

Silenus was a friend of Dionysus, the God of Wine. Dionysus often used to gather his wild band of followers in the woods for a noisy, riotous party.

They included satyrs as well as Maenads, who were wild women of the woods. They would bang drums, blow pipes and horns, and crash cymbals and they danced themselves into a mad frenzy. But above all, they liked to drink wine.



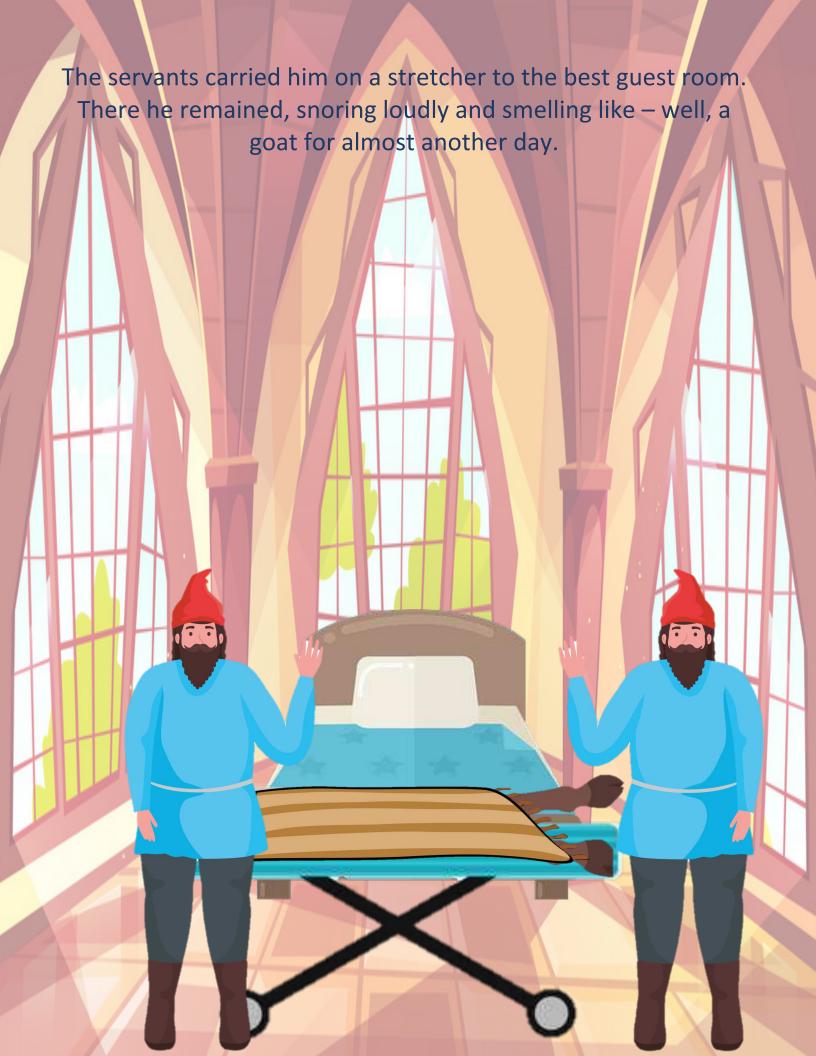


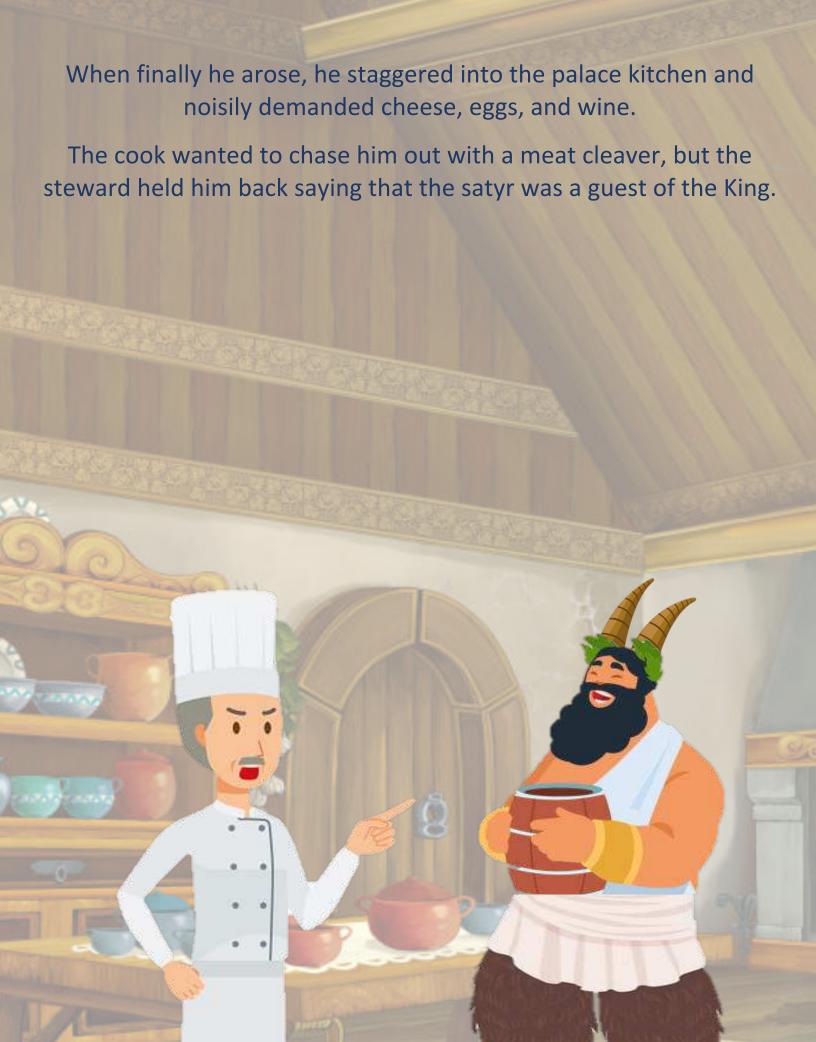














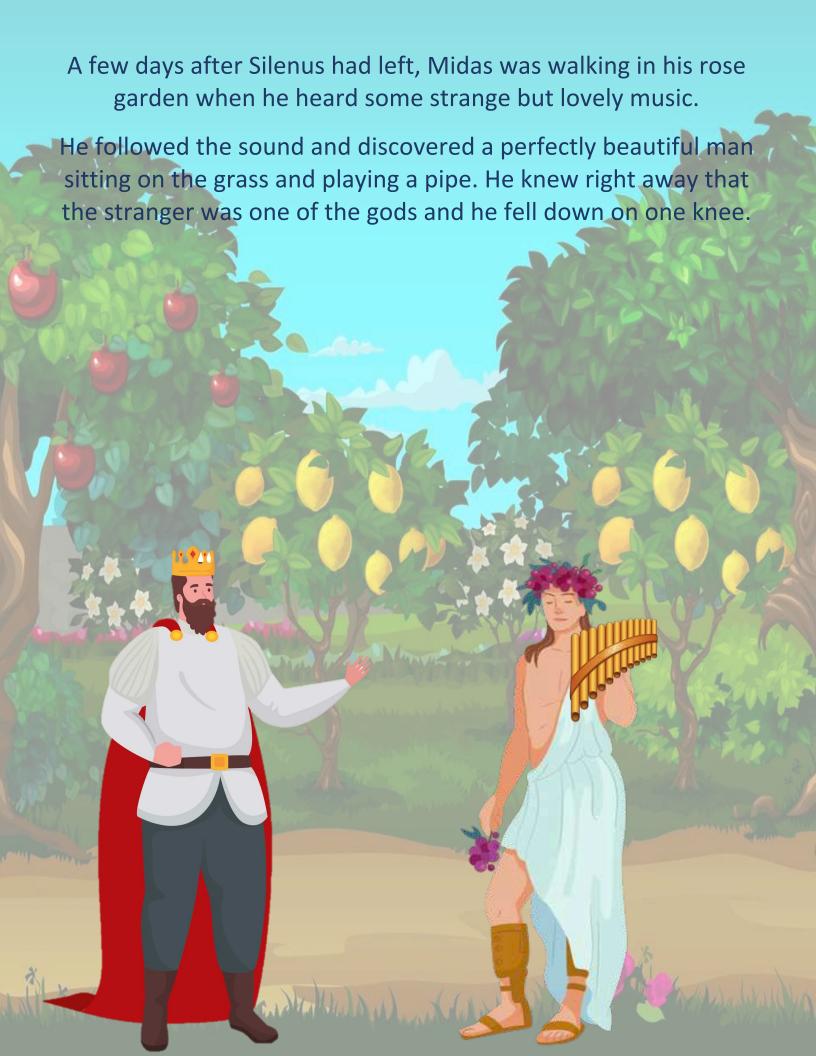


Although Princess Zoe and the Queen did their best to stay out of the way of the satyr, King Midas entertained his guest, eating and drinking with him until late at night, and playing music on the pan pipes.



All in all, Silenus stayed with Midas for a week. No one was more pleased about this show of hospitality than Dionysus, because in his eyes, anyone who honoured Silenus honoured Dionysus.















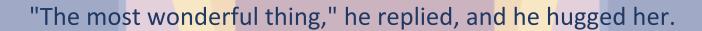


The servants heard his voice laughing and shouting, "Gold, glorious gold!" And they wondered what had gotten into the king.

Princess Zoe heard him too. She found him turning peas into little golden nuggets.

"Father, what has happened?" she asked.





But this was not what he had expected. He was holding not his daughter in his arms, but a cold, still statue.



Distraught, he went to the fountain to wash his hot tears from his face. But as he scooped up the water in his hands, it turned into liquid gold.

Now he realised the cruelty of his gift. He called out, "Lord Dionysus, save me from this cursed metal!"



Dionysus heard him and took pity on the foolish King. He appeared sitting on the edge of the fountain and said,

"Go to the river that flows by the great city of Sardis. Make your way upstream until you come to the source. Plunge your head and body at the same moment into the foaming fountain, where it gushes out, and wash away your foolishness."



