

Prologue

The alchemist reads a book containing the story of Narcissus. According to legend, Narcissus kneeled every day beside a lake to admire his reflection, until one day he became so fascinated with his own beauty that he fell into the lake and drowned. The goddess of the forest appeared at the lake and found the water transformed into salty tears. She asked the lake why it cried for Narcissus, assuming it had admired Narcissus's beauty. The lake replies that it was enjoying its own beauty reflected in Narcissus's eyes.

Part 1

The third-person narrator describes a shepherd named Santiago arriving with his flock at an abandoned Church. Santiago decides to sleep there. A giant sycamore tree grows in the spot where a sacristy once stood. While Santiago sleeps, he has a disturbing dream (we do not learn exactly what the dream was). When he wakes, his flock begins to stir, and Santiago talks to the sheep about a girl he met the year prior. She is the daughter of a merchant who Santiago is visiting to sell some wool.

When Santiago arrives, the merchant asks him to wait until afternoon to sell him wool. While Santiago reads, he meets the merchant's daughter and talks to her about life in the village. She asks why he chooses to be a shepherd even though he can read. Santiago avoids the question, preferring instead to talk about his travels. Santiago finds the merchant's daughter's Moorish eyes and raven-colored hair entrancing. He experiences for the first time a desire to stay in one place for the rest of his life. When the merchant finally appears, he asks Santiago for the wool of four sheep and tells him to return the next year.

The story jumps forward in time almost a year, to four days before Santiago's next visit to the village. He stays in the abandoned church and daydreams about the merchant's daughter. As he urges his sheep along, he admires their loyalty. Santiago imagines he could kill his sheep one by one, and each one would be none the

wiser until he killed it. He feels troubled by his thought, and that night has the same troubling dream he had the year before.

Santiago recalls the day he told his father he wanted to travel instead of becoming a priest. His father told him that travelers see other lands, but do not change as a result. They just end up being nostalgic for the past. His father said the only people of their class who travel are shepherds. The next day, Santiago's father gave him three gold coins to purchase a flock of sheep. He encouraged Santiago to travel, but said Santiago would learn that their own countryside is best. As he recalls the scene, Santiago senses that his father also would have liked to travel, but could not afford to while raising a family. Santiago wonders if his sheep enjoy discovering new roads and sights each day, but decides they only care about eating. He compares the flock's single-mindedness to his own preoccupation with the merchant's daughter. Suddenly, Santiago remembers that an old woman in the nearby village of Tarifa interprets dreams. He decides to visit her.

Almost as soon as we meet Santiago, we learn that he is not an ordinary shepherd. Most notably, he reads regularly, which surprises the merchant's daughter. Shepherding presents an unusual career path for an educated young man, but Santiago clearly feels comfortable with his choice. We also see that Santiago's bearing has quickly made him successful at his job. He has regular customers, purchases books as he pleases, and appears to be content with his lifestyle. Only his attraction to the merchant's daughter, who the narrator says acts as the first signal that Santiago's life will never be the same, makes him question his choice to be a traveling shepherd. The other signal is Santiago's troubling dream, which is not initially explained but always occurs while he sleeps under the sycamore tree growing in the sacristy of the abandoned church. This mysterious dream repeats in two consecutive passages a year apart, and it serves as an important piece of foreshadowing.

Santiago enjoys his life as a shepherd not only because it allows him to travel, but also because he loves his sheep. Santiago notices his flock's ability to find contentment through food and

water alone, and he almost envies the fact that they never have to make any decisions. Happiness for a human being, he thinks, seems much more complicated. On the other hand, Santiago feels frustrated by the fact that his sheep can't share his appreciation of travel. He imagines that he could kill his sheep one by one and the flock would not even notice. The unexpectedly violent image shows us that the sheep live blind to important truths, and that they are not to be emulated. Santiago wonders if all humans are like his sheep: looking only for physical contentment and living without ever appreciating life. Later, this tension becomes very important to Santiago: even though he has travelled throughout Spain, he still feels limited. He wonders if his relatively local travels, comforting stacks of books, and obedient flock play the same role in his life that food and water play in the lives of his sheep. Santiago's thoughts imply that he must seek out a higher purpose if he wants to be truly happy.

Part 2

Upon meeting Santiago, the dream interpreter takes his hands and begins chanting a Gypsy prayer. When he was a boy, Santiago feared being captured by gypsies, and he worries the fear will return. He takes solace in an image of Jesus in the room, but his hands still tremble. When Santiago realizes that the dream interpreter detects his nervousness, he pulls his hands away and says he doesn't want a palm reading. The dream interpreter replies that she can help him, and that she will still charge him if he leaves early. Santiago decides to go ahead and explain his dream.

In his dream, Santiago is in a field with his sheep when a child starts to play with them. The child grabs Santiago's hands, transports him to the pyramids in Egypt, and tells him that he will find a treasure near them. As the child begins to say the exact location of treasure, Santiago wakes up.

After listening to the dream, the dream interpreter says she will not charge him for her service, but that she wants ten percent of the treasure when he finds it. Santiago laughs in disbelief, and agrees to swear that he will share his treasure. Then the dream interpreter

goes on to insist that Santiago travel to the Pyramids and find the treasure. She says that she knows the treasure really exists because it was a child who pointed it out in the dream. Skeptical, Santiago leaves disappointed but relieved he didn't have to pay anything.

Santiago eats and buys a new book in Tarifa. He rests in town to wait out the hot sun before he moves on. He is reading when an old man who resembles an Arab approaches him. Santiago ignores the man initially, but the old man persistently questions Santiago about the book until Santiago relents and talks to him. To Santiago's surprise, the old man knows the book. The old man says it is the same as most other books, because it describes how people end up believing "the world's greatest lie," that nobody can choose his own fate, or "Personal Legend." Santiago says he controlled his destiny by becoming a shepherd instead of a priest.

During their conversation, the old man introduces himself as Melchizedek and says he is the King of Salem. Santiago has never heard of Salem and thinks the old man is crazy. The old man says that if Santiago gives him one tenth of his sheep, he will tell him how to find the hidden treasure. Santiago guesses the old man works with the dream interpreter in a Gypsy scam, since in no other way could he have known about the treasure. Melchizedek then proceeds to write the names of Santiago's mother and father in the sand with a nearby stick—names Santiago never told the gypsy.

Part 3

Melchizedek explains the concept of the Personal Legend to Santiago. A person's Personal Legend, he says, represents what that person most desires to accomplish in his or her life. Everyone knows their Personal Legend when they are young, but as time passes, a mysterious force makes them feel they will never achieve their Personal Legend.

Melchizedek asks Santiago why he lives as a shepherd. When Santiago says he likes to travel, Melchizedek points to a baker working nearby. The baker likes to travel, but became a baker

because people consider them more important than shepherds. Melchizedek worries that Santiago is about to give up on his own Personal Legend and says he appears to everyone who is about to quit pursuing his or her dream. He usually appears as a solution to a problem or an idea, and once appeared as an emerald to a miner. He says he will help Santiago if Santiago hands over one-tenth of his flock.

The meeting upsets Santiago, and he begins wandering through the city. He buys bread from the baker Melchizedek mentioned. He then stops at a booth selling tickets for the boat to Africa, but decides to keep being a shepherd. Then, an intense wind called the levanter picks up. Santiago envies the wind's freedom, and decides the merchant's daughter and his sheep are only steps on the way toward his Personal Legend.

Santiago finds Melchizedek the next day and brings six sheep. He tells Melchizedek he sold the rest of his sheep the day before. Melchizedek says Santiago can find his treasure in Egypt by the pyramids. Initially, Santiago feels annoyed that Melchizedek does not give a more exact location, but then a butterfly appears. Melchizedek explains the butterfly is Santiago's first omen and opens his cape to reveal a jeweled breastplate. Melchizedek gives Santiago two stones from the breastplate. He says the stones are called Urim and Thummim and they represent "yes" and "no." They will help Santiago to read omens.

Before Melchizedek leaves, he tells Santiago the story of a shopkeeper who sends his son to learn the secret of happiness from the wisest man in the world. The boy finds the man in a beautiful castle in the desert. The wise man tells the boy to spend time looking around while balancing a spoonful of oil. When the boy returns, he says he didn't pay attention to any of the castle's splendor because he concentrated on the oil. The wise man sends him out again to see the castle, and the boy returns having seen the castle but having also spilled the oil. The wise man tells him he must admire the castle without forgetting the oil. The story reminds Santiago of a shepherd always needing to remember his flock.

As Melchizedek watches Santiago's ship pull out of port towards Africa, he remembers making the same bargain with Abraham that he made with Santiago.

Part 4

Santiago arrives in Tangier and sits at a bar. When he sees people engaging in local behaviors such as sharing pipes and walking hand-in-hand, he scorns the people as infidels. He worries that he can't speak Arabic, reassuring himself only with the money in his pouch. A man of similar age and appearance as Santiago addresses him in Spanish. Santiago tells him he needs to get to the Pyramids and offers to pay him to serve as a guide. The young man explains that the route across the Sahara desert is dangerous, and Santiago needs to show that he has enough money to make the trip. The bar owner speaks angrily to the young man in Arabic, and the young man drags Santiago outside, saying the bar owner is a thief. Santiago gives the young man his money to purchase camels.

The two traverse a crowded marketplace and Santiago notices a sword on display. Santiago asks the young man to find out the sword's price, but realizes the young man has disappeared. Santiago waits at the marketplace until nightfall for the young man to return and begins to cry when he realizes he's been robbed. Santiago takes inventory of his remaining possessions. He has his book, his jacket, and the stones Melchizedek gave him. He considers selling the stones to pay for a trip back home. He asks the stones if he will find his treasure, but when he puts his hand in his pocket he realizes the stones have slipped through a hole and fallen to the ground. As he collects them, he remembers his promise to make his own decisions, and he resolves to continue his mission.

Santiago falls asleep in the marketplace. He wakes as merchants begin setting up shop for the day. A candy seller offers Santiago his first sweet. Santiago notices that some merchants speak Spanish and others speak Arabic, but they communicate with each other without words. Meanwhile, a crystal merchant wakes up feeling anxious. For thirty years, his shop has stood on a desolate street

and attracted few customers. Business once boomed when Tangier was a busy port, but sales have fallen off ever since nearby Ceuta became a more important town.

That day, the crystal merchant sees Santiago looking around his shop. Santiago offers to clean glasses in the shop's window in exchange for food, but the crystal merchant does not respond. Santiago cleans the glasses anyway. During that time, two customers enter and buy crystal. When Santiago finishes, the crystal merchant takes him to a café. He explains that Santiago didn't need to clean, because the Koran orders him to feed the hungry. Santiago replies that they both needed to cleanse their minds of bad thoughts. The crystal merchant says it was a good omen that customers entered while Santiago cleaned and offers Santiago a job. Santiago says he will clean all the merchant's crystal overnight in exchange for money to get to Egypt. The merchant replies that the trip to Egypt is so long and expensive that Santiago couldn't earn enough for the trip in a year. Santiago feels disappointed but agrees to take the job.

Part 5

After almost a month of work, Santiago feels annoyed with his new job. The crystal merchant is grouchy and the work is tedious. The job pays decently, but Santiago would still need a year's savings to afford a new flock of sheep. Santiago offers to build a display case to place outside the shop and attract more customers, but the crystal merchant fears people will bump into it and break crystal. He argues that business has been good and asks why Santiago wants more. Santiago says he needs to follow his Personal Legend and go to the pyramids.

The crystal merchant doesn't understand why Santiago feels so determined. He warns that the display case could be a mistake just as easily as it could help them make more money. The crystal merchant says he lives by the Koran, which makes few demands, but as he explains these demands he recalls that one of them is a pilgrimage to Mecca. Traveling to Mecca has long been his dream. Santiago asks why he never made the trip, and the merchant says

that, if he did, he would no longer have anything to live for. He prefers to have his dream. In recognition of Santiago's dream, he agrees to build the display case.

The display case increases customer traffic, and Santiago realizes that, within six months, he will have enough to return to Tarifa and buy twice as many sheep as he originally owned. After hearing a man complain about the lack of places to drink on the hill, Santiago suggests that the crystal merchant also sell tea in crystal glasses. The crystal merchant hesitates to enter a new business, but he invites Santiago to smoke a pipe with him to discuss the idea. He tells Santiago he has become aware of the danger of ignoring blessings, and agrees to sell tea. The tea becomes popular, and the crystal merchant hires more employees as his business increases.

The months pass and Santiago, nearly a year after his arrival in Africa, has become rich as a result of the crystal shop's success. One morning, Santiago wakes early. He tells the crystal merchant he wants to return to Tarifa and buy a large flock of sheep, and he encourages the crystal merchant to travel to Mecca. The crystal merchant says he will not go to Mecca, and Santiago will not go home. Santiago asks how he knows, and the crystal merchant says "*maktub*," which means "it is written."

As Santiago packs, the two stones, Urim and Thummim, fall to the floor, reminding Santiago of Melchizedek. He considers how much he has achieved by travelling to Tangier and reconsiders returning home and becoming a shepherd again. The trip through the desert to the pyramids will offer him the chance to get to know a new place, and he could always return to his sheep. He decides to continue pursuing his Personal Legend, and visits a supplier for desert caravans.

Part 6

An Englishman sits in a stable preparing for a caravan trip through the Sahara desert. He studies alchemy and hopes to learn from an alchemist residing in the desert's Al-Fayoum oasis. The legendary

alchemist supposedly discovered the Philosopher's Stone and the Elixir of Life.

Santiago also joins the group traveling with the desert caravan, and he tells the Englishman his story of working for the crystal merchant. The Englishman seems unfriendly at first, telling Santiago that Urim and Thummim are cheap rock crystals. Santiago explains that a king gave them to him, but that the Englishman wouldn't understand. The Englishman says he does understand, because he read the story of Urim and Thummim in the Bible. He explains that he is seeking an alchemist, and Santiago replies that he is heading to Egypt to look for treasure. As the caravan sets off, the caravan leader orders everyone to swear to their God that they will follow his orders. On their trip, the Englishman reads constantly, so Santiago speaks to him very little during the journey. Instead, he daydreams, tries to read his book, and befriends a camel driver.

Santiago relates his adventures as a shepherd to the camel driver, and one day the camel driver tells Santiago his own story. He maintained a successful orchard, had travelled to Mecca, and felt he could die happily. However, one day an earthquake caused a flood that ruined his land, so he had to become a camel driver. These events taught him not to fear losing material possessions.

The caravan runs into groups of hooded Bedouins who warn of nearby thieves, barbarians, and tribal wars. The caravan travels quickly through the dangerous area, and no one speaks at night. The travelers do not light their fires either so as not to draw attention, and they must huddle around a circle of camels to stay warm. One night, the Englishman, unable to sleep, walks with Santiago around the encampment. Santiago goes into detail about the story of his life, and the Englishman compares Santiago's success to the governing principle of alchemy, called the Soul of the World. The term refers to the positive force of the world that works for the betterment of all things, both living and inanimate.

Santiago decides to learn more about the Soul of the World by reading the Englishman's alchemy books. He learns that the most important text in alchemy is inscribed on an emerald, called the

Emerald Tablet, and runs only a few lines. He also reads about the Master Work, which entails purifying metals to the point that all that is left of them is the Soul of the World. The Master Work has two parts, a liquid part called the Elixir of Life that cures all ills, and a solid part called the Philosophers Stone that can transform any metal into gold. The Englishman talks to Santiago about alchemy but feels disappointed with his superficial understanding of the practice.

A war begins in the desert but the caravan reaches the oasis safely. Egypt remains a long distance away, but Santiago feels pleased not to travel in fear any longer.

Part 7

The alchemist watches from Al-Fayoum as the caravan arrives. The village around Al-Fayoum buzzes with excitement, but the alchemist has seen many people come and go so he pays no attention. Omens have made the alchemist aware that someone traveling with the caravan will learn from him, and the alchemist wonders how capable his new apprentice will be.

Al-Fayoum, a desert oasis, amazes Santiago. The place appears larger than many Spanish towns. Curious children crowd the caravan and women accost the caravan's merchants. The camel driver tells Santiago that they are safe in Al-Fayoum. Warring tribes avoid it because mostly women and children inhabit the place. The caravan leader explains that the group will remain in Al-Fayoum until the war ends, and that they must hand over their arms and stay in tents with locals and fellow travelers. Santiago sleeps in a tent with five other young men his age. The next morning, he regales his roommates with stories of his life as a shepherd in Spain, but the Englishman interrupts him to ask for help finding the alchemist.

The pair searches all day for the alchemist's tent without luck. Santiago asks an old man about the alchemist, and the old man replies that even tribal chieftains can't meet with him. Santiago decides to ask one more person before giving up, and approaches

a young woman at a well. As soon as he sees her, he falls deeply in love with her. The girl introduces herself as Fatima, and explains that the alchemist communicates with desert spirits and lives in the south of Al-Fayoum. The Englishman disappears to pursue the alchemist and Fatima leaves after getting water. Santiago remains where he stands, love-struck.

The next day, Santiago returns to the well, hoping to see Fatima again. He finds the Englishman there as well. The Englishman explains he waited all day for the alchemist. When the alchemist finally arrived, the Englishman asked how to turn lead into gold. The alchemist only responded that he must "go and try." The Englishman feels annoyed to get such vague instructions after his long journey, but he resolves to try.

Fatima arrives after the Englishman leaves, and Santiago tells her he loves her. As the war drags on and the caravan remains in Al-Fayoum, Santiago meets Fatima at the well every day. Santiago tells Fatima about his Personal Legend which leads him to the pyramids, but he says he wants to stay in Al-Fayoum with her. One day, Fatima tells Santiago that she has been waiting for him her entire life, but insists that he continue on to Egypt after the war to pursue his Personal Legend. She says if they are meant to be together, they will meet again.

After this conversation, Santiago seeks out the Englishman and discovers he has built a furnace. The Englishman explains that he has abandoned his fear of failure and will attempt the Master Work.

Part 8

Santiago watches a pair of hawks attacking each other and has a vision of armies riding through the oasis. Santiago remembers Melchizedek's advice to heed omens, so he tells the camel driver about his vision. The camel driver takes Santiago's warning seriously because he believes that all people can penetrate to the Soul of the World.

The camel driver considers how seers make their living by understanding the Soul of the World, and recalls a time when a

seer asked him why he wanted to know the future. The camel driver had trouble coming up with a good answer, so the seer refused to cast the twigs he used to make his predictions. Instead, he told the camel driver to forget about the future and pay attention to the present. The seer told him that God will occasionally reveal the future to someone, but only so it can be rewritten.

Because the camel driver believes that God showed Santiago the future through his vision, he tells Santiago to warn the local tribal chieftains of approaching armies. Santiago doubts the chieftains will take him seriously, but the camel driver explains that they deal often with omens.

The chieftains reside in a huge white tent in the middle of the oasis. Santiago visits and tells a guard that he saw an omen. The guard goes inside the tent and emerges with a young Arab dressed in white and gold. Santiago explains his vision to the Arab, and the Arab asks Santiago to wait as he goes back into the tent. Santiago waits outside until nightfall, when finally the guard invites Santiago inside. The chieftains sit at the back of the lushly decorated tent on silk pillows, eating, smoking hookahs, and drinking tea. One of the chieftains asks Santiago why the desert would speak to him, a newcomer to the desert. Santiago replies that, because he is new, he can see things those accustomed to the desert may not. The chieftains argue in an Arabic dialect Santiago can't understand.

The old man at the center of the chieftains, dressed in white and gold, does not speak until the conversation ends. Then he recounts the story of a man who believed in dreams and was sold as a slave. The tribe's merchants bought the man and delivered him to Egypt, because they thought that anyone who believed in dreams could also interpret them. The man was Joseph, and he saved Egypt from famine by interpreting the Pharaoh's dreams. The old man says that the tribe believes in this tradition, which means they must take messages from the desert seriously.

After his speech, the old man says he will lift the ban on carrying weapons in the oasis for one day, and that everyone should be on the lookout for enemies. He says he will reward each man in the

oasis for every ten enemies he kills, and if Santiago turns out to be wrong, they will kill him.

Part 9

Santiago leaves the chieftains. Outside, a horseman in black carrying a sword knocks Santiago to the ground. The horseman asks who dared read the flight of the hawks. Santiago says he did and that he was able to see into the Soul of the World. The horseman asks Santiago why he defies Allah's will, and Santiago replies that Allah willed his vision to occur. The horseman withdraws his sword and asks why Santiago is in the desert. When Santiago says he is following his Personal Legend, the horseman explains he needed to test Santiago's courage, and that Santiago must not give up on his goal. The horseman tells Santiago to find him the next day after sunset if he survives the ensuing battle. Santiago asks the horseman where he lives, and the horseman simply points south before riding away. We learn that the mysterious horseman is the alchemist.

The next morning, two thousand armed men guard Al-Fayoum. Five hundred mounted troops arrive in the city pretending to be on a peaceful expedition, but when they arrive at the tent in the center of Al-Fayoum they all draw hidden swords and attack. The tent, however, is empty, and because the tribe is ready, the tribesmen defeat the attackers, killing everyone but the battalion's commander. The chieftains question the commander about why he broke with tradition and attacked Al-Fayoum, and the commander replies that his men were starving and needed to take the oasis to continue with the war. The chieftains express pity, but condemn the commander to death by hanging. The old man who leads the chieftains rewards Santiago with fifty gold pieces and asks him to become the tribal counselor.

That night, Santiago wanders to the south of Al-Fayoum. He sees a tent that a group of passing Arabs says genies inhabit. Santiago waits beside the tent, and at midnight the alchemist appears on his horse carrying two dead hawks on his shoulder. The alchemist says Santiago should not be there unless his Personal Legend

directed him to. He signals for Santiago to enter the tent. Inside, Santiago sees no traditional alchemy tools. The alchemist tells Santiago that he asked him to come to his tent because the omens told him Santiago would need help. Santiago tells the alchemist that the Englishman needs his help, but the alchemist replies that the Englishman has other things to do first. The alchemist says he needs to help direct Santiago to the treasure he seeks.

Santiago argues that he already has his treasure with his camel, money, and Fatima. The alchemist replies that Santiago has nothing from the pyramids. He proceeds to pour Santiago some wine, even though the rules of Al-Fayoum prohibit drinking alcohol. He tells Santiago to sell his camel and buy a horse.

Part 10

Santiago returns to the alchemist's tent the next night with a horse. The alchemist mounts his own horse and puts a falcon on his shoulder. He tells Santiago to lead him to where there is life in the desert. Santiago feels confused, but he understands what to do when the alchemist tells him that life attracts life. He gallops into the desert until his horse slows down. He tells the alchemist life exists where they have stopped, because his horse knows life. The pair look around among the desert stones and the alchemist finds a cobra and grabs it by the tail. The cobra flails and hisses and Santiago jumps away. The alchemist draws a circle in the sand with his scimitar and places the cobra inside it. The cobra relaxes, and the alchemist says the cobra will not leave the circle.

The alchemist prepares to move on with Santiago to the pyramids, but Santiago complains that he doesn't want to leave Fatima. The alchemist says Fatima understands that Santiago needs to complete his Personal Legend. Santiago asks the alchemist what would happen if he stayed in Al-Fayoum. The alchemist explains that Santiago would have enough money to buy many sheep and camels, and that he would marry Fatima. Santiago and Fatima would be happy for one year, but that during the second year Santiago would start to think about the treasure again. He would not be able to ignore the omens. During the third year, Santiago

would become increasingly obsessed with his Personal Legend, and Fatima would feel bad for interrupting Santiago's quest. Santiago and Fatima would still love each other, but by the fourth year, the omens of treasure would disappear. The tribal chieftains would dismiss Santiago as their counselor, and Santiago would live the rest of his life in regret. The alchemist's story convinces Santiago. The pair returns to Al-Fayoum for one night and Santiago tells Fatima he is leaving, but that he still loves her and he will return. The two embrace, touching for the first time.

The alchemist leads the boy through the desert with the falcon on his shoulder. During their stops, the falcon flies off and returns with rabbits or birds to eat. They travel for a week, speaking little. On the seventh day, the alchemist sets up camp early and tells Santiago his journey is almost finished. Santiago feels frustrated that the alchemist didn't teach him anything, but the alchemist says Santiago should have learned through actions. Santiago asks him why he is an alchemist, and the alchemist explains he learned the practice from his grandfather, when alchemy was simpler. He says men complicated alchemy by writing books about it. Previously, alchemists only needed the Emerald Tablet. Santiago asks what the tablet says, and the alchemist replies that one can't understand it through reason since it provides a passage to the Soul of the World. The alchemist encourages Santiago to immerse himself in the desert and listen to his heart so he can also gain an understanding of the Soul of the World.

Part 11

Santiago and the alchemist travel cautiously over the next two days while they pass through the area where the tribal fighting is worst. Santiago tells the alchemist his heart doesn't want him to continue because it fears it will lose everything. The alchemist replies that no heart suffers while it pursues its dreams, because to pursue a dream is to encounter God. The next morning, Santiago's heart tells him that everyone who has God within him feels happy, and that everyone on earth has a treasure waiting for him. Santiago tells the alchemist he has come to peace with his heart.

The next day, three tribesmen approach Santiago and the alchemist. They insist on searching the pair, and discover that the alchemist carries the Philosopher's Stone and the Elixir of Life. The tribesmen laugh when the alchemist tells them about the magical properties of his possessions, and they allow the two to continue on. Santiago asks the alchemist why he told the men about his possessions, and the alchemist replies that people seldom believe a person carrying treasures.

As the pair travel, Santiago's heart says it protected him throughout his life in ways he never noticed. They pass a tribal encampment and Santiago says he feels no danger. The alchemist gets angry, saying that Santiago should remember he travels through the desert. Two men suddenly appear behind Santiago and the alchemist and tell them they can travel no further. The alchemist stares into the eyes of the men and tells them they are not going far, and the men leave. The alchemist explains to Santiago that the eyes demonstrate the strength of one's soul.

After the alchemist and Santiago cross a mountain range, the alchemist says that they have two days' journey to the pyramids. Santiago asks the alchemist to tell him the secret of alchemy before the two part ways, and the alchemist says Santiago already knows alchemy because he can penetrate to the Soul of the World. Santiago asks how to specifically turn lead into gold. The alchemist says that gold represents the most evolved metal, and that successful alchemists understand evolution.

That evening, hundreds of Arab tribesmen dressed in blue approach Santiago and the alchemist and accuse them of acting as spies. They take them to a military camp and begin questioning them. The alchemist says Santiago is an alchemist, and offers Santiago's money to the tribe's chief. After the chief accepts the money, the alchemist says that Santiago could destroy the camp with the force of the wind. The men laugh and challenge Santiago to prove the alchemist's claim. The alchemist says that after three days Santiago will transform himself into the wind. Santiago feels confused, and the alchemist says he was only trying to avoid getting killed. Santiago replies that, since he can't become the wind,

they will die in three days anyway. The alchemist pours tea on Santiago's wrists, saying only fear prevents someone from living out their Personal Legend.

Part 12

A battle takes place during Santiago's and the alchemist's first day at the camp. Santiago finds the alchemist feeding his falcon and tells him he has no idea how to turn into the wind. He asks why the alchemist doesn't seem worried, since if Santiago doesn't turn into the wind, they will both die. The alchemist says he already knows how to turn himself into the wind.

For most of the second day, Santiago sits on a cliff contemplating his fear. On the third day the chief and his officers visit Santiago to see if he can make good on his claim. Santiago looks out to the desert and it speaks to him. Santiago tells the desert about his love for Fatima, and it offers its sand to Santiago to help the wind blow. It says that Santiago will also have to ask the wind for help.

A breeze picks up as Santiago asks the wind for help. The wind argues that Santiago differs too much from it, but Santiago contends that he desires to reach all corners of the world, just like the wind. The wind understands but doesn't know what to do. Santiago tells the wind that love can empower it to do anything. The wind feels like Santiago demeans what it already knows how to do. It blows harder, annoyed, and tells Santiago to talk to the Hand That Wrote All. Santiago says he will, but that first the wind should create a sandstorm so he can look into the sky without the sun blinding him.

The wind picks up into a powerful gale called the *simum* and the tribesman ask their chief if they can stop Santiago's stunt. The chief, however, wants to see Santiago complete his task. Santiago speaks to the sun. The sun tells him it knows of love, but Santiago argues it does not. Santiago says that all things have their own Personal Legend, and when something realizes its Personal Legend, it must change so it can acquire a new Personal Legend. Alchemists use this process to coax lead into becoming gold. After

hearing Santiago's words, the sun decides to shine more brightly, and the wind blows harder so it can continue to block out the brightness.

Santiago tells the sun that love transforms the Soul of the World and asks the sun to turn him into the wind. The sun says it can't and suggests Santiago speak to the Hand That Wrote All. The wind is happy to see the limit to the sun's wisdom and blows harder. Santiago communicates with the Hand That Wrote All but senses he should not speak. Instead, he prays and experiences a rush of love. He realizes that the Soul of God is his own soul, and that he can perform miracles.

Generations of people after remember the wind on that day. When the tribesmen look at where Santiago was standing, he is gone. Instead, he stands far on the other side of camp. The men feel terrified, and the alchemist seems pleased. The chief lets Santiago and the alchemist continue on their journey and provides them with an escort party.

Part 13

Santiago, the alchemist, and their escort ride until they arrive at a Coptic monastery. The alchemist tells Santiago they are three hours from the pyramids, and that he must finish the trip alone. The alchemist speaks to one of the monks in a strange language, and the monk leads him and Santiago to the kitchen and brings them a block of lead. The alchemist heats it and shaves a sliver off the Philosopher's Stone. He adds the lead sliver to the pan, and the mixture becomes red. When it dries, it is gold. Santiago wants to try but the alchemist reminds Santiago that alchemy is not his Personal Legend. The alchemist gives gold to the monk, to Santiago, and keeps some himself. He also gives a fourth part to the monk to keep for Santiago.

Before leaving, the alchemist tells Santiago a story about Emperor Tiberius of Rome. Tiberius had one son who was a soldier and one who was a poet. An angel tells him in a dream that generations of men will know the words of one of his sons. After Tiberius dies, he

meets the angel from his dream and thanks the angel for saying his son's poetry would become immortal. The angel replies that people have forgotten his son's poem. Instead, the son who was a soldier met the Son of God while looking for a healer for his servant. The soldier said that he was not worthy, and that the Son of God needed only to speak one word and his servant would be healed. These words became immortal.

Santiago rides off alone. As a full moon rises, Santiago sees the pyramids from atop a dune. He falls to his knees and sees a scarab in the sand. He starts digging in that spot but finds nothing. Eventually, two refugees from the tribal wars approach and yank Santiago from the hole. They take his gold, and assuming Santiago digs toward more gold, force him to keep digging until morning. When Santiago finds nothing, they beat him until he nearly dies. Santiago gasps that he saw the treasure in a dream, which makes the attackers think Santiago is crazy. One tells Santiago he had a dream of a treasure buried in Spain, and describes the church and sycamore tree from Santiago's days as a shepherd. The attacker says he isn't stupid enough to pursue it. Santiago smiles. He knows where to find his treasure.

Epilogue

Santiago arrives at the church and falls asleep contemplating the strange way God has guided him to the treasure. He wakes up digging and laughing about how God left gold at the monastery through the alchemist to ease his journey back. A voice in the wind says God wanted him to see the pyramids' beauty. Soon Santiago finds a chest of gold coins and jewels. He removes Urim and Thummim and puts them in the chest. He plans to head to Tarifa and give the gypsy one tenth of his treasure, and as the wind blows he feels Fatima's kiss on his lips. Santiago declares that he will return to her soon.