led him to the castle. He tried to stay focused on his task, though it was difficult with all the fairies flying around.

Their beauty was captivating; their anger was legendary. One wrong look and he could be banned from their realm for all eternity.

# Chapter Four: The Golden Feather



The Fairy King and Queen took one look at him. Even in his tattered blacksmith garb, they recognized him and dropped from their thrones

in a low bow.

“Terrin,” they said with sweet voices, “we were so sorry to hear of your father and mother’s passing. Sorrier that you were placed with the

mortals. We asked to keep you ourselves, but your people thought it best to hide you among your enemies.”

The fairies spoke in unison, their voices a melodic gift to the ears that could easily hypnotize a weaker person. He fought to keep control of

his mind.

“It was the last command my father gave,” he said. “The mortals march again, looking for my people. Our land is threatened without me

there to protect them.”

The King and Queen continued to stare at him without speaking. He waited for them to offer the feather. They stood in silence for a long

moment.

“I know you have the feather that must be returned to the Crystal Cave. Without my powers, my people will be lost.”

After a whispering together, they spoke again: “As you wish, Terrin. You mother was wary of you receiving your full powers too young. We

only hesitate to honor her wishes. We suppose it cannot be helped.”

They flew together to the silver box between their thrones and lifted the lid. Inside, a long, golden feather glittered and shone bright, lit with a

light that was neither fairy-made nor bound to the Earth above. The gold from this feather was crafted from gold mined in the Crystal Caves. Terrin thanked the fairies and promised to return again one day. He followed his escort back to the tunnels and swam once more to the surface

of the lake, golden feather tucked securely in his belt.

“Terrin,” Jeg called to him when he resurfaced. “I nearly came after you! Did you find the feather?”

Terrin climbed out of the water, instantly dry with the feather raised above his head. They rode once more out of the forest and into the

desert lands, past the Valley of the Forgotten, all the way to the base of Mount Crescent to the Crystal Caves.

They found the caves with little difficulty, tracking the many footsteps of his people. It was Crystalline tradition to come twice a year and

mine for more magic. The entrance was not guarded. It did not need to be; only a true Crystalline could enter. Terrin had not been to the caves

since before his parents died, but he was guided by instinct.

Soon, he found the crystal wall. Just as he (now) remembered, the golden feathers of all the past kings and queens were embedded in its

stone. Led by past knowledge and future purpose, Terrin placed his next to his parents' feathers, continuing the royal lineage. He *was* the king

of the Crystallines, and as his powers returned, he was filled with hope for his people.

**Question 1:**

At the beginning of the story, why is Terrin unable to remember anything about his parents?

His uncle told him lies to make him forget.

His parents' enemies cast a spell to make him forget.

He was just an infant when they died.

His people cast a spell for his own protection.

**Question 2:**

What is the theme of this story?

hardship

self-esteem

destiny

mortality

**Question 3:**

What best summarizes the plot of this story?

 Terrin, a poor blacksmith's apprentice, is visited by a strange man, who reveals that the boy is really the king of a magical realm. He finds the golden feather that renews his powers. He then gains strength and defeats the mortals destroying his kingdom.

 Terrin, a poor blacksmith's apprentice, is visited by a strange man, who reveals that the boy is really the king of a magical realm. He finds the golden feather that will renew his powers so that he can fight the mortals destroying his kingdom.

 Terrin, a poor blacksmith's apprentice, is unhappy in life. His uncle is unkind and the villagers laugh at him. The golden feather given to him by the fairies helps him to remember who he is.

**Question 4:**

Read the passage below.

*"Jeg," Terrin said with slow* ***deliberation****, "why can I not remember any of this? What of the golden feather?”*

What does the word **deliberation** mean?

confused longing

reckless action

sad feeling

careful thought

**Question 5:**

How does chapter 1, "The Stranger," contribute to the plot of the story?

It introduces the climax of the story and shows how the story will end.

It introduces the main character's motivations and describes the story's setting.

It shows how the main character will change throughout the story and describes the climax.

It describes the rising action of the story and begins describing the resolution.

**Question 6:**

What event most drastically changes Terrin's point of view in the story?

Terrin regains his powers.

Terrin is drawn to the fire.

Terrin regains his early memories.

Terrin makes it to the fairies' den.

**Question 7:**

What passage from the story is an example of figurative language?

The trees bore down upon them like soldiers encircling their enemy.

They never seemed as filthy at the end of their day, nor did they have to hover over a blazing fire for hours at a time.

Once out of the tunnel, he was greeted by flying sentries dressed in silver chainmail.

The horse looked deep into his eyes, and everything else faded away.