

# ***THE KINGDOM OF AZERECK PT. 1***

## ***THE KINGDOM OF WAR***

Based on a story by Chrisvin Jabamani



There once was a kingdom that was always at war. The Kingdom of War was always attacking the kingdoms in the surrounding region. They loved war and were constantly making life miserable for the other kingdoms.

One of the kingdoms, the Kingdom of Azereck, became frustrated because of the constant war. More than half their soldiers had died, and the treasury was almost empty. The king needed to find a solution to this problem.

The king's advisors made several suggestions, but none of them were viable. It was impossible for Azereck to defeat the Kingdom of War.

The king was about to go to the king of the Kingdom of War and surrender all he had, but before he could, his daughter the princess Azul came to him and offered an idea.

“Father, since you are willing to give up all of your kingdom to the king of the Kingdom of War, why don't you offer half of your domain in exchange for kidnapping the king?” the princess said to her father.

“Kidnap the king? That is an interesting idea,” her father began to ponder the suggestion. “I will offer this reward to our bravest fighters. I am sure that one of them will take me up on this offer. Then we will stop this useless war and create a peaceful kingdom for our people!” the king said, very excited at his daughter's idea.

The next day the king called all of his soldiers to the castle. He stood on the royal

balcony overlooking the courtyard. The colors of the uniforms and the flags blowing in the wind made the courtyard jump with excitement.

“My fellow Azerecks, I have an offer to make to you. We want this war to end, so I am willing to offer one half of my kingdom to the brave soldier who will go to the Kingdom of War, kidnap the king, and bring him here to me,” the king said, with a booming voice and a smile on his face.

The crowd went silent. No one stepped forward. The king’s face became sad.

“Is there not one brave man who will save our kingdom? Is there not one of you who will accept half of my kingdom in exchange for peace?” the king began to beg.

Still silence. No one stepped forward to accept the king’s plan.

The king looked around. He thought for a few moment,s and then added, “I will also offer my daughter the princess’ hand in marriage to the one who completes this task.”

Azul’s jaw dropped. “I will not accept this Father. You can’t do this to me!”

The princess looked out over the courtyard hoping that no one would agree to the king’s offer.

The king gazed out over his subjects. Still there was silence, and not one person moved.

The people in the crowd began to move as if a mole was moving under the earth. Someone was moving through the crowd toward the king.

Just then a young man emerged from the crowd. He bowed before the king.

“I, Walter Gressler, will kidnap the king for you. I will bring him here and stop this war. I will take you up on your offer,” he said.

“Aren’t you the blacksmith’s son?” the king inquired.

“Yes, I am,” he replied.

“Just how do you think you can do this?” the king asked.

“I will make my plan as I go to the Kingdom of War. I am not sure exactly how I will do this, but I will return with the king,” the young man stated confidently. “I must

have your word that you will honor the offer you have made for this dangerous endeavor,” he continued.

“I will swear an oath before all of these people that I will honor the offer I have made here today,” the king said loud enough so that all those in attendance could hear.

The young man turned to leave. The crowd cheered him as they moved aside to let him pass.

The princess said softly to her father, “Father, you don’t intend for me to marry the blacksmith’s son, do you?”

“Don’t be concerned young one. He will not succeed. I just hope that his bravery will inspire more of our own soldiers to be more courageous. His actions will give us time to rebuild what we have. I am sure he will be a distraction to the king of the Kingdom of War,” her father tried to reassure her.

Walter went to his father’s shop.

“Father, I have to go on a quest to the Kingdom of War. I am going to kidnap the King and bring him here. I have told the king I will accept his offer of half the kingdom and the princess’ hand in marriage if I am successful. Do you have any advice Father?” Walter asked.

“Son, what you are planning to do is suicide. You will not return. You are brave, but at the same time foolish to think that you can accomplish this task. I wish you luck,” his father said as he took his hammer and slammed it on the red hot metal he was turning into a sword.

Walter looked at all of the weapons his father had hanging around his shop. He took a small knife and stuck it into his belt.

“I am off Father. I will return with the king of the Kingdom of War. You will see!” Walter said confidently as he turned to leave. “Say goodbye to Mother!”

Walter went quietly out of the town. It was a three week journey to the edge of the Kingdom of War.

Once he reached the Kingdom of War, he had to be very careful. Although he was

an ordinary looking peasant, the people were very cautious of newcomers.

As he entered the town, before him rose the towers of the castle of the king. It looked as powerful as the army of the Kingdom of War.

After two days in the town, he took a job helping the local blacksmith. He knew exactly what to do, so the blacksmith was very happy to have him work for him. He was able to blend in with the townspeople very easily.

One day a messenger from the castle came to the blacksmith's shop.

"The king has ordered that you make a grand sword. One that is better than anything ever made before," the messenger said. He then showed the blacksmith a drawing of the sword that the king wanted.

The messenger left.

"I have never made anything like this before," the blacksmith said, shaking his head.

"I can help you," Walter offered. "I can fashion the sword the king wants."

The blacksmith gave him the plans. Walter immediately began to form the metal with the hammer and anvil. The sword began to take shape; never before had a sword been crafted like this one. It would be the pride of any nobleman.

It took a week before the sword had its full shape and another two weeks before it had the shine of a mirror. Walter engraved designs into the steel that were so impressive the blacksmith invited all of the townspeople to come and see.

News of the king's sword traveled to the castle. The king sent his messenger to bring the sword to him.

When the messenger arrived, Walter refused to give it to him.

"I will present the sword to the king myself!" Walter stated proudly. "I will bring it to the castle tomorrow."

The messenger warned Walter that his refusal to deliver the sword that day would anger the king, and then he left.

Soon a troop of soldiers arrived and demanded that the sword be given to them to

take to the king. Walter once again refused. He had hidden the sword in a safe place so when the soldiers searched for it they could not find it.

“You will come with us. You must answer to the king for your disobedience,” the leader of the soldiers commanded Walter.

Walter went with the soldiers, but before they entered the castle, he bolted into the crowd and disappeared. The soldiers searched for him, but were unable to find him. He had climbed to the top of one of the houses and was looking down on the soldiers as they searched for him.

When the soldiers returned to the castle, Walter crawled down from the top of the house and hid until dark. He then went to the blacksmith’s shop, went to where he had hidden the sword and retrieved it.

Early the next morning, Walter placed the sword in a special box with a purple cloth under it. He used the blacksmith’s cart to take it to the castle. As he entered the walls of the castle people pushed forward to get a glimpse of the king’s new sword that was lying in the bed of the cart. The sun shone brightly off of the sword showing its beauty. Walter just smiled as the small pony pulled the cart toward where the king was waiting.

When he got to the entrance, Walter jumped out of the cart, took the sword out of its box, raised it above his head; showing it to everyone. First there was a gasp and then a cheer. Walter smiled.

He carried the sword proudly as he walked past the guards at the entrance to the throne room. As he moved past the invited guests, who were on each side of the room, they were in awe of the workmanship. He approached the throne, bent down on one knee while holding the sword in both hands above his head in front of the king.

The king got up from his throne and walked toward where Walter was kneeling. He took the sword, looked at it from end to end and then raised it above his head to show everyone how impressive his new sword was. Everyone cheered.

“I am told you are the one who made this, is that correct?” the king asked Walter.

“Yes, your majesty, I made the sword,” Walter replied still looking at the ground.

“Why did you refuse my orders to bring the sword to me yesterday? I should have you put in prison for your impudence,” the king said sternly.

“Your majesty, I wanted to deliver the sword myself. I wanted you to realize how grateful I am to you that you are my king,” Walter replied.

“Come with me,” the king said as he turned to return to his throne.

The king went to his throne, turned around and addressed his guests. “I declare that this young man is now the royal blacksmith, and that he will have all the honor and respect that is due to him.”

The people gasped. How was such a young man deserving of such a high honor?

“Come up here to receive your ring and your robe,” the king directed Walter. “What is your name?”

“My name is Walter Gressler, you majesty,” Walter replied.

“Well, Walter, you have impressed me beyond my highest expectations!” the king stated.

Walter began his duties as the king’s blacksmith that very day. He worked hard and produced the finest work the kingdom had ever seen.

After about a year, the king received a message. The message said that Walter had a surprise for the king. He was to come to the blacksmith’s shop to see the most amazing piece of armor that had ever been made. The king needed to go for a fitting at the blacksmith’s shop. Walter added that the king should come alone because the suit of armor was to be a surprise to all who lived in the Kingdom of War.

The king agreed. He went secretly to the blacksmith’s shop to see Walter. He went behind a screen where the armor lay on a table. Walter showed him the suit of armor. It was just as the note had said.

The king was excited. It was the most beautiful armor anyone had ever seen.

“Your majesty, please come for your fitting. First we will put on the breastplate,” Walter directed the king.

The king put on the upper armor. It was a perfect fit. Then he put on the lower armor. Again it was a perfect fit. Last he put on the helmet.

The king said, "How did you know my size? This is perfect!"

He pulled down the visor and began to move around the room trying out the armor.

All of a sudden he couldn't move. He struggled to walk, but he was stuck. He yelled at Walter to help him, but all that came out was a muffled noise.

Walter backed the small cart up to the king and pushed him over so he landed inside the cart with a thud. Walter then covered the king with straw and a blanket.

He drove the little cart out of the castle waving at the people. They loved him and knew him well. He then passed through the village, and they smiled and greeted him as the cart moved slowly down the road.

Walter continued out of the village, and then out of the Kingdom of War toward the Kingdom of Azereck.

The guards at the castle of Azereck saw the cart coming down the road. They recognized Walter. He was older now, but they knew who he was. They ran to the king and told him that Walter Gressler was returning in a small cart.

The people crowded the entrance to the castle as Walter drove the little pony to where the king was waiting.

I have a present for you my king, and at that he threw back the blanket and straw to expose the shiny suit of armor.

The king walked around to see what Walter had in the cart.

"That is a fine suit of armor, son. Who is it for?" the king inquired.

"It is for you my king. Open the visor on the helmet. There is a surprise for you inside," Walter said with a smile on his face.

When the king opened the visor, much to his surprise, he saw the king of the Kingdom of War!

"I can't believe you did this. We thought you had given up. It has been more than a year since you disappeared," the king said. "I will honor my offer to you. Half of my

kingdom and my daughter's hand in marriage are yours.”

“I didn't do this for your kingdom or for your daughter. I did this for the people of Azereck. I am willing to serve you, my king, for the rest of my days,” Walter surprised everyone.

**VOCABULARY** (*Match the word to its definition*)

- |                     |                          |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. viable _____     | a. normal, same          |
| 2. surrender _____  | b. take by force, abduct |
| 3. domain _____     | c. works with metal      |
| 4. kidnap _____     | d. brave                 |
| 5. endeavor _____   | e. property, land        |
| 6. courtyard _____  | f. open space            |
| 7. blacksmith _____ | g. give up, yield        |
| 8. courageous _____ | h. feasible              |
| 9. suicide _____    | i. struggle, venture     |
| 10. ordinary _____  | j. to kill one's self    |

**TRUE OR FALSE**

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|---|-------|
| 1. Walter was the blacksmith's son.                           | T / F |
| 2. The king of Azereck loved to make war.                     | T / F |
| 3. The king of the Kingdom of War wanted a new sword.         | T / F |
| 4. The princess suggested that she marry the bravest soldier. | T / F |
| 5. Walter drove a large wagon to the king.                    | T / F |
| 6. Walter was put into jail.                                  | T / F |
| 7. The people of the town loved Walter.                       | T / F |
| 8. The king of the Kingdom of War escaped.                    | T / F |
| 9. Walter wanted half of the kingdom.                         | T / F |
| 10. Walter married the princess.                              | T / F |

**MULTIPLE CHOICE:**

1. What did Walter make for the king first? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) sword
  - b) cart
  - c) uniform
  - d) food
  
2. What did the king promise to the person who kidnapped the king of the Kingdom of War? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) to become the new king of Azereck
  - b) a new sword
  - c) the princess' hand in marriage
  - d) the kingdom of Azereck
  
3. How long was Walter living in the Kingdom of War? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) two weeks
  - b) over one year
  - c) the rest of his life
  - d) one month
  
4. How did Walter return to the Kingdom of Azereck? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) by bus
  - b) by train
  - c) by pony cart
  - d) by walking

**COMPREHENSION:** (*Write a complete sentence to answer the question.*)

1. Who agreed to kidnap the king of the Kingdom of War?

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2. What did Walter's father do for work?

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3. How long did it take to get to the border of the Kingdom of War?

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4. What did Walter take with him from his father's blacksmith shop?

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5. What did Walter engrave into the sword?

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6. What happened when Walter walked into the throne room with the sword?

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7. What position did the king of the Kingdom of War give to Walter?

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8. What did Walter refuse when he returned to Azereck?

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9. Who saw Walter when he was returning to Azereck?

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10. At the end of the story, what happened to Walter?

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