**The Story of a Wish**

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| Once upon a time, there lived a young king who had just ascended the throne after his father, the old king died. One day he dreamed that God would grant him one single wish. He could have anything he asked God for. "What could he possibly ask God for?" he thought. As the new King, he had the whole kingdom under him. The kingdom was already wealthy and well-established. He had no lack of any material things. Finally, he decided to ask for wisdom. He figured that he needed it to run his country. He was young and he felt inferior to all the court officials and ministers.  When he awoke from his dream, he felt a new sense of confidence which he did not have before. A simple dream can work wonders, he thought to himself, or was it a dream he wondered. Soon, the court officials brought before him a rather difficult case. They thought that it was time for the young king to learn how to administer justice and to pass judgment. The advisors were standing by ready to offer their advice.  "O King, the child is mine, she took it from me," the first woman cried. "Your Highness, it is not true. The child is mine!" cried the second woman in like-manner. Both women had given birth to a baby boy within a few days of each other. They stayed together in an old house because they were friends and were in the same profession. They had no family and were both hostesses in a inn.  "O King, I woke up one morning and was shocked to find my child dead but on closer examination discovered that it was not my baby. How can I not know my own child? I believe this woman must have rolled over in her sleep and accidentally suffocated her son to death. Then she took my child and replaced it with hers while I was still sleeping," cried the first woman.  "It's a pack of lies, your Highness. Don't be fooled by her. She cannot accept the fact that her child is dead and mine is living. Now she wants to claim my son for her own. This child is my flesh and blood. How can I not know my own son? The dead one is indeed her son," cried the second woman.  The young King shook his head. It was difficult to decide which one of them was telling the truth. Both the women seemed convincing enough. To the astonishment of all those around, the King commanded, "Bring me a sword."  "I give up. I cannot decide which of you is telling the truth. Since both of you claim that the child is yours, you shall both have him," the king told them. "Guards, cut the baby into two and give each one, one half." The king saw the face of the first woman turn into anguish. The other woman's face hardened after the initial shock.  "Give her the child, O Lord. Please do not kill him," the first woman pleaded. "Have I made a wrong judgment?" the king pretended to look angrily at the second woman. "No, my lord, it is a fair judgment. Let both of us not have him," she replied.  The king smiled and said to her, "You are not the real mother." He commanded that the baby be given to the first woman who thanked the young king profusely. The officials marveled at the king's wisdom and was glad for the kingdom.  **Answer the following questions:** | | |
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|  | 1. | What happened in the young king's dream ? |
|  | 2. | What made the king decide on the wish that he made ? |
|  | 3. | What effect did the dream have on the king ? |
|  | 4. | Why were the advisors standing by and ready to offer advice ? |
|  | 5. | Give three things that the two women have in common ? |
|  | 6. | What was the cause of death for the baby as told to the king ? |
|  | 7. | What was the second woman's defense ? |
|  | 8. | Why were the people astonished at the king's command to bring a sword ? |
|  | 9. | Explain why the king 'pretended to look angrily at the second woman'. |
|  | 10. | What was the second woman's response to the king's judgment ? |
|  | 11. | In your own words, how did the king arrive at his judgment ?   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Answers** | | | |  | 1. | He dreamt that God would grant him a wish and he  wished for wisdom. | |  | 2. | He felt that he needed wisdom to run his country as he was young and inexperienced. | |  | 3. | He felt more confident. | |  | 4. | They thought that the King might not be able to handle the case. | |  | 5. | Any 3 :  • Both of them had no family  • They had the same profession  • They had given birth to a baby boy  • They stayed together in an old house. | |  | 6. | The baby was suffocated to death when the mother accidentally rolled over him while sleeping. | |  | 7. | She claimed that the first woman was unable to accept the fact that her child was dead while hers was still alive. | |  | 8. | It was a totally unexpected command and thought to be irrelevant in solving the case. | |  | 9. | He wanted to trick the second woman in believing that he was angry with the first woman for not agreeing with him. He wanted to identify the real mother. | |  | 10. | She replied that it was fair that both of them would not have the child. | |  | 11. | The king knew that the real mother would not bear to see the baby killed.  Reference :  http://www.englishdaily626.com/comprehension.php?238 | |