

WHITE MAGIC

Once there lived a wealthy Merchant who owned half a dozen stores, two caravanserais, ten orchards and one hamam and employed more than hundred servants under his command. He was a witty and respected businessman whose fame reached to the furthest end of the country. Where ever he went, people always recognized him and wanted to make business with him. His name was his word and his word was his bond.

He had one son who recently turned 18. His name was Tamer. Time to time wealthy Merchant left Tamer at home alone and made short trips on business looking for new merchandise to buy. He brought back spices, grains, variety of fabrics, carpets and potteries with him and sold them in the market place for profit. The fortune and the countless possessions he had would not only be enough for him and his son to live a prosperous life in this world but as well secure a comfortable life for his grand-grand kids. Yet things were about to change when wealthy Merchant met with a wanderer visiting the town.

Wanderer was indeed nobody but a sorcerer, a villainous magician who cast bad spells on people. He traveled all around the country, transforming himself from one vocation into another till he found his next victim that he could lay his dirty tricks on. When he met wealthy

Merchant, he made up his mind right away to accomplish his evil goal, which was to own his fortune. And he knew how to achieve that.

THE STORY OF WEALTHY MERCHANT

Long time ago wealthy Merchant was not as wealthy and well-known as he was today. The reason to that was his unfortunate addiction to gambling. He was a gambler, spending all his time playing cards, rolling dice and ignoring his work, his family and his beloved ones. His health was declining because he was sleeping less, eating less and living stressfully with the hope of winning and becoming rich one day. But as everybody knows, there is never a winner at gambling table, more you bet more you loose and poorer you become. His wife warned him a thousand times and threatened him leaving if he didn't quit. Nevertheless wealthy Merchant shut his ears to her advice and became more attached to gambling.

Tamer was 6 years old when his mother passed away. When wealthy Merchant was informed with the death of his wife, he realized that he didn't have any money to cover her funeral expenses. He asked people for their help, knocking at their doors and begging them to borrow him some money so that he would be able to bury his wife, but nobody would ever trust a gambler's word. They despised him and shut the door at his face without giving him a penny. He had never been so embarrassed in his life and he didn't know

what to do. An old carpenter in the end felt pity for him and gave him some spare wood that he could use for the coffin. The son of a blacksmith handed him some left-over nails and a hammer. Imam loaned him a shovel to prevent public disgrace and wealthy Merchant buried his wife.

Following that event, he quit gambling. He promised to his son that he would never ever gamble for money again. He would work hard like all fathers and gave him a life that he would never suffer for money. Then he started his own business, mastered his trade and became one of the most successful and richest merchant in the country.

WEALTHY MERCHANT LOST EVERY PENNY HE HAD

Though, merciless Sorcerer didn't miss the thirst in his eyes and the longing in his heart when he first saw him. He worked out his plan very quickly. He cast a spell on an abandoned house and turned it into a majestic casino where even the least interested would be attracted by its glamour. Inside was as charming as outside decorated with finest fabric, crystal and silk drapery and equipped with the most dazzling and alluring gambling machines one could have seen.

As expected, wealthy Merchant heard the reputation of the casino very soon. He couldn't resist the temptation to take a closer look at it. When he arrived he was mesmerized by the enchanted beauty of it like everyone else. He hesitated for a moment whether to enter the casino or

not but changed his mind remembering his oath.

In the mean time Sorcerer was watching him meticulously from his hidden place. When he saw his hesitation, he appeared behind him without loosing any time. He started telling him the stories about the glamorous atmosphere inside the casino and how people were having good time gambling. Listening to his stories, wealthy Merchant's mind got clouded more than ever. He spoke out finally and told Sorcerer that he promised not to play for money and he couldn't break his word.

That was what merciless Sorcerer was expecting to hear and he made his maneuver quickly. He suggested that the casino rules were different and people did not play for money but play for exchange of goods. He said "If you bet for a horse, you win a horse. If you bet for a sack of grains, you will get the equivalent in grains. You will never need to touch or exchange any money. Besides you have enough wealth in your possession. Loosing one night would not be the end of the world. We all deserve having fun once for a while." Wealthy Merchant thought that Sorcerer was right and playing one night would not be the end of the world. He agreed to play. But Sorcerer knew that once he broke his word, there would be no point of return after that.

Wealthy Merchant visited the casino on special occasions in the beginning when he was in town. It was not more than two months later that he became a regular

guest and started spending all his leisure time in the casino playing all sorts of games. He was so occupied with his new vocation that he was even reluctant to take new trips in search for new merchandise. His stocks vanished quickly and he wasn't able to supply the demands of the store owners anymore. With the fear of running out of stock, the store owners found new merchants to make business. This didn't bother Wealthy Merchant while he was thinking that he had accumulated enough wealth and he could retire.

"What do you have more to gamble on?" the Sorcerer asked viciously "All I got is my son." The Merchant mumbled.

Sorcerer became his best friend and sole advisor. Wealthy Merchant was spending most of his time with him and some days passed even he didn't speak a word with Tamer. Day by day, his health declined and his wealth shrank. But he was blind to see what was taking place. He became more attached to the gambling, became greedier, more selfish and more self-obsessed. Nobody could talk to him including Tamer. He shut his ears to his advice as he did once to his wife.

He lost all his possessions one by one; caravanserais, stores, orchards and hamam were left into the hands of malicious Sorcerer. His workers left him because he didn't have any job to offer them. His servants left him because he didn't have any money to pay them.

Wealthy Merchant was still blind to the fact that he was no longer wealthy. When he went to the casino next day, Sorcerer was waiting him at the front gate. He didn't let him in saying that he didn't have anything left to gamble. He realized finally what was taking place but it was too late.

He visited the store owners one by one asking them for credit, but nobody was willing to make business with a gambler. They said no to him. He left empty-handed and found his way back to casino.

Sorcerer was waiting him and he asked "What do you have more to gamble on?" "All I got is my son." Wealthy Merchant mumbled. "What is he worth for?" Sorcerer commanded. Wealthy Merchant responded saying "He is strong; he can work in the fields. He is handy; he can give you a hand in the house. He does speak foreign languages; he can help you in trade."

Sorcerer had a daughter, who recently turned 18. Her name was Seher. Listening to Wealthy Merchant's plead, he thought that he might use his son as a servant for his daughter. He replied saying "I accept your offer. If you win, you'll get all your possession back. If I win, your son will be my slave and serving me till the end of his life." Wealthy Merchant agreed.

And it was the last thing he lost in gambling. After that he felt so sad and died in grief, agony and shame leaving his son to the hands of Sorcerer.

THE STORY OF TAMER AND SEHER

Once again Tamer's fate had played a trick on him. From a poor and sorrowful childhood, he was raised into a prosperous and happy life and then he became a slave working 18 hours a day and sleeping in the barn with other animals. His only reason for survival was his love towards Seher. Since first day they saw each other, they fell in love and determined to stay together till the end of their life. Tamer couldn't possibly bear the tough work if he didn't have the hope that one day he would be free and they would get married.

Seher, on the other hand was waiting for the right moment to talk to his father. However every time she was about to speak, she held it back sensing his father's treacherous and devious nature. She asked him a couple of times to feel pity for him and ease his work, but Sorcerer was hardhearted man and in return he gave him more work to do. Poor Tamer had to work harder every day.

At last she built enough courage to talk to her father. She told him about their love and asked his forgiveness to free Tamer so that they would get married. But Sorcerer was a bad-mannered and selfish person who liked nobody but himself. Listening to her daughter, he became jealous about their love and Tamer. He could not simply accept her request and let them get married.

He said to Seher "If he wants his freedom, he has to earn it. I will ask him to fulfill my three wishes. Upon completing them successfully, he will be set free and deserved to be the husband of my daughter. But if he fails, then I will kill him. This is my condition. If he accepts, bring him to my presence."

Seher gave Tamer the good news. Knowing Sorcerer's evil spirit better than anyone else, Tamer warned her saying that Sorcerer was playing tricks on them. Seher told him not to worry about his tricks. Tamer screamed "How can we win against a magician?" Seher calmed him down saying "I'll protect you with my white magic. I'm his daughter. If he has access to black magic, I do have access to white magic, stronger than his. I'll bless your mind and body, shield you from his curses and evil spells and help you fulfill his requests. Now go to his presence, tell him that you accept his condition and ready to listen to his first wish."

Tamer screamed "How can we win against a magician?" Seher calmed him down saying "I'll protect you with my white magic."

Tamer did as Seher suggested. He went to Sorcerer's presence and told him that he accepted his condition and ready to learn his first wish. Pleased with his answer, Sorcerer told him his first wish.

SORCERER'S FIRST WISH

Sorcerer spelled out his first wish "My father used to possess an invaluable ring, made of pure gold, forged into a shape of a snake with a black pearl placed right in the center. It was a memorable tribute from his father and had no likes in the world. One day while he was sailing in the Aegean Sea, he dropped it into the water and lost it. The ring was nowhere to be found since then. I want you to search for the ring and bring it to me in no later than three days. In the night of the third day, if I don't see the ring, prepare yourself for your destiny."

Tamer found Seher right away and told her about the story of the ring and her father's first wish. He exclaimed "How can one possibly find a ring in the open sea? Even so, it will require three centuries to search for it not three days." Seher responded "Leave me alone and let me think about a solution tonight. I'll advise what we should be doing tomorrow morning."

Tamer had a long sleepless night. It was before dawn when Seher appeared in the barn and woke him up. She told him that she had a solution which would help them find the lost ring. Before saying much ado, she cast a spell and turned herself into an enchanted mermaid in front of the wondering eyes of Tamer. She took him under her arm and jumped into the sea right away. They swam all day long till they reached the fish kingdom.

It was Fish King who welcomed them at the shore. He was an old wizard, full of wisdom and acumen. He listened to their story; the death of irresponsible Wealthy Merchant, the sad story of Tamer and the devious wish of Sorcerer. He broke his silence at the end and said “I will never forget your help to my kingdom in the time of trouble. My kingdom is in your service and ready to help you to find the lost ring.” Tamer learnt that during a disastrous hurricane, Seher saved the lives of a group of whales by helping them cross the ocean safely.

Fish King said “It’s the migration season for the baby fishes to swim across the Bosphorus all the way down to Aegean Sea. I will issue an order to all my generals to assign duties to every one of them to search under every rock, inside every sea shell and unearth the entire sea bottom till they found the lost ring.”

As he suggested, millions of baby fishes started their search and in less than 24 hours, the ring was found. Seher thanked Fish King for his help and asked his permission to leave in order to take the ring to her father before the end of three days. Fish King saluted them and gave them his blessing and asked his best guards to escort them for a safe trip.

When they returned home, Sorcerer was asleep. They didn’t wake him up but put the ring next to his pillow and went back to their room for sleep.

In the morning Sorcerer was surprised to find the ring on his bedside. As opposed to feeling any happiness for regaining his father’s precious ring, he developed more envy and rage towards Tamer. He swore to himself that his next wish would be challenging even for the most skillful and earnest one to fulfill.

SORCERER’S SECOND WISH

Tamer made his presence in front of Sorcerer next morning. He bowed before him and gave his benevolences. Sorcerer didn’t say a word nor mentioned anything about the ring. He threw a cold and threatening look at him and then asked whether he was ready to hear his second wish. Tamer confirmed.

Sorcerer said “It is brought to my attention that one of my food shelters was damaged during the wind storm couple of days ago. I went there this morning to look at the place and I was disappointed to see that my entire stock; bulgur, rice and couscous were spread over the ground and mixed with each other. I can’t sell them unless I can separate them. And I can’t separate them myself because I’m farsighted. I need somebody to give me a hand in doing so. And this will be my second wish from you. I’ll take you to the shelter tomorrow evening and when I come back at dawn, I expect you to tidy up the shelter and put bulgur, rice and couscous in separate sacks. Don’t forget if you happen to fail, you will pay it with your own life. If you manage to separate the grains then get ready to hear my third and final wish.”

Poor Tamer left his presence his legs shaking in fear and found salvation near Seher and communicated her Sorcerer’s second wish. After listening to him, Seher told him that it was a weird story while there was no trace of any storm in the area for the entire week. She suggested that this must be another of her father’s endless tricks.

They went to the shelter to see the situation with their own eyes. It appears that Sorcerer was right in his statement while inside of the shelter was in total mess; bulgur, rice and couscous were spread all over the ground. Tamer cried out “What should we do? It will take me hundred years to be able to separate the entire stock.” Seher responded “Leave me alone and let me think about a solution tonight. I’ll advise what we should be doing tomorrow morning.”

Tamer had a long sleepless night. It was before dawn when Seher appeared in the barn and woke him up. She told him that she found a solution which would help them separate the grains. Before saying much ado, she cast a spell and turned herself and Tamer into two black ants and took him down with her to the ant nest in the woods to meet Ant Queen.

Ant Queen welcomed them at the gate of her nest. She was a righteous and spirited leader who spoke always the truth. She listened to their story; the death of irresponsible Wealthy Merchant, the sad story of Tamer and the devious wish of Sorcerer. She broke her silence at the end

and said “I will never forget your help to my kingdom in the time of trouble. My kingdom is in your service and ready to help you to clean up the shelter.” Tamer learnt that during a long and a draught summer, Seher saved the lives of hundred thousands of ants from famine by supplying them food for the winter.

Ant Queen said “I’ll give an order to all my commanders now to gather all the worker ants from the woods and transfer them to the shelter. They will work all night long till all the grains are neatly separated.”

As she suggested, millions of worker ants started their migration from woods to the shelter. The shelter was soon occupied with so many ants that it was impossible to see the ground from the cloud of ants. Ants worked all night long with no rest and before dawn all the grains were sorted out neatly and placed in the sacks.

In the morning Sorcerer was bewildered to find the shelter clean and hundreds of sacks neatly organized lying on the floor as he requested. He kept his calm attitude not to show any emotion but he was getting suspicious about her daughter’s involvement with everything. He asked Tamer to visit him tomorrow morning to hear his third and the last wish.

Sorcerer spent all night thinking about his third wish. Soon he made up his mind and went to bed. He was confident that there was no living soul on earth including his daughter that could possibly fulfill his request.

SORCERER’S THIRD WISH

Tamer visited Sorcerer next morning to listen to his third wish. Sorcerer wasted no time with the words and told him his final wish right away. He said “This will probably be the easiest of all my wishes. I want you to ride the youngest stallion in my stable. He is a little bit misbehaved and wild in nature, but I’m sure for a man who can find a ring in the sea in three days and who can separate the mess of bulgur, rice and couscous overnight, this will not be such a difficult task to handle. If you manage to stay on stallion more than two minutes, I’ll set you free and marry you to my daughter as I promised. Now go and wait me in the stable.”

Without wasting any time Tamer found Seher in the garden and told her word by word his conversation with Sorcerer. He said “I’m an expert on horse training and possibly the best rider in town. I tamed many horses in my father’s stable in the past. This will not be a difficult task for me.” Listening to him, she immediately understood the bad intentions of her father. She responded “Don’t ever fool yourself! Do you think he will ever give you an easy task? You know how devious and smart my father is. He probably understood my involvement with everything and now he is playing a new trick on us.”

At the same moment Sorcerer was listening to them from his hidden place in a tree. He decided to follow Tamer after he left him. He wanted to be sure that it

was Seher’s magic spell that helped Tamer fulfill his two wishes. Now listening to their conversation, he was satisfied. He smiled sarcastically. He knew that Seher was afraid of riding horses and she would not be able to help him this time. He leaped out from his hidden place and went to the stable. Momentarily a wild stallion appeared in the fields galloping around madly.

Seher signed “This wild stallion is nobody other than my father.”

Tamer exclaimed “I know what to do, don’t worry.” Seher signed “You don’t understand. This wild stallion is nobody other than my father. He cast a spell to turn him into the wildest of all the beasts one could ever see. He played the same trick to two other merchants who wanted to marry me and killed them both mercilessly.”

Tamer asked getting nervous “Why don’t you cast a spell and turn yourself into a rider then?” Seher said “I can’t because I’m afraid of riding horses and my father knows that. He understood that it was my white magic that helped you find the ring and separate the grains. He planned his next trick accordingly so that I could no longer help you.” Tamer cried “What are we gonna do?” Seher responded “I don’t know. You go now and try to stay away from that beast till I find a solution.”

Tamer took his way to the stable in despair. When he came closer, he saw the wild stallion in the distance and immediately recalled Seher's words calling him a beast. The stallion was the wildest and most fierce horse he saw in his life. Though, he didn't have a choice to run away. It was Sorcerer's third wish and he had to fulfill his last request in order to be free and marry Seher. He built up his courage and went over to fence to face him.

As he jumped over the fence, the stallion became more agitated disapproving the presence of an intruder in his territory. Every time Tamer stepped forward to get closer to him, the stallion hopped forward on his back legs and started kicking wildly. Tamer grabbed a stick and hit it on the ground constantly to scare him a bit, but the stallion didn't seem to show any sign of weakness or fear. He stroked out with its forelegs to force him retreat. Tamer located a rope and tried to get the rope round his neck but the stallion was moving so rapidly that it was rather impossible to seize him.

Sorcerer, hidden inside the body of fierce stallion, was enjoying the scene watching Tamer's relentless attempts. At last Tamer gave up, he felt down on his knees gasping out of breath. He didn't know what to do next; the stallion was so strong to defeat. While he was crouching on the ground trying to recoup his strength, Sorcerer decided to make his final attempt and kill him. As he jumped forward on his back legs to make his deadly move, he felt a

painful bite on his neck and drew back. It was a black fly that bit him hurtfully. The pain was so steep that he couldn't move for a moment. He tried to wipe the fly away with his tail but the fly wasn't willing to go away easily.

In the meantime Tamer rose from his place regaining his strength. He threw the rope once more around stallion's neck and this time managed to catch him. He approached the stallion and stepped on it at once. The stallion went crazy him being on his top but every time he tried to leap forward to dismiss him, the black fly bit him so miserably that he would not be able to move. Tamer rode the stallion two more minutes effortlessly and this was probably the easiest ride he ever made.

He stepped out the stallion and ran towards the house in excitement to inform Seher of the situation but as expected there was no one in the house waiting for him. He learnt later that the black fly was indeed nobody but Seher. She cast a spell to turn herself into a black fly and it was she who was continuously biting her father, the stallion, so that he would not be able to move and do any harm to Tamer.

Sorcerer was upset with his defeat but pleased with the fact that her daughter's magic and foresight was greater than his and this was always a moment of pride for all magician fathers.

TAMER & SEHER GOT MARRIED

Tamer and Seher got married the following day. The wedding took place in an enchanted palace where the entire village people were invited to the festivity of food, drink and dancing including Fish King and Ant Queen. Sorcerer talked proudly about her daughter's white magic and his son-in-law's bravery and he promised that he would never cast bad spells on anyone and be a good magician and caring father going forward.

Before they departed for honeymoon, Sorcerer asked Tamer to give his word that he would never gamble in his life no matter what was on offer and always take good care of his beloved ones. Tamer gave his word.

During the honeymoon, they conceived their first child and lived happily ever after raising three wonderful kids.

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THE END