

A Touch of Gold

The scene takes place when Greece was the centre of the Universe and Greek gods and goddesses ruled kingdoms through their immense powers. There was once a king called MIDAS who was greedy to become the richest man on earth. The gods decided to grant his wish but with disastrous consequences. In this scene, Midas is sitting on a golden throne in his garden of statues. He is suddenly aware that he is no longer alone. He looks up and notices Jason, a young boy from the village, who has broken into the palace to find out if the rumours he has heard about his king are true.

MIDAS: Hello! What are you doing here in my private garden? Snooping, I suppose? I'm surprised that you got past my guards but, well – I'm a little short-staffed at the moment. I wish you'd stop looking at me like that – mouth open! Have you never seen a king before? Well... no, you probably haven't. *(Looking around him)* Certainly not such a rich one!

(Getting up) Let me show you around. This is my palace... my swimming pool... my, er, statues. Yes, I do have a lot and yes, they are all gold... solid gold! My robes are gold thread, my throne is gold, my goblet is gold.

(Coming closer, and moving towards Jason) Shall I let you into a secret? I love making money... lots of it. My own little empire! One day, though, I made a wish which I have rather regretted. I wished that everything I touched would turn to gold. The gods heard me and granted my wish! *(Midas sees a coin lying on the ground and picks it up)* Look! It was copper... but now... it's gold! *(He plucks a flower from a bush)* This flower – see, it's now gold leaf! I can't even pick up bread or cheese because if I did it would turn to gold.

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No... don't back away. Are you getting nervous? Afraid that I might accidentally touch you? (*Moving towards the statues by the pool*) This statue of a dog – it wasn't always a statue, it was Hellen, my favourite hound, and these guards, yes, they were once living, breathing men! (*Turning towards the statue of a beautiful girl*) This is the worst of all! She was so beautiful, so full of life. Her name was Zoe. She loved to laugh and run and sing and play the lyre. (*Sadly*) She was my daughter. I just touched her like this (*putting his hand out*) and she turned to gold! No more laughter... no more songs.

Oh dear! Don't be afraid! Just be careful what you wish for... (*He reaches out to put his hand on Jason's arm*) Mmm. Too late, I fear. I seem to have gained another statue!

Traditional, adapted by LAMDA