

# The Butterfly That Stamped

by Rudyard Kipling

There once was a wise king named Suleiman-bin-Daoud. He could understand what the birds said and what the fish said and what the animals said. Suleiman was also very powerful. He wore a magic ring and when he turned the ring, Jinns, or genies, would appear and do whatever Suleiman asked.

Suleiman lived in a beautiful palace surrounded by beautiful gardens. But all was not peaceful in Suleiman's home. You see, he had 1,000 wives. It's not that he wanted so many wives. No, Suleiman truly loved his wise and beautiful queen, Balkis. But in those days, wise and powerful kings were suppose to have many wives.

Suleiman's problem was that his wives, except for Balkis, argued all the time. They argued with him and they argued with each other.

Suleiman could have turned his powerful ring and asked the Jinns to make his arguing wives disappear, but he thought that would be showing off. Besides being wise and powerful, Suleiman was also very humble. When his wives argued too much, Suleiman would leave his beautiful palace and walk in the garden.

One day, when his wives were arguing very loudly, Suleiman went for his walk in the garden. As he walked by a large tree, Suleiman was surprised to hear two butterflies quarreling.

"Don't talk like that to me," said one butterfly to the other. "Don't you know that if I stamped with my foot the palace and garden would vanish in a clap of thunder?"

Suleiman thought this was the funniest thing he had ever heard! A butterfly could not make his beautiful palace and garden disappear. He called out to the butterfly. "Come here, little friend," he said. The butterfly was scared, for he had not known that Suleiman had been listening. The butterfly flew over, shaking his little wings, and landed on Suleiman's finger.

"Tell me why you are telling such lies to your wife," Suleiman asked.

"She has been arguing with me all day. I want some peace and quiet!" replied Butterfly Husband.

Suleiman understood, for he wanted the same thing. He laughed again and told Butterfly Husband to return to his wife. He could hardly wait to see what would happen to the couple next.

All this time Queen Balkis had been hiding on the other side of the large tree. She had followed Suleiman to the garden to comfort him. She had heard what had been said and smiled. Balkis had a plan for helping Suleiman with his arguing wives. While he talked to Butterfly Husband, she called to Butterfly Wife.

"Do you believe what your husband told you?" Balkis asked, when Butterfly Wife landed on Balkis' finger.

"You know husbands, dear Queen," Butterfly Wife replied. "They get angry and say things that they don't mean. He'll forget this by tomorrow."

Wise Balkis nodded, for she also knew how husbands were. "You are right, but the next time he brags, ask him to stamp. We'll see what happens. He may be ashamed."

With that, Butterfly Wife returned

to her husband.

When the butterfly couple were back together, they quickly started arguing again. Butterfly Husband angrily reminded his wife what would happen if he stamped his foot.

"I don't believe you!" cried Butterfly Wife. "I would like to see you do it. I dare you. Stamp! Stamp, I say!"

This was not what Butterfly Husband expected. Quickly, he flew back to Suleiman, who was laughing until tears rolled down his face.

"What shall I do?" asked Butterfly Husband. "You know I can't do it! She'll laugh at me forever."



Suleiman wiped away his tears of laughter. "No she won't," he said.

With that, he turned his powerful ring. In an instant, four Jinns came out of the ground. "When this butterfly stamps his foot you will make my palace and gardens disappear in a clap of thunder," Suleiman told the Jinns. "When the butterfly stamps again you will bring them back gently."

Suleiman turned to Butterfly Husband. "Go back and stamp your foot all you want."

Balkis saw the Jinns arrive and knew her plan was working. She smiled to herself.

Butterfly Husband returned to his wife, who was still screaming "Stamp!" As he landed on a leaf, he stamped his tiny foot.

In a flash of lightning and a clap of thunder, the beautiful palace and garden vanished! Everything was black and quiet.

"Oh! Oh!" screamed Butterfly Wife. "I'm sorry! I won't

argue with you anymore. Please, bring back the gardens."

Butterfly Husband was almost as frightened as his wife. He quickly stamped his foot again. The beautiful palace and gardens came down from the sky and landed without a bump. All was back the way it was.

Suddenly, there was the sound of screams, as Suleiman's many wives ran from the palace. Balkis met them at the steps to the garden.

"What has happened?" they cried.

"Nothing has happened," said Balkis. "A butterfly complained to Suleiman about his wife who argues with him. Suleiman taught her a lesson about speaking quietly and kindly."

The wives looked at each other in dismay. They turned and walked as quiet as mice back to the beautiful palace.

Suleiman and Balkis walked together to the palace where they all lived happily and peacefully ever after.

### Vocabulary Matching

Place the letter in the blank for the correct meaning of the word.

- |                  |                                         |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| _____ genie      | A. arguing                              |
| _____ humble     | B. disappear                            |
| _____ quarreling | C. boast; speak highly of yourself      |
| _____ stamped    | D. a magical creature who grants wishes |
| _____ vanish     | E. short period of time, a moment       |
| _____ brags      | F. modest, not vain                     |
| _____ instant    | G. strongly strike to the ground        |

### Who Did It?

Circle the correct answer.

- |                                     |                      |                                           |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Who said "Stamp!"<br>over and over? | Who turned the ring? | Who told the many<br>wives what happened? |
| A. Suleiman                         | A. Suleiman          | A. Suleiman                               |
| B. Balkis                           | B. Balkis            | B. Balkis                                 |
| C. Butterfly Husband                | C. Butterfly Husband | C. Butterfly Husband                      |
| D. Butterfly Wife                   | D. Butterfly Wife    | D. Butterfly Wife                         |

### Secret code

Answer the question by using the secret code. Write the letter in the blank that matches the number from the code.

Who made Suleiman laugh?

2 21 20 20 5 18 6 12 25

8 21 19 2 1 14 4

- |       |        |        |
|-------|--------|--------|
| 1 = A | 10 = J | 19 = S |
| 2 = B | 11 = K | 20 = T |
| 3 = C | 12 = L | 21 = U |
| 4 = D | 13 = M | 22 = V |
| 5 = E | 14 = N | 23 = W |
| 6 = F | 15 = O | 24 = X |
| 7 = G | 16 = P | 25 = Y |
| 8 = H | 17 = Q | 26 = Z |
| 9 = I | 18 = R |        |



