

ANCIENT CREEK

ONE TIME THERE WAS THIS OLD KING named King George Condominium the Third, sent his army out to conquer a certain mountain district that never had been conquered before.

The old King already ruled about half the world but he wasn't satisfied with just half. He wanted it all. He'd heard that this Hill Domain had a lot of beautiful rivers and valleys and meadows and great herds and flocks of wild game. The mountains had a lot of timber, too, and other natural resources the King was greedy for. So he sent his army down into the hills to dispossess the natives and put them to work as laborers for his empire.

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When the King got word that his army had everything in the Hill Domain under control, he decided to go down and look at it, check things over, see what he got. But before he could get started, first one thing then another came up to keep old King Condominium from going.

The King was real busy in those days. His armies were conquering places faster than he could go see them. He had two or three wars going on overseas, and there was a lot of intrigue in the main castle that distracted his mind. The King had two or three mistresses to tend to, not to mention Queen Condominium who was always wanting this and wanting that, she never was satisfied.

So time went along, went along, and old King Condominium got to be an old man, way up in his eighties, and he still never had been to see that part of his kingdom they called the Hill Domain. In fact, the King had just about forgot he even owned a Hill Domain 'til one spring he got sick and his doctor said to him, "Now King, you've got to get away and rest up if you intend to live much longer. You've been working too hard and worrying about things too much, your blood pressure's up, your heart's weak, you've lost your hearing and your eyesight's getting worse every day. The thing for you to do is go off in the mountains somewhere and live quiet for a while. You'll feel a whole lot better if you do."

Well, King Condominium liked that advice. Breathing that pure mountain air and drinking that sweet mountain spring water would surely be a tonic to his system. And no doubt the mountain people with their quaint customs and odd manner of speech and dress would be an entertainment for him and the members of his court.

“Doc,” said the King, “go pack your bags. We’re all going down to the mountains for a vacation.” He told the Queen to get her stuff together and be ready to leave at daybreak. The King ordered his chief assistants to get to work on preparations to move the whole government to Holiday Land, the seat of the Royal Administration in the hills as well as a famous spa.

Then he told his secretary to send word to the Duke of Cumberland, otherwise known as the Black Duke, the Royal Administrator of the Hills, to get ready because the whole royal scene was coming his way fast.