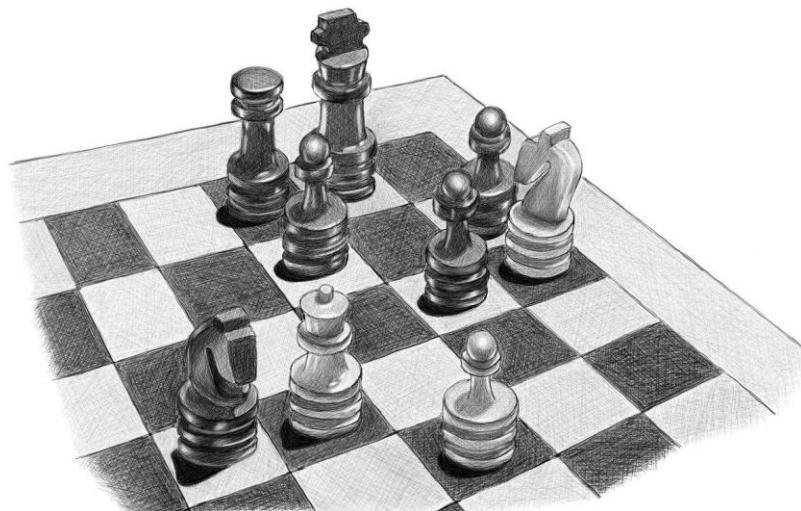
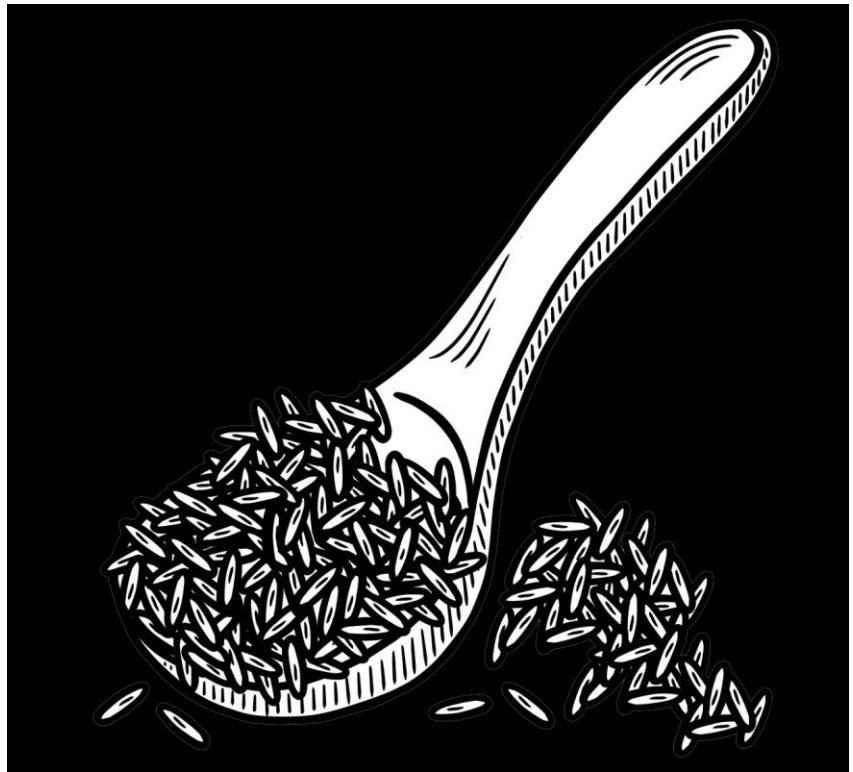


The King and the Chessboard

A parable

There was a king in India who loved mental games and puzzles. A wise man in his kingdom invented the game of chess for him. The king enjoyed the game so much that he invited the wise man to his castle and told him that as a reward he could have anything in the kingdom that he desired.





The wise man thought for a moment and then said that he was a but a **humble man**, and he only wanted a bit of rice.



When the king asked him how much rice he would like, the wise man said:

"Only a single grain of rice on the first square of the chessboard. Then two grains of rice on the second square, then four on the third square, and double that amount, and so on up to the last square."

That is how much rice he would like, if the king didn't feel that the request was too great. He warned the king that all the rice wouldn't fit nicely on the chessboard, but that was fine.



The king said, "such a small reward? No, mere rice won't do for such a great invention. What about gold? An atom of gold on the first square, two atoms on the second square, and doubling every square after that."





The wise man could scarcely believe his ears. He bowed low, and said, "My king, thank you a thousand times for your generosity."



And the king sent him off with 0.006 grams of gold.