



It all happened long ago,” continued the Queen sadly. “My son, the Crown Prince of Montsuelo, was suddenly **afflicted with** the strangest of **maladies**. It was his **misfortune** to suffer every **sorrow**, every **wound**, every sickness of **the lowliest of our subjects** as though it were his own.

“News of a labourer’s accident at his tools, reports of a royal messenger thrown from his horse, even the sight of a baby hare caught in a trap—any of this would make the Prince weep so much that I feared he was not long for this world. And then, when our wounded soldiers came tramping back from the first great battle against Valerdia, the Prince became so ill, he seemed close to death himself.

“Months passed. I **consulted with** physicians from all over the Kingdom, but there was no cure to be found. It was then, finally, that Caerleon, my trusted servant, advised me what to do.”

“—what to do, Your Highness?” echoed the merchant hastily. He was curious now, but still fearful and terribly anxious to be on his way.

“Alas, I had to send my son away to the Palace of the Northern Isle. Only there did he become well again, far from our war-torn Kingdom.”





Can you write down the word that is missing on each line? If you don't remember, look back at the Northern Isle of Dreams story. **Example number one is done for you.**

1. (afflicted with) suffered from
2. _____
asked for someone's advice
3. _____
the poorest of our people
4. _____
hurt, injury
5. _____
illness(es)
6. _____
bad luck
7. _____
sadness

Northern Isle of Dreams



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS Page 6

- a. Where is the Crown Prince of Montsuelo?
- b. Why did the Prince leave his Kingdom many years ago?



Can you draw a picture of the Crown Prince of Montsuelo?



Listen to the CD again and imagine what you might see.





The merchant was amazed at the Queen's strange tale. He felt more anxious than ever to **depart** these gloomy halls but, just then, the Queen's old servant himself came hobbling into the room.

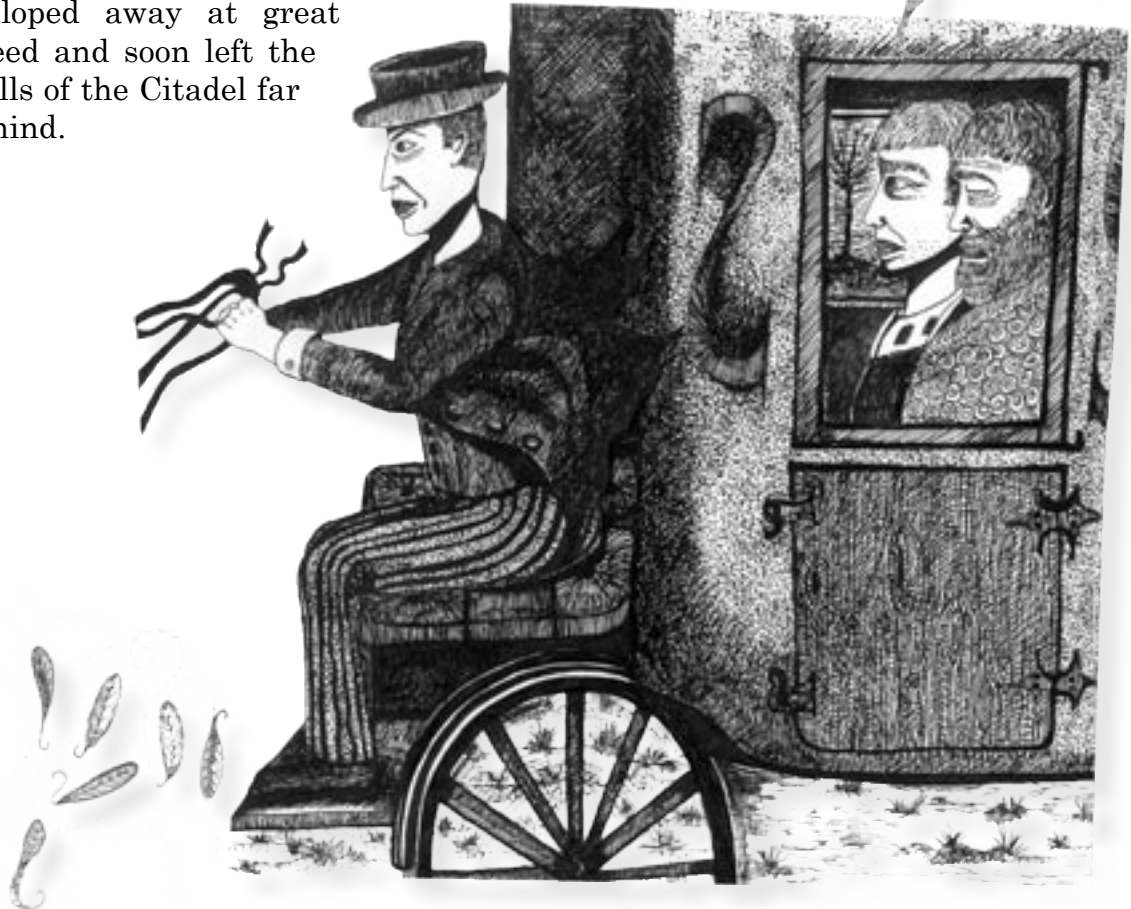
"Caerleon has offered to travel with you, good Sir," said the Queen. "Would you make haste and seek out the Northern Isle? Pray, bring me back news of my dear son, for only he can comfort me in this darkest hour."

Merciful heaven! thought the merchant. Is this my reward? To depart on some godforsaken journey to—to the Northern Isle. I've never even heard of such a place in all my life!

"I'm ready to leave at once, Sir," said Caerleon solemnly.

Hmmm, thought the merchant, perhaps I can give this old man the slip. He's **lame** and almost blind and far too old to travel.

But old Caerleon followed close behind. His ancient gaze was **stern** and **resolute**; his shuffling feet kept up their **unrelenting pace**. As soon as he climbed into the carriage beside the merchant, the **frantic** driver cracked his whip over the backs of the horses. They galloped away at great speed and soon left the walls of the Citadel far behind.





Can you write down the word that is missing on each line? If you don't remember, look back at the Northern Isle of Dreams story. **Example number one is done for you.**

1. (**unrelenting pace**) (speed forward) without stopping
2. _____
walking with difficulty, disabled
3. _____
strict, severe, not smiling
4. _____
very afraid, terrified
5. _____
firm, decisive
6. _____
leave, go away



Northern Isle of Dreams



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS Page 7

- a. What does the Queen ask the merchant to do?
- b. Does the merchant want to do as the Queen wishes?
- c. Who will travel with the merchant to the Northern Isle?
- d. Do you think the merchant should slip away from old Caerleon and go home at once?



Can you draw a picture of the Queen's servant, old Caerleon?



Listen to the CD again and imagine what you might see.





Soon they were traveling back through the forest again. All around, it was cool and shadowy and green and filled with the mysterious language of the wild birds. Furry creatures rustled through the wilderness. But the merchant neither saw nor heard them; so troubled was he by the danger—and the **strangeness**—of the journey.

Where on earth are we going? he thought. These woodland roads are full of highwaymen and cut-throats. My foolish dreams of glory may bring about **my downfall**. I fear I may never reach home alive.

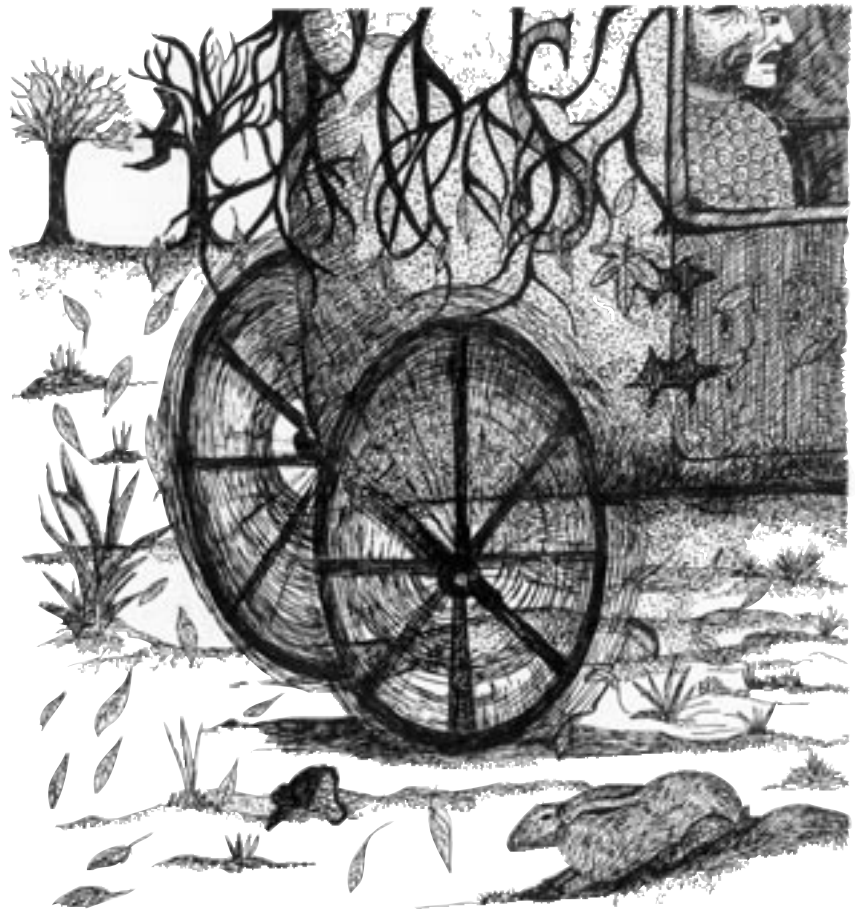
Yet he was even more afraid to speak his mind, for surely old Caerleon would think him a coward. He was now a noble Knight of the Royal Shield—and he had made a **solemn promise**—how *could* he disobey his Queen?

When they finally left the forest, Caerleon began **scouring** the open countryside with his weak eyes.

“It is almost noon,” he said, blinking in the harsh sunlight. “Very soon we should meet someone who can **guide** us along the way.”

“Guide us?” echoed the merchant. “But aren’t you a wise man? Can you not guide us to the Palace of the North?”

“I am an old man, and some have called me wise, but my **limbs** are **feeble** and my sight is **dim**. I no longer trust myself to find the way.”





Can you write down the word that is missing on each line? If you don't remember, look back at the Northern Isle of Dreams story. **Example number one is done for you.**

1. (my downfall) something bad that happens to me
2. _____
searching carefully for something hidden
3. _____
a firm promise that you must keep
4. _____
something mysterious or difficult to understand
5. _____
misty, unclear
6. _____
legs (and arms)
7. _____
weak, not very strong
8. _____
lead (someone somewhere)

Northern Isle of Dreams



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS Page 8

- a. What is the merchant afraid of?
- b. Do you think he will keep his promise to the Queen?
- c. Does old Caerleon know the way to the Northern Isle?



Can you draw a picture of the carriage traveling through the forest?



Listen to the CD again and imagine what you might see.





Suddenly they were approaching the marketplace. Again they could hear the shouts and jeers of a crowd of ruffians up ahead. A young boy was running toward them and kept glancing fearfully back over his shoulder at the **pursuing** mob.

“There he is!” cried old Caerleon. “Quick! Open the carriage door and let him climb in.”

But the merchant only stared at Caerleon in **amazement**.

“Hurry!” repeated the old man. “He is our guide!”

“What, that ragged **urchin**? *He* will guide us to the Palace of the North. You must be joking, old man!”

“No time for argument!” shrieked Caerleon. “Open the door at once, I say!”

“But we have no room! How can the horses drag an extra **burden**, even if he looks as light as a scarecrow!”

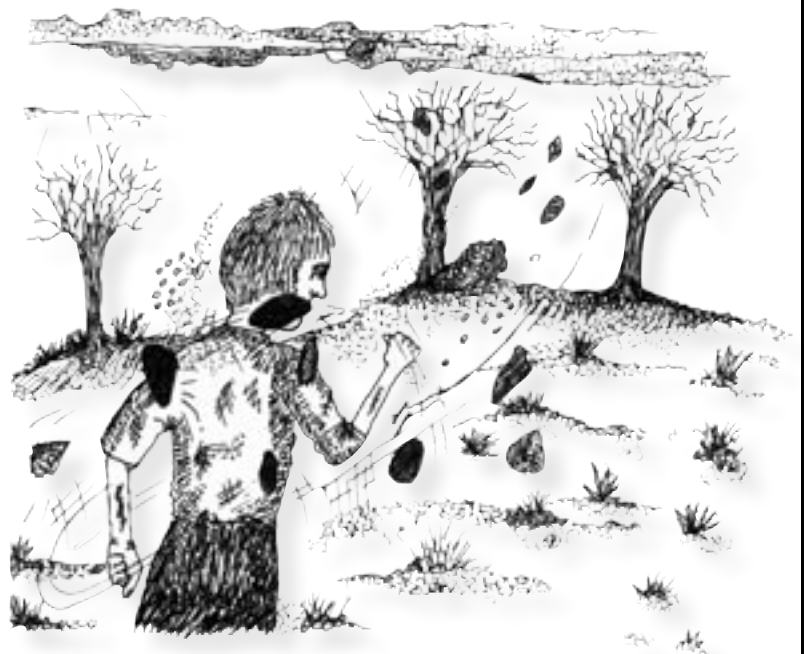
“What’s that chest you have tucked under your seat? Throw that out at once, man, and let the boy **embark**.”

“My treasure chest?” gasped the merchant. “Throw it out? Are you mad, old man? This chest contains the savings of a lifetime!”

“Well, that can’t be helped! We have no choice. How else can we keep our promise to the Queen?”

The merchant’s face flamed in an agony of **despair**. He spluttered. He choked. He could not bring himself to obey. But, already, Caerleon had **pried out** the chest with his wooden walking cane. Puffing and groaning, he was dragging it across the carriage floor.

Here’s this **demented** old man, thought the merchant, about to tip to the four winds my savings of a lifetime—and *for what*—to rescue a skinny beggar boy he’s never seen before in all his life!





Can you write down the word that is missing on each line? If you don't remember, look back at the Northern Isle of Dreams story. **Example number one is done for you.**

1. (urchin) a small child
2. _____
chasing after someone
3. _____
removed (the chest) with difficulty
4. _____
a heavy load to carry
5. _____
to get in; to get on board
6. _____
a feeling of great surprise
7. _____
a hopeless feeling
8. _____
mad, crazy

Northern Isle of Dreams



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS Page 9

- a. Why is the merchant so amazed when he sees the young boy?
- b. Do you think the young boy might know the way to the Northern Isle?
- c. If you were the merchant, would you toss out your chest of gold to save the poor boy?



Can you draw a picture of the mob chasing the young boy?



Listen to the CD again and imagine what you might see.





Too late to **lament**. Caerleon had already opened the carriage door. He **beckoned** to the **fleeing** youth; but the boy just looked back wildly over his shoulder and ducked his head under a storm of rocks and pebbles that were thrown by the crowd.

“Quick!” cried Caerleon. “Climb in here, my son.”

“Take care! Take care,” squealed the merchant, as the **astonished** boy **clambered** over the treasure chest.

And seeing the old man’s **intention**, the boy helped Caerleon to **heave** out the chest. It fell to the earth with a ringing crash and, at once, its metal lock sprang open. Hundreds of gleaming coins rolled out into the mud.

“Good,” said the old man, “that should **distract** those **scoundrels** for a time, and we shall pass on in safety.”

At this, the merchant groaned loudly, but Caerleon ignored him. He turned to the young boy.

“Catch your breath, my son,” he said kindly. “Now tell us, why was the mob chasing you?”

“My Master sent them after me,” answered the boy. “For just this morning, he **discovered** his sack of gold and silver coins was gone.”





Can you write down the word that is missing on each line? If you don't remember, look back at the Northern Isle of Dreams story. **Example number one is done for you.**

1. (fleeing) running away
2. _____
called someone with a wave of the hand
3. _____
make someone think of something else; take someone's mind off something
4. _____
dishonest people, rogues
5. _____
moan and complain
6. _____
found out (something)
7. _____
very surprised
8. _____
push
9. _____
climbed
10. _____
something you want to do

Northern Isle of Dreams



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS Page 10

- a. Who tosses the treasure chest out of the carriage?
- b. How do you think the merchant feels about losing his life savings?



Can you draw a picture of the young boy being rescued by Caerleon?



Listen to the CD again and imagine what you might see.

