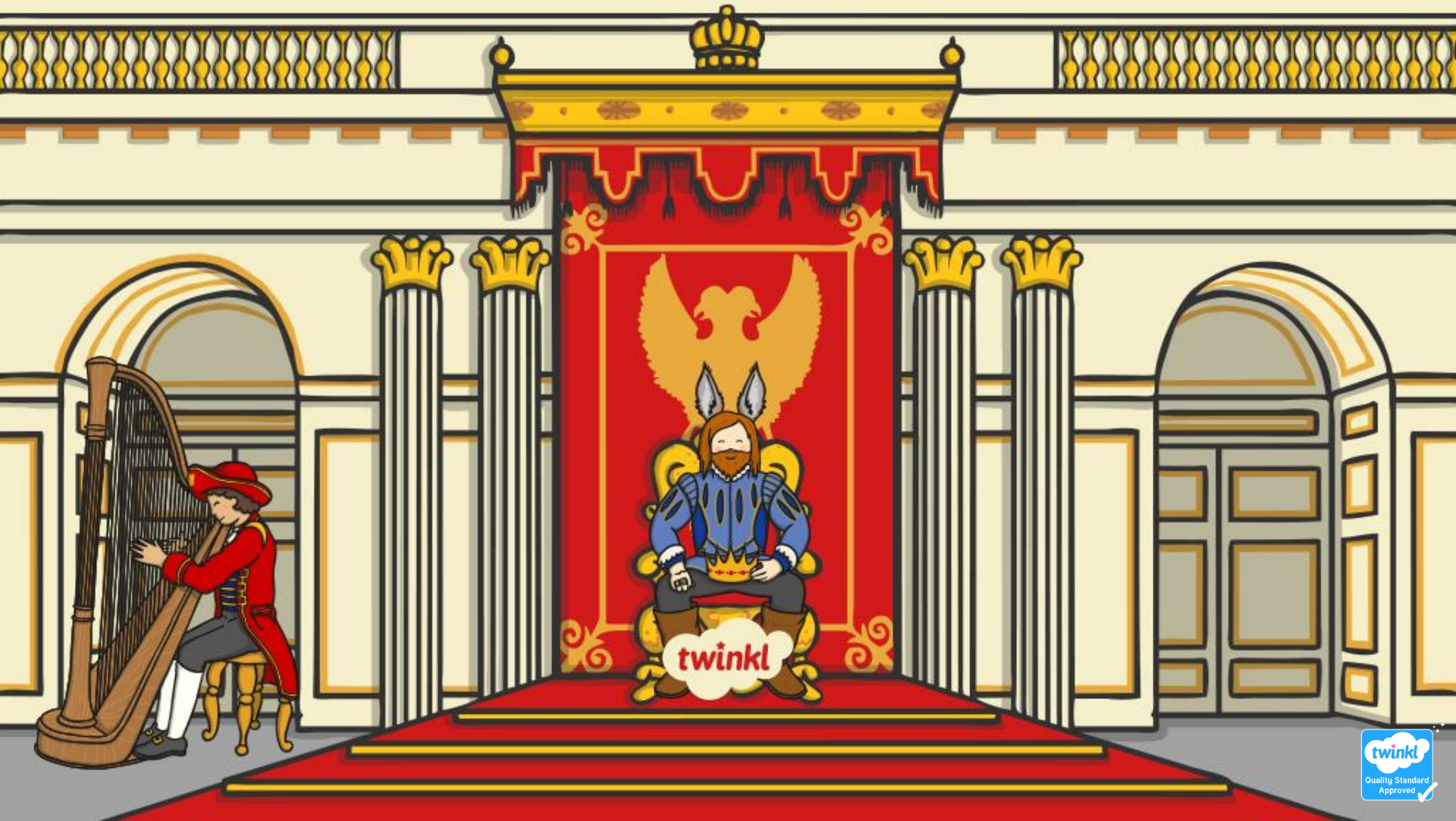


# The King with Donkey's Ears

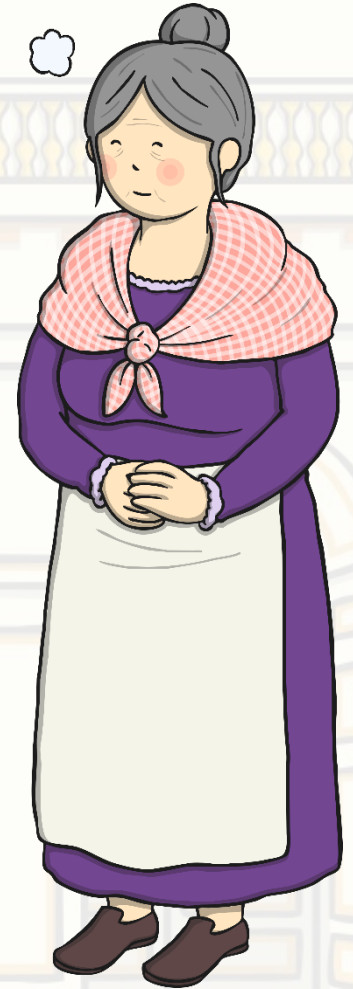
An Irish Legend





Fadó fadó, a poor widow was visited by the king's messenger. Her son was a barber and the messenger asked him to visit the king.

The woman was very worried because once a year, a barber was called to visit the king, but that barber would never be seen again.

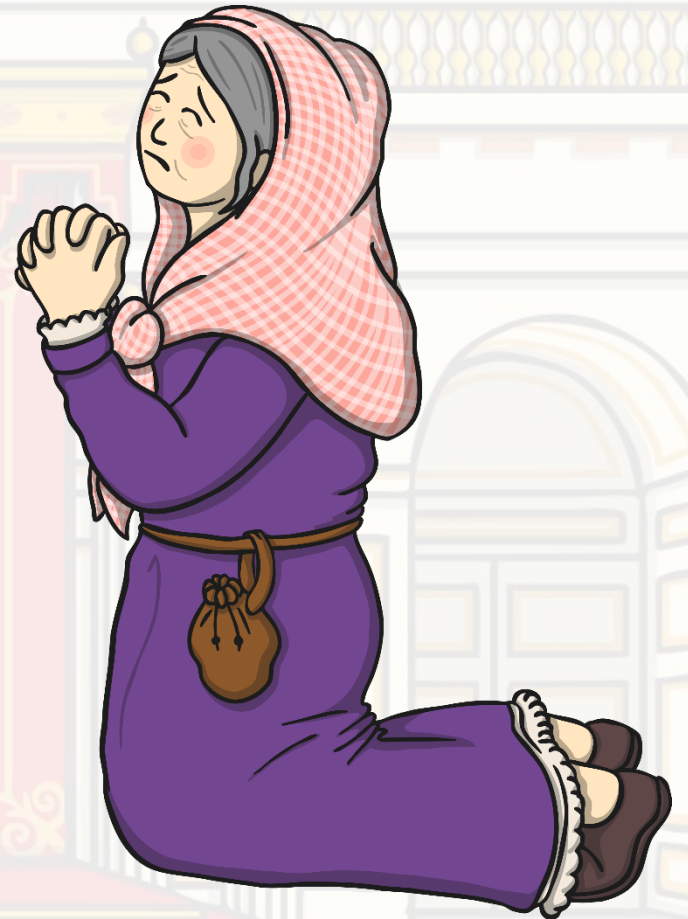




The king had a secret. He had very strange ears, just like donkey ears. The king wore his hair in a special way to hide his ears. Once a year he had his hair cut and then ordered the barber to be killed so that no one would know his terrible secret.

Fadó fadó was awfully upset so she decided to visit the king.

She begged him not to kill her son. She said “I am a widow, my son is all I have in the world. If he dies, I will have no family to love and to care for. Please, please, spare my son!”





The king agreed on one condition.  
“I will spare your son on one condition.  
He must not tell anyone about anything  
that happens in this castle. If he  
promises not to tell anyone about what  
he sees, he will be safe”.



The next day, the barber arrived at the castle. He began to cut the king's hair. He got a huge shock when he lifted the king's hair and saw his donkey ears, but he was wise and kept cutting in silence.

Days turned to weeks, weeks turned to months and the poor widow noticed that her son was not well. He was quiet and seemed very sad. She sent for a druid to help him.

The druid could not help him because the barber refused to share his secret with anyone.



The druid gave the barber a piece of advice. He told him to go to the woods and to tell the tall willow tree his secret.

The barber followed the druid's advice and immediately afterwards he felt as though a weight had been lifted off his shoulders. He was happy again.





A few days later, the king's harpist went to the woods. He picked a tall willow tree to use to make a new harp.



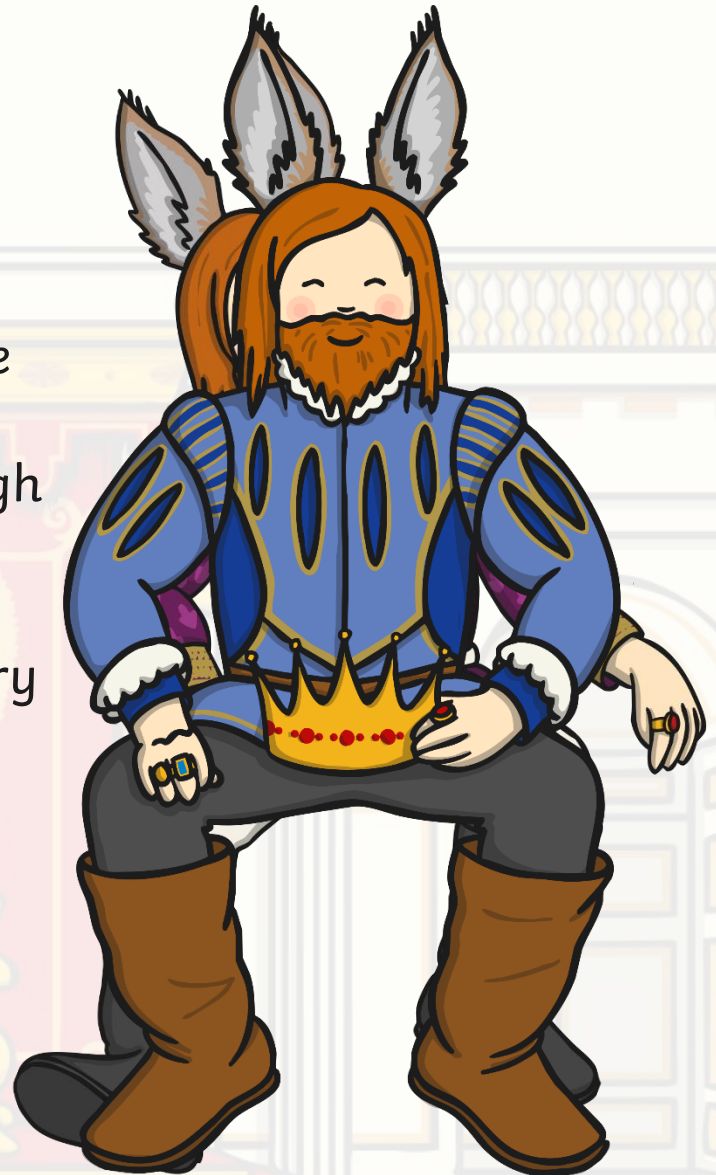
That night, he was playing his harp at a party in the castle.

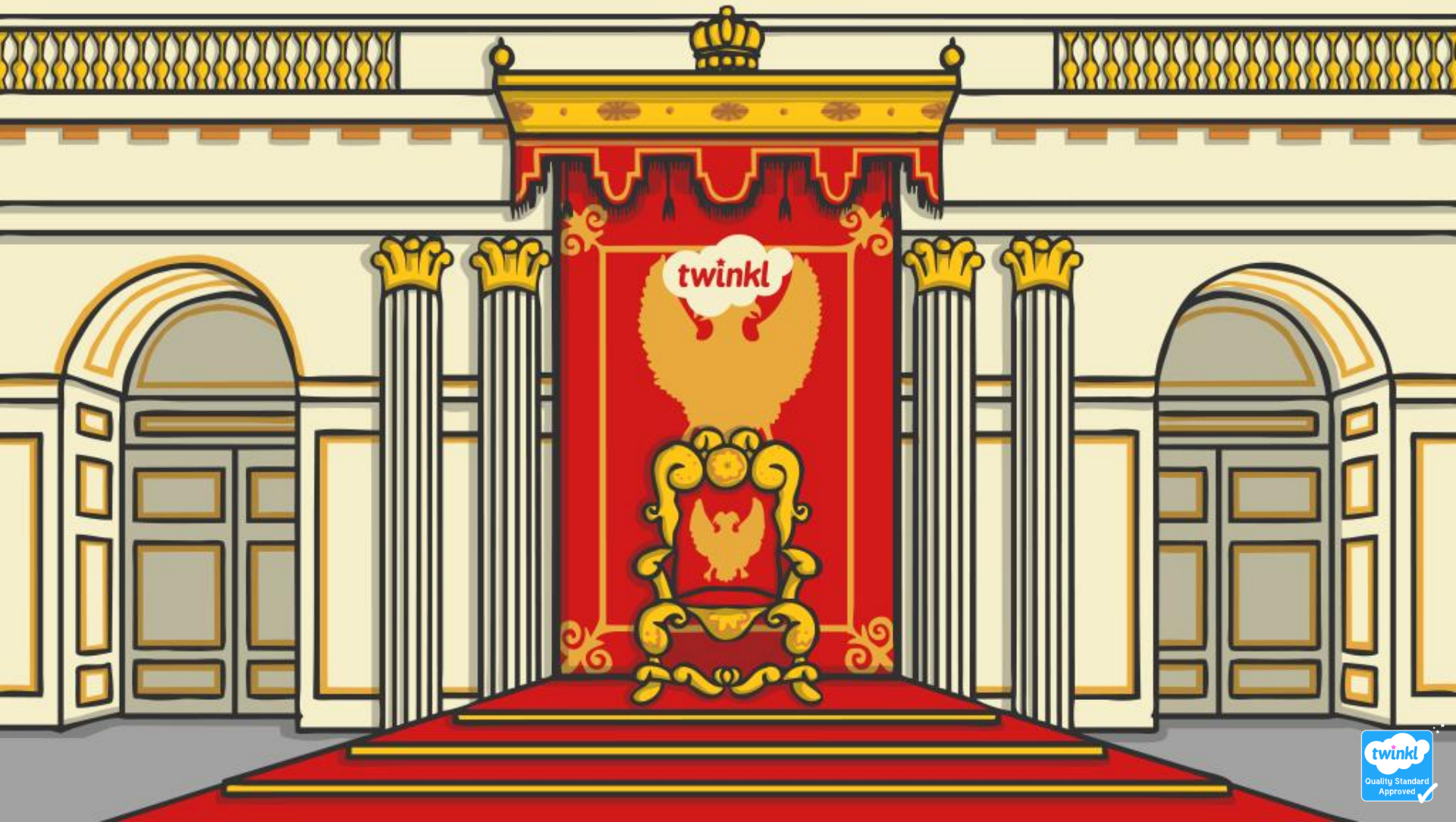
As he plucked the strings, a very strange thing began to happen. "The king has donkey ears, the king has donkey ears" the harp sang out.



The king was terribly upset when he heard the harp's song. He was very frightened that everyone would laugh at him when they saw his ears.

But no one did and the king was very relieved when he realised that he wouldn't have to keep his ears a secret anymore.





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