

# **A THREE-FOOT STOOL**

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A three-foot stool by Peter Wright

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**PETER WRIGHT**

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STOOL**



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**A THREE-FOOT STOOL**

A  
THREE-FOOT STOOL

BY

PETER WRIGHT

*"When on my three-foot stool I sit and tell  
the . . . feats I have done."*

CYMBELINE.

LONDON  
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# A THREE-FOOT STOOL

## CHAPTER I

“The midnight breeze that haunts the plain  
Now cools my horse’s flanks ;  
The wearied cattle now have lain,  
In close and darkened ranks,  
Their huddled bodies on the ground.  
Around the sleeping herd  
We keep our slow monotonous round ;  
Hushed is the air, unstirred  
Save where the puncher’s tuncful cry,  
Also on guard with me,  
Tells the wild creatures they may lie  
In full security,  
And where the creek keeps its soft song,  
Unheard in the fierce heat  
That from the sun all the day long  
On the burnt plains did beat.

The moon in highest heaven does ride.  
Her palace gates that smoothly glide,  
Her ivory gates, are opened wide  
In stately sort.  
The stars that fill the silent night  
Draw nearer to her palace bright,  
Their sil’ry urns to fill with light  
In her high Court.

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The camp-fire is almost dead.  
Only the fainter glow  
Of crumbling embers, burning red,  
Its shadowy light does throw  
On muffled men, who on the ground  
Are stretched in many ways ;  
They in an iron sleep are bound,  
The gift of arduous days.  
A motionless and faithful band,  
Close to their masters' beds,  
The little ready ponies stand,  
Drooping their patient heads.

The moon has dropped. The endless plain  
Has sunk in blackness yet again.  
The darkness spreads like a broad main,  
An unplumbed sea.  
A still more dark, oblivious pall  
Will on those sleeping figures fall ;  
Th' impenetrable night will call  
Both them and me.

To-morrow in the icy dawn  
Our saddles we will throw  
On horses fresh, ere day is born  
Or things their colour show.  
Again the whirling clouds that rise  
Around the surging steers  
Will fill with dust our aching eyes  
And make them smart to tears.  
And on, and on, and on, and on,  
We'll press each tired beast  
Till even Twilight shall have gone  
To her house in the East.  
Again the noontide's javelin rays  
Upon us will be bent,  
Another day of many days  
In heat and labour spent,