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Intro



I remember as a kid sitting in a classroom and chaos being all around. All the kids were chattering and being distracted by each other.

Yet when the teacher sat down on a chair and opened a book and said the following once upon a Time that's all it took to get the students to calm down and listen to the story.

What is it behind the words once upon a time that can do such a tremendous shift in awareness? This phrase has been used for thousands of years. Many cultures have the same meaning yet different words.

Each time we hear this phrase we are tapping into our true essence and yet we're not aware of it. Something so cozy happens to us. It's like we are transported to a place where there is a beautiful fireplace and a fire is gently sending out sparks of light that are mesmerizing.

We are sitting in a comfy chair and watching the flicker of the fire. At times the fire makes a popping sound that delights the soul. You really can't put words into this experience.

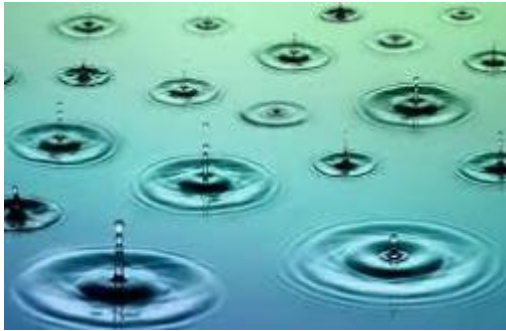
We all have the once-upon-a-time stories that lie within us. Mind you, this isn't the first time you are alive.

Since the dawning of creation, you have been around. We just think that the world around us is all that there is. When we hear the words once upon a Time something inside recognizes that and we respond even just for a few moments in time.

We settle down. We calm down. One small spark of the fire ever so gently comes to the surface.

Mind you, the more attention you pay to this the more attention it starts paying attention to you. We are so busy doing, that we have no time to just be. That is

the crux of the problem. Stories are a way to tap into the true essence that lies within.



Each one of us is like raindrops different and unique. Yet a raindrop's goal is to merge into the ocean. That is its true nature. We think we are separated from each other.

That is the problem. We wouldn't have the problems that we have today if we truly experienced the unity behind all things. We get

so preoccupied with the external.



Come sit by the fireplace and simply relax. There's a story to be told. This story is a part of you. It may seem like someone else's story, yet the essence is the same.

Your soul is speaking to you. Your soul is so much grander than what you think. You are infinite. You are the universe and just don't know it.

Once upon a time.

Sound of silence



Simon And Garfunkel The Sound of Silence Version Original 1964

4.8M views · 8 years ago



Typ iak

The Sound Of Silence - Simon And Garfunkel 1964 Paroles et traduction The Sound Of Silence (Le Son Du Silence) Hello ...



Linda Anne Brown

[onts502 0y 3t1at15MPm0aa7 M:620i](#) ·

“Hello, darkness, my old friend...” Everybody knows the iconic Simon & Garfunkel song, but do you know the amazing story behind the first line of The Sounds of Silence?

It began when Arthur “Art” Garfunkel, a Jewish kid from Queens, enrolled in Columbia University. During freshman orientation, Art met a student from Buffalo named Sandy Greenberg, and they immediately bonded over their shared passion for literature and music.

Art and Sandy became roommates and best friends. With the idealism of youth, they promised to be there for each other no matter what.

Soon after starting college, Sandy was struck by tragedy. His vision became blurry and although doctors diagnosed it as temporary conjunctivitis, the problem grew worse. Finally after seeing a specialist, Sandy received the devastating news that

severe glaucoma was destroying his optic nerves. The young man with such a bright future would soon be completely blind.

Sandy was devastated and fell into a deep depression. He gave up his dream of becoming a lawyer and moved back to Buffalo, where he worried about being a burden to his financially-struggling family. Consumed with shame and fear, Sandy cut off contact with his old friends, refusing to answer letters or return phone calls.

Then suddenly, to Sandy's shock, his buddy Art showed up at the front door. He was not going to allow his best friend to give up on life, so he bought a ticket and flew up to Buffalo unannounced. Art convinced Sandy to give college another go and promised that he would be right by his side to make sure he didn't fall - literally or figuratively.

Art kept his promise, faithfully escorting Sandy around campus and effectively serving as his eyes. It was important to Art that even though Sandy had been plunged into a world of darkness, he should never feel alone.

Art actually started calling himself "Darkness" to demonstrate his empathy with his friend. He'd say things like, "Darkness is going to read to you now." Art organized his life around helping Sandy.

One day, Art was guiding Sandy through crowded Grand Central Station when he suddenly said he had to go and left his friend alone and petrified. Sandy stumbled, bumped into people, and fell, cutting a gash in his shin. After a couple of hellish hours,

Sandy finally got on the right subway train. After exiting the station at 116th street, Sandy bumped into someone who quickly apologized - and Sandy immediately recognized Art's voice! Turned out his trusty friend had followed him the whole way home, making sure he was safe and giving him the priceless gift of independence.

Sandy later said, "That moment was the spark that caused me to live a completely different life, without fear, without a doubt. For that, I am tremendously grateful to my friend."

Sandy graduated from Columbia and then earned graduate degrees at Harvard and Oxford. He married his high school sweetheart and became an extremely successful entrepreneur and philanthropist.

While at Oxford, Sandy got a call from Art. This time Art was the one who needed help. He'd formed a folk-rock duo with his high school pal Paul Simon, and they desperately needed \$400 to record their first album. Sandy and his wife Sue had literally \$404 in their bank account, but without hesitation, Sandy gave his old friend what he needed.

Art and Paul's first album was not a success, but one of the songs, The Sounds of Silence, became a #1 hit a year later. The opening line echoed the way Sandy always greeted Art. Simon & Garfunkel went on to become one of the most beloved musical acts in history.

The two Columbia graduates, each of whom has added so much to the world in his own way, are still best friends. Art Garfunkel said that when he became friends with Sandy, "my real life emerged.

I became a better guy in my own eyes, and began to see who I was - somebody who gives to a friend." Sandy describes himself as "the luckiest man in the world." Adapted from Sandy Greenberg's memoir: "Hello Darkness, My Old Friend: How Daring Dreams and Unyielding Friendship Turned One Man's Blindness into an Extraordinary Vision for Life."

14Mark McClellan, Katharita Parsons Lamoza and 12 others

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Charles R. Beresford

What an Extraordinary and Beautiful story. Rick thank you for sharing it. So Moving !!! I went to an intimate hall to an Art Garfunkel concert near my home in 2010 !! Amazing

- **Love**
- **Reply**
- **1d**

-

Pamela Flowers

Thanks for sharing!

- **Love**
- **Reply**
- **1d**

-

Jamie Schultz Tucker

Love this so much ❤️

- **Love**
- **Reply**
- **19h**

-

Active

Don Johnson

That is so freaking cool. What a story.

- **Love**

Chuck Cook



Mark S. BlackburnNHHS Class of 1971

[oetsdrp4,77 5b71ae25fvom 0hre10mN](#) ·

After a train of bad news such as the loss of Gary Hill's William B., and the very bad global news from Paris today, it is my great pleasure to share some GOOD NEWS. I am posting delightful news about our classmate Chuck Cook.

I have the pleasure to announce that at age 62 Charles Arthur Cook has become a Father--about 6 months after Chuck received his first social security check!

This amuses me on many levels. I have a GrandDaughter who will be 15 next Spring, but Charlie Cook has a Son who will not turn 1 until next May! If there is one word to describe Chuck---what would that be? Virile? Those still residing in the Harbor area probably have spotted Chuck riding his bicycle around Newport. He has led a life entirely suitable to Newport and himself...but clearly out of the mainstream!

I well recall when Chuck was 17 after reading and researching carefully (not skills Chuck applied to school very often) he determined he would be a vegetarian. This was pretty uncommon back in 1971. His parents (the worst I've ever known) promptly kicked Chuck out of their house in response.

An inconvenience to be sure--but trust me, Chuck was MUCH better off! Perhaps due to his affinity for vegetables, Chuck worked in the produce industry for about a decade--his longest "stint" was at a produce market called "grower's ranch" on Newport Blvd. I believe for 3-4 years he filled out a 1040 form on April 15 as most of us tax slaves do.

Increasingly, Chuck did more casual labor migrating more into landscaping--something he seems to have a talent for. He's had a few side jobs including

helping one of the Neddeau brothers at farmer's markets and working as an assistant to an electrician.

For the past 25 years, Chuck has serviced a loyal following of landscaping customers in the Newport Heights area. Through the years Chuck has been very true to himself, marching to the beat of his unique drum. Chuck's adoptive parents punished him with a close-shave haircut 4x a year when report cards came out.

While Chuck's adoptive Father was allegedly an intelligent engineer, he couldn't seem to fathom that his ADOPTED Son would not have "inherited" his same math skills. So, Chuck was made to feel like a failure on many levels but found his dignity in living cheaply and simply with his integrity and wonderful sense of humor.

He owned 1 car in his life (that his parents made him buy) selling it by age 23. He has met 99% of his transportation needs with a bicycle. He's in great shape! Roughly 30 years ago Chuck began going "South for Winter."

For many years he would spend the winters at the beaches of Oaxaca, Mexico, and would return with the most exquisite hammocks made in Mexico. He'd sell these for a markup upon his return.

For the last 20 years, he has gone to SE Asia and is very expert in Thailand and Cambodia. He used to spend about 5 months a year there. Then he would "hold his nose" and return and work in Newport doing landscape work for 7 months.

Gradually spending more time there, he now is in SE Asia for perhaps 7 months and only in the USA for 5 (Chuck and I both find the USA less tolerable each year). He is a master of living frugally which allows him to live the life of a retired millionaire for half of each year (on Asia's lower cost of living).

Chuck will only work 6 hours a day, 4 days a week, 6 months of the year. He will only work outdoors. The rest of the time he is relaxing on the most beautiful beaches in the world. His life is simple, his requirements are few--it is a lifestyle, that, although unconventional, has served him very well.

Yes, the IRS wishes he would work harder and churn more \$, but Chuck has internal wisdom that stupefies me! Yeah, he still sucks at Algebra, but I honestly think he's one of the happiest people it has ever been my privilege to know.

Chuck practices meditation every day and is remarkably disciplined about his habits. He is still a vegetarian after 40+ years, and has never had health insurance nor do I believe has he seen a doctor in 40 years.

He has never married.

Chuck's Son was born last May. His name is Amar Charles. Chuck has known his Son's Mother for 6 years. Her family operates a farm. His destiny and legacy seem to be in Thailand, a free and happy country.

Chuck is NOT on Facebook, but I can hook you up with his email (on request).

21 You, Mark McClellan, Caroline Cahill Cecil , and 18 others

21 Comments

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[Mark S. Blackburn](#)

[erstSor21h,7c03bc00 e91oa2t 1322](#) ·

Many of my friends and family have met my friend Chuck Cook--a friend since Junior High School. More than anyone I have ever met, Chuck has chronically failed to meet society's expectations, which makes him very interesting and charming.

He marches to the beat of his own drum. He meditates and follows an Eastern Guru. He has traveled the world, works no more than 1/2 the year, and hasn't held a formal job in 40 years. He has lived an extremely high-quality, relaxed life in Thailand, Mexico, Costa Rica, Fiji, and Newport Beach.

He is the Father of a brilliant 6-year-old boy in Thailand. He rides a bicycle--and has not owned a car in 45 years.

He goes barefoot nearly always. When in Newport, to save for his travels, he lives in a tuff shed for which he recently held a mortgage burning celebration.

Usually, he spends 1/2 the year in Thailand, although he is departing for Zipolite, Mexico next week due to Thailand's crazy travel restrictions.

Zipolite is Mexico's premiere nude beach near Huatulco. Chuck spends enormous amounts of time simply laying in the sun.

Trust me--he'll NEVER get Covid! He is the King of Vitamin D--which is why he is the PERFECT person to have starred in this advertisement for a sun tanning balm.

What is the impact of his non-conforming lifestyle? Chuck Cook is probably the least-stressed & happiest person I have ever known! (You cannot hear what Chuck says if you use a phone.

You must listen on a computer...not sure why this Vimeo works this way).



Betty Topalion



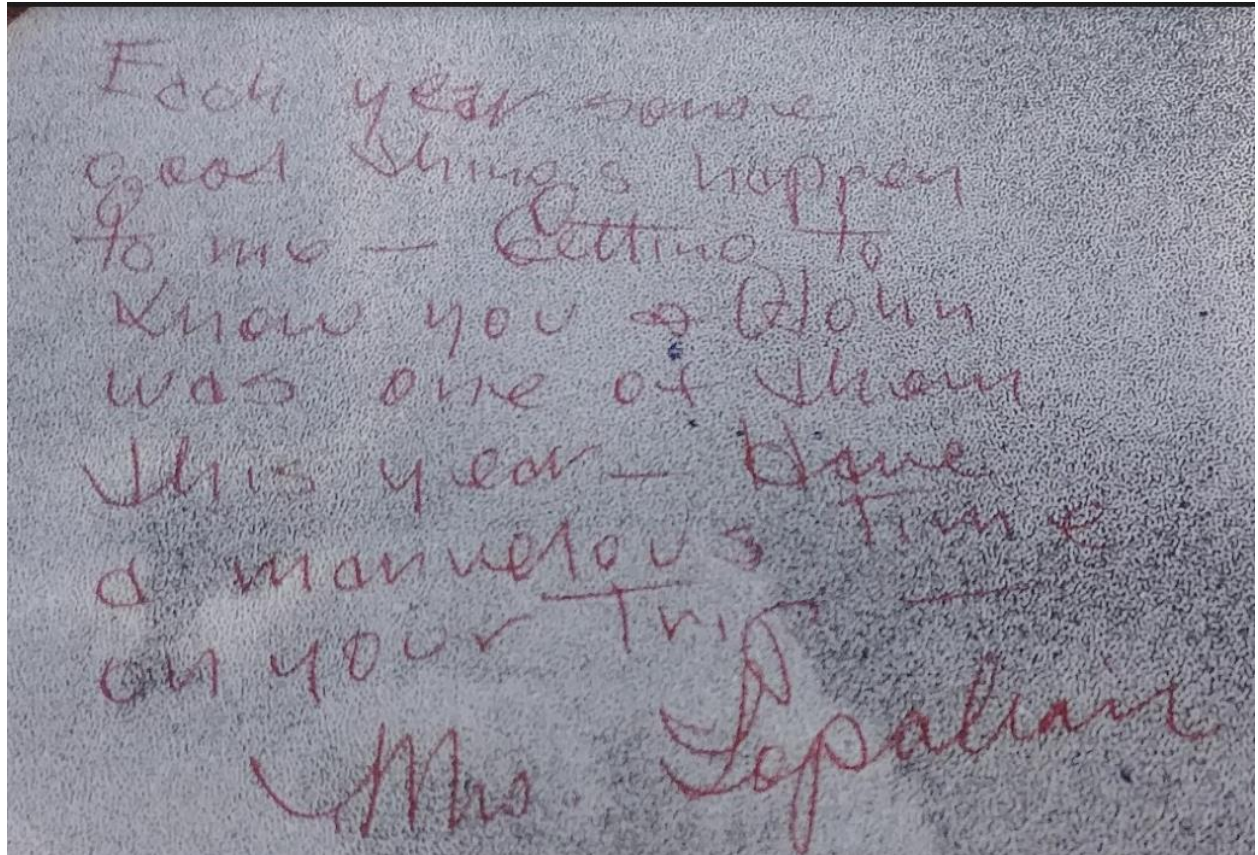
Mrs. Topalion was my poetry teacher in my senior year. She taught me the love of poetry.

I remember one day we had an assignment to read a poem. I found a spiritual poem and read it to the class.

She asked me what it means and I said it was self-explanatory. To be honest I had no clue.

She knew that and was kind not to go further.

She inspired me to look at ways that are different from society. There is a world where words come up to the surface to be a creative force for mankind. She helped me to dive deep to discover the pearls of life.



[My High School Poetry Teacher](#)

When I was in high school, I took poetry.

I had an incredible teacher.

She inspired me.

We read from many different poets.

I learned about the power of words.

The poetic reflects human life.

His soul is on fire.

Life is passionate.

The poet's words have meanings.

The poet teaches us how to listen.

The poet says we are all poets.
We have simply forgotten.
We speak at a surface level.
Throughout time the poets have been here.
They reflect our needs.

Betty Topalion Poetry Assignment

I remember one day Mrs. Topalion gave us an assignment. We were to find a poem that we like and had to read it to the class. I just started to learn how to meditate.

I choose this incredible eastern poem. I don't remember the name of it. Somehow I gravitated to it. I didn't know its meaning. Anyway, all the students gave their readings.

It was my turn to read the poem. I read the poem and my teacher asked me if could I critique the poem. I said it was self-explanatory. To be honest it was at such a deep level I didn't have the life experience to say anything. She has such compassion.

She didn't press me on it. Most teachers wouldn't let you get away so easily.

Yet a seed was planted and she didn't crush the seed. Years later I love to ponder life and its meanings. I often wondered how my life would be if she was a typical teacher who had her rules.

If you don't follow them exactly you will feel the consequences.

To this day I am grateful she had great intuition and saw my struggle. She gave me the inspiration to follow my dreams.

That is what a teacher is all about. I'm still learning the power of words in my everyday life. I feel so honored to have such a teacher.

Ducks splashing in the driveway



Once upon a Time in the land of OZ which is now called Kansas, Little Ricky and his wife Barbara were out for a countryside drive.

At times they would see an elderly man spraying his driveway on a hot summer day. To their amazement, many ducks were gathered in the driveway and were splashing like kids.

It was a site to behold. You could see the glee and happiness in these ducks. They were in having the time of their lives.

The elderly man had so much love and compassion for the ducks. They developed such a bond of friendship.

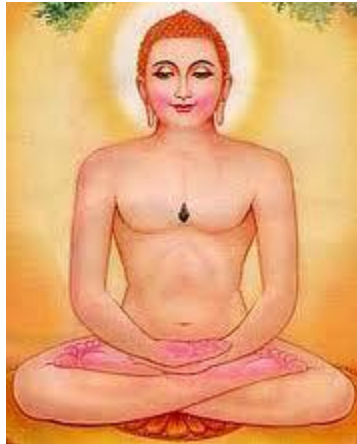
We would see this happening quite often on a hot summer day. Usually, this would take place around 5:00 or 6:00 in the evening.

Did Jainism Help Shape the American Civil Rights Movement?

By Andrew Bowen

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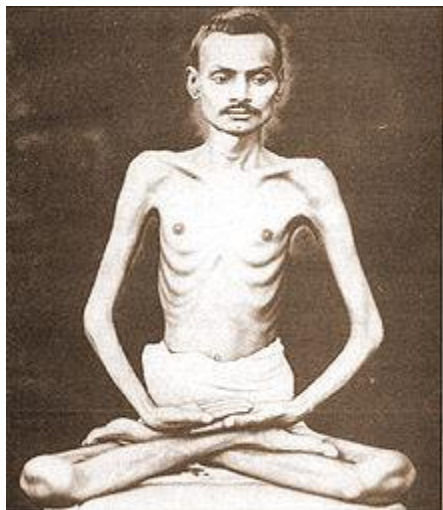
The American Civil Rights movement during the mid-1950s to early '70s marked one of the most tumultuous periods of social change and unrest in American history.

A wave of political and social conservatism consumed the national attention during the 1950s after the end of World War II and now with the African-American Civil Rights Movement in full swing, the fires of change swept through American culture.

So how could Jains, who are hardly known outside of academia in the United States at this time, have any influence on social movements in America?

As with many events in our lives, it isn't the impact that reaches you, but the ripple.

Meet our impact point. Shrimad Rajchandra



Shrimad Rajchandra was a Jain philosopher who lived in India between 1867 and 1901. After watching a funeral pyre at a young age, it is said that Shrimad Rajchandra suddenly recollected all of his past lives, thus gleaning all the knowledge and spiritual wisdom he attains in those periods.

He would go on to spend the rest of his life teaching and writing about spiritual concepts within the Jain framework until he died at the age of 32.

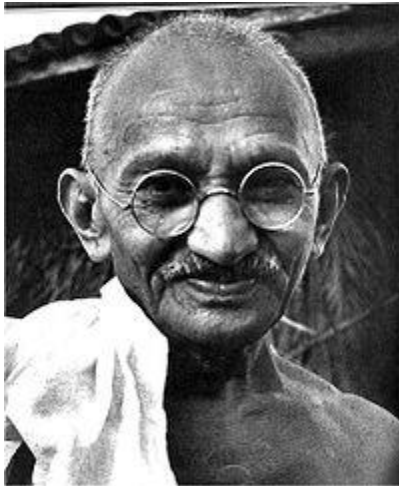
His most important literary work, which bears his name, is highly regarded even today.

¹ <https://www.beliefnet.com/columnists/projectconversion/2011/11/did-jainism-help-shape-the-american-civil-rights-movement.html>

What is interesting about his story (among other things) is that Shrimad Rajchandra made a very special friendship with one of history's most endeared activists.

Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi himself regarded Shrimad Rajchandra as not only a friend but a spiritual guide.

"I have drunk to my heart's content the nectar of religion that was offered to me by Shri Raichandbhai. Raichandbhai hated the spread of irreligion in the name of religion and he condemned lies, hypocrisy, and such other vices that were getting a free hand in his time. He considered the whole world as his relative and his sympathy extended to all living beings of all ages." –Mahatma Gandhi



Mahatma Gandhi is who many of us think of regarding civil disobedience and non-violent resistance. Under the influence of his native Hindu faith, his mentor Shrimad Rajchandra who preached ahimsa (non-injury), and a love for freedom, Gandhi began civil rights and liberation movements in South Africa during his early years as an attorney before moving on to his native India.

Gandhi is known for his non-violent resistance against British rule in India which after years of struggle, led to its independence in 1947. He was assassinated in 1948.

"The science of war leads one to dictatorship, pure and simple. The science of non-violence alone can lead one to pure democracy...Power based on love is a thousand times more effective and permanent than power derived from fear of punishment..." –Mahatma Gandhi



From America's South, its own philosopher and propagator of non-violence and change soon rose. Martin Luther King Jr., a Baptist preacher from Georgia, was a tremendous personality.

An academic marvel with a flair for leadership and activism, he helped found the SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference) and was a prominent leader in the NAACP.

King led the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955 which opposed the Montgomery Alabama transit segregation policy and played a pivotal role in the 1963 March on Washington where he delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech.

While King cited many influences for his position on non-violent activism, he spoke warmly of none other than Mahatma Gandhi. King was greatly impacted by Gandhi's work after visiting India, a trip that may have helped shape the American political and social structure forever.

"Since being in India, I am more convinced than ever before that the method of nonviolent resistance is the most potent weapon available to oppressed people in their struggle for justice and human dignity. In a real sense, Mahatma Gandhi embodied in his life certain universal principles that are inherent in the moral structure of the universe, and these principles are as inescapable as the law of gravitation." –Martin Luther King Jr., Jr.

With the help of King and many others in the struggle for racial equality, America eventually adopted the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Immigration and National Services Act of 1965, and the Fair

Housing Act of 1968 among others. For his service to humanity, King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. He was assassinated in 1968.

Ripples. Martin Luther King Jr., Jr. was an American Christian. Gandhi was a Hindu. Shrimad Rajchandra was a Jain philosopher. Lord Mahavira taught his people 2,500 years ago in northern India.

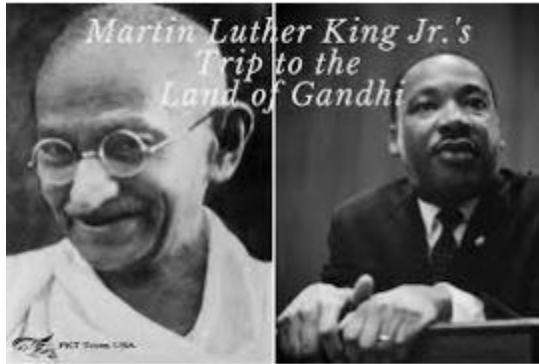
Each ripple reached out, inch by inch, and eventually covered the world. And the influence of non-violent activism is still alive today with our current Occupy Movement, which has spread globally.

So now we see how Jainism subtly influenced social change across centuries and nations without converting a single soul, without coercion, without force, but simply because it makes sense.



What sort of ripple will you form today?

My Trip to the Land of Gandhi- Martin Luther King Jr.



Author: King, Martin Luther, Jr.

Date: July 1, 1959, to July 31, 1959

Location: Chicago, Ill.

Details

In his account of his India tour published in Ebony magazine, King notes that Gandhi's spirit is still alive, though "some of his disciples have misgivings about this when . . . they look around and find nobody today who comes near the stature of the Mahatma."¹ Lamenting India's pervasive economic inequalities,

King observes that "the bourgeoisie—white, black or brown—behaves about the same the world over," and he calls upon the West to aid India's development "in a spirit of international brotherhood, not national selfishness."

For a long time, I had wanted to take a trip to India. Even as a child the entire Orient held a strange fascination for me—the elephants, the tigers, the temples, the snake charmers, and all the other storybook characters.

While the Montgomery boycott was going on, India's Gandhi was the guiding light of our technique of non-violent social change. We spoke of him often. So as soon as our victory over bus segregation was won, some of my friends said: "Why don't you go to India and see for yourself what the Mahatma, whom you so admire, has wrought."

In 1956 when Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, India's Prime Minister, made a short visit to the United States, he was gracious enough to say that he wished that he and I had met and had his diplomatic representatives make inquiries as to the possibility of my visiting his country sometime soon.

Our former American ambassador to India, Chester Bowles, wrote me along the same lines.²

But every time that I was about to make the trip, something would interfere. At one time it was my visit by a prior commitment to Ghana.³ At another time my publishers were pressing me to finish writing *Stride Toward Freedom*.

Then along came Mrs. Izola Ware Curry. When she struck me with that Japanese letter opener on that Saturday afternoon in September as I sat autographing books in a Harlem store, she not only knocked out the travel plans that I had but almost everything else as well.

After I recovered from this near-fatal encounter and was finally released by my doctors, it occurred to me that it might be better to get on the trip to India before plunging too deeply once again into the sea of the Southern segregation struggle.

I preferred not to take this long trip alone and asked my wife and my friend, Lawrence Reddick, to accompany me. Coretta was particularly interested in the women of India and Dr. Reddick in the history and government of that great country.

He had written my biography, *Crusader Without Violence*, and said that my true test would come when the people who knew Gandhi looked me over and passed judgment upon me and the Montgomery movement. The three of us made up a sort of 3-headed team with six eyes and six ears for looking and listening.

The Christopher Reynolds Foundation made a grant through the American Friends Service Committee to cover most of the expenses of the trip and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Montgomery Improvement Association added their support.⁴

The Gandhi Memorial Trust of India extended an official invitation, through diplomatic channels, for our visit.⁵

And so on February 3, 1959, just before midnight, we left New York by plane. En route, we stopped in Paris with Richard Wright, an old friend of Reddick's, who brought us up to date on European attitudes on the Negro question and gave us a taste of the best French cooking.⁶

We missed our plane connection in Switzerland because of fog, arriving in India after a roundabout route, two days late. But from the time we came down out of the clouds at Bombay on February 10, until March 10, when we waved goodbye at the New Delhi airport, we had one of the most concentrated and eye-opening experiences of our lives.

There is so much to tell that I can only touch upon a few of the high points.

At the outset, let me say that we had a grand reception in India. The people showered upon us with the most generous hospitality imaginable. We were graciously received by the Prime Minister, the President, and the Vice-President of the nation; members of Parliament, Governors, and Chief

Ministers of various Indian states; writers, professors, social reformers, and at least one saint.⁷ Since our pictures were in the newspapers very often it was not unusual for us to be recognized by crowds in public places and on public conveyances.⁸ Occasionally I would take a morning walk in the large cities, and out of the most unexpected places someone would emerge and ask: "Are you Martin Luther King Jr.?"

Virtually every door was open to us. We had hundreds of invitations that the limited time did not allow us to accept. We were looked upon as brothers with the color of our skins as something of an asset.

But the strongest bond of the fraternity was the common cause of minority and colonial peoples in America, Africa, and Asia struggling to throw off racialism and imperialism.

We had the opportunity to share our views with thousands of Indian people through endless conversations and numerous discussion sessions. I spoke before university groups and public meetings all over India.

Because of the keen interest that the Indian people have in the race problem these meetings were usually packed. Occasionally interpreters were used, but on the whole, I spoke to audiences that understood English.

The Indian people love to listen to the Negro spirituals. Therefore, Coretta ended up singing as much as I lectured. We discovered that autograph seekers are not confined to America.

After appearances in public meetings and while visiting villages we were often besieged for autographs. Even while riding planes, more than once pilots came into the cabin from the cockpit requesting our signatures.

We got good press throughout our stay. Thanks to the Indian papers, the Montgomery bus boycott was already well known in that country. Indian publications perhaps gave a better continuity of our 381-day bus strike than did most of our papers in the United States.

Occasionally I meet some American fellow citizen who even now asks me how the bus boycott is going, apparently never having read that our great day of bus integration, December 21, 1956, closed that chapter of our history.

We held press conferences in all of the larger cities—Delhi, Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay—and talked with newspapermen almost everywhere we went.

They asked sharp questions and at times appeared to be hostile but that was just their way of bringing out the story that they were after. As reporters, they were scrupulously fair with us and in their editorials showed an amazing grasp of what was going on in America and other parts of the world.

The trip had a great impact on me personally. It was wonderful to be in Gandhi's land, to talk with his son, his grandsons, his cousin, and other relatives; to share the reminiscences of his close comrades; to visit his ashrama, to see the countless memorials for him, and finally to lay a wreath on his entombed ashes at Rajghat.⁹

I left India more convinced than ever before that non-violent resistance is the most potent weapon available to oppressed people in their struggle for freedom.¹⁰ It was a marvelous thing to see the amazing results of a non-violent campaign.

The aftermath of hatred and bitterness that usually follows a violent campaign was found nowhere in India. Today a mutual friendship based on complete equality exists between the Indian and British people within the Commonwealth.

The way of acquiescence leads to moral and spiritual suicide. The way of violence leads to bitterness in the survivors and brutality in the destroyers. But, the way of non-violence leads to redemption and the creation of a beloved community.

The spirit of Gandhi is very much alive in India today. Some of his disciples have misgivings about this when they remember the drama of the fight for national independence and when they look around and find nobody today who comes near the stature of the Mahatma. But any objective observer must report that Gandhi is not only the greatest figure in India's history but that his influence is felt in almost every aspect of life and public policy today.

India can never forget Gandhi. For example, the Gandhi Memorial Trust (also known as the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi) collected some \$130 million soon after the death of "the father of the nation."

This was perhaps the largest, spontaneous, mass monetary contribution to the memory of a single individual in the history of the world. This fund, along with support from the Government and other institutions, is resulting in the spread and development of Gandhian philosophy, the implementation of his constructive program, the erection of libraries, and the publication of works by and about the life and times of Gandhi.

Posterity could not escape him even if it tried. By all standards of measurement, he is one of the half-dozen greatest men in world history.

I was delighted that the Gandhians accepted us with open arms. They praised our experiment with the non-violent resistance technique at Montgomery.

They seem to look upon it as an outstanding example of the possibilities of its use in western civilization. To them, as to me it also suggests that non-violent resistance when planned and positive in action can work effectively even under totalitarian regimes.

We argued this point at some length with the groups of African students who are today studying in India.¹¹ They felt that non-violent resistance could only work in a situation where the resisters had a potential ally in the conscience of the opponent.

We soon discovered that they, like many others, tended to confuse passive resistance with non-resistance. This is completely wrong. True non-violent resistance is not unrealistic submission to evil power.

It is rather a courageous confrontation of evil by the power of love, in the faith that it is better to be the recipient of violence than the inflictor of it, since the latter only multiplies the existence of violence and bitterness in the universe, while the former may develop a sense of shame in the opponent, and thereby bring about a transformation and change of heart.

Non-violent resistance does call for love, but it is not sentimental love. It is a very stern love that would organize itself into collective action to right a wrong by taking on itself suffering.

While I understand the reasons why oppressed people often turn to violence in their struggle for freedom, it is my firm belief that the crusade for independence and human dignity that is now reaching a climax in Africa will have a more positive effect on the world, if it is waged along the lines that were first demonstrated in that continent by Gandhi himself.¹²

India is a vast country with vast problems. We flew over the long stretches, from North to South, East to West; took trains for shorter jumps, and used automobiles and jeeps to get us into the less accessible places.

India is about a third the size of the United States but has almost three times as many people. Everywhere we went we saw crowded humanity—on the roads, in the city streets and squares, even in the villages.¹³

Most of the people are poor and poorly dressed. The average income per person is less than \$70 per year.

Nevertheless, their turbans for their heads, loose flowing, wrap-around dhotis that they wear instead of trousers, and the flowing saris that the women wear instead of dresses are colorful and picturesque. Many Indians wear part native and part western dress.

We think that we in the United States have a big housing problem but in the city of Bombay, for example, over a half million people sleep out of doors every night.

These are mostly unattached, unemployed, or partially employed males. They carry their bedding with them like foot soldiers and unroll it each night in any unoccupied space they can find—on the sidewalk, in a railroad station, or at the entrance of a shop that is closed for the evening.

The food shortage is so widespread that it is estimated that less than 30% of the people get what we would call three square meals a day. During our great depression of the 1930s, we spoke of "a third of a nation" being "ill-housed, ill-clad, and ill-fed."

For India today, simply change one-third to two-thirds in that statement and that would make it about right.

As great as is unemployment, under-employment is even greater. Seventy percent of the Indian people are classified as agricultural workers and most of these do less than 200 days of farm labor per year because of the seasonal fluctuations and other uncertainties of mother nature. Jobless men roam the city streets.

Great ills flow from the poverty of India but strangely there is relatively little crime. Here is another concrete manifestation of the wonderful spiritual quality of the Indian people.

They are poor, jammed together, and half-starved but they do not take it out on each other. They are a kindly people. They do not abuse each other—verbally or physically—as readily as we do. We saw but one fist fight in India during our stay.¹⁴

In contrast to the poverty-stricken, there are Indians who are rich, have luxurious homes, landed estates, fine clothes, and show evidence of over-eating. The bourgeoisie—white, black or brown—behaves about the same the world over.

And then there is, even here, the problem of segregation. We call it race in America; they call it caste in India. In both places, it means that some are considered inferior, treated as though they deserve less.

We were surprised and delighted to see that India has made greater progress in the fight against caste "untouchability" than we have made here in our own country against racial segregation.

Both nations have federal laws against discrimination (acknowledging, of course, that the decision of our Supreme Court is the law of our land). But after this has been said, we must recognize that there are great differences between what India has done and what we have done on a problem that is very similar.

The leaders of India have placed their moral power behind their law. From the Prime Minister down to the village councilmen, everybody declares publicly that untouchability is wrong.

But in the United States, some of our highest officials decline to render a moral judgment on segregation and some from the South publicly boast of their determination to maintain segregation. This would be unthinkable in India.

Moreover, Gandhi not only spoke against the caste system but he acted against it. He took "untouchables" by the hand and led them into the temples from which they had been excluded. To equal that, President Eisenhower would take a Negro child by the hand and lead her into Central High School in Little Rock.

Gandhi also renamed the untouchables, calling them "Harijans" which means "children of God."

The government has thrown its full weight behind the program of giving the Harijans an equal chance in society—especially when it comes to job opportunities, education, and housing.

India's leaders, in and out of government, are conscious of their country's other great problems and are heroically grappling with them. The country seems to be divided.

Some say that India should become westernized and modernized as quickly as possible so that it might raise her standards of living. Foreign capital and foreign industry should be invited in, for in this lies the salvation of the almost desperate situation.

On the other hand, there are others—perhaps the majority—who say that westernization will bring with it the evils of materialism, cut-throat competition, and rugged individualism; that India will lose her soul if she takes to chasing Yankee dollars; and that the big machine will only raise the living standards of the comparative few workers who get jobs but that the greater number of people will be displaced and will thus be worse off than they are now.

Prime Minister Nehru, who is at once an intellectual and a man charged with the practical responsibility of heading the government, seems to steer a middle course between these extreme attitudes.

In our talk with him he indicated that he felt that some industrialization was absolutely necessary; that there were some things that only big or heavy industry could do for the country but that if the state keeps a watchful eye on the developments, most of the pitfalls may be avoided.

At the same time, Mr. Nehru gives support to the movement that would encourage and expand the handicraft arts such as spinning and weaving in-home and village and thus leaving as much economic self-help and autonomy as possible to the local community.

There is a great movement in India that is almost unknown in America. At its center is the campaign for land reform known as Bhoodan. It would solve India's great economic and social change by consent, not by force.

The Bhoodanists are led by the sainted Vinoba Bhave and Jayaprakash Narayan, a highly sensitive intellectual, who was trained in American colleges.¹⁵ Their ideal is the self-sufficient village. Their program envisions

Persuading large land owners to give up some of their holding to landless peasants;

Persuading small land owners to give up their individual ownership for common cooperative ownership by the villages;

Encouraging farmers and villagers to spin and weave the cloth for their own clothes during their spare time from their agricultural pursuits.

Since these measures would answer the questions of employment, food, and clothing, the village could then, through cooperative action, make just about everything that it would need or get it through barter or exchange from other villages.

Accordingly, each village would be virtually self-sufficient and would thus free itself from the domination of the urban centers that are today like evil loadstones drawing the people away from the rural areas, concentrating them in city slums, and debauching them with urban vices.

At least this is the argument of the Bhoodanists and other Gandhians.

Such ideas sound strange and archaic to Western ears. However, the Indians have already achieved greater results than we Americans would ever expect. For example, millions of acres of land have been given up by rich landlords and additional millions of acres have been given up to cooperative management by small farmers. On the other hand, the Bhoodanists shrink from giving their movement the organization and drive that we in America would venture to guess that it must have in order to keep pace with the magnitude of the problems that everybody is trying to solve.

Even the government's five-year plans fall short in that they do not appear to be of sufficient scope to embrace their objectives. Thus, the three five-year plans were designed to provide 25,000,000 new jobs over a 15-year period but the birth rate in India is 6,000,000 per year.

This means that in 15 years there will be 9,000,000 more people (less those who have died or retired) looking for the 15 million new jobs¹⁶. In other words, if the planning were 100 percent successful, it could not keep pace with the growth of problems it is trying to solve.

As for what should be done, we surely do not have the answer. But we do feel certain that India needs help. She must have outside capital and technical know-how. It is in the interest of the United States and the West to help supply these needs and not attach strings to the gifts.

Whatever we do should be done in a spirit of international brotherhood, not national selfishness. It should be done not merely because it is diplomatically expedient, but because it is morally compelling. At the same time, it will rebound to the credit of the West if India can maintain her democracy while solving her problems.¹⁷

It would be a boon to democracy if one of the great nations of the world, with almost 400,000,000 people, proves that it is possible to provide a good living for everyone without surrendering to a dictatorship of either the "right" or "left."

Today India is a tremendous force for peace and non-violence, at home and abroad. It is a land where the idealist and the intellectual are yet respected. We should want to help India preserve her soul and thus help to save our own.

1. Four weeks after returning from India, King prepared a draft of this article (Draft, "My trip to India," April 1959; see also Maude L. Ballou to Lerone Bennett, 17 April 1959). Nine photographs accompanied it, including pictures of King meeting Prime Minister Nehru and the Kings and traveling companion Lawrence Reddick placing a wreath at the site of Gandhi's cremation.
2. Bowles to King, 28 January 1957; see also Homer Alexander Jack to King, 27 December 1956, in Papers 3:496, 498.
3. In March 1957 King attended the Ghanaian independence celebrations. For more on King's trip to Ghana, see Introduction in Papers 4:7-9.
4. The Reynolds Foundation provided \$4,000 for the trip, SCLC provided an additional \$500, and the MIA and Dexter Avenue Baptist Church presented the Kings with a money tree at a "bon voyage" celebration in their honor on 26 January (AFSC, "Budget: leadership intervisitation, visit to India by Martin Luther and Coretta King," February-March 1959, and "The Kings Leave Country," Dexter Echo, 11 February 1959).
5. See G. Ramachandran to King, 27 December 1958, in Papers 4:552-553.
6. Wright, an African American novelist, had lived in Paris since 1947. In a draft of this article, King had crossed out the reference to Wright. For more on King's visit with Wright, see Introduction, p. 4 in this volume.
7. Among those King met were Nehru, President Rajendra Prasad, Vice President Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, and member of Parliament Sucheta Kripalani. King also refers to Gandhi's disciple Vinoba Bhave.
8. King's draft phrased this differently: "Our pictures were in the newspapers very often and we were recognized by crowds at the circus and by pilots on the planes." The draft did not include the subsequent sentence or the following two paragraphs.
9. See King to Ramdas M. Gandhi, 8 August 1959, pp. 255-256 in this volume.
10. This sentence and the remainder of the paragraph were not included in King's draft.

11. King's draft added the following sentence: "They, like many others, seem to feel that nonviolent resistance means non-resistance, do nothing." The remainder of the paragraph and the following paragraph were not included in the draft.

12. King's draft included the following paragraph: "We also learned a lot from the India journalists. Our practice was to divide the time of our press conferences between questions they asked us and questions we asked them."

13. King's draft added the following: "The people have a way of squatting, resting comfortably (it seemed) on their haunches. Many of the homes do not have chairs and most of the cities have very few park or street benches."

14. In King's draft, he had stricken the following two paragraphs: "There is great consideration for human life but little regard for labor and time. We saw men mending shoes almost without tools. Five persons may be sent to bring down a package that one could carry. Human muscles there do many jobs that our machines do here. Moreover, nobody seems to be in a hurry and it is surprising when arrangements and appointments come off according to schedule.

Young boys accost you everywhere, persistently offering to supply you with just about anything your heart could desire and your pocket book can pay for. Begging is widespread though the government has done much to discourage it. But what can you do when an old haggard woman or a little crippled urchin comes up and motions to you that she is hungry?"

15. For King's 1959 interview with Vinoba Bhave, see Vinoba, "Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with Vinoba," *Bhoodan* 3 (18 March 1959): 369-370; see also King to Narayan, 19 May 1959, pp. 209-211 in this volume.

16. King's draft indicated that ninety million more people would be looking for work.

17. In his draft, King marked the following sentence for deletion: "Her people are remarkably patient but many of them are looking toward their neighbor to the North and noting that China under the discipline of communism seems to be moving ahead more rapidly than India."

Source:

Ebony, July 1959, pp. 84-92.

Paul Sides



When I first moved to Hawaii I heard that an old junior high friend was living in Maui. I hadn't spoken to him in probably 20 years. Paul was a twin too so we had a lot in common. Both of us were surfers.

When I met him after twenty years I was really impressed by him. He was truly a genuine human being. He carried that aloha spirit. He was a genuine human being. He was full of love and compassion.

He had a lot of friends on this island and introduce me to him. I didn't pick up any ego from him at all. We became greater friends. I would meet him very early in the morning at the beach. He taught me the ropes about surfing in Hawaii.

He had a great sense of humor. Both of us were involved in our own quest to find God. We shared a lot of love and brotherhood. I found out that he was dying from cancer. He had cancer for five years. It would come and go. Paul never complained about it.

When I was in his presence I felt gratitude that I knew a human being like this. In the end, Paul died. Hundreds of surfers came to a huge party at the beach.

This is what Paul wanted. He wanted each one of us to cherish life. Even amidst his death, his presence was there. Paul where ever you all I love you. Aloha.....

Nick Roth

Nick is another extremely creative person. He was one of the best surfers of the day. He was quite humble and never boast about his achievements. His mother was a famous artist.

She was well known in the art field. Yet I didn't know this until recently. Nick and I had a great chuckle because back then we couldn't see the forest from the trees. Surfing is another incredible expression in life.



I have known Nick since junior high school. We went on many surfing adventures in High School.

Nick is one of those guys that whatever he touches turns to gold. He was good at whatever sport he played yet at surfing he seemed he was destined to be a surfer.

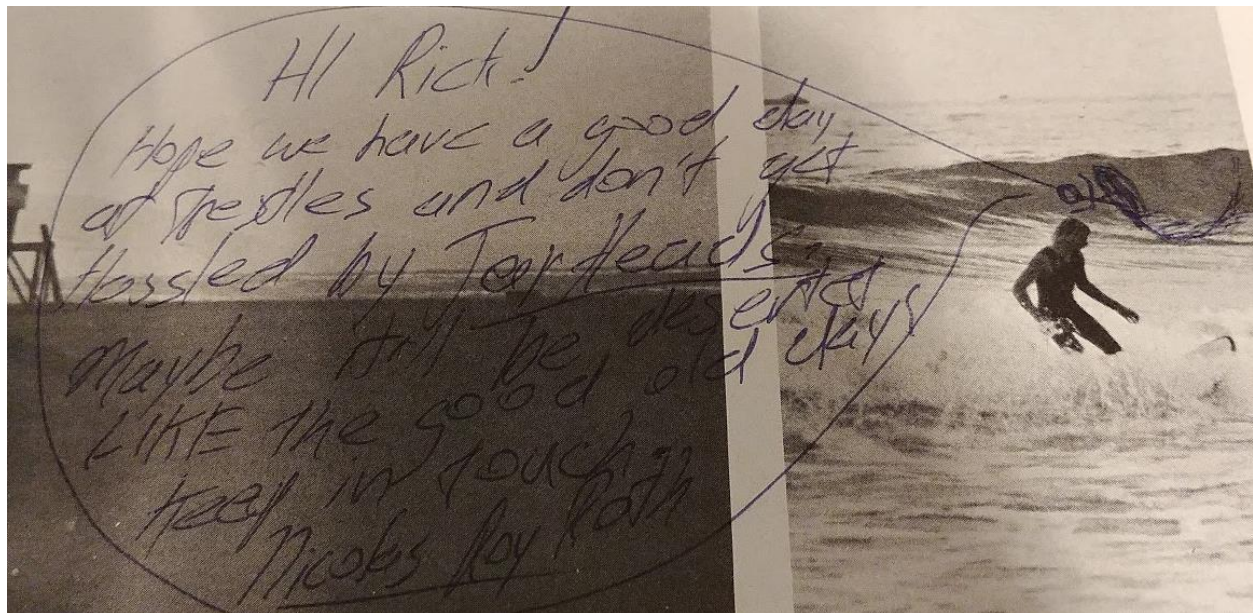
If Nick was young today he would be in my eyes one of the best surfers in the world. He would have tons of money.



When it comes to food memories of Nick and his family, I fondly remember eating liverwurst sandwiches.

Nick and I will come back from a full morning surfing adventure and Nick's Mom would make this incredible homemade liverwurst sandwich. It was quite good.

I only had this kind of sandwich at my house only a few times. Nick's family had this quite often. I would always look forward to it. 50 years later I still have fond memories of eating those wonderful sandwiches.



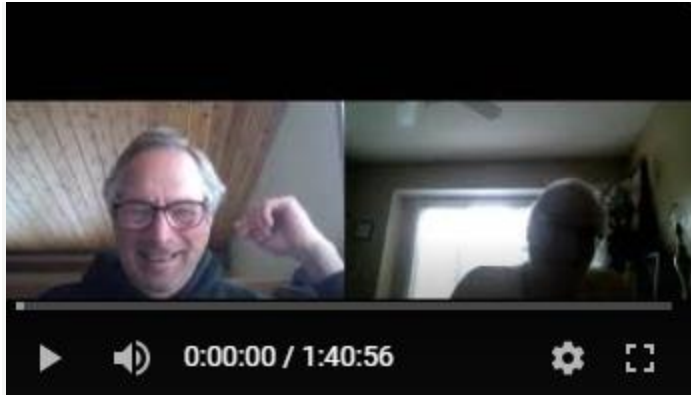
Nick doesn't surf for fame, fortune, or glory. He surfs because it's a part of his life. He is an artist when it comes to surfing. He has nothing to prove. He just smiles like a wise man.

One funny story is about Nick and his Dad. He would call me an electric man. He said my voice would sound like an electric computer.

Years later I stopped and pondered what he said. It seems like his subconscious was on to something. He was picking something up about me and couldn't quite pinpoint it. To this day he was one of the only people who picked up that I was different.

Nick moved from Orange County to Depoe Bay Oregon about 10 years ago. He still surfs at 64 years old. I saw him for the first time in years and we connected that time is endless. It seemed just like yesterday we saw each other. In fact, it was over 30 years ago.

Nick is definitely the web in my life. We had many great journeys together.



Nick's Moms paintings

These are three of my favorites that we kept, my mom was very generous and gave away lots of her stuff to relatives that liked her art. It's scattered all over the country and it's cool to see them in their homes when we visit.

1, oil painting. 2, print from metal etching (Hana Maui beach scene.) 3, watercolor, my personal favorite titled "Aura.) Nick



Figure 1 Oil painting



Figure 2 print from metal etching (Hana Maui beach scene)

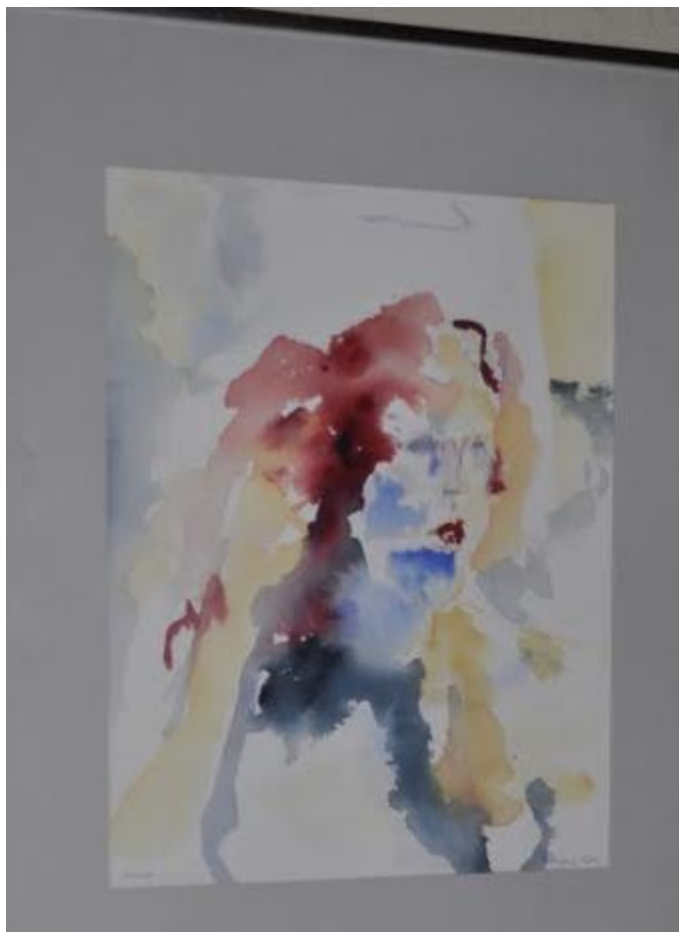


Figure 3 my personal favorite titled "Aura"

[Nick ripping](#)

Hi Rick,

Was great talking with you today, I always thought we had a great rapport and could talk on a deeper level than something like, "How bout them Dodgers!" LOL!!

I have to send two emails to send six pictures, they should be a good resolution. This has the surf shots, 1, cutback on a Jon Ashton single fin 1975, 2, backside turn at the point probably 1980, Russell gun that your' brother broke in half. 3, Slow shutter speed cutback also 1980, 56th street Russell single fin. Nick



Figure 4 cutback on a Jon Ashton single fin 1975



Figure 5 backside turn at the point probably 1980, Russell gun that your' brother broke in half



Figure 6 Slow shutter speed cutback also 1980, 56th street Russell single fin

Nick's story of moving from Anaheim to Newport Beach



The saying "timing is everything" certainly applies to most people who found themselves growing up in Newport Beach when Rick and I did.

Growing up in Anaheim was great when I was age three to age ten, lots of orange groves, and not many people, it was still rural living and one traffic light and one-stop sign between our house and the beach.

I had three friends (brothers) that lived next door and we had a great early childhood with a lot of freedom to roam and play. By the time I was ten suburban sprawl had claimed most of the orange groves and tract homes were there instead, my friends had moved away, and even at ten, the future looked boring.

Most of the older guys were into fast cars or being on the football team, I didn't care about either and didn't like school to boot. I was an unhappy kid sitting in class at Walt Disney elementary school when a kid knocked on the classroom door. "I need to talk to Nick, his house is on fire."

Our house was right across the street and was a total loss, my mom was a great artist and lost a lot of her work. My dad was making good money by then, he had a machine shop that had a lot of aerospace contracts, so the decision was made to move to Newport Beach. Talk about "every cloud has a silver lining" this cloud had a gold lining, the year was 1963.

My parents bought an old house with a view of the harbor and ocean for half the price of a new truck today, and the opportunities for someone my age quickly expanded. I met some friends that lived nearby and all the fun activities revolved around the ocean, bodysurfing, skim boarding, kneeboarding, surfing, sailing, fishing, diving, etc.

The people that gravitated toward the beach lifestyle had a different attitude than what I was used to, a more vibrant enthusiastic mentality with more emphasis on enjoying life and taking advantage of the gifts the beach life offers. It also attracted successful and talented people in other fields, and lots of creative types gravitated to the coast.

It was still low-key and uncrowded, the landscape still had a lot of open spaces and most people weren't there to show off, we were lucky to be there at that place in time and I'm grateful for it.

My Twin Brother



My twin brother John.

John is my best friend.

He has always been there for me.

In the thick and thin.

We are on the same path in this journey of life.

We have spent most of our life going within.

We have our struggles in life.

Life is not easy.

I'm sure you will say the same thing.

Yet with all this pounding we take we come out to the other side.

We know the God within.

Not the complete picture yet we have a beautiful experience.

My brother taught me patience in so many different ways.

His yearning for God is endless.

He has a great love for humanity.

Inside he knows humans have a great heart.

The mirror is just full of dust.

Joseph Campbell

Joseph Campbell

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Joseph Campbell



Campbell in the late 1970s

Born	Joseph John Campbell
	March 26, 1904
	White Plains, New York, U.S.
Died	October 30, 1987 (aged 83)
	Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S.
Spouse(s)	Jean Erdman

(m. 1938)

Academic background

Alma mater	Columbia University
Academic advisors	Roger Sherman Loomis ^[1]
Influences	Adolf Bastian Friedrich Nietzsche Jiddu Krishnamurti Oswald Spengler James George Frazer Sigmund Freud Carl Jung Heinrich Zimmer James Joyce Thomas Mann Arthur Schopenhauer Leo Frobenius Rudolf Otto ^[2]

Academic work

Discipline	Literature
Sub-discipline	Comparative mythology
Institutions	Sarah Lawrence College
Notable works	<i>The Hero with a Thousand Faces</i> (1949)
Notable ideas	Monomyth
Influenced	George Lucas Alan Watts ^[3] Jim Morrison Christopher Vogler ^{[4][5]}

Dan Harmon
Keith Buckley
Buddy Nielsen
Chuck Palahniuk
Dave Carter

Joseph John Campbell (March 26, 1904 – October 30, 1987) was an American writer. He was a professor of literature at [Sarah Lawrence College](#) who worked in [comparative mythology](#) and [comparative religion](#).

His work covers many aspects of the human experience. Campbell's best-known work is his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949), in which he discusses his theory of the journey of the [archetypal hero](#) shared by world [mythologies](#), termed the [monomyth](#).

Since the publication of *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Campbell's theories have been applied by a wide variety of modern writers and artists.

His philosophy has been summarized by his own often repeated phrase: "Follow your bliss."^[6] He gained recognition in Hollywood when [George Lucas](#) credited Campbell's work as influencing his *Star Wars* saga.^[7]

Campbell's approach to [folklore](#) topics such as myth and his influence on popular culture has been the subject of criticism, including from [folklorists](#).^{[8][9][10]}





Joseph Campbell_Power of Myth]

[FILMS](#) // OCTOBER 22, 2015

MYTHIC DISCOVERY WITHIN THE INNER REACHES OF OUTER SPACE: JOSEPH CAMPBELL MEETS GEORGE LUCAS – PART I

A MUCH FRIENDLIER MEET-UP THAN OBI-WAN AND VADER².

Joseph Campbell (1904-1987) was a world-renowned mythologist who helped modern society understand the true power that storytelling has in our culture and within our personal lives. He studied and identified the universal themes and archetypes that are present in mythical storytelling across history and the world.

His seminal work, The Hero With a Thousand Faces, outlined what Campbell called the Hero's Journey, a motif of adventure and personal transformation that is used in nearly every culture's mythical framework. George Lucas was an avid admirer of Campbell's writings and used them as a direct reference in his creation of Star Wars.

The two didn't meet face to face until after Lucas had already finished his original trilogy of films...

Part 1

² <https://www.starwars.com/news/mythic-discovery-within-the-inner-reaches-of-outer-space-joseph-campbell-meets-george-lucas-part-i>

We look to the stars and wonder. Light from infinite directions and distances meets our gaze. And within our “mythic imagination,” as Joseph Campbell described it, we begin to tell stories.

As Campbell points out, the visual beauties that inspire a saga like *Star Wars* are derived as much from within us as it is outside. “The imagery is necessarily physical and thus apparently of outer space,” Campbell says, “The inherent connotation is always, however, psychological and metaphysical, which is to say, of inner space.”

As we look to the stars, we are inherently reflected. It is what Campbell calls the “inner reaches of outer space.”

In 1984, Joseph Campbell came to the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco, an architectural beauty rebuilt from the Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915, and near the current location of Lucasfilm’s headquarters.

The iconic dome had been constructed to reflect the classical styles of ancient Rome and Greece and evokes emotion as if it could be an archetype of myth itself. It was an apt setting for Campbell to lead discussions on the inner reaches of outer space.

George Lucas was in the audience. Though he had long admired and studied Campbell back to the time of his early drafts of *Star Wars*, he had yet to meet the man who he would call, “my Yoda.” San Francisco certainly wasn’t the swampy planet of Dagobah.

The meeting would in fact be the opposite of Master Yoda and young Luke Skywalker’s. This time it was the master who was to learn just how pivotal his teachings could be for the apprentice.



The master and apprentice both learn from each other.

“[...] Outer space is within since the laws of space are within us; outer and inner space are the same. We know, furthermore, that we have actually been born from space,” Campbell told audiences in San Francisco.

He continued to describe the “wonderland of myth,” where an almost circular path of inspiration moves between that which we see and that which we imagine. “From the outer world, the senses carry images to mind, which do not become a myth, however, until they’re transformed by fusion with accordant insights, awakened as imaginations from the inner world of the body.”

As Yoda tells Luke in *The Empire Strikes Back*, “Luminous beings are we, not this crude matter.” The light of the stars is fully within us.

After the mesmerizing discussions, Lucas was introduced to Campbell via their mutual friend, scientist and Nobel laureate Barbara McClintock. Though they did not connect at first words, as McClintock would remember to Campbell’s biographer, “I got them sitting together, but Joe was holding court like he would...There was a young man there, David Abrams, the only true magician I’ve

ever known in my life... I called David over and said, 'See if you can get these two talking to each other.' David went over and did a trick...it involved putting George's hand on Joe's hand and that was it."



Fateful Meetings

The spark had been ignited and a friendship had begun. Campbell and Lucas took a liking to each other. They enjoyed discussing ideas of mythology, and in particular the influence of Campbell's *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* on Lucas' filmmaking.

Their relationship blossomed over the coming years, though surprisingly, Campbell had yet to see any of the *Star Wars* films.

A few years after their first meeting, the time finally came for Lucas to show Campbell his work. Lucas would tell Campbell's biographers: "[...] At one point I talked about *Star Wars*, and he'd heard about *Star Wars*. I said, 'Would you be interested at all in seeing it?'

At this point, I'd finished all three of them. He said, 'I'll see all three of them.' I said, 'Would you like to see one a day?' because he was going to be here for around a week. 'No, no, I want to see them all at once.'"

And so Campbell, along with his wife Jean, came to Marin County north of San Francisco. It was on a Sunday when Lucas took the Campbells to the recently finished Skywalker Ranch. Lucas remembered, "I showed them one in the morning [*A New Hope*], and we had lunch.

I showed another one in the afternoon [*The Empire Strikes Back*], then we had dinner. Then I showed another one in the evening [*Return of the Jedi*]. It was actually the first time anybody, I think, had ever seen all three of them together at one time!"

Their mutual friend, Barbara McClintock, joined in for the third film, and she remembered the moment after it had ended. "It was just us and George. It was very quiet in the dark, and Joe said, 'You know, I thought real art had stopped with Picasso, Joyce, and Mann. Now I know it hasn't.'"



Campbell had good things to say at the end of Return of the Jedi.

Myth is often something experienced unconsciously by a collective. Most audience members in the summer of 1977 were not aware of the age-old archetypes at work in *A New Hope*. They simply enjoyed the film; the story had its attraction.

Even the creators themselves can be part of this collective unconscious. Composer John Williams was in the audience for one of Campbell's lectures at Skywalker Ranch and commented, "Until Campbell told us what *Star Wars* meant [...] we regarded it as a Saturday morning space movie." Nevertheless, the power resides in the experience equally as much as the understanding.

In his book, *The Inner Reaches of Outer Space*, Campbell meditates on the universe's immensity, "[...] twenty Milky Ways of billions of exploding nuclear furnaces, flying from each other through spaces not to be measured, the universe (of which we speak so easily) compromising, literally, quintillions of such self-consuming stars."

To contemplate a starry sky itself is to contemplate on a mythical level. And as scientific discovery continuously redefines our understanding of the cosmos, certainly our mythical perspective must change as well. Campbell himself states, "What does all this do to mythology?"

George Lucas would help to redefine this mythical framework for the Space Age, and in effect prove that the discoveries and revelations of a storyteller could be as influential as those of an astronomer.

In the late 1980s, as Campbell entered the final years of his life, his friendship with Lucas continued. The apprentice would perform a fitting tribute to his mentor. Together with journalist Bill Moyers, they'd ensure Campbell's teachings would remain as immortal as the very myths themselves...

The story continues in the second and final installment of this two-part article...

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TAGS: [GEORGE LUCAS](#), [JOSEPH CAMPBELL](#)

LUCAS SEASTROM



SWCA 2022: 5 CREATIVE LESSONS BEHIND THE MAKING OF STAR TOURS

PART 2

THE HERO'S JOURNEY REACHES COSMIC PROPORTIONS.

Joseph Campbell (1904-1987) was a world-renowned mythologist who helped modern society understand the true power that storytelling has in our culture and within our personal lives. He studied and identified the universal themes and archetypes that are present in mythical storytelling across history and the world.

His seminal work, The Hero With a Thousand Faces, outlined what Campbell called the Hero's Journey, a motif of adventure and personal transformation that is used in nearly every culture's mythical framework. George Lucas was an avid admirer of Campbell's writings and used them as a direct reference in his creation of Star Wars.

The two didn't meet face to face until after Lucas had already finished his original trilogy of films... In case you missed it, be sure to read [part one](#) of our look at this historic meeting and enjoy the conclusion below.

Skywalker Ranch was a newly-completed filmmaking oasis in the late 1980s. Nestled amongst rolling hills of gold, bespeckled with live oaks and cattle, it was an environment wholly conducive to creative thinking.

In June of 1988, courtesy of PBS, television audiences across America had one of their first glimpses of this hallowed locale. They watched journalist Bill Moyers and mythologist Joseph Campbell walking together in conversation with serene nature in the background, eventually making their way up the steps of the main house and into the library.

It was the first episode in a six-part series, *The Power of Myth*.

Campbell had passed away some months before the broadcast in October of 1987, but not before over 40 hours of interviews had been recorded between himself and Moyers.

Campbell, who in his life had enjoyed minor celebrity status and great admiration from his colleagues and peers, was soon to become even more famous through the medium of television.

For some time, Bill Moyers had entertained the idea of interviewing Campbell for a television series. When George Lucas caught wind of this developing project, he contacted Moyers, remembering to Campbell's biographers: "I said, 'Let's bring him out to the ranch here [...] Just point the camera at him and turn it on. Let's not make a big deal of this, let's just get him talking.' There's nothing wrong with having people carry on a lucid, intelligent conversation — which is something that

Joe is extremely good at [...] If you can take wisdom and somehow capture it with the human element, that's so inspiring, that's part of what we can do today that we couldn't do a hundred years ago."

Lucas, always recognizing the practicality of modern technology, understood the impact Campbell would have on television audiences. He would financially support the project in its early stages.

The *Power of Myth* series "made Campbell a rock star," as journalist Ron Suskind puts it. Audiences could connect with Campbell as he recounted the great myths and their unifying motifs.

This included *Star Wars*. As Suskind told Moyers: "It does the [mythical] cycle perfectly. It's not a simple morality play; it has to do with the powers of life and their inflection through the actions of man [...] One of the wonderful things about this adventure into space is that the narrator, the artist, the one thinking up the story, is in a field that is not covered in our own knowledge. Much of the adventure in the old stories is when they go into regions that no one has been in before."

The famed cantina sequence from *A New Hope* was Campbell's favorite, symbolizing the mythical first step into the wider world. He'd celebrate Han Solo, a character we first meet in the cantina, commenting, "He thinks he's an egoist, but he really isn't.

That's a very loveable kind of human being. There are lots of them functioning beautifully in the world. They think they're working for themselves, but there's something else pushing them."



The Cantina sequence was one of Campbell's favorites.

Though Campbell didn't live to see the immense success of the program, it proved the universality and appeal of his ideas, which he would have considered more important.

His works became standards in classrooms around the world, and storytellers in various mediums continued to adapt the Hero's Journey and its motifs. This included George Lucas, who would soon be ready to continue developing his mythical saga.

The world of the late 20th century was a smaller one with bigger horizons. As world cultures blended in an increasingly connected global society, we looked to the stars as a frontier.

In his book, *The Inner Reaches of Outer Space*, Campbell states, "And so now we must ask: What does all this do to mythology? Clearly, some changes have to be made." With a shift in cultural perspective also comes a shift in mythological horizons.

In the past, myths began on the limited tribal level. “Such mythologies are neither addressed to nor concerned with, humanity at large,” Campbell tells us. “The tribe and its landscape are the universes.”

Literally, the horizon was small for myth, limited by an ethnocentric outlook. But as the Space Age transformed this perspective and scientific communicators such as Carl Sagan began to show us the beauties of the wider universe, a new myth was waiting to be born.

In 1997, George Lucas would tell journalist John Seabrook: “When I was in college, for two years I studied anthropology [...] myths, stories from other cultures. It seemed to me that there was no longer a lot of mythology in our society, the kind of stories we tell ourselves and our children, which is the way our heritage is passed down. Westerns used to provide that, but there weren’t Westerns anymore.

I wanted to find a new form. So I looked around, and tried to figure out where myths come from. It comes from the borders of society, from out there, from places of mystery [...] And I thought space. Because back then space was a great source of mystery.”

Part of Lucas’ mastery may be in the dichotomous nature of *Star Wars*’ central storyline. Luke Skywalker, a young farm boy yearns to escape the confines of his geography, as did young George Lucas growing up in California’s Central Valley.

The famed scene of Luke staring off into the binary sunset, dreaming of his future, may very well have been Lucas watching the sunset behind the coast range west of Modesto. Here lies the quintessence of *Star Wars*.

A cosmic story is at its heart a deeply personal tale. Lucas had already explored this theme in *American Graffiti* (1973), and for *Star Wars* he used such as his own key to Campbell’s concept of the Hero’s Journey. He harnessed these personal themes and set them against a galaxy far, far away where mythological limitations were non-existent.



The Hero's Journey is one we all take.

For Joseph Campbell, Lucas' vision may well have been that of a "true prophet," as he describes. "[The prophet] knew the difference between his ethnic ideas and the elementary ideas that they enclose, between a metaphor and its connotation, between a tribal myth and its metaphysical import."

Campbell points out this mythological awakening had taken place before in ancient Mesopotamia, an era "when writing was invented; also mathematical measurement, and the wheel." Is it a coincidence that *Star Wars* also came at the dawn of a technological revolution?

From a connected global culture is derived a global myth, and *Star Wars* serves that need. As in Mesopotamia, "The leap was from geography to the cosmos."

Star Wars is the gift that our global culture receives from this natural evolution of mythic tradition. The Space Age, with its planets and nebulae, asteroid belts, and starships, is the next step along this pathway of storytelling.

We stand at a new avenue of mythic discovery, where archetypes intersect on a global level, as audiences experience a film from one continent to the next. But within this avenue individuality is still paramount, as the Hero's Journey is one of endless possibility. "This thing communicates," Campbell would tell Moyers. "It is in a language that is talking to young people today, and that's marvelous."

In December of 2015, audiences will once again return to the cinemas — as ancient peoples once gathered around a fire or in an amphitheater — and collectively partake in the magic of myth. As Lucas and Campbell sat together in front of a silver screen to share an experience, so too shall we with our friends and family. It's time for another good story!

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Once upon a Time was a man

If there was a man who discovered the meaning of once upon a Time in the 20th century, it was Joseph Campbell. He spent his whole life investigating the myths and stories from civilizations all around the world. Mind you, he even studied ancient civilizations and their myths.

His power of myth series on public television with Bill Moyers was an incredible event for its time. I was clearly inspired by the wisdom that he had in uniting all the myths together. All myths are talking about discovering the jewel within.

All myths talk about man must go on the inner journey to find this hidden. Jewel. Signposts are all around yet do we have the eyes to see?
Joseph Campbell was one of those rare individuals whose entire life was spent solving the puzzle of life.

Years later the world is still trying to understand what his message was all about. We are so caught up with our 9:00 to 5 existence that we miss out on discovering the Jewel within.

In my eyes, his wisdom far surpassed almost any scientific discovery of the 20th century. Stories and myths contain the secrets of the universe. The universe speaks to us through stories and myths.

Just think the secrets are always there in plain sight yet we look externally to find them. A wise man simply says look into the inner mirror within and you will see your true nature. You are the universe. You just don't know it. This is the journey that all myths and stories are talking about.

There is a thread of love tying us all together. The story will be told in so many different ways. The storyline gets even better and better. One can talk for eternity and yet it's still just a drop in the bucket in the scheme of things. As humans, we have the inherent nature to tell stories and myths.

Storytellers yearn for the audience to discover the jewel within. That is their main goal to help humanity to understand their true nature. Mind you, they get great bliss from telling the stories, yet they get even greater bliss when they see the inner child start to open up within when they tell their stories.

Stories are not only for children. As we get older we think that is the case. When we do this, we close the door to discovering our true nature. No wonder we are so confused. How can we see the light of day when we live in a cave of darkness? This is not a metaphor but this is man's reality for now.

Mind you, we have been living in this state for such a long time. We even think this is our natural state. For those wise souls who come down and say no, there is another way we treat them with disgust. Who are you to rock the boat? We don't like people who think outside of the box. We feel threatened.

During Joseph Campbell's time, many people felt threatened by what he was saying. They did not like the unity that he was talking about. Many scholars thought it was nonsense. You see there is a huge difference between intelligence and wisdom.

A man of intelligence gets threatened when someone thinks outside of the box. A man of wisdom will listen to both sides of the coin and not feel threatened at all.

A wise man is secure and understands that the universe is constantly changing and morphing. In this state, one understands that today's beliefs will change in the near future.

Nothing is constant. Everything changes. When one understands this, one simply smiles at life.

The Boat And The Whale



One incident that remains to this day is the following.

Once upon a time, while we were in high school my dear friend Mark Blackburn and his Uncle Carl, took my brother on a boat ride. It takes probably half an hour to reach the ocean from

where we took off in the harbor.

When we got off the harbor we moved left to where we were directly off Big Corona where my brother and I surfed as a kid. We are sitting there when all of a sudden we feel this tremendous rush of energy with thousands of bubbles underneath the boat.

It was kind of scary. Finally, these huge whales emerge to the surface probably ten feet away. When I saw its eyes it was such an incredible sight. Pure wisdom, kindness, compassion, and supreme intelligence.

Today this day probably 46 years later I can still visualize this in my mind's eye. I have always been in love with dolphins and whales but to see one in the wild like this was truly a gift. I could sense and see the magnificence of such a beautiful creature of God.

If he wanted to he could have destroyed the boat but that's not its nature. We need to learn from the dolphins and whales in our lives. They have so much we can learn from.



Mark Blackburn



Your video

Talk Story with Mark Blackburn Part 2

I have known Mark since kindergarten. Mark has a place in my heart. We have been good friends for years. He loves adventures.

Mark is extremely intelligent and humorous at the same time. Good traits to have. He always has a wise crack you can see from his mouth. He is actually listening to you. Another good trait.

We have been friends for so long that anything goes. We don't try to change one another. Another good trait. Both of us are in the same field of IT so we know what going on with the hiring and firing in our industry.

We both laugh and cry at the absurdities of life. We talk around four times a year. It's nice to hear about his life's adventures. Mark just completed a childhood dream when he was 10 years old. Here's a Facebook post that Mark posted on April 19, 2017. It describes his sense of adventure in life.



Why I climbed the pyramid: The year was 1963. I was 10 years old attending Mariner's Elementary School in Newport Beach, CA. We had a school assembly. The father of a student (that a handful of my friends might remember) gave a slide presentation in the cafeteria of their family's

summer vacation trip to Mexico. Many things impressed me, but I was utterly astounded and enchanted to learn that Mexico had pyramids. Up to that point, I thought only Egypt had pyramids.



The slides clearly showed that this family was allowed to climb to the top of the pyramids. Since that instant, it has been a dream of mine to climb to the top of a pyramid. So, yes, it took me 53 years to finally make good on that dream. The cost was minimal--\$300 RT airfare from SFO to MEX. Mexico is on sale right now.

For whatever reason, the Peso is down against the Greenback. Rental cars can be had for \$4 a day, and decent hotels for \$40/night. A final inducement to go now was the fact that UNESCO is trying to make it illegal to climb all pyramids.

A gringo borracho (a drunk American) fell off Chichen Itza a few years ago to his death, and it HAS been closed for climbing ever after. I wanted to go before all of them are closed. It was a fantastic and surreal experience. I am extremely glad I went. I am now glad I was a spy for the NSA in Central America in the late 70s, and still retain much of my Spanish speaking/listening ability, which was mandatory for that job. The classmate whose Father gave the presentation was Paul Cohen.

Does anyone remember what became of him? (I suspect he went to CDM , not NHHS). Since I was sent to my reform school in Hawaii during my last 2 years of NHHS, I lost track of many folks.

That said, I must have at least 8 good FB friends who attended Mariner's with me, and might even remember that slide show. I cannot put into words how satisfying it was to be at the top of the Pyramid of the Sun on Good Friday. Incidentally, I chose that day to go, believing I would have Teotihuacan to myself--because everyone in this Catholic nation would be at church! No, they were all at Teotihuacan! Avoid holidays! On a normal day, the Unesco Historical Site 40 minutes north of Mexico City will have 10,000 visitors.

On Good Friday there were 40,000! Bucket List item accomplished! I have 1 friend and 1 relative who has climbed these pyramids: [Les Jones](#) and my cousin [Gale Demmer Seiersen](#), both of whom climbed these over 50 years earlier. Who else has?

Paul Cohen



I really believe in Synchronicity. This is from Wikipedia.

Synchronicity is a concept, first explained by analytical psychologist Carl Jung, which holds that events are "meaningful coincidences" if they occur with no causal relationship yet seem to be meaningfully related.

This post of Paul got started by the synchronicity of events. My friend Mark (see above) goes to Mexico and visits the pyramids at Teotihuacan just outside Mexico City. This is his childhood dream.

When he was ten years old he listens to the adventures at a lecture given by Paul Cohen's Dad. Paul's family spent the summer in Mexico and Guatemala. Paul's Dad was a doctor and did volunteer work for the summer. Mark never knew that Mexico had pyramids.

So Mark goes to Mexico and posts his adventures on Facebook. I read the post and thought whatever happened to Paul. We go back to first grade. I haven't spoken or heard about Paul for over 46 years. That's a long time.

So here's where synchronicity kicks in. Mark post on Facebook. Mary Louise Piccard sees the post.



Mary Louise Piccard Paul Cohen is in Colorado Springs **Mark S. Blackburn**!! I spoke with him last summer! I'm sure he'd love to hear about your adventure and that his family inspired you! He's on FB - albeit very seldom - he does check it!

Like · Reply · 2 · April 19 at 1:50pm



Mark S. Blackburn Mary, Thanks so much! I found Paul's FB page. (which you are correct, he hasn't used since 2015). Still, next time I'm in Colorado Springs, I may try to look him up.

Like · Reply · 1 · April 19 at 2:39pm



Paul Cohen Mark--so nice to read your post and am looking forward to reconnecting with you. Wow--was nice reading of your trek to Mexico--very cool! Interesting how you had that intent for so many years--I think our visit to Mexico and Guatemala long ago led to a couple of years volunteer in Laos, SE Asia.

Like · Reply · 2 · April 20 at 5:53pm



Mark S. Blackburn Paul, Great to hear from you & know you are alive (and presumably) well! I vividly remember your Father narrating that slide show to this day. Traveling that far from home was not so common in those days.....How long have you been in Colorado Springs?

Like · Reply · April 21 at 11:47am



Paul Cohen hah--yes, mostly well, thank you! Great to hear from you as well. Wow--this is an amazing story. So fun that you did that. I've enjoyed seeing your video posts. Looks like you've had an incredible trip. Are you back in the U.S. now? A friend and i made that same climb this time of year--just two years ago.

We really enjoyed it. I moved to the Springs about 25 years ago and like it. Are you in Seattle?

Like · Reply · [1](#) · April 21 at 1:18pm



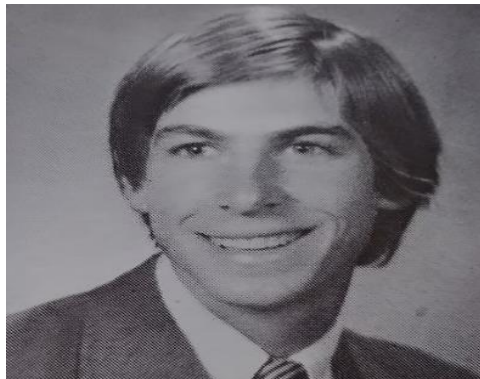
Gretchen Gribble Omg...[Paul Cohen](#). FB has become "old home week" for me recently. I don't know if you remember me or not. It's fun hearing what my classmates are doing all these years later. Happy to hear tidbits about you, Mark S. Blackburn, [Mark McClellan](#) and others. Yeah Mariners, Ensign and/or NHHS alumni!

Like · Reply · [2](#) · April 27 at 12:52am · Edited

I see that Paul is on Facebook so I send him a Facebook friend request. Paul responds **Richard, [Paul Cohen](#) has confirmed that you're friends on Facebook.**

So yesterday I was looking at Mark Blackburn's chapter I decided to add Paul's picture.

This is from the previous chapter.



The classmate whose Father gave the presentation was Paul Cohen. Does anyone remember what became of him? (I suspect he went to CDM, not NHHS).

I get out my Newport Harbor yearbook and snap this picture and insert it above.

I send Paul a message.

Hi, Paul, It's been many moons since we have last seen each other. I was visiting some friends last summer in Colorado Springs. I tried to look you up. Anyway, maybe next time.

Rick!!!

First Mary P, Mark- now my friend Rick!!!!

Haha

Can't believe it!

What's happening?!?

Paul

Wow

Earliest of friends!!

So then we get on the phone and start talking for a few hours. Now we haven't talked since high school but we had instant communication. It's amazing to see how a series of events connect each one of us. If Mary Louise Piccard didn't contact Paul or Mark didn't do a post of his adventures on Facebook I wouldn't have been in contact with Paul.



I remember as a kid I was fascinated by Paul's house. It was a Japanese-style house. From what I remembered they had a courtyard with the rooms coming off from it. Instead of having ordinary doors, they had shoji doors.

Now as a kid I love anything from the Far East. I loved things outside of the box. Paul's house was stuck in a neighborhood with all the standard houses of the time. The front of the house was standard but nobody knew the jewel inside.

Paul's Dad was a doctor. I saw him a few times when I was a kid. Paul's Dad was my brother David's primary doctor. Back then it wasn't unusual for a Doctor to treat a patient smoking a cigar.

Paul and I were great friends in elementary school.

I learned over the phone that Paul has been to about the same number of countries that I have been to. Around 35. He spent two years in Laos doing volunteer work.



Paul tried to go to India. He had his plane tickets but unfortunately, the Bhopal gas tragedy happened in India.

When Paul tried to get a visa he was denied. Paul was a lawyer at the time. The Indian government wouldn't give him a visa. They thought he was going to India to work on the Bhopal gas tragedy. Paul tried to tell them he was going just as a tourist but they wouldn't listen.

It's a small world. Paul's Mom got remarried. Her husband was a member of the Beek family from Newport Beach. I went to junior high school with his niece Carol.

This is a story from the Balboa Island Museum about the Beek family

In 1919 Joseph Alen Beek obtained the rights from the city of Newport Beach to provide a ferry service across the Newport Harbor between Balboa Island and the Balboa Peninsula. Before starting the ferry service Beek owned The Ark.

The Ark consisted of a giant rowboat with a small engine which Beek used as his first ferry vessel. The Ark carried oars in the event of engine failure. There was no regularly scheduled service and customers telephoned Beek when they needed a ride across the harbor.

In 1919 Beek charged a nickel (5 cents) per person. Three years after commencing operation, Beek built the Fat Ferry. This vessel held twenty passengers. Beek later built a small one-car barge which the Fat Ferry pushed across in front of it.

In the 1950s Beek built three double-ended wooden boats for his ferry service: the Admiral, the Commodore, and the Captain. These three boats are still in service and have transported over two million persons.

Each ferry holds three cars and 75 people. As of 2007, the Beek family charges \$1 per adult, \$2 per vehicle, \$.50 for children ages 5–11, \$1.25 for adults on bikes, \$.75 for children on bikes, and \$1.50 for motorcycles. Children under the age of 5 are free.

The ferry boats need constant maintenance but this does not usually interrupt the ferry service. For two weeks in 2008, the ferry service shut down for an extended period, for the first time in 50 years, to rebuild the automobile ramp leading to the boats.

Currently, Beek's three sons run the business and it has been in the family for close to 100 years.

Paul tells me his Step-Dad is an incredible character. He is in his nineties. He has driven the same Volkswagen since the seventies. Who knows how many miles he has traveled on it? Paul says he has the unique ability for photographic memory.

pho·to·graph·ic mem·o·ry

ˌfōdəˌɡrafɪk ˈmem(ə)rē/

noun

1. the ability to remember information or visual images in great detail.

- 2.

3. He also loves computers. He was involved in the early days when computer science was still in its infancy. I would love to meet him someday. He seems like the character I would love to be around.



Train ride though the ranch 1

Paul said he loves to travel on the Amtrak train between Los Angeles and San Francisco. His favorite part is when the train would pass through the Hollister ranch.

Paul said each time he would reflect that the Fletcher brothers spent an incredible

amount of time there during high school.

Paul went to the Thacher School in Ojai for two years. Paul met the family that sold the ranch to the Macco Corporation in the sixties. I wonder how the family that sold the ranch feels today. For a surfer, it would be like selling the keys to heaven.



Paul said he would tell stories to his kids about my brother and I. Paul remembers a time in fifth grade where John and I would switch classes.

Paul remembers that John and I would switch shirts and then go to each other class. All the students knew my brother and

I were playing a joke. At some point in time, the entire class would start laughing. Everyone except for the teacher was on to this joke. The teacher would wonder what's going on.

Eventually, the teacher would catch on and we would all laugh. These were simple times. I don't know if today the school system would appreciate this.



Bruce Charles 1

I knew Paul's brother Nat in high school. My brother and I were on the same track team and cross country team in high school. Nat was best friends with Bruce Charles a great neighbor of ours.

I remember in either fifth or sixth grade they dressed up as surfers and carried a surfboard for Halloween. I was impressed. I distinctly remembered when I said, "someday I'm going to be a surfer".

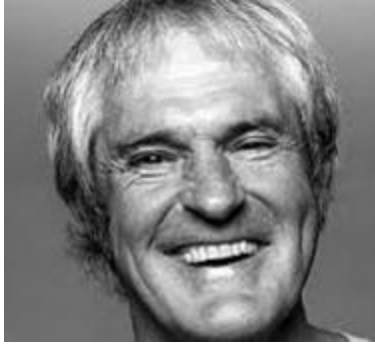


Richard Albert 1

During my phone conversation with Paul, he mentioned that with my travels to India and my love for meditation if I had ever heard about his second cousin. He was somewhat a black sheep in the family.

His name was Baba Ram Das formerly known as Richard Albert. Did I know Ram Das? During my late teens and early twenties, Ram Das was famous in the meditation community.

Richard Albert was a famous young psychologist during the sixties. He along with Timothy Leary began to explore the effects of psychotropic substances on the mind. Both of them worked at Harvard University.



Timothy Leary 1

They began to do clinical studies on the effects of LSD and psilocybin. At this time they weren't illegal in the country. At some point, they got fired during the research.

They had graduate students who actively participated in the research but one time they had an undergraduate study. Consequently, they were fired.

Timothy Leary's famous slogan was "Tune in, Turn On, Drop Out".



Ram Das wrote the book "Be here now" a popular book during the sixties and seventies. Today it is considered a modern spiritual classic. In fact, I read this book at Ananda in Nevada City before I went on my journey.

To be honest, at that time I really didn't understand the book. Books like these take the practical experience to understand and incorporate these ideas in the book. Ram Das stopped using drugs and meditated for the rest of his life.

He used to say that drugs were training wheels. At some point, you don't need them anymore. I tried LSD once and never again. The state of meditation brings one into our natural state where we don't need anything artificial to open the door within.

So I was completely surprised when Paul told me his second cousin was Ram Das. I saw him speak in Santa Fe New Mexico during the seventies. I have been impressed by his work. He had a tremendous influence on the population at large.

He helped to bring meditation to be common in our society. During the seventies, it was considered you were on the fringe of society if you

meditated. You were strange. Now a day's yoga is mainstream. You can practice it almost everywhere.

Synchronicity is so common yet most of the time we don't see it. Sign posts are everywhere yet we don't have eyes to see them.

Thanks, Paul for being my lifelong friend. I'm so happy that we are connected again. We are all on an incredible journey in life.

The elephant gun



Once upon a Time in 1972, Little Ricky and Kali were hitchhiking from Kenya to South Africa. Somewhere along the way, they got picked up by two intelligent black Africans.

We got into the car. After a few hours of driving, they got out of the car and shot two cows with an elephant gun. We thought we were next.

They got into the car and they said oh! We just shot two elephants. We agreed with them. We knew we shouldn't cause any conflict or maybe we would be next.

Being shot at



Once upon a Time Anna and I visited Kali's Mom. She had a house in Baja California. Along the way, we stopped off at Matanchen bay.

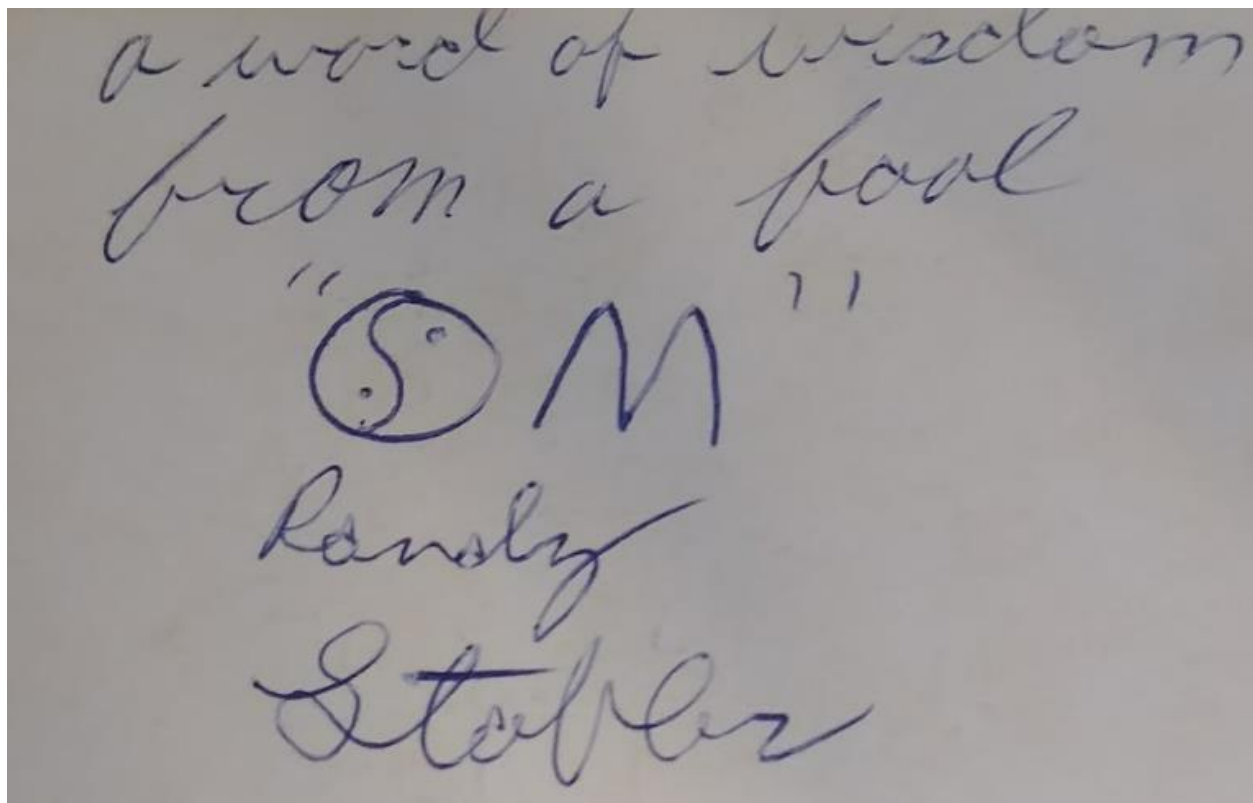
This bay was known by surfers since the sixties. On a good day, you can ride a wave for almost a mile. The only drawback is at sunset and sunrise the no-see-ums come out by the millions.

One day we took a walk up the point, past the bay. At some point, both of us realized that we should turn around. We couldn't quite pinpoint it. We turned around and start to walk back to Matanchen bay.

Well, we were right to turn around. As we were walking a bullet whizzed so close we could hear it. We didn't turn around but slowly walked away.

Randy Stabler





I just learned yesterday that a dear friend of mine Randy Stabler died last Friday.

In my high school yearbook, Randy wrote the following.

A word of wisdom from a fool.

Randy's one word was OM yet he used the letter Om as a ying-yang symbol.

To be honest it was quite profound for its time.

Randy had a great heart.

My twin brother and I ran cross-country and track together with Randy.

He was always a delight to be around.

I last talked to Randy only a few months back.

He talked about his kids and spending time in Iraq.

Both of us love to cook.

We both love the ocean.

We had so much in common.

I would see incredible posts on Facebook with Randy and his six kids.

They all had an incredible love for each other.

The day he died all six kids were there.

What a beautiful way to leave this world.

Randy's body died yet his spirit is eternal.

His ashes were spread across the universe.

Randy is still alive.

Close your eyes and go into the silence.

You will sense Randy's presence.

Randy lives inside of your heart.

He is a part of you.

So whenever you are sad about your dear Dad leaving this planet remember he is
a part of you.

Those glorious memories never go away.

They are a part of you.

Randy is riding the incredible wave of the universe.

He is a cosmic surfer now.

Some things never change.

They just transform and go into another dimension.

Love you, Randy.

We will see your shining face again.

Randal Stabler message 1

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Here is an interesting fact in my life as ... father (aka; papa with my kids). We sold a house in Newport Heights, in 1993 ...packed up a 20-foot container with all our worldly possessions....four kids in tow, the youngest 2 years old...and moved to Hong Kong. Business and adventure were calling.

After a move to Hong Kong...I traveled from Taiwan to Israel and all countries between these points to support my family and live the adventure. Creating a business in over 13 or so countries ...cool yea! Still have an Export/Import business in Macau (dormant)...Macau, our final home settling for the last 5 years after 3 years in Hong Kong.

MY wife, at the time, and children were the "true troopers."

Thank you for reading....any one into hearing about our eight+ years living in Asia?

Randy



The following is a story that Randy wrote on his journey in Afghanistan. It comes right out of a James Bond movie. I was in Afghanistan 50 years ago today.

Randy only had 5 days to pull this off.

I can't believe that he did this. The waves of the world are very different than ours. To simply comprehend that. Randy did this in 5 days is extraordinary. His daughter Misha was going to graduate from Newport harbor high.

This story is better than any novel. When you have visited these far-off places and you hear other people's stories, you understand how dangerous the world can be. Randy nonchalantly tells a story

Randal Stabler

History;

1993/94 Hong Kong, developing business via fax machine...internet in its infancy, or nonexistent to parts of the world I was communicating with to service/create Sta-Lube business.

Sta-Lube was sold to CRC Aerosol in 1993. I along with Dad, Laird, and Judi Proetel negotiated an exclusive contract with CRC for me to continue the Sta-Lube market/sales presence in Asia and the Middle East, which I earlier developed. Thus move to Hong Kong...with my family and selling off our NPT home. The move was best for all who experienced the China/Hong Kong/Macau education/experience!

While servicing and developing business via fax. A hit on Afghanistan requesting 20Ft container of high-quality vehicle gear oil, that is eighty drums, each drum weighing 450lbs. The logistics/payment alone were daunting and challenging. Inquire came from Kabul via Islamabad, Pakistan. No easy task to get such an inquiry.

I respond, again, via fax. Their response; the gear oil was for Russian vehicles left behind from Russia's rapid retreat in the late eighties defeat. At the time, 1994, the outside world was not aware of the Taliban. I admit I was "horny" to do a 'big deal," With a family to support and grow a business in Asia. And I loved the adventure of it all...fortunate me living life.

A Year or so later learned, after the sale, about the brutal place in Afghanistan, especially towards women.

Flew into Lahore, Pakistan from Hong Kong in early June/94. I had five days to get the deal done...because, after the five days, I had four more days to be in Newport for Mischa's High School graduation, I was not going to miss it!! (probably just racked up enough miles to fly around the world).

Arrived in Lahore and promptly drove to Islamabad for the night. The next day, in early AM, woken to attend the call to the Mosque (the largest in the world). I attended, washed my feet, and the service. Then we, prospective Afghan customers, loaded into a crew cab Toyota pick-up and headed towards Peshawar.

At Peshawar, my Afghan minders wanted to share with me an open market. Oh...yea all along the way ate great locale food, including raw goat brain with lots of garlic, herbs and peppers.

The open market, Peshawar (border to Afghanistan), is set out like a "swap meet," with beautiful rugs laid out.



But instead of general domestic goods...there is a huge array of weapons! AK 47's, Mortars, Machine guns, Hand Held Rocket Propelled grenades, etc, and Ammunition for all.

Hundreds bartering for the goods. I felt very uncomfortable among all these weapons

meant to kill. My minders/customers thought they were sharing a beautiful open market.

After being shown the pride of the country, Mosque/Open Market. We loaded into the crew cab to drive into Kabul via "Kyber Pass" (if you do not know of Kyber Pass history, look it up...very famous).



All this with the Himalayas in the deep foreground. Dicy drive with deep river valleys and no road guards to deflect you from going over the edge into a thousand or more foot drop into the valley.

Arrived in Kabul to complete the gear oil deal. I was promptly served locally brewed beer and tea, brought in by young boys (yea I know you are

thinking ... this is a Muslim country, beer? yes). Deal done after the midnight hour. The transaction\$ was a logistic nightmare.

Three banks were involved all requiring LCs (letters of Credit) and BLS (Bills of Lading) starting from the docks of Sta-Lube at Rancho Dominguez, CA, destined for Kabul.



Drove back to Pakistan ... four and one-half days out. Arrived in Islamabad mid-afternoon on finish of the fifth day. I was knocked off the flight to Calcutta, India due to unrest/saber-rattling between each country. And told there were no more flights for the next 2-3 days. But...for an extra fee, I could catch a flight to Indonesia that would connect me with a flight in Hong Kong to meet a USA flight. I was set up!

Fortunately, I was prepared with "Swiss Army Knife" knock-offs from HK with twenty dollars USD\$ wrapped around each knife (I had been here before). Got on the plane and was seated...for the next six or more hours, to an aging woman constantly coughing up blood into a handkerchief, anxious about what I was going to catch.

I made MISCHAS' graduation!

Randal Stabler message 2
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My time in Baghdad...I was in the "LE" (local economy, the streets) almost daily from 2003-2004. Just rummaged up these photos. The group of Iraq teens was a spontaneous shot..two girls were happy to see me one was confused and the boy your next a car bomber...second shot our soldier in an improvised armor with sand bags, 4x4's and steel doors with his office chair bolted to the Humvee bed (check out the pic in the mirror).

The crazy place was Baghdad. I was a sub-contractor cheffing for the intelligence and Black Water community (before we knew of Black Water 2003).

Have several newspaper articles under "Embedded Chef."





Randal Stabler curry soup message

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Rick...As promised; here is my Curry Soup version along with stocks...enjoy creating! Please take liberties with your variations...then share. You are excellent in creating with cooking!

Remember; all has been done before in cooking, we can only expand with our own creative nuances'.

Chicken Stock;

- Roast 1/2 chicken with garlic, onion, celery, carrots, peeled/sliced ginger, turnips, parsnips, a small amount of beet a few cloves, cilantro, parsley, and S/P. coat all with a small amount of sesame oil.

After Roasting; throw all in 5qts of water...reduce to 3 quarts. Slowly, three hours or more.

Vegetable Stock:

- No chicken

Soup finish:

- Strip chicken meat from the bone. Toss bones. Chop meat.

- Add all roasted vegetables to compost, to grow your future vegetables in next season's soil.
- Again, use the same fresh veggies, or more of your choice (potatoes along with tomatoes work well here). Chopped to your preferred size. Add chopped chicken.
- Sauté veggies and chicken in clarified butter, or oil of choice, to point of semi-softness. In soup size pot.
- At this point add one apple (skin on) and one banana, both finely chopped.
- Add curry powder or paste of your choice along with a little added coriander, turmeric, and of course chile spice to your temperament.
- Stir and sauté
- At a time well stirred saute meld, splash in a small amount of Saki to set off flavors, and...stir, until you get right aroma.
- Add 1 12oz can of coconut milk. Not coconut water
- Add the 3qts stock and simmer for 2 hours or so.
- Remove from heat and let rest overnight for flavors to bind and discover each other.

Next day:

Reheat and serve with Rita some Nan along with rice or whatever.

ENJOY...and play in cuisine fun!

22

2 Comments

Like

Comment


Share

2 Comments



Mark McClellan

Randy, this sounds yummy. Rick, I know you're on it.

- Like
- 9y 

Richard Fletcher

I'm making this on Saturday....

- Like

Curry Soup

Chef: Randy Stabler

Ethnic: Thai

Main Ingredient: chicken

Categories: Soup

Meal Type: Dinner

Food Type: Non vegetarian

Level:

Servings: 8

Prep Time:30 minutes

Cook Time:3 hours



My dear friend Randy Stabler gave me this recipe. He has been an incredible chef for many years. The secret to this recipe is the stock.

Here's a quote from Randy. The beauty of cooking "we could cook 24/7 3 meals a day in our life time and not repeat a recipe." There are literally millions of recipes. I can go to a Pot Sticker restaurant in Macau and then another one around the corner and experience different slight variations in flavors for the same product.



Ingredients

Chicken stock

- 1/2 whole chicken
- 1 cup potatoes
- 1 cup celery
- 1 tablespoon fresh ginger
- 1 large turnips
- 1/2 cup beets
- 1 teaspoon 5 star anise
- 1/2 cup fresh cilantro
- 1/2 cup fresh parsley
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 10 cups water
- 1 whole juiced lime

Soup ingredients

- 1 diced large banana
- 1 tablespoon ghee
- 1 cup potatoes
- 1 cup celery
- 1 tablespoon fresh ginger
- 1 teaspoon cloves
- 10 sprigs fresh cilantro
- 10 sprigs fresh parsley
- 1 medium apples
- 1/8 fl oz sake
- 1 1/2 cups coconut milk
- 1 tablespoon curry powder
- 1 teaspoon coriander powder
- 1/2 whole red chili
- dash of salt

Recipe

Add 10 cups of water to pot. Add chicken and rest of broth ingredients. Bring to a boil and simmer for two hours. Strain the stock by pouring the liquid over a colander with a pot underneath it. Compost the vegetables if you can. Save the chicken and set aside.

Add soup ingredients to stock. Bring to a boil and simmer for 20 minutes. Let it cool overnight to bring out the flavors. Next day heat up soup and serve with yogurt or naan.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 Curry Soup

Servings Per Batch 8

Amount Per Serving

Calories151

Calories from Fat 2

% Daily Value *

Total Fat 9g

14%

Saturated Fat 6g

32%

Monounsaturated Fat 1g

Polyunsaturated Fat 0g

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 4g

1%

Sodium 84mg	4%
Potassium 637mg	18%
Total Carbohydrate 18g	6%
Dietary Fiber 4g	18%
Sugars 7g	
Protein 3g	6%
Vitamin A	66%
Vitamin C	79%
Calcium	9%
Iron	3%

* The Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet, so your values may change depending on your calorie needs. The values here may not be 100% accurate because the recipes have not been professionally evaluated nor have they been evaluated by the U.S. FDA.

Nutritional information

Carl Sagan

The following is a YouTube videos encapsulates the meaning of once upon a time. Each time I watch these I get goosebumps. I hope you do too. This is the essence of storytelling and myths. Being awed is a state of mind that transforms the mundane into a sublime state of mind.



Carl Sagan - 'A Glorious Dawn' ft Stephen Hawking (Symphony of...

melodysheep ✓ 12M views

MP3: <http://www.symphonyofscience.com> My own musical tribute to two great men of science. Carl Sagan and his cosmologist...



Symphony of Science - 'We Are All Connected' (ft. Sagan,...)

melodysheep 8.5M views

MP3 available at <http://www.symphonyofscience.com>. "We Are All Connected" was made from sampling Carl Sagan's Cosmos, The...

Prem Rawat



I put this in a Google search.

How many miles does Prem Rawat travel in a year

To fulfill his vision of inspiring people to discover and practice peace, he maintains a demanding travel schedule, flying an average of **100,000 nautical miles** and attending some 90 speaking engagements across the globe every year.

Just think Prem has been doing this for over 50 years. That's absolutely incredible. I don't know about you but I've done a lot of traveling and at the same time I truly disliked flying. My body does not like it at all.

Yet Prem travels constantly all over the world. I'm completely in awe of how he does this. Not only the traveling but he also flies his own plane. He has other pilots yet he loves to fly.

His stories have always mesmerized me. I first met him in India when I was 18 years old. This was in 1971. He was only 13 years old. I was in Delhi at a festival that almost a million people attended. I remember Prem giving several talks. He talked about inner knowledge.

He talked about you were built to have this experience within. It is a part of your true existence. It is never born nor will it ever die. He said I can show you how to discover the jewel within.

Nobody can do the digging for you. You must dig for the diamond within you. But I can show you where to dig. For me, that made all the difference in the world.

I've been practicing this knowledge since 1971. One can meditate for a trillion years and still, it's a drop in the bucket in eternity. This world would be a better place if we all discovered peace inside of us.

Prem's message is simple. Peace lies inside of you. The world will not give you peace.

Prem has always been an incredible storyteller. Even going back to when I was 18 years old in India. He would tell amazing stories. He probably knows thousands of stories.

When he was quite young, when he would go to sleep, he would listen to many great stories. This became his second nature and an incredible storyteller.

Many people say that it takes around 10,000 hours of practice to become an expert. Just think Prem has been doing this for over 50 years.

Stories to ponder over



These stories are meant to be pondered over. They are not just stories. There is a meaning behind them all.

Many of the stories below I heard in India when I was just 18 years old and Prem at that time was only 13 years old.

These are classical Indian stories that have been told for centuries. There is a hidden meaning behind each story. Ponder these over. It may help you on your journey.

This is the definition of the word ponder.

verb

1. think about (something) carefully, especially before making a decision or reaching a conclusion.

"I pondered the question of what clothes to wear for the occasion"

synonyms: think about, [contemplate](#), [consider](#), [review](#), reflect on, mull over, meditate on, muse on, deliberate about, cogitate on, dwell on, brood on, ruminate on, chew over, puzzle over, turn over in one's mind, [overthink](#)

"she had time to **ponder over** the incident"

The Jeweler And The Thief



Well, let's continue with this incredible story. The dragons when they first saw the youngsters entering the cave many moons ago weren't interested in the slightest in training man. You see man was one of their major troubles.

There was even a dragon slayer profession in the British Isles. Yet at the same time, they could see the potential in these youngsters. As a matter of fact, they were more evolved than them when they were young. Back then the dragons didn't even have a glimmer of light.

So they had an internal discussion amongst themselves. "Do you think we can train them"? Do you think they can change? You see even in China and Tibet war ruled the land.

Anger was the norm. Mind you these youngsters had a combination of light and darkness. They could see both sides of the coin. So the dragons decided to train them.

Now their training wasn't like today. Today children in schools are bored. They are taught to use just memory. They are taught to remember the facts. They are not taught to use their mind and think. The dragons are experts in this field.

They are the master's wizards of Hogworth today. In fact, they are thousands of years ahead in development. Hogwarts teachers would be in nursery school. The dragons would have an advanced Ph.D. study in the universe. They were off the charts.

The dragons had a unique style of teaching. You could say it was revolutionary today. They taught by using games, play, and fireside chats.

The very first game they taught was hide and seek. This was a very practical game. They had a series of talks about the universe. They were taught that the universe

existed inside of them. Well, to be frank, that was completely over their heads. They couldn't even understand one word.

So the dragons played a game of hiding and seek. The dragons would hide. The youngsters closed their eyes and counted to 10. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10. Ready or not here we come.

They would open their eyes and all the dragons were gone. The dragons had rules they couldn't leave the cave.

All of the kids were completely shocked when they open their eyes. All the dragons disappeared. They all gasped in surprise. As you know dragons are quite large. They weigh thousands of pounds. This game went on for around six months or so.

Finally, at one fireside chat, the dragons told this practical story. Imagine two young men walking down the road. They were headed to a town five days from their current destination.

One of the men was a jeweler. The other man was a thief. The thief knew this man had a very precious jewel that he was carrying. As I said both of them were going to the same town.

They decided to travel together. They had a long journey ahead of them. Hours passed. They were quite tired. Fortunately, there was a simple inn ahead of them. They both decided to spend the night there and share a room.

Both of them decided to have dinner together. The jeweler went first and a few minutes later the thief joined him. while the jeweler was holding a table for them the thief was looking all over for the precious jewel. He was quite dumbfounded.

He was the greatest thief in the land. They had dinner and went to bed immediately. They weren't in the mood to drink the ale and party into the night.

Well, guess what? This went on for several days. Finally, they reach their destination. By then the thief was confused. He thought this was going to be an easy steal. He said to the jeweler I'm a thief. I'm a king of thieves. I knew you were carrying a precious jewel. Every night I knew you hide the jewel inside of the room. Every night I would search all over for it. I got quite frustrated when I couldn't find it.

Where did you put it? I'm dying for an answer. The jeweler said I knew you were a thief. I knew you wanted to steal the jewel. Each night I would hide it in a place you would never look.

The thief said where is that? The jeweler said under your own pillow. I thief knew he was outwitted and outsmarted.

Well, the kids loved this story. They were well acquainted with thieves and jewelers. They went through their town quite frequently.

The dragons said let's play a game of hide and seek again. This time focus on your breath. Close your eyes. To their amazement, the dragons appeared inside of them.

They couldn't believe it. How could all the dragons appear to them inside of their being? This was the starting point of their incredible adventures.

Now when they played hide and seek they knew where to look. A single but necessary step took place. They knew this was both an inward and outward journey. The youngsters were thrilled.

Each time they play the game the youngsters knew where to look. They love to play this game. All the first-time students had to go through the same baby steps the others went through.

You see this path is two steps forward and one step backward. You learn from your progress and your mistakes. Never give up.

The Fight of Two Wolves Within You



An old Cherokee is teaching his grandson about life:

“A fight is going on inside me,” he said to the boy.

“It is a terrible fight and it is between two wolves. One is evil—he is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego.”

He continued, “The other is good – he is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith. The same fight is going on inside you—and inside every other person, too.”

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather: “Which wolf will win?”

The old Cherokee simply replied, “The one you feed.”

Learning How To Ride A Bicycle



Once upon a time, there was two twin brother named little Ricky and little Johnny. Little Johnny was a genius at picking up and learning new things.

While little Ricky was what you would call on the slow side. It took him hundreds of tries to learn new things.

For example one Christmas morning their wonderful parents presented them both with brand new bicycles. Both of them were so excited. Well, they took them outdoors.

Little Johnny hopped on his and immediately started riding down the block. Well, Little Ricky didn't have the same luck. It was kinda funny to see how clumsy he was. He didn't give up. He knew deep down inside he could learn how to ride this. It took him about a month.

The first time he realized that he was riding the bicycle he was filled with joy. He was so grateful. I did t. I did it. I didn't give up.

This incident carried him throughout his life. Every time he had to learn something new he remembered the experience of learning how to ride a bike.

Years later his wife said that he learned things so quickly. Little Ricky just smiled. He knew that life taught him such a precious lesson at such a young age. New give up. Preserve. You can learn anything. It may just take your time.

Follow The Recipe



Little Ricky loved ethnic foods, He was brought up since he was born to eat ethnic foods. He absolutely loved them. Yet he never knew how to cook them. One day in high school he enrolled in a cooking class. He wanted to learn how to cook. To his amazement, he learned that there were cooking recipes that you can follow to make each dish.

A recipe usually had a list of ingredients along with the actual step-by-step steps needed to make the dish. He was so excited. From that precious course, he took he learned hundreds of recipes throughout the years. He took the same concept to his own life.

He learned how to use spices like kindness and patience in his life. He would sprinkle these on his daily actions. He knew that life was an incredible adventure. He adds these precious spices to his everyday affair.

Ponder this over. What spices can you use to enhance your life? Kindness, tolerance, patience. Love and compassion. These are incredible spices that the world loves.

Learn how to avoid the spice of anger, being a bully, and fighting. These never are good in the end. They are old habits from the past.

The Frog in The Well



You are the universe. You just don't know it. This is the central theme of the Dragons. They reached a growth of awareness where they become the sun, moon, and stars and were walking around in dragon bodies.

They realized they were eternal. They were beyond time and space.

The dragons also knew that humans had the same capability. They were curious about that. The dragons knew that man came from the stars. They were stardust.

Yet the village around them and Tibet and China at that time had no idea of who they truly are.

The dragons were once in the same state of awareness as the humans. They were angry, hateful, warring, and full of greed. Yet over time, they realized their potential.

They needed a story that would reflect how large they felt yet how small in reality they live in. So here goes the story.

Once upon a time, a frog lived in a well. This frog thought he was a know it all. This frog thought the water in my well is the largest in the world. This was, in fact, quite a large well.

The villagers used it for the community. Anyway, this frog bragged a lot and told all the people who were strangers to the well how vast the water is in the well.

One day a stranger came who lived near the ocean. The frog came up to the stranger and said: "the water in my well is far grander than any water in the well".

The stranger said "Well according to my experience the water in your well is probably one of the smallest I have ever seen.

Well, a fight ensued with the war of words. It was going out of control. Both sides were putting wood on the fire. Finally, they both calmed down. All the villagers came and wondered what was going on. It was quite the scene.

Well, the villagers and frog said to the man “Can you prove it”. “Can you show us a place where water is larger than our well”?

So to make a long story short a small group of villagers and the frog traveled to the ocean. They couldn’t believe what they saw. An endless body of water is everywhere.

They were dumbfounded. Never in their world did they see such a precious sight. The stranger laughed and said, “now this is a large body of water”. The villagers and frog couldn't agree more. Their well wasn’t even a drop of water compared to the ocean.

The dragons told this story to the youngsters. They reminded the kids of playing hide and seek and peek-a-boo.

The dragons would appear to them inside. Well, the dragons said that is the frog in the well. That is the starting point in your incredible journey of life.

Inside of you lies the infinite ocean of love. You have the potential to tap into this. In fact, you are this ocean. This is your true nature.

You should see how wide were the eyes opened from the children. They were completely mesmerized by the story. These weren’t just some mumbo-jumbo words The dragons were talking about their own experience.

They were telling the kids that they could ultimately have the same experience. It’s a moment-by-moment conscious journey. Baby steps are taken along the way.

3 Blind Men And The Elephant



When I was young I heard the story about three blind men touching an elephant.

Each man touched a different part of the elephant.

One touched the elephant's ear, another touched his feet, while the last touched the tusk.

They began to discuss their experience and a huge fight began.

I'm right and you're wrong.

I know all the answers.

You are a fool to believe in that.

What a child you are.

Yet they all had their own experience.

It was a piece of the puzzle.

Not the puzzle itself but a piece.

Are we like the blind man touching the elephant?

My religion is better than your religion.

I'm going to heaven while you're going to hell.

I'm going to declare war on you.

I'm going to convert you.

Religion has a piece of the puzzle.

It is not the puzzle itself.

Each religion is different and unique.

The essence is the same.

Which part of the elephant did you touch?

Maybe it's about time to be open to something new.

Your enemy is talking about the same thing you are.

He just has a different piece, a different point of view.

In the end, the essence is the same.

Stop The Noise In Your Head



As the children began to learn how to meditate they saw how powerful the mind is. They never noticed that before.

They asked the dragons how to stop the noise in my head. Of course, all the dragons laughed. They laughed because everyone goes through this.

You see the mind is the most different thing to control in the universe. The majority of man reacts to every situation. Man is reactive. The wise man learns to be proactive.

They understood the basic law it's by will alone that sets my mind in motion. Now that's very easy to say but hard to do. All people who learn how to meditate in the beginning have this problem.

In the east, they call it the monkey mind. The monkey goes from one branch to another. It can't be controlled. Well, when they first started to learn how to mediate they saw this from first-hand experience.

The dragons told a wonderful story each time this subject was brought up. They told a story where a man saves a genie. Nobody knows exactly how this man saved him.

Well, the genie told this man you can have as many wishes as you want. The man said wow that's incredible. I love that idea. The genie said well there's a catch.

The man said, "what's that". You must always give one wish after another. If you don't I will chop off your head with my sword. Are you sure you want to continue with this? The man hesitates for a moment and says reluctantly sure.

Well, the genie said what's your first wish. The man gives one wish after another. It seems like when one wish is granted he had to give another. He didn't have one opportunity to enjoy even for a second the previous wish. He was getting tired and couldn't even go to sleep. The genie was always harassing him and saying "what's your next wish"?

Well, fortunately, there was a wise man nearby. He went to the wise man and sincerely asked for help. This boon was turning into a curse. The wise man whispered into his ear.

Well, the genie demanded another wish or he will chop off his head. The young man said to go to the forest and find a huge log. Your wish is my command. In a second he returns with a huge log.

The genie said with a smile give me a wish or I will chop off your head. As you can see the genie wasn't particularly nice. Well, the young man told the genie to go up and down the pole.

When I need you I will give you another command. The young man could relax and enjoy all the wishes he gave to this genie.

The genie knew he was outsmarted by the wise man. The young boy enjoyed his life and helped others in the community. He eventually learned about the dragons and helped tremendously his fellow man.

The dragons said that the genie is the mind. The mind wants to control you versus the other way around. By placing your mind on your breath the genie will go up and down the log and set you free.

Meditation is the key to bringing awareness to your mind. Your mind is either your friend or foe.

Everyone in the universe has to learn how to control their mind.

The Mirror



Mirror, Mirror on the wall. Who's the fairest one of all? What if we have an actual mirror that exists inside of us? Wouldn't that be an incredible fairy tale? Now, what if I told you that you are the universe? You just don't know it.

How's that for a fairy tale? You see your mirror is dusty. Throughout your life, nobody told you that this mirror exists inside of you.

Well, let the fairytale begin. You can start learning how to clean your precious mirror. You can start by being kind in each moment. The more you are kind the more you will clean your mirror.

Learn how to meditate and enjoy the silence inside of you. At first, you may get bored but the more you practice the more you are cleaning your mirror.

Remember this is a play not work.

Cleaning your mirror is like removing huge boulders that you carry around. They weigh you down. Each time you remove a boulder you get lighter and lighter. You see you are your own Prince Charming.

You can remove all obstacles inside of you. Now that's a fairy tale. Ponder this over. You are the universe. You just don't know it.

The Ugly Duckling



This is a beautiful fable by Hans Christian Andersen.

It is a beautiful summer day. The sun shines warmly on an old house near a river. Behind the house, a mother duck is sitting on ten eggs. "Tchick." One by one all the eggs break open.

All except one. This one is the biggest egg of all.

Mother duck sits and sits on the big egg. At last, it breaks open, "Tchick, tchick!"

Out jumps the last baby duck. It looks big and strong. It is grey and ugly.

The next day mother duck takes all her little ducks to the river. She jumps into it. All her baby ducks jump in. The big ugly duckling jumps in too.

They all swim and play together. The ugly duckling swims better than all the other ducklings.

Quack, quack! Come with me to the farmyard! - says mother duck to her baby ducks and they all follow her there.

The farmyard is very noisy. The poor duckling is so unhappy there. The hens peck him, the rooster flies at him, the ducks bite him, and the farmer kicks him.

At last one day, he runs away. He comes to a river. He sees many beautiful big birds swimming there. Their feathers are so white, their necks so long, and their wings so pretty.

The little duckling looks and looks at them. He wants to be with them. He wants to stay and watch them. He knows they are swans. Oh, how he wants to be beautiful like them.

Now it is winter. Everything is white with snow. The river is covered with ice. The ugly duckling is very cold and unhappy.

Spring comes once again. The sun shines warmly. Everything is fresh and green.

One morning the ugly duckling sees the beautiful swans again. He knows them. He wants so much to swim with them in the river. But he is afraid of them. He

wants to die. So he runs into the river. He looks into the water. There in the water, he sees a beautiful swan. It is he! He is no more an ugly duckling. He is a beautiful white swan.

We are all swans. We just don't have the eyes to see. Lookin inside of your heart. You will see your true nature.

The Sun And The Wind



THE WIND and the Sun were disputing which was the stronger. Suddenly they saw a traveler coming down the road, and the Sun said: "I see a way to decide our dispute.

Whichever of us can cause that traveler to take off his cloak shall be regarded as

the stronger You begin."

So the Sun retired behind a cloud, and the wind began to blow as hard as it could upon the traveler. But the harder he blew the more closely did the traveler wrap his cloak around him, till at last, the Wind had to give up in despair.

Then the Sun came out and shone in all his glory upon the traveler, who soon found it too hot to walk with his cloak on.

"Kindness effects more than severity."

The Sun And Darkness



Once upon a time, a wise man was having a conversation with the sun. He told the sun that darkness did not like him. He felt that the sun ruined everything for him.

Darkness love to keep everyone in a state of ignorance. Darkness loved to see humanity bickering and fighting with one another.

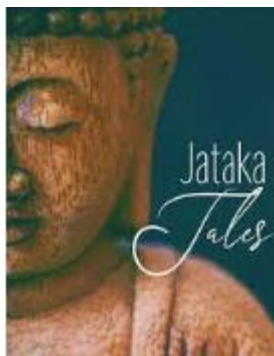
The sun just loved to shine and give love, kindness, and compassion to all. Well, the sun said to the wise man bring darkness to me and we can have a wonderful conversation.

The wise man said, “I will bring him to you tomorrow”. Well, the sun waited and waited. The next day darkness never came.

He waited for over a month. Darkness never showed up. You see darkness is only the absence of light. The sun is always shining so darkness can never appear.

Discover the light inside of you. That is your true nature.

Jātaka tales



Where they come from

This story belongs to the Jātaka tales, which are part of sacred Buddhist literature. The Jātaka is a collection of 547 stories that deal with anecdotes, legends, and fables about the incarnations of the Buddha before his existence as such, between 563 and 483 b.c.e. Jātaka stories are dated between 300 b.c.e. and 400 c.e.; that is, they were composed over seven centuries.

The following came from an article by Andrew Schelling which appeared in the Tricycle magazine in Fall 1991

The *Jataka Tales*, from which this story comes, gather some of the earliest and strangest writings preserved in the Buddhist heritage. *Jataka* means “birth.”

The old collection, inscribed in a vernacular language called Pali, preserves 550 legends that tell of the Buddha’s miraculous births in the eons before he became enlightened. The stories occur in rough-hewn prose, studded with cryptic shards of a much older verse.

It is in these broken oddments of poetry that you find something remarkably ancient—animal tales dating in all likelihood to Paleolithic times.

Folklore and archaeology suggest that *Jataka*’s interest in wild animal personalities is not an isolated instance. The earliest pictorial art largely depicts animals—think of the Magdalenian cave paintings found in Spain and southern France, or comparable rock art that survives across the planet.

There is every reason to believe that the earliest verbal art was concerned with similar themes. As written documents the *Jataka Tales* are ancient, but from any anthropological perspective they look comparatively recent—humans have been speaking for 40,000 years, perhaps longer.

During that period the animal fable occurred in many places but survives into our day largely in cultures like India’s, where the old spoken lore met on friendly terms with the scholar’s pen.

³ <https://tricycle.org/magazine/jataka-mind/>



Courtesy of Hosho.

I do believe, however, that the *Jataka Tales* register the first instance in the written literature of what I'd call *cross-species compassion*, or Jataka Mind, an immediate and unqualified empathy shown towards creatures, not of one's own biological species.

Perhaps the tales retain traces of a universal contract between living creatures, so long ago vanished that no one remembers its ancient imperatives. With a bow to the old stories, Jataka Mind is that conscious human behavior which bears a whiff of that old way of thinking. Tales like the one just recounted were meant to waken a notion of kinship that sweeps across animal species.

Animals in the *Jatakas* surely justify the storyteller's interest—they show themselves to be of an equal, often a higher, ethical order than humans.

A thousand, two thousand, maybe ten thousand years after these tales first began to circulate through the villages and pass along the trade routes of Asia, Buddhism cast the *Jataka Tales* into philosophical form.

The Diamond Sutra, a central document in India, Tibet, China, and Japan, makes explicit what the old stories had gestured towards. It is here that the Buddha announces an unqualified brother and sisterhood of creatures:

One should produce a thought in this manner: 'As many beings as there are in the universe of beings, comprehended under the term *beings*—egg-born, born from a womb, moisture-born, or miraculously born; with or without form; with perception, without perception, and with neither

perception nor non-perception—as far as any conceivable form of beings is conceived, all these I must lead out of misery.’

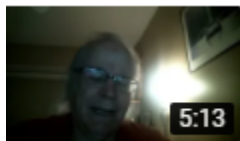
The fundamental vow of the Buddhist practitioner, fashioned two thousand years ago in India, makes explicit the ethical stance. India however, has passed both metaphysics and ethics down the ages in a nearly hallucinogenic cloak of symbols.

Myth, folklore, dance, sculpture, music, and painting have made sophisticated doctrine readily available to the popular mind. Thus the finest poem of Buddhist India, which cast its metaphysics into durable shape, was in fact a recasting of the ancient *Jataka Tales*.



Where they came from

Fletcher Soul Traveler



Where they came from Part 2

Fletcher Soul Traveler

Buddha and the drunk elephant



Buddha had a cousin named Devadatta. Devadatta was very jealous of the Buddha. He would think to himself why does he get all the attention? I'm just as good as he is. Sometimes we believe what the mind tells us.

Devadatta came up with a master plan. He knew that in a few days Buddha was going to a particular village.

Devadatta went to this village a day before Buddha was supposed to show up. He got an elephant totally drunk. I mean totally drunk. Then he started to beat the poor old elephant with a stick.

He did this once he saw Buddha enter the village. The elephant was in extreme pain and furious. He wanted revenge. Devadatta then opened up the gate and the elephant saw the Buddha and his followers.

Like a mad elephant, he ran towards them. Everyone scrambled for dear life. Everyone except for the Buddha and his close attendant Ananda.

The Buddha didn't even flinch. He was in a complete state of love and compassion. It was like a young puppy dog rushing to its master. Well, the elephant was still angry and drunk. What was going to happen next?

When the drunk elephant was just inches from barreling down and crashing the Buddha, the elephant stopped in his track. It was a sight to be seen. Nobody could believe it, especially Devadatta.

The elephant just melted like butter into Buddha's arms and they embraced. The Buddha took away the pain and the state of intoxication of the elephant. They became from that point in time best friends.

Whenever the Buddha came to this town the Buddha and the elephant would meet and greet each other. They were the best of friends.

The Deer King of the Banyan ⁴



The Deer King of the Banyan

In one of his previous incarnations, the Buddha incarnated in the form of a deer in a forest near Kashi, which later received the name Varanasi or Benares. Over the years, he grew into a beautiful, golden stag. His eyes shone like two stars, his mouth was as red as the forest berries.

His hooves were black and as bright as night in the Thar desert, and everyone who saw him said that his antlers were made of silver. Besides being beautiful, this golden deer was also compassionate and just. So much so, that he became the king of a herd of five hundred deer, the Herd of the Banyan.

In the same forest, there was another herd of deer that was equally numerous, the Herd of the Antlers, and their king was likewise a noble, beautiful and impressive golden deer.

Around that time, Brahmadatta was crowned king of Kashi. Brahmadatta was a man of good heart, but he had regrettable tastes in pursuits. He liked to hunt.

Obviously, a king did not need to hunt for survival; instead, Brahmadatta hunted for pleasure. In addition, he loved venison above all other foods, as you can imagine, this combination of interests did not bode well for the herds of deer who lived in the forest near Kashi.

⁴ https://theearthstoriescollection.org/en/the-deer-king-of-the-banyan/?fbclid=IwAR31Ud25GAxSL-LNKKAG7CWjeba_UHFJk96BF5Bs84a3aWAT-UQFXyv-e8M

Brahmadatta went out almost every day to hunt, starting each time from a different village. The people of the villages were thus obliged to set aside their own work to accompany and serve the king and his hunting parties.

The people of the villages began to get frustrated with the number of interruptions the king was subjecting them to. The farmers could not take care of their fields, so the crops were harvested haphazardly and later than they should be.

The merchants and traders did not have the time to take care of their businesses properly. So the people from all the villages gathered together and decided to build a big deer park for the king next to Kashi.

That way, they thought, the king could easily hunt any time he wished, and he would not need to recruit villagers to help him.

No sooner said than done, the peasants built a high palisade around a large meadow dotted with dense groves of trees and bushes. and they dug ponds where the deer could drink and bathe.

They opened the large door in the palisade and, banging sticks and poles to create a deafening noise, they drove the deer out of the forest and into the park. When the last deer had gone through, the door was closed.

The representative of the villages went to visit the king and said:

‘Your Majesty, as you know, we have always been willing to help your hunting parties, but our fields and businesses are increasingly neglected because of this, and we have families to feed.

We know that you are a wise king and that, consequently, you will know how to value what we have created for you. We have made you a nice deer park next to the city, in which we have gathered two big herds for your enjoyment. Now, you can go hunting whenever you want to, without needing to recruit villagers for each outing.

Days that you do not go out hunting, you can still have fresh venison, because your own cooks will be able to kill all the meat they need.’

The king, who was not a bad man, understood perfectly the problem brought to him by the peasants and merchants of the villages and agreed to their initiative.

The following day, Brahmadatta went to the park and was pleased to see so many deer roaming the grounds. It did not take him long to discern two golden stags of impressive stature, which he supposed to be the kings of the herds.

Brahmadatta pointed them out to his assistant, the chief of the guard, and his cook giving the order that those two deer should not be slaughtered under any circumstances.

Every day, Brahmadatta came to the park and killed a deer, which was taken by the cook to prepare dishes for the king's table. Sometimes, if the king was very busy, it was the cook himself who gave the order to the chief of the guard to kill a deer.

But as soon as the deer saw the bows and arrows, they panicked. They ran from here to there, they crashed against trees or got caught between them, hooking their antlers and wounding themselves, twisting their legs and breaking bones with the falls. Others were injured by the loose arrows.

The king of the Banyan Herd was saddened by all the injuries, deaths, and panic, so he went to see the king of the Antlers Herd.

'It is clear that we are trapped here, at least for the moment,' the Banyan Stag said, 'We may have to face this unfortunate situation for a while. But we should, at least, try to reduce the suffering of everyone as much as possible.'

'I agree,' said the Antlers Stag. 'I have also been thinking about this, but I do not know what we can do.'

'Well,' the Banyan Deer said. 'I thought something that, although it is very hard to accept, could at least limit the damage to the rest of the deer in both herds.'

Since the human king only needs the meat of one deer a day, I suggest that one of us could be chosen by lot each day, and that deer should go directly to king Brahmadatta to be killed, or to the chopping block to be sacrificed by the cook.

One day we would choose one of my herd, and the next day a deer of yours. In this way, we would avoid the chaos and mad racing that causes so many injuries and wounds.'

'I agree with your proposal,' the Stag of the Antlers said, and addressing the other deer in both herds, he asked, 'What do you think?'

After some debate, the members of both herds were unanimous in accepting the proposal of the Banyan Stag.

The next day, when the king and his men looked over the palisade of the park, they saw a single deer standing there. He was shaking with fear, but he held his antlers high with pride.

The king paused, thoughtful. He realized what had happened: the kings of both herds, those magnificent golden stags, had convinced their herds to sacrifice one deer each day, in order to avoid injuries to the rest.

Brahmadatta fell into a deep sadness in the face of the nobility of those animals. After a few minutes of reflection, he said to his men:

‘You will no longer hunt among the herds. You will only kill the deer that is offered to you every day down here for the sacrifice.’

He put away his bow, climbed down from the palisade, and rode silently back to his palace, absorbed in his sad thoughts. That night he slept restlessly and dreamt that a bright deer gazed at him sadly as he approached.

Thus, for a time, a deer was chosen by lot, by turns from each herd, and was sent to the chopping block of the Kashi king’s cook. Injuries and wounds were avoided in this way and, despite their gloomy fate and the deep anguish of seeing one of them leave each day, the deer were able to live in some tranquillity.

Despite having improved the situation slightly, the Banyan Stag felt his soul break every day, when he saw a deer leave the herd and walk towards its death.

Day after day, he tried to encourage the deer of his herd so that they would not lose hope.

‘Try not to think beyond the present,’ he told them as the sun lit his shining eyes. ‘Enjoy the fresh air you breathe and the comfortable grass that welcomes you when resting.

Let yourselves be warmed by the sun. Do not give up. As long as we live, there will be hope. I will find a way out of here.’

One day, the tragic draw fell on a pregnant hind of the Herd of the Antlers. The doe went to see her king and said:

‘I’m ready to take my destiny, but not before my fawn was born. Understand me, please,’ she insisted, ‘if I go now, two will die. I do not ask you to save my life.

I am not asking for myself, but my fawn. Let my little one be born, and I swear that the next day I will take my place on the block.'

But the Antlers Stag responded sadly:

'The law is the law. I cannot change the rules now and, therefore, I cannot spare you from your destiny. Please, understand me. Fate has chosen you, and there can be no exceptions. You have to go.'

Desperate, the doe went to the Deer King of the Banyan. Folding her front legs, she knelt before him and begged him to do something. The Banyan Stag watched her silently, sweetly, and moved to the depths of his heart.

'Get up, sister,' the deer king said, finally. 'For once we will change the rules. Do not worry. Calm down and rest. You are not going to be sacrificed. I will take care of everything.'

The doe looked at him with relief and gratitude, though not joy, for she knew that, whatever the Banyan Stag did, some other would have to take her place.

The Banyan Stag lowered his head and closed his eyes. He knew that the time had come to behave like a true king. Then, he raised his head again, his magnificent silver antlers outlined against the sky.

'My position as king and leader forces me to assume what no one else can take on.' He thought to himself. 'I will take her place.'

He walked slowly and with dignity towards the door of the palisade, while the members of his herd watched him pass by. They knew what he was going to do.

They knew him well, he would not allow such an injustice to take place, even if it cost him his life.

A deep silence descended over the park when the Banyan King arrived at the door of the palisade. When the cook saw him, he said to the soldiers:

'Do not shoot! The two golden stags must not die. This is what the king decreed.'

He immediately sent a messenger to the king. Soon after, Brahmadata appeared at the palisade. The king of Kashi met the eyes of the king of the deer and realized that this was the deer from his dreams.

‘Deer King of the Banyan,’ Brahmadata said at last, ‘I know you, for you have been visiting me in my dreams. Why are you here? I freed you from this commitment, you and the king of the other herd.

Why do you offer yourself for sacrifice, when I do not want your death?’

‘Oh, king of men!’ replied the Banyan Deer. ‘Today the sacrifice has fallen to a pregnant hind, who has begged me to do something to free her from this obligation, at least until after her fawn is born. But I could not do anything other than take her place.

I could not condemn another of our people to die when luck had favored them. I could not force the death penalty on someone whom fate had not called. So it must be me who takes her place.’

The Deer King of the Banyan lowered his head and swallowed and then raised his magnificent antlers to the sky and said:

‘Go ahead, shoot your arrows.’

The soldiers looked at their king, waiting for an order, but Brahmadata could not speak. Two large tears rolled down his cheeks.

How could he have been so blind, so insensitive to the feelings of these noble animals, he wondered. In truth, he felt ashamed of the suffering humans caused to beings who were just as sensitive to pain and the anguish of death as they were.

‘Oh, Great Deer King!’ Brahmadata said at last, ‘You are right. A King must take responsibility for all of his subjects.

Not even among human beings have I witnessed as much nobility as you have demonstrated today, along with compassion and generosity. I beg you to forgive me for not being aware of the pain and suffering of deer.’

He continued, ‘You and all the deer prisoners of this park are free to return to your forests. You may graze where you wish to on my lands. No one will hunt you again. Go and live in peace.’

‘Sir, your kindness moves me,’ the Deer King of the Banyan replied. ‘But what will happen to the other animals, birds, and fish that suffer just as we do and you do? Will you hunt them, now that you have freed us from suffering?’

‘Noble king,’ Brahmadatta replied with tears in his eyes. ‘I never would have thought that I could see things as clearly as I am seeing them now!’

Please, take my word that, while they are in my kingdom, no animal, bird, or fish will be killed by the hand of a man.’

‘Listen to me, all courtiers and assistants present here,’ he shouted. ‘I decree that, from today, all beings in my kingdom will be considered my subjects.

Therefore, they must not be hunted or killed. I order you to go forth and announce this decree throughout the country,’

Brahmadatta, returned his attention to the Banyan King. ‘Tell me, compassionate king of the deer, is your heart at peace with me now?’

‘Yes, great king Brahmadatta!’ replied the golden stag. ‘My heart is at peace!’

The people of the kingdom were amazed at first, but they complied with the royal order, and the animals were no longer hunted and massacred in those lands.

Since the kingdom came to depend on the crops in the fields, the farmers and their lands became more respected.

As for the Deer King of the Banyan and the two herds that were once imprisoned in the park, they returned to the depths of the forests, where they led a life free from the anguish of hiding and fleeing.

Adapted by Grian A. Cutanda (2018).

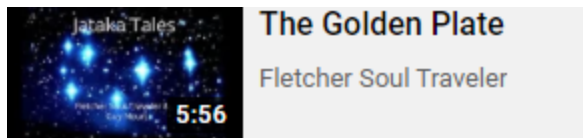
Under license Creative Commons CC BY-NC-SA.



The Deer King of the Banyan story is Jātaka no. 12, and its original title is the Nigrodhamiga-Jātaka, although for this adaptation I have drawn mainly on the adaptations of Rafe Martin (1999), Todd Anderson (1995), and K. R. Vidhyaa (2014).

The Golden Plate
[Greed and Honesty]⁵

⁵ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_03.htm



Once upon a time in a place called Seri, there were two salesmen of pots and pans and hand-made trinkets. They agreed to divide the town between them. They also said that after one had gone through his area, it was all right for the other to try and sell where the first had already been.

One day, while one of them was coming down a street, a poor little girl saw him and asked her grandmother to buy her a bracelet. The old grandmother replied,

"How can we poor people buy bracelets?" The little girl said, "Since we don't have any money, we can give our black sooty old plate." The old woman agreed to give it a try, so she invited the dealer inside.

The salesman saw that these people were very poor and innocent, so he didn't want to waste his time with them. Even though the old woman pleaded with him, he said he had no bracelet that she could afford to buy.

Then she asked, "We have an old plate that is useless to us, can we trade it for a bracelet?" The man took it and, while examining it, happened to scratch the bottom of it. To his surprise, he saw that underneath the black soot, it was a golden plate!

But he didn't let on that he had noticed it. Instead, he decided to deceive these poor people so he could get the plate for next to nothing. He said, "This is not worth even one bracelet. There's no value in this. I don't want it!" He left, thinking he would return later when they would accept even less for the plate.

Meanwhile the other salesman, after finishing in his part of town, followed after the first as they had agreed. He ended up at the same house. Again the poor little girl begged her grandmother to trade the old plate for a bracelet. The woman saw that this was a nice tender looking merchant and thought,

"He's a good man, not like the rough-talking first salesman." So she invited him in and offered to trade the same black sooty old plate for one bracelet. When he examined it, he too saw that it was pure gold under the grime.

He said to the old woman, "All my goods and all my money together are not worth as much as this rich golden plate!"

Of course, the woman was shocked at this discovery, but now she knew that he was indeed a good and honest fellow. So she said she would be glad to accept whatever he could trade for it.

The salesman said, "I'll give you all my pots and pans and trinkets, plus all my money, if you will let me keep just eight coins and my balancing scale, with its cover to put the golden plate in." They made the trade. He went down to the river, where he paid the eight coins to the ferryman to take him across.

By then the greedy salesman had returned, already adding up huge imaginary profits in his head. When he met the little girl and her grandmother again, he said he had changed his mind and was willing to offer a few cents, but not one of his bracelets, for the useless black sooty old plate.

The old woman then calmly told him of the trade she had just made with the honest salesman, and said, "Sir, you lied to us."

The greedy salesman was not ashamed of his lies, but he was saddened as he thought, "I've lost the golden plate that must be worth a hundred thousand." So he asked the woman, "Which way did he go?"

She told him the direction. He left all his things right there at her door and ran down to the river, thinking, "He robbed me! He robbed me! He won't make a fool out of me!"

From the riverside, he saw the honest salesman still crossing over on the ferry boat. He shouted to the ferryman, "Come back!" But the good merchant told him to keep on going to the other side, and that's what he did.

Seeing that he could do nothing, the greedy salesman exploded with rage. He jumped up and down, beating his chest.

He became so filled with hatred towards the honest man, who had won the golden plate, that he made himself cough up blood. He had a heart attack and died on the spot!

The moral is: "Honesty is the best policy."

Beauty and Grey
[A Wise Leader] ⁶



Beauty and Grey
Fletcher Soul Traveler

Once upon a time, there was a deer who was the leader of a herd of a thousand. He had two sons. One was very slim and tall, with bright alert eyes, and smooth reddish fur. He was called Beauty. The other was Grey in color, also slim and tall, and was called Grey.

One day, after they were fully grown, their father called Beauty and Grey to him. He said, "I am now very old, so I cannot do all that is necessary to look after this big herd of deer.

I want you, my two grown-up children, to be the leaders, while I retire from looking after them all the time. We will divide the herd, and each of you will lead 500 deer." So it was done.

In India, when the harvest time comes, the deer are always in danger. The rice is at its tallest, and the deer cannot help but go into the paddies and eat it.

To avoid the destruction of their crops, the human beings dig pits, set sharp stakes in the ground, and build stone traps - all to capture and kill the deer.

Knowing this was the season, the wise old deer called the two new leaders to him. He advised them to take the herds up into the mountain forest, far from the dangerous farmlands.

This was how he had always saved the deer from being wounded or killed. Then he would bring them back to the low lands after the harvest was over.

⁶ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_12.htm

Since he was too old and weak for the trip, he would remain behind in hiding. He warned them to be careful and have a safe journey. Beauty set out with his herd for the mountain forest, and so did Grey with his.

The villagers all along the way knew that this was the time the deer moved from the low-lying farmlands to the high countryside. So they hid along the way and killed the deer as they passed by.

Grey did not pay attention to his father's wise advice. Instead of being careful and traveling safely, he was in a hurry to get to the lush mountain forest. So he moved his herd constantly, during the night, at dawn and dusk, and even in broad daylight.

This made it easy for the people to shoot the deer in Grey's herd with bows and arrows. Many were killed, and many were wounded, only to die in pain later on. Grey reached the forest with only a few deer remaining alive.

The tall sleek red-furred Beauty was wise enough to understand the danger to his moving herd. So he was very careful. He knew it was safer to stay away from the villages, and from all humans.

He knew it was not safe in the daytime, or even at dawn or dusk. So he led his herd wide around the villages and moved only in the middle of the night. Beauty's herd arrived in the mountain forest safe and sound, with no one killed or injured.

The two herds found each other and remained in the mountains until well after the harvest season was over. Then they began the return to the farmland country.

Grey had learned nothing from the first trip. As it was getting cold in the mountains, he was in a hurry to get to the warmer low lands. So he was just as careless as before.

Again the people hid along the way and attacked and killed the deer. All Grey's herd were killed, later to be eaten or sold by the villagers. Grey himself was the only one who survived the journey.

Beauty led his herd in the same careful way as before. He brought back all 500 deer, completely safe. While the deer was still in the distance, the old chief said to his doe, "Look at the deer coming back to us. Beauty has all his followers with

him. Grey comes limping back alone, without his whole herd of 500. Those who follow a wise leader, with good qualities, will always be safe.

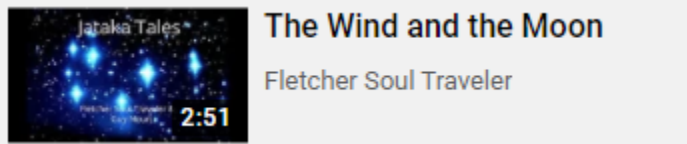
Those who follow a foolish leader, who is careless and thinks only of himself, will fall into troubles and be destroyed."

After some time, the old deer died and was reborn as he deserved. Beauty became chief of the herd and lived a long life, loved and admired by all.

The moral is: A wise leader puts the safety of his followers first.

The Wind and the Moon

[Friendship] ⁷



8

Once upon a time, two very good friends lived together in the shade of a rock. Strange as it may seem, one was a lion and one was a tiger. They had met when they were too young to know the difference between lions and tigers.

So they did not think their friendship was at all unusual. Besides, it was a peaceful part of the mountains, possibly due to the influence of a gentle forest monk who lived nearby. He was a hermit, one who lives far away from other people.

For some unknown reason, one day the two friends got into a silly argument. The tiger said, "Everyone knows the cold comes when the moon wanes from full to new!"

The lion said, "Where did you hear such nonsense? Everyone knows the cold comes when the moon waxes from new to full!"

The argument got stronger and stronger. Neither could convince the other. They could not reach any conclusion to resolve the growing dispute. They even started

⁷ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_19.htm

8

calling each other names! Fearing for their friendship, they decided to go ask the learned forest monk, who would surely know about such things.

Visiting the peaceful hermit, the lion and tiger bowed respectfully and put their question to him. The friendly monk thought for a while and then gave his answer.

"It can be cold in any phase of the moon, from new to full and back to new again. It is the wind that brings the cold, whether from the west or north, or east. Therefore, in a way, you are both right!

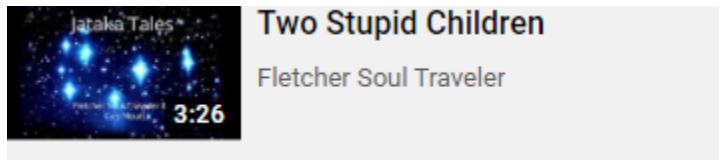
And neither of you is defeated by the other. The most important thing is to live without conflict, to remain united. Unity is best by all means."

The lion and tiger thanked the wise hermit. They were happy to still be friends.

The moral is: Weather comes and the weather goes, but friendship remains.

Two Stupid Children

[Foolishness]



9

Once upon a time, there was an old carpenter with a shiny bald head. On sunny days, his head shined so brightly that people shaded their eyes when talking to him!

On just such a sunny day, a hungry mosquito was attracted to the old carpenter's bright bald head. He landed on it and started biting into it.

The carpenter was busy smoothing a piece of wood with a plane. When he felt the mosquito biting him, he tried to chase him away. But the hungry mosquito would not leave such a good-looking meal.

So the man called over his son and asked him to get rid of the stubborn pest.

Unlike his father's shiny head, the son was not so bright. But he was hard working and obedient. He said, 'Don't worry Dad, be patient. I'll kill that bug with just one blow!'

Then he picked up a very sharp ax and took careful aim at the mosquito. Without thinking, he came down with the ax and split the mosquito in two! Unfortunately, after slicing through the mosquito, the ax also split the old carpenter's shiny bald head in two.

Meanwhile, an adviser to the king happened to be passing by with his followers. They saw what had just happened, and were quite shocked that anyone could be so stupid!

⁹ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_47.htm

The king's adviser said, "Don't be so surprised by human stupidity! This reminds me of a similar event that occurred just yesterday.

"In a village not far from here, a woman was cleaning rice. She was pounding it in a mortar with a pestle, to separate the husks. As she worked up a sweat, a swarm of flies began buzzing around her head.

She tried to chase them away, but, the thirsty flies would not leave.

"Then she called over her daughter and asked her to shoo away the bothersome bugs. Although she was a rather foolish girl, the daughter always tried her best to please her mother.

"So she stood up from her own mortar, raised her pestle, and took careful aim at the biggest and boldest of the flies. Without thinking, she pounded the fly to death! But of course, the same blow that killed the fly also ended her mother's life.

"You all know what they say," said the adviser, finishing his story, "'With friends like these, who needs enemies!'"

The moral is: A wise enemy is less dangerous than a foolish friend.

The Tree That Acted Like a Hunter

[Impatience]



The Tree That Acted Like a Hunter

10

Once upon a time, there was an antelope who lived in the deep forest. He ate the fruits that fell from the trees. There was one tree that had become his favorite.

In the same area, there was a hunter who captured and killed antelopes and deer. He put down fruit as bait under a tree. Then he waited, hiding in the branches above.

He held a rope noose hanging down to the ground around the fruits. When an animal ate the fruit, the hunter tightened the noose and caught him.

Early one morning the antelope came to his favorite tree in search of fruits to eat. He did not see that the hunter was hiding in it, with his noose-trap ready. Even though he was hungry, the antelope was very careful.

He was on the lookout for any possible danger. He saw the delicious-looking ripe fruits at the foot of his favorite tree. He wondered why no animal had yet eaten any, and so he was afraid something was wrong.

The hiding hunter saw the antelope approaching from a distance. Seeing him stop and take great care, he was afraid he would not be able to trap him. He was so anxious that he began throwing fruits in the direction of the antelope, trying to lure him into coming closer.

¹⁰ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_23.htm

But this was a pretty smart antelope. He knew that fruits only fall straight down when they fall from trees. Since these fruits were flying toward him, he knew there was danger.

So he examined the tree itself very carefully and saw the hunter in the branches. However, he pretended not to see him.

He spoke in the direction of the tree. "Oh my dear fruit tree, you used to give me your fruits by letting them fall straight down to the ground. Now, throwing them towards me, you do not act at all like a tree!

Since you have changed your habits, I too will change mine. I will get my fruits from a different tree from now on, one that still acts like a tree!"

The hunter realized his mistake and saw that the antelope had outsmarted him. This angered him and he yelled out, "You may escape me this time, you clever antelope, but I'll get you next time for sure!"

The antelope realized that, by getting so angry, the hunter had given himself away a second time. So he spoke in the direction of the tree again. "Not only don't you act like a tree, but you act like a hunter! You foolish humans, who live by killing animals.

You do not understand that killing the innocent brings harm also to you, both in this life and by rebirth in a hell world. We antelopes are far wiser than you. We eat fruits, we remain innocent of killing others, and we avoid the harmful results."

So saying, the careful antelope leaped into the thick forest and was gone.

The moral is: The wise remain innocent.

The Magic Priest and the Kidnapper Gang

[Power and Greed] ^{11 12}



Once upon a time in Benares, there was a king named Brahmadatta. In one of the kingdom's remote villages, there was a priest who had magical power. He knew a special magic spell which was a secret given to him by his teacher.

This spell could be used only once a year when the planets were lined up in a certain way. Only then, the priest could say the secret magic words into his open palms.

Then he looked up into the sky, clapped his hands, and a shower of precious jewels came down on him.

The magic priest was also a teacher. He had a very good student, who was intelligent and able to understand the most difficult ideas. He was obedient and faithful, always wishing to honor and protect his master.

One day, the priest had to go on a trip to a faraway village, in order to perform an animal sacrifice. Since he had to take a dangerous road, the good student went with him.

Along this road there happened to be a gang of 500 bandits. They were known as the 'Kidnapper Gang'. They captured people and demanded ransom money in return for letting them live.

Lo and behold, the magic priest and his good student were captured by the Kidnapper Gang. They set the ransom at 5,000 gold coins and sent the student to go get it, in order to save his master's life.

¹¹ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_50.htm

¹²

Before leaving, the student knelt before his teacher and bowed respectfully. He said to him quietly, so the bandits could not hear, "Oh master, tonight is the one night of the year when the planets will be lined up perfectly.

Only then can your magic spell be used to shower you with jewels from the sky. However, I must warn you, my beloved and respected teacher, that to use such a power to save yourself from such greedy men as these would be extremely dangerous.

Obtaining great wealth so easily must lead to disaster for men like them. And if you think only of your own safety, bringing such harm to them will cause danger to you as well.

"Therefore, I warn you, do not give in to the desire to make the spell of jewels. Let the lucky night pass by for this year. Even if these bandits harm you, trust your faithful student to save you, without adding to your danger." So saying, he took his leave.

That evening, the kidnappers tied up the magic priest tightly and left him outside their cave for the night. They gave him nothing to eat or drink.

After the moon came out, the priest saw the planets lining up so his spell could work. He thought, "Why should I suffer like this? I can magically pay my own ransom.

Why should I care if harm comes to these 500 kidnappers? I am a magic priest. My life is worth much more than theirs. I care only for my own life. And besides, this lucky night only comes once a year. I cannot waste the chance to use my great power!"

Having decided to ignore the advice of the good student, he called the kidnappers and said, "Oh brave and mighty ones, why do you want to tie me up and make me suffer?"

They replied, "Oh holy priest, we need money. We have many mouths to feed. We must have money, and lots of it!"

The magic priest said, "Ah, you did this for money? Is that all there is to it? In that case, I will make you rich beyond your wildest dreams! For I am great and

powerful. As a holy priest, you can trust me. You must untie me, wash my head and face, dress me in new clothes, and cover me with flowers. Then, after so honoring me properly, leave me alone to do my magic."

The kidnappers followed his instructions. But, not trusting him completely, they hid in the bushes and secretly watched him.

This is what they saw. The washed and flower-covered priest looked up into the sky. Seeing that the planets were lined up in the special lucky pattern, he lowered his head and muttered the magic spell into his hands.

They were sounds that no one could understand, something like this: "Nah Wah Shed-nath. Eel Neeah Med-rak. Goh Bah Mil-neeay."

Then he gazed into the sky and clapped his hands. Suddenly he was showered with the most beautiful jewels!

The Kidnapper Gang came out from hiding and grabbed all the precious stones. They wrapped them up in bundles and went off down the road, with the magic priest following behind.

On the way, they were stopped by another gang of 500 robbers. They asked them, "Why are you stopping us?" "Give us all your wealth!" the others demanded.

The kidnappers said, "Leave us alone. You can get all the riches you want from this magic priest, just as we have done. He says magic words, looks up into the sky, claps his hands, and the most fabulous jewels come down!"

So they let the Kidnapper Gang go, and surrounded the priest. They demanded that he make a shower of precious stones for them as well.

He said, "Of course, I can give you all the jewels you want. But you must be patient and wait for one year. The lucky time, when the planets are lined up properly, has already come this year.

It will not happen again until next year. Come see me then, and I will be happy to make you rich!"

Robbers are not exactly known for their patience. They became angry at once. They shouted at him, "Ah, you tricky lying priest! You made the Kidnapper Gang wealthy, but now you refuse to do the same for us.

We'll teach you to take us so lightly!" Then they cut him in two with a sharp sword and left both halves of his body in the middle of the road.

The robbers chased after the Kidnapper Gang. There was a terrible bloody battle. After hours of fighting, they killed all 500 kidnappers and stole the wonderful jewels.

As soon as they left the battleground, the 500 robbers began quarreling over the wealth. They divided into two rival groups of 250 each. These fought another bloody battle until only two were left alive one from each side.

These two collected all the valuable jewels and hid them in the forest. They were very hungry. So one guarded the treasure, while the other started cooking rice.

The one doing the guarding thought, "When the other is finished cooking, I will kill him and keep all this loot for myself?"

Meanwhile, the one doing the cooking thought, "If we divide these jewels in two, I will get less. Therefore, I will add poison to this rice, kill the other, and keep all the jewels for myself. Why share, when I can have it all!"

So he ate some of the rice, since he was so hungry, and poisoned the rest. He took the rice pot to the other and offered it to him. But he immediately swung his sword and chopped off the cook's head!

Then the hungry killer began gobbling up the poisoned rice. Within minutes, he dropped dead on the spot!

A few days later, the good student returned with the ransom money. He could not find his teacher or the Kidnapper Gang. Instead, he found only the worthless possessions they had left behind after getting the jewels.

Continuing down the road, he came to the two halves of his teacher's dead body. Realizing that the magic priest must have ignored his warning, he mourned his

cruel death. Then he built a funeral pyre, covered it with wildflowers, and burned the body of his respected teacher.

A little further down the road, the good student came upon the 500 dead bodies of the Kidnapper Gang. Further still, he started seeing the dead robbers, until he counted 498.

Then he saw the footprints of the last two going into the forest. He realized that they too must fight over the treasure, so he followed them. Finally, he came to the dead body slumped over the rice pot, the other one with his head chopped off, and the bundles of valuable jewels.

He could tell immediately what had happened.

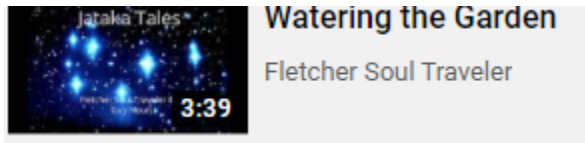
He thought, "It is so sad. My teacher had great knowledge, but not enough common sense. He could not resist using his magical power, regardless of the results. By causing the deaths of the one-thousand greedy gangsters, he doomed himself as well."

The good student took the treasure back to the village and used it generously for the benefit of many.

The moral is: When power has no conscience, and greed has no limit - the killing has no end.

Watering the Garden

[Foolishness] ¹³



It was just before New Year's in Benares, in northern India. Everyone in the city was getting ready for the three-day celebration, including the gardener of the king's pleasure garden.

There was a large troop of monkeys living in this pleasure garden. So they wouldn't have to think too much, they always followed the advice of their leader, the monkey king.

The royal gardener wanted to celebrate the New Year's holiday, just like everybody else. So he decided to hand over his duties to the monkeys.

He went to the monkey king and said, "Oh king of monkeys, my honorable friend, would you do a little favor for me? New Years' is coming. I too wish to celebrate.

So I must be away for three full days. Here in this lovely garden, there are plenty of fruits and berries and nuts to eat. You and your subjects may be my guests and eat as much as you wish.

In return, please water the young trees and plants while I'm gone."

The monkey king replied, "Don't worry about a thing, my friend! We will do a terrific job! Have a good time!"

The gardener showed the monkeys where the watering buckets were kept. Feeling confident, he left to celebrate the holiday. The monkeys called after him, "Happy New Year!"

The next day, the monkeys filled up the buckets and began watering the young trees and plants. Then the king of the monkeys addressed them: "My subjects, it is not good to waste water. Therefore, pull up each young tree or plant before

¹³ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_48.htm

watering. Inspect it to see how long the roots are. Then give more water to the ones with long roots and less water to the ones with short roots. That way we will not waste water, and the gardener will be pleased!"

Without giving it any further thought, the obedient subjects followed their king's orders.

Meanwhile, a wise man was walking by outside the entrance to the garden. He saw the monkeys uprooting all the lovely young trees and plants, measuring their roots, and carefully pouring water into the holes in the ground.

He asked, "Oh foolish monkeys, what do you think you're doing to the king's beautiful garden?"

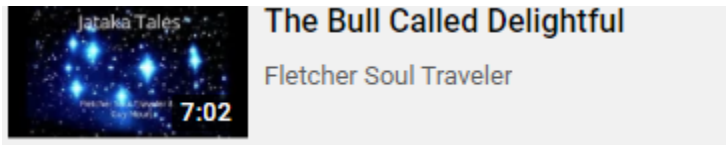
They answered, "We are watering the trees and plants, without wasting water! We were commanded to do so by our lord king."

The man said, "If this is the wisdom of the wisest among you - the king - what are the rest of you like? Intending to do a worthwhile deed, your foolishness turns it into a disaster!"

The moral is: Only fools can make good deeds into bad ones.

The Bull Called Delightful

[All Deserve Respect]¹⁴



Once upon a time, in the country of Gandhara in northern India, there was a city called Takkasila. In that city, the Enlightenment Being was born as a certain calf. Since he was well-bred for strength, he was bought by a high-class rich man.

He became very fond of the gentle animal, and called him 'Delightful'. He took good care of him and fed him only the best.

When Delightful grew up into a big fine strong bull, he thought, "I was brought up by this generous man. He gave me such good food and constant care, even though sometimes there were difficulties.

Now I am a big grown-up bull and there is no other bull who can pull as heavy a load as I can. Therefore, I would like to use my strength to give something in return to my master."

So he said to the man, "Sir, please find some wealthy merchant who is proud of having many strong bulls. Challenge him by saying that your bull can pull one-hundred heavily loaded bullock carts."

Following his advice, the high-class rich man went to such a merchant and struck up a conversation. After a while, he brought up the idea of who had the strongest bull in the city.

The merchant said, "Many have bulls, but no one has any as strong as mine." The rich man said, "Sir, I have a bull who can pull one hundred heavily loaded bullock carts."

¹⁴ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_29.htm

"No, friend, how can there be such a bull? That is unbelievable!" said the merchant. The other replied, "I do have such a bull, and I am willing to make a bet."

The merchant said, "I will bet a thousand gold coins that your bull cannot pull a hundred loaded bullock carts." So the bet was made and they agreed on a date and time for the challenge.

The merchant attached one hundred big bullock carts. He filled them with sand and gravel to make them very heavy.

The high-class rich man fed the finest rice to the bull called Delightful. He bathed him and decorated him and hung a beautiful garland of flowers around his neck.

Then he harnessed him to the first cart and climbed up onto it. Being so high class, he could not resist the urge to make himself seem very important.

So he cracked a whip in the air, and yelled at the faithful bull, "Pull, you dumb animal! I command you to pull, you big dummy!"

The bull called Delightful thought, "This challenge was my idea. I have never done anything bad to my master, and yet he insults me with such hard and harsh words!" So he remained in his place and refused to pull the carts.

The merchant laughed and demanded his winnings from the bet. The high-class rich man had to pay him one thousand gold coins. He returned home and sat down, saddened by his lost bet, and embarrassed by the blow to his pride.

The bull called Delightful grazed peacefully on his way home. When he arrived, he saw his master sadly lying on his side. He asked, "Sir, why are you lying there like that?"

"Are you sleeping? You look sad." The man said "I lost a thousand gold coins because of you. With such a loss, how could I sleep?"

The bull replied. "Sir, you called me 'dummy'. You even cracked a whip in the air over my head. In all my life, did I ever break anything, step on anything, make a mess in the wrong place, or behave like a 'dummy' in any way?" He answered, "No, my pet."

The bull called Delightful said, "Then sir, why did you call me 'dumb animal', and insult me even in the presence of others? The fault is yours. I have done nothing wrong.

But since I feel sorry for you, go again to the merchant and make the same bet for two thousand gold coins. And remember to use only the respectful words I deserve so well."

Then the high-class rich man went back to the merchant and made the bet for two-thousand gold coins. The merchant thought it would be easy money.

Again he set up the one hundred heavily loaded bullock carts. Again the rich man fed and bathed the bull, and hung a garland of flowers around his neck.

When all was ready, the rich man touched Delightful's forehead with a lotus blossom, having given up the whip. Thinking of him as fondly as if he were his child, he said, "My son, please do me the honor of pulling these one hundred bullock carts."

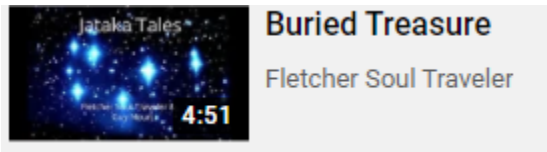
Lo and behold, the wonderful bull pulled with all his might and dragged the heavy carts until the last one stood in the place of the first.

The merchant, with his mouth hanging open in disbelief, had to pay the two thousand gold coins. The onlookers were so impressed that they honored the bull called Delightful with gifts. But even more important to the high-class rich man than his winnings was his valuable lesson in humility and respect.

The moral is: Harsh words bring no reward. Respectful words bring honor to all.

Buried Treasure

[The Arrogance of Power] ¹⁵



Once upon a time, there was an old man who lived in Benares. He had a very good friend, who was known to be wise. Luckily, or perhaps unluckily, he also had a beautiful young wife.

The old man and his young wife had a son. The man came to love his son very much. One day he thought, "I have learned that my beautiful young wife cannot always be trusted.

When I die, I am sure she will marry another man, and together they will waste the wealth I have worked so hard for. Later on, there will be nothing left for my son to inherit from his mother.

So I will do something to guarantee an inheritance for my deserving son. I will bury my wealth to protect it for him."

Then he called for his most faithful servant, Nanda. Together they took all the old man's wealth deep into the forest and buried it. He said, "My dear Nanda, I know you are obedient and faithful.

After I die, you must give this treasure to my son. Keep it a secret until then. When you give the treasure to him, advise him to use it wisely and generously."

Before long, the old man died. Several years later, his son completed his education. He returned home to take his place as the head of the family. His mother said, "My son, being a suspicious man, your father has hidden his wealth.

I am sure that his faithful servant, Nanda, knows where it is. You should ask him to show you. Then you can get married and support the whole family."

¹⁵ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_41.htm

So the son went to Nanda and asked him if he knew where his father had hidden his wealth. Nanda told him that the treasure was buried in the forest and that he knew the exact spot.

Then the two of them took a basket and a shovel into the forest. When they arrived at the place the treasure was buried, all of a sudden Nanda became puffed up with how important he was.

Although he was only a servant, he had the power of being the only one to know the secret. So he became conceited and thought he was better than the son. He said, "You son of a servant girl! Where would you inherit a treasure from?"

The patient son did not talk back to his father's servant. He suffered his abuse, even though it puzzled him. After a short time, they returned home empty-handed.

This strange behavior was repeated two more times. The son thought, "At home, Nanda appears willing to reveal the secret of the treasure. But when we go into the forest carrying the basket and shovel, he is no longer willing. I wonder why he changes his mind each time."

He decided to take this puzzle to his father's wise old friend. He went to him and described what had happened.

The wise old man said, "Go again with Nanda into the forest. Watch where he stands when he abuses you, which he surely will do. Then send him away saying, "You have no right to speak to me that way. Leave me."

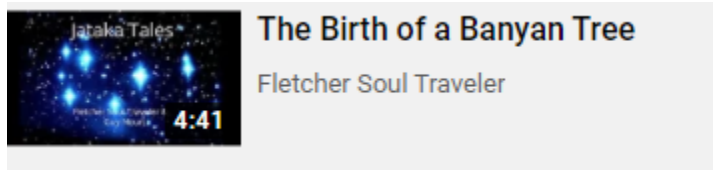
"Dig up the ground on that very spot and you will find your inheritance. Nanda is a weak man. Therefore, when he comes closest to his little bit of power, he turns it into abuse."

The son followed this advice exactly. Sure enough, he found the buried treasure. As his father had hoped, he generously used the wealth for the benefit of many.

The moral is: A little power soon goes to the head of the one not used to it.

The Birth of a Banyan Tree

[Respect for Elders]



16

Once upon a time, there was a big banyan tree in the forest beneath the mighty Himalayas. Living near this banyan tree were three very good friends. They were a quail, a monkey, and an elephant. Each of them was quite smart.

Occasionally the three friends got into a disagreement. When this happened, they did not consider the opinion of any one of them to be more valuable. No matter how much experience each one had, his opinion was treated the same as the others.

So it took them a long time to reach an agreement. Every time this happened, they had to start from the beginning to reach a solution.

After a while, they realized that it would save time, and help their friendships, if they could shorten their disagreements. They decided that it would certainly help if they considered the most valuable opinion first.

Then, if they could agree on that one, they would not have to waste time, and possibly even become less friendly, by arguing about the other two.

Fortunately, they all thought the most valuable opinion was the one based on the most experience. Therefore, they could live together even more peacefully if they gave higher respect to the oldest among them.

Only if his opinion were wrong, would they need to consider others.

¹⁶ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_39.htm

Unfortunately, the elephant and the monkey, and the quail had no idea which one was the oldest. Since this was a time before old age was respected, they had no reason to remember their birthdays or their ages.

Then one day, while they were relaxing in the shade of the big banyan tree, the quail and the monkey asked the elephant, "As far back as you can remember, what was the size of this banyan tree?"

The elephant replied, "I remember this tree for a very long time. When I was just a baby, I used to scratch my belly by rubbing it over the tender shoots on top of this banyan tree."

Then the monkey said, "When I was a curious baby monkey, I used to sit and examine the little seedling banyan tree. Sometimes I used to bend over and nibble its top tender leaves."

The monkey and the elephant asked the quail, "As far back as you can remember, what was the size of this banyan tree?"

The quail said, "When I was young, I was looking for food in a nearby forest. In that forest, there was a big old banyan tree, which was full of ripe berries. I ate some of those berries, and the next day I was standing right here. This was where I let my droppings fall, and the seeds they contained grew up to be this very tree!"

The monkey and the elephant said, "Aha! Sir quail, you must be the oldest. You deserve our respect and honor. From now on we will pay close attention to your words. Based on your wisdom and experience, advise us when we make mistakes.

When there are disagreements, we will give the highest place to your opinion. We ask only that you be honest and just."

The quail replied, "I thank you for your respect, and I promise to always do my best to deserve it." It just so happened that this wise little quail was the Bodhisatta the Enlightenment Being.

The moral is: Respect for the wisdom of elders leads to harmony.

The Fawn Who Played Hooky

[Truancy]



17

Once upon a time, there was a herd of forest deer. In this herd was a wise and respected teacher, cunning in the ways of deer. He taught the tricks and strategies of survival to the young fawns.

One day, his younger sister brought her son to him, to be taught what is so important for deer. She said, "Oh brother teacher, this is my son. Please teach him the tricks and strategies of deer."

The teacher said to the fawn, "Very well, you can come at this time tomorrow for your first lesson."

At first, the young deer came to the lessons as he was supposed to. But soon, he became more interested in playing with the other young bucks and does.

He didn't realize how dangerous it could be for a deer who learned nothing but deer games. So he started cutting classes. Soon he was playing hooky all the time.

Unfortunately, one day the fawn who played hooky stepped into a snare and was trapped. Since he was missing, his mother worried. She went to her brother the teacher, and asked him,

"My dear brother, how is my son? Have you taught your nephew the tricks and strategies of deer?"

The teacher replied, "My dear sister, your son was disobedient and unteachable. Out of respect for you, I tried my best to teach him. But he did not want to learn

¹⁷ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_17.htm

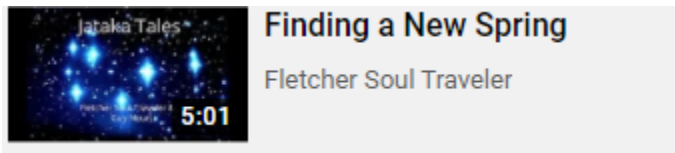
the tricks and strategies of deer. He played hooky! How could I possibly teach him? You are obedient and faithful, but he is not. It is useless to try to teach him."

Later they heard the sad news. The stubborn fawn who played hooky had been trapped and killed by a hunter. He skinned him and took the meat home to his family.

The moral is: Nothing can be learned from a teacher, by one who misses the class.

Finding a New Spring

[Perseverance]



18

Once upon a time, a certain tradesman was leading a caravan to another country to sell his goods. Along the way, they came to the edge of a severe hot-sand desert.

They asked about, it and found that during the daytime the sun heats the fine sand until it's as hot as charcoal, so no one can walk on it - not even bullocks or camels! So the caravan leader hired a desert guide, one who could follow the stars, so they could travel only at night when the sand cools down.

They began the dangerous night-time journey across the desert.

A couple of nights later, after eating their evening meal, and waiting for the sand to cool, they started again. Later that night the desert guide, who was driving the first cart, saw from the stars that they were getting close to the other side of the desert.

He had also overeaten so that when he relaxed, he dozed off to sleep. Then the bullocks who, of course, couldn't tell directions by reading the stars, gradually turned to the side and went in a big wide circle until they ended up at the same place they had started from!

By then it was morning, and the people realized they were back at the same spot they'd camped at the day before. They lost heart and began to cry about their condition.

Since the desert crossing was supposed to be over by now, they had no more water and were afraid they would die of thirst. They even began to blame the

¹⁸ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_02.htm

caravan leader and the desert guide - "We can do nothing without water!", they complained.

Then the tradesman thought to himself, "If I lose courage now, in the middle of this disastrous situation, my leadership has no meaning.

If I fall to weeping and regretting this misfortune, and do nothing, all these goods and bullocks and even the lives of the people, including myself, may be lost. I must be energetic and face the situation!"

So he began walking back and forth, trying to think out a plan to save them all.

Remaining alert, out of the corner of his eye, he noticed a small clump of grass. He thought, "Without water, no plant could live in this desert."

So he called over the most energetic of his fellow travelers and asked them to dig up the ground on that very spot. They dug and dug, and after a while, they got down to a large stone. Seeing it they stopped and began to blame the leader again, saying "This effort is useless.

We're just wasting our time!" But the tradesman replied, "No no, my friends, if we give up the effort we will all be ruined and our poor animals will die - let us be encouraged!"

As he said this, he got down into the hole, put his ear to the stone, and heard the sound of flowing water. Immediately, he called over a boy who had been digging and said, "If you give up, we will all perish - so take this heavy hammer and strike the rock."

The boy lifted the hammer over his head and hit the rock as hard as he could - and he was the most surprised when the rock split in two and a mighty flow of water gushed out from under it!

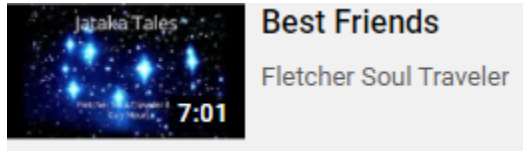
Suddenly, all the people were overjoyed. They drank and bathed and washed the animals and cooked their food and ate.

Before they left, they raised a high banner so that other travelers could see it from afar and come to the new spring in the middle of the hot-sand desert. Then they continued on safely to the end of their journey.

The moral is: Don't give up too easily - keep on trying until you reach the goal.

Best Friends

[The Power of Friendship]



19

Before the time of this story, people in Asia used to say that there would never be a time when an elephant and a dog would be friends. Elephants simply did not like dogs, and dogs were afraid of elephants.

When dogs are frightened by those who are bigger than they are, they often bark very loudly, to cover up their fear. When dogs used to do this when they saw elephants, the elephants would get annoyed and chase them.

Elephants had no patience at all when it came to dogs. Even if a dog were quiet and still, any nearby elephant would automatically attack him. This is why everybody agreed that elephants and dogs were 'natural enemies', just like lions and tigers, or cats and mice.

Once upon a time, there was a royal bull elephant, who was very well fed and cared for. In the neighborhood of the elephant shed, there was a scrawny, poorly fed, stray dog.

He was attracted by the smell of the rich sweet rice being fed to the royal elephant. So he began sneaking into the shed and eating the wonderful rice that fell from the elephant's mouth. He liked it so much, that soon he would eat nowhere else.

While enjoying his food, the big mighty elephant did not notice the tiny shy stray dog.

By eating such rich food, the once underfed dog gradually got bigger and stronger, and became very handsome looking. The good-natured elephant began to notice him. Since the dog had gotten used to being around the elephant, he

¹⁹ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_28.htm

had lost his fear. So he did not bark at him. Because he was not annoyed by the friendly dog, the elephant gradually got used to him.

Slowly they became friendlier and friendlier with each other. Before long, neither would eat without the other, and they enjoyed spending their time together.

When they played, the dog would grab the elephant's heavy trunk, and the elephant would swing him forward and backward, from side to side, up and down, and even in circles! So it was that they became 'best friends, and wanted never to be separated.

Then one day a man from a remote village, who was visiting the city, passed by the elephant shed. He saw the frisky dog, who had become strong and beautiful.

He bought him from the mahout, even though he didn't really own him. He took him back to his home village, without anyone knowing where that was.

Of course, the royal bull elephant became very sad, since he missed his best friend the dog. He became so sad that he didn't want to do anything, not even eat or drink or bathe. So the mahout had to report this to the king, although he said nothing about selling the friendly dog.

It just so happened that the king had an intelligent minister who was known for his understanding of animals. So he told him to go and find out the reason for the elephant's condition.

The wise minister went to the elephant shed. He saw at once that the royal bull elephant was very sad. He thought, "This once happy elephant does not appear to be sick in any way. But I have seen this condition before, in men and animals alike.

This elephant is grief-stricken, probably due to the loss of a very dear friend."

Then he said to the guards and attendants, "I find no sickness. He seems to be grief-stricken due to the loss of a friend. Do you know if this elephant had a very close friendship with anyone?"

They told him how the royal elephant and the stray dog were best friends. "What happened to this stray dog?" asked the minister. He was taken by an unknown man," they replied, "and we do not know where he is now."

The minister returned to the king and said, "Your majesty, I am happy to say your elephant is not sick. As strange as it may sound, he became best friends with a stray dog!

Since the dog has been taken away, the elephant is grief-stricken and does not feel like eating or drinking, or bathing. This is my opinion."

The king said, "Friendship is one of life's most wonderful things. My minister, how can we bring back my elephant's friend and make him happy again?"

"My lord," replied the minister, "I suggest you make an official announcement, that whoever has the dog who used to live at the royal elephant shed, will be fined."

This was done, and when the villager heard of it, he released the dog from his house. He was filled with great happiness and ran as fast as he could, straight back to his best friend, the royal bull elephant.

The elephant was so overjoyed, that he picked up his friend with his trunk and sat him on top of his head. The happy dog wagged his tail, while the elephant's eyes sparkled with delight. They both lived happily ever after.

Meanwhile, the king was very pleased by his elephant's full recovery. He was amazed that his minister seemed to be able to read the mind of an elephant. So he rewarded him appropriately.

The moral is: Even 'natural enemies' can become 'best friends.'

The Baby Quail Who Could Not Fly Away [The Power of Truth, Wholesomeness and Compassion]



The Baby Quail Who Could Not Fly Away

Fletcher Soul Traveler

20

Once upon a time, the Enlightenment Being was born as a tiny quail. Although he had little feet and wings, he could not yet walk or fly. His parents worked hard bringing food to the nest, feeding him from their beaks.

In that part of the world, there were usually forest fires every year. So it happened that a fire began in that particular year. All the able birds flew away at the first sign of smoke.

As the fire spread, and got closer and closer to the nest of the baby quail, his parents remained with him. Finally, the fire got so close, that they too had to fly away to save their lives.

All the trees, big and small, were burning and crackling with a loud noise. The little one saw that everything was being destroyed by the fire that raged out of control. He could do nothing to save himself. At that moment, his mind was overwhelmed by a feeling of helplessness.

Then it occurred to him, "My parents loved me very much. Unselfishly they built a nest for me, and then fed me without greed. When the fire came, they remained with me until the last moment. All the other birds could have flown away a long time before.

"So great was the loving-kindness of my parents, that they stayed and risked their lives, but still they were helpless to save me. Since they could not carry me, they were forced to fly away alone.

I thank them, wherever they are, for loving me so. I hope with all my heart they will be safe and well and happy.

²⁰ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_37.htm

"Now I am all alone. There is no one I can go to for help. I have wings, but I cannot fly away. I have feet, but I cannot run away. But I can still think. All I have left to use is my mind - a mind that remains pure.

The only beings I have known in my short life were my parents, and my mind has been filled with loving-kindness towards them. I have done nothing unwholesome to anyone. I am filled with newborn innocent truthfulness."

Then an amazing miracle took place. This innocent truthfulness grew and grew until it became larger than the baby bird. The knowledge of truth spread beyond that one lifetime, and many previous births became known.

One such previous birth had led to knowing a Buddha, a fully enlightened knower of Truth - one who had the power of Truth, the purity of wholesomeness, and the purpose of compassion.

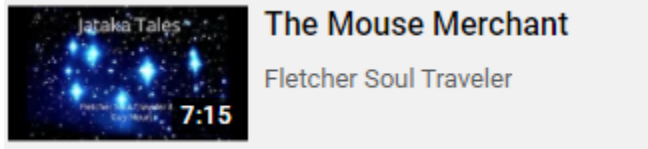
Then the Great Being within the tiny baby quail thought, "May this very young innocent truthfulness be united with that ancient purity of wholesomeness and power of Truth.

May all birds and other beings, who are still trapped by the fire, be saved. And may this spot be safe from fire for a million years!"

And so it was.

The moral is: Truth, wholesomeness, and compassion can save the world.

The Mouse Merchant [Diligence and Gratitude]



21

Once upon a time, an important adviser to a certain king was on his way to a meeting with the king and other advisers. Out of the corner of his eye, he saw a dead mouse by the roadside.

He said to those who were with him. "Even from such small beginnings as this dead mouse, an energetic young fellow could build a fortune. If he worked hard and used his intelligence, he could start a business and support a wife and family."

A passerby heard the remark. He knew this was a famous adviser to the king, so he decided to follow his words. He picked up the dead mouse by the tail and went off with it.

As luck would have it, before he had gone even a block, a shopkeeper stopped him. He said, "My cat has been pestering me all morning. I'll give you two copper coins for that mouse." So it was done.

With the two copper coins, he bought sweet cakes and waited by the side of the road with them and some water. As he expected, some people who picked flowers for making garlands were returning from work.

Since they were all hungry and thirsty, they agreed to buy sweet cakes and water for the price of a bunch of flowers from each of them. In the evening, the man sold the flowers in the city.

With some of the money, he bought more sweet cakes and returned the next day to sell to the flower pickers.

This went on for a while, until one day there was a terrible storm, with heavy rains and high winds. While walking by the king's pleasure garden, he saw that

²¹ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_04.htm

many branches had been blown off the trees and were lying all around. So he offered to the king's gardener that he would clear it all away for him if he could keep the branches. The lazy gardener quickly agreed.

The man found some children playing in a park across the street. They were glad to collect all the branches and brush at the entrance to the pleasure garden, for the price of just one sweet cake for each child.

Along came the king's potter, who was always on the lookout for firewood for his glazing oven. When he saw the piles of wood the children had just collected, he paid the man a handsome price for it. He even threw into the bargain some of his pots.

With his profits from selling the flowers and firewood, the man opened up a refreshment shop. One day all the local grass mowers, who were on their way into town, stopped in his shop.

He gave them free sweet cakes and drinks. They were surprised at his generosity and asked, "What can we do for you?" He said there was nothing for them to do now, but he would let them know in the future.

A week later, he heard that a horse dealer was coming to the city with 500 horses to sell. So he got in touch with the grass mowers and told each of them to give him a bundle of grass.

He told them not to sell any grass to the horse dealer until he had sold his. In this way, he got a very good price.

Time passed until one day, in his refreshment shop, some customers told him that a new ship from a foreign country had just anchored in the port. He saw this to be the opportunity he had been waiting for. He thought and thought until he came up with a good business plan.

First, he went to a jeweler friend of his and paid a low price for a very valuable gold ring, with a beautiful red ruby in it. He knew that the foreign ship was from a country that had no rubies of its own, where gold too was expensive.

So he gave the wonderful ring to the captain of the ship as an advance on his commission. To earn this commission, the captain agreed to send all his passengers to him as a broker. He would then lead them to the best shops in the

city. In turn, the man got the merchants to pay him a commission for sending customers to them.

Acting as a middle man in this way, after several ships came into port, the man became very rich. Being pleased with his success, he also remembered that it had all started with the words of the king's wise adviser.

So he decided to give him a gift of 100,000 gold coins. This was half his entire wealth. After making the proper arrangements, he met with the king's adviser and gave him the gift, along with his humble thanks.

The adviser was amazed, and he asked, "How did you earn so much wealth to afford such a generous gift?" The man told him it had all started with the adviser's own words not so long ago.

They had led him to a dead mouse, a hungry cat, sweet cakes, bunches of flowers, storm-damaged tree branches, children in the park, the king's potter, a refreshment shop, grass for 500 horses, a golden ruby ring, good business contacts, and finally a large fortune.

Hearing all this, the royal adviser thought to himself, "It would not be good to lose the talents of such an energetic man. I too have much wealth, as well as my beloved only daughter.

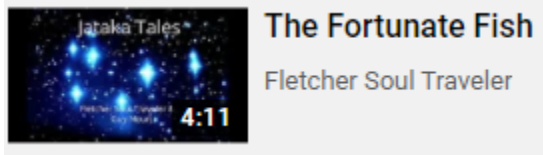
As this man is single, he deserves to marry her. Then he can inherit my wealth in addition to his own, and my daughter will be well cared for."

This all came to pass, and after the wise adviser died, the one who had followed his advice became the richest man in the city. The king appointed him to the adviser's position.

Throughout his remaining life, he generously gave his money to the happiness and well-being of many people.

The moral is: With energy and ability, great wealth comes even from small beginnings.

The Fortunate Fish [Desire]



22

Once upon a time, King Brahmadatta had a very wise adviser who understood the speech of animals. He understood what they said, and he could speak to them in their languages.

One day the adviser was wandering along the riverbank with his followers. They came upon some fishermen who had cast a big net into the river. While peering into the water, they noticed a big handsome fish who was following his pretty wife.

Her shining scales reflected the morning sunlight in all the colors of the rainbow. Her feather-like fins fluttered like the delicate wings of a fairy, as they sent her gliding through the water. It was clear that her husband was so entranced by the way she looked and the way she moved, that he was not paying attention to anything else!

As they came near the net, the wife fish smelled it. Then she saw it and alertly avoided it at the very last moment. But her husband was so blinded by his desire for her, that he could not turn away fast enough. Instead, he swam right into the net and was trapped!

The fishermen pulled in their net and threw the big fish onto the shore. They built a fire and carved a spit to roast him on.

Lying on the ground, the fish was flopping around and groaning in agony. Since the wise adviser understood fish talk, he translated for the others. He said, "This poor fish is madly repeating over and over again:

²² http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_36.htm

"My wife! My wife! I must be with my wife!

I care for her much more than for my life!

'My wife! My wife! I must be with my wife!

I care for her much more than for my life!"

The adviser thought, "Truly this fish has gone crazy. He is in this terrible state because he became a slave to his own desire. And he has learned nothing from the results of his actions.

If he dies keeping such agony, and the desire that caused it, in his mind, he will surely continue to suffer by being reborn in some hell world. Therefore, I must save him!"

So this kind man went over to the fishermen and said, "Oh my friends, loyal subjects of our king, you have never given me and my followers a fish for our curry. Won't you give us one today?"

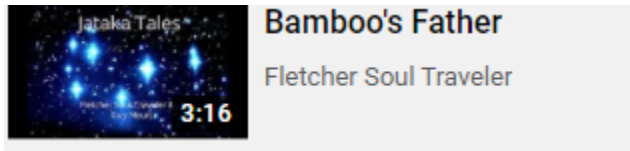
They replied, "Oh royal minister, please accept from us any fish you wish!" "This big one on the riverbank looks delicious," said the adviser. "Please take him, sir," they said.

Then he sat down on the bank. He took the fish, who was still groaning, into his hands. He spoke to him in the language only fish can understand, saying, "You foolish fish! If I had not seen you today, you would have gotten yourself killed. Your blind desire was leading you to continued suffering. From now on, do not let yourself be trapped by your own desires!"

Then the fish realized how fortunate he was to have found such a friend. He thanked him for his wise advice. The minister released the lucky fish back into the river and went on his way.

The moral is: Fools are trapped by their own desires.

Bamboo's Father [Wasted Advice]



23

Once upon a time, there was a teacher who meditated much and developed his mind. Gradually his fame spread. Those who wished to be guided by a wise man came to hear him.

Considering what he said to be wise indeed, 500 decided to become his followers.

One of these 500, who considered his teachings to be wise, was a certain pet lover. In fact, he loved pets so much that there was no animal he did not wish to keep as a pet.

One day he came upon a cute little poisonous snake, who was searching for food. He decided he would make an excellent pet. So he made a little bamboo cage to keep him in when he had to leave him alone.

The other followers called the little snake, 'Bamboo'. Because he was so fond of his pet, they called the pet lover, 'Bamboo's Father'.

Before long, the teacher heard that one of his followers was keeping a poisonous snake as a pet. He called him to him and asked if this was true. Bamboo's Father said, "Yes master, I love him like my own child!"

The wise teacher said, "It is not safe to live with a poisonous snake. Therefore, I advise you to let him go, for your own good."

But Bamboo's Father thought he knew better. He replied, "This little one is my son. He wouldn't bite me. I can't give him up and live all alone!"

The teacher warned him, "Then surely, this little one will be the death of you!" But the follower did not heed his master's warning.

²³ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_46.htm

Later on, all 500 of the teacher's followers went on a trip to collect fresh fruits. Bamboo's Father left his 'son' locked up in the bamboo cage.

Since there were many fruits to collect, it was several days before they returned. Bamboo's Father realized that poor Bamboo had not eaten the whole time he was away. So he opened the cage to let him out to find food.

But when he reached inside, his 'son' bit his hand. Having been neglected for all that time, Bamboo was angry as well as hungry. Since he was only a snake, he didn't know anything about poison!

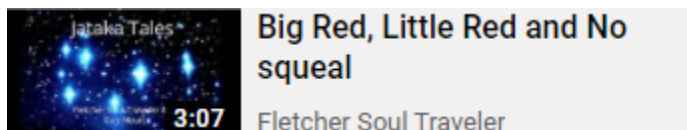
But his 'father' should have known better. After all, he had been warned by the very teacher he considered wise.

Within minutes of being bitten, Bamboo's Father dropped dead!

The moral is: There's no benefit in following a teacher if you don't listen to what he says

.

Big Red, Little Red, and No-squeal [Envy]



24

Once upon a time, two calves were part of a country household. At the same home, there also lived a girl and a baby pig. Since he hardly ever made a sound, the pig was called 'No-squeal'.

²⁴ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_31.htm

The masters of the house treated No-squeal very very well. They fed him large amounts of the very best rice and even rice porridge with rich brown sugar.

The two calves noticed this. They worked hard pulling plows in the fields and bullock carts on the roads. Little Red said to Big Red, "My big brother, in this household you and I do all the hard work.

We bring prosperity to the family. But they feed us only grass and hay. The baby pig No-squeal does nothing to support the family. And yet they feed him the finest and fanciest of foods. Why should he get such special treatment?"

The wise elder brother said, "Oh young one, it is dangerous to envy anybody. Therefore, do not envy the baby pig for being fed such rich food. What he eats is really "the food of death".

"There will soon be a marriage ceremony for the daughter of the house, and little No-squeal will be the wedding feast! That's why he is being pampered and fed in such a rich fashion.

"In a few days, the guests will arrive. Then this piglet will be dragged away by the legs, killed, and made into curry for the feast."

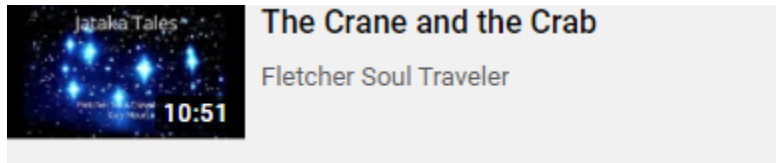
Sure enough, in a few days, the wedding guests arrived. The baby pig No-squeal was dragged away and killed. And just as Big Red had said, he was cooked in various types of curries and devoured by the guests.

Then Big Red said, "My dear young brother, did you see what happened to baby No-squeal?" "Yes brother," replied Little Red, "now I understand."

Big Red continued, "This is the result of being fed such rich food. Our poor grass and hay are a hundred times better than his rich porridge and sweet brown sugar. For our food brings no harm to us, but instead promises long life!"

The moral is: Don't envy the well-off until you know the price they pay.

The Crane and the Crab [Trickery]



25

Once upon a time, there was a crane that lived near a small pond. Right next to the pond was a big tree with a fairy living in it. He learned by observing the various animals.

There were also many small fish living in the small pond. The crane was in the habit of picking up fish with his beak and eating them. Since there happened to be a drought in the area, the water level in the pond was becoming lower and lower.

This made it easier for the crane to catch fish. In fact, he was even getting to be a little fat!

However, the crane discovered that no matter how easy it was to catch fish, and no matter how many he ate, he was never completely satisfied.

But he did not learn from this. Instead, he decided that if he ate all the fish in the pond, then he would find true happiness. "The more the merrier!" he said to himself.

To catch all the fish in the pond, the crane thought up a clever plan. He would trick the fish, and deceive them into trusting him.

Then when they trusted him the most, he would gobble them up. He was very pleased with himself for thinking up such a trick.

²⁵ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_40.htm

To begin with, the crane sat down on the shore. He remained quietly in one position, just like a holy man in the forest. This was intended to get the fish to trust him.

The fish came to him and asked. "Sir crane, what are you thinking?" The holy-looking crane answered, "Oh my dear fish, it makes me sad to think of your future. I am thinking about the coming miserable disaster."

They said, "My lord, what disaster is coming to us?" To which the crane replied, "Look around you! There is very little water left in this pond. You are also running out of food to eat. This severe drought is very dangerous for your poor little ones."

Then the fish asked, "Dear uncle crane, what can we do to save ourselves?" "My poor little children," said the crane, "you must trust me and do as I say. If you allow me to pick you up in my beak, I will take you, one at a time to another pond. That pond is much bigger than this one.

It is filled with water and covered with lovely lotuses. It will be like a paradise for you!"

When they heard the part about the beak, the fish became a little suspicious. They said, "Mr. Crane, how can we believe you? Since the beginning of the world, there has never been a crane that wanted to help fish. Cranes have put fish in their beaks only to eat them. This must be a trick. Or else you must be joking!"

The crane then raised his head and made himself look as dignified as possible. He said, "Please don't think such a thing. Can't you see that I am a very special crane? You should trust me.

But if you don't believe me, send one fish with me and I will show him the beautiful pond. Then when I bring him back here, you will know I can be trusted."

The fish said to each other, "This crane looks so dignified. He sounds like an honest crane. But just in case it's a trick. let us send with him a useless little troublemaker fish. This will be a test."

Then they found a young fish who was known for playing hooky from school. They pushed him towards the shore.

The crane bent his head and picked up the little one in his beak. Then he spread his wings and flew to a big tree on the shore of a beautiful big pond. Just as he had said, it was covered with lovely lotuses.

The fish was amazed to see such a wonderful place. Then the crane carried him back to his poor old pond, just as he had promised.

Arriving home, the little fish described the wonders of the beautiful big pond. Hearing this, all the other fish became very excited and rushed to be the first to go.

The first lucky passenger was that same useless little troublemaker. Again the crane picked him up in his beak and flew to the big tree on the shore of the beautiful new pond.

The little one was sure the helpful crane was about to drop him into the wonderful pond. But instead, the crane suddenly killed him, gobbled up his flesh, and let the bones fall to the ground.

The crane returned to the old pond, brought the next little fish to the same tree, and ate him in the same way. Likewise, one by one, he gobbled up every last fish!

He became so stuffed with fish meat that he had trouble flying back to the little pond. He saw that there were no more fish left for him to trick and eat. Then he noticed a lonely crab crawling along the muddy shore. And he realized that he was still not completely satisfied!

So he walked over to the crab and said, "My dear crab, I have kindly carried all the fish to a wonderful big pond not far from here.

Why do you wish to remain here alone? If you simply do as the fish have done, and let me pick you up in my beak, I will gladly take you there. For your own good, please trust me."

But the crab thought, "There is no doubt this over-stuffed crane has eaten all those fish. His belly is so full he can hardly stand up straight.

He definitely cannot be trusted! If I can get him to carry me to a new pond and put me in it, so much the better. But if he tries to eat me, I will have to cut off his head with my sharp claws."

Then the crab said, "My friend crane, I am afraid I am much too heavy for you to carry in your beak. You would surely drop me along the way. Instead, I will grab onto your neck with my eight legs, and then you can safely carry me to my new home."

The crane was so used to playing tricks on others, that he did not imagine he would be in any danger -even though the crab would be grasping him by the throat. Instead, he thought, "Excellent! This will give me a chance to eat the sweet meat of this foolish trusting crab."

So the crane permitted the crab to grab onto his neck with all eight legs. In addition, he grasped the crane's neck with his sharp claws. He said, "Now kindly take me to the new pond."

The foolish crane, with his neck in the clutches of the crab, flew to the same big tree next to the new pond.

Then the crab said, "Hey you stupid crane, have you lost your way? You have not taken me to the pond. Why don't you take me to the shore and put me in?"

The crane said, "Who are you calling stupid? I don't have to take that from you. You're not my relative. I suppose you thought you tricked me into giving you a free ride.

But I'm the clever one. Just look at all those fish bones under this tree. I've eaten all the fish, and now I'm going to eat you too, you stupid crab!"

The crab replied, "Those fish were eaten because they were foolish enough to trust you. But no one would trust you now. Because you tricked the fish, you have become so conceited you think you can trick anyone. But you can't fool me. I have you by the throat. So if one dies, we both die!"

Then the crane realized the danger he was in. He begged the crab, "Oh my lord crab, please release me. I have learned my lesson. You can trust me. I have no desire to eat such a handsome crab as you."

Then he flew down to the shore and continued, "Now please release me. For your good, please trust me."

But this old crab had been around. He realized the crane could not be trusted no matter what he said. He knew that if he let go of the crane, he would be eaten for sure. So he cut through his neck with his claws, just like a knife through butter! And the crane's head fell to the ground. Then the crab crawled safely into the wonderful pond.

Meanwhile, the inquisitive fairy had also come to the new pond and seen all that had happened. Sitting on the very top of the big tree, he said for all the gods to hear:

"The one who lived by tricks and lies,

No longer trusted now he dies."

The moral is: The trickster who can't be trusted, has played his last trick.

Salty Liquor [Foolishness]



Salty Liquor
Fletcher Soul Traveler

26

Once upon a time, there was a tavern owner in Benares. He had a hard-working bartender, who was always trying to be helpful by inventing new ways of doing things.

One hot day, the tavern owner wanted to bathe in a nearby river. So he left the bartender in charge while he was gone.

The bartender had always wondered why most of the customers ate a little salt after drinking their liquor. Not wishing to show his ignorance, he never bothered to ask them why they did this.

He did not know that they ate the salt in order to chase away the aftertaste of the liquor. He thought it needed salt to taste good.

He wondered why taverns did not add salt to their liquor. He decided that if he did so, the business would make much higher profits, and the tavern owner would be very pleased. So he added salt to all the liquor!

To his surprise, when the customers came to the tavern and drank the salty liquor, they immediately spit it out and went to a different bar.

When the owner returned from his dip in the river, he found his tavern without customers, and all his liquor ruined.

So he went and told this story to his friend, an adviser to the king. The adviser said, "The ignorant, wishing only to do good, often cannot help harming."

The moral is: The best intentions are no excuse for ignorance.

²⁶ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_49.htm

Little Prince No-father [The Power of Truth]



Little Prince No father
Fletcher Soul Traveler

27

Once upon a time, the King of Benares went on a picnic in the forest. The beautiful flowers and trees and fruits made him very happy. As he was enjoying their beauty, he slowly went deeper and deeper into the forest. Before long, he became separated from his companions and realized that he was all alone.

Then he heard the sweet voice of a young woman. She was singing as she collected firewood. To keep from being afraid of being alone in the forest, the king followed the sound of the lovely voice.

When he finally came upon the singer of the songs, he saw that she was a beautiful fair young woman, and immediately fell in love with her. They became very friendly, and the king became the father of the firewood woman's child.

Later, he explained how he had gotten lost in the forest, and convinced her that he was indeed the King of Benares. She gave him directions for getting back to his palace.

The king gave her his valuable signet ring, and said, "If you give birth to a baby girl, sell this ring and use the money to bring her up well. If our child turns out to be a baby boy, bring him to me along with this ring for recognition." So saying, he departed for Benares.

In the fullness of time, the firewood woman gave birth to a cute baby boy. Being a simple shy woman, she was afraid to take him to the fancy court in Benares, but she saved the king's signet ring.

In a few years, the baby grew into a little boy. When he played with the other children in the village, they teased him and mistreated him, and even started fights with him.

²⁷ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_08.htm

It was because his mother was not married that the other children picked on him. They yelled at him, "No-father! No-father! Your name should be No-father!"

Of course, this made the little boy feel ashamed and hurt and sad. He often ran home crying to his mother. One day, he told her how the other children called him, "No-father! No-father! Your name should be No-father!"

Then his mother said, "Don't be ashamed, my son. You are not just an ordinary little boy. Your father is the King of Benares!"

The little boy was very surprised. He asked his mother, "Do you have any proof of this?" So she told him about his father giving her the signet ring, and that if the baby was a boy she should bring him to Benares, along with the ring as proof. The little boy said, "Let's go then."

Because of what happened, she agreed, and the next day they set out for Benares.

When they arrived at the king's palace, the gatekeeper told the king the firewood woman and her little son wanted to see him. They went into the royal assembly hall, which was filled with the king's ministers and advisers.

The woman reminded the king of their time together in the forest. Finally, she said, "Your majesty, here is your son."

The king was ashamed in front of all the ladies and gentlemen of his court. So, even though he knew the woman spoke the truth, he said, "He is not my son!" Then the lovely young mother showed the signet ring as proof.

Again the king was ashamed and denied the truth, saying, "It is not my ring!"

Then the poor woman thought to herself, "I have no witness and no evidence to prove what I say. I have only my faith in the power of truth." So she said to the king,

"If I throw this little boy up into the air if he truly is your son, may he remain in the air without falling. If he is not your son, may he fall to the floor and die!"

Suddenly, she grabbed the boy by his foot and threw him up into the air. Lo and behold, the boy sat in the cross-legged position, suspended in mid-air, without

falling. Everyone was astonished, to say the least! Remaining in the air, the little boy spoke to the mighty king.

"My lord, I am indeed a son born to you. You take care of many people who are not related to you. You even maintain countless elephants, horses, and other animals.

And yet, you do not think of looking after and raising me, your own son. Please do take care of me and my mother."

Hearing this, the king's pride was overcome. He was humbled by the truth of the little boy's powerful words. He held out his arms and said, "Come to me my son, and I will take good care of you."

Amazed by such a wonder, all the others in the court put out their arms. They too asked the floating little boy to come to them. But he went directly from mid-air into his father's arms. With his son seated on his lap, the king announced that he would be the crown prince, and his mother would be the number one queen.

In this way, the king and all his courts learned the power of truth. Benares became known as a place of honest justice. In time the king died.

The grown-up crown prince wanted to show the people that all deserve respect, regardless of birth. So he had himself crowned under the official name, "King No-father!" He went on to rule the kingdom generously and righteously.

The moral is: The truth is always stronger than a lie.

The Silent Buddha [Generosity]



The Silent Buddha
Fletcher Soul Traveler

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Once upon a time, there was a very rich man living in Benares, in northern India. When his father died, he inherited even more wealth. He thought, "Why should I use this treasure for myself alone? Let my fellow beings also benefit from these riches."

So he built dining halls at the four gates of the city - North, East, South, and West. In these halls, he gave food freely to all who wished it. He became famous for his generosity. It also became known that he and his followers were practices of the Five Training Steps.

In those days, a Silent Buddha was meditating in the forest near Benares. He was called Buddha because he was enlightened.

This means that he no longer experienced himself, the one called 'I' or 'me', as being in any way different from all life living itself. So he was able to experience life as it really is, in every present moment.

Being one with all life, he was filled with compassion and sympathy for the unhappiness of all beings. So he wished to teach and help them to be enlightened just as he was.

But the time of our story was most unfortunate, a very sad time. It was a time when no one else was able to understand the Truth, and experience life as it really is. And since this Buddha knew this, that was why he was Silent.

While meditating in the forest, the Silent Buddha entered into a very high mental state. His concentration was so great that he remained in one position for seven days and nights, without eating or drinking.

²⁸ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_54.htm

When he returned to the ordinary state, he was in danger of dying from starvation. At the usual time of day, he went to collect alms food at the mansion of the rich man of Benares.

When the rich man had just sat down to have lunch, he saw the Silent Buddha coming with his alms bowl. He rose from his seat respectfully. He told his servant to go and give alms to him.

Meanwhile, Mara, the god of death, had been watching. Mara is the one who is filled with greed for power over all beings. He can only have this power because of the fear of death.

Since a Buddha lives life fully in each moment, he has no desire for future life and no fear of future death. Therefore, since Mara could have no power over the Silent Buddha, he wished to destroy him.

When he saw that he was near death from starvation, he knew that he had a good chance of succeeding.

Before the servant could place the food in the Silent Buddha's alms bowl, Mara caused a deep pit of red hot burning coals to appear between them. It seemed like the entrance to a hell world.

When he saw this, the servant was frightened to death. He ran back to his master. The rich man asked him why he returned without giving the alms food. He replied, "My lord, there is a deep pit full of red hot burning coals just in front of the Silent Buddha."

The rich man thought, "This man must be seeing things!" So he sent another servant with alms-food. He also was frightened by the same pit of fiery coals. Several servants were sent, but all returned frightened to death.

Then the master thought, "There is no doubt that Mara, the god of death, must be trying to prevent my wholesome deed of giving alms-food to the Silent Buddha.

Because wholesome deeds are the beginning of the path to enlightenment, this Mara wishes to stop me at all costs. But he does not understand my confidence in the Silent Buddha and my determination to give."

So he took the alms food to the Silent Buddha. He too saw the flames rising from the fiery pit. Then he looked up and saw the terrible god of death, floating above in the sky. He asked, "Who are you.?" Mara replied I am the god of death!"

"Did you create this pit of fire?" asked the man. "I did," said the god. "Why did you do so?" "To keep you from giving alms food, and in this way to cause the Silent Buddha to die! Also to prevent your wholesome deed from helping you on the path to enlightenment, so you will remain in my power!"

The rich man of Benares said, "Oh Mara, god of death, the evil one, you cannot kill the Silent Buddha, and you cannot prevent my wholesome giving! Let us see whose determination is stronger!"

Then he looked across the raging pit of fire, and said to the calm and gentle Enlightened One, "Oh Silent Buddha, let the light of Truth continue to shine as an example to us. Accept this gift of life!"

So saying, he forgot himself entirely, and at that moment there was no fear of death. As he stepped into the burning pit, he felt himself being lifted by a beautiful cool lotus blossom.

The pollen from this miraculous flower spread into the air and covered him with the glowing color of gold. While standing in the heart of the lotus, the Great Being poured the alms food into the bowl of the Silent Buddha. Mara, the god of death, was defeated!

In appreciation for this wonderful gift, the Silent Buddha raised his hand in blessing. The rich man bowed in homage, joining his hands above his head. Then the Silent Buddha departed from Benares and went to the Himalayan forests.

Still standing on the wonderful lotus, glowing with the color of gold, the generous master taught his followers. He told them that practicing the Five Training Steps is necessary to purify the mind.

He told them that with such a pure mind, there is great merit in giving alms - indeed it is truly the gift of life!

When he had finished teaching, the fiery pit and the lovely cool lotus completely disappeared.

The moral is: Have no fear when doing wholesome deeds.

Demons in the Desert [The Correct Way of Thinking]



Demons in the Desert
Fletcher Soul Traveler

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Once upon a time, there were two merchants, who were friends. Both of them were getting ready for business trips to sell their merchandise, so they had to decide whether to travel together.

They agreed that, since each had about 500 carts, and they were going to the same place along the same road, it would be too crowded to go at the same time.

One decided that it would be much better to go first. He thought, "The road will not be rutted by the carts, the bullocks will be able to choose the best of all the grass, we will find the best fruits and vegetables to eat, my people will appreciate my leadership and, in the end, I will be able to bargain for the best prices."

The other merchant considered carefully and realized there were advantages to going second. He thought, "My friend's carts will level the ground so we won't have to do any road work, his bullocks will eat the old rough grass and new tender shoots will spring up for mine to eat.

In the same way, they will pick the old fruits and vegetables and fresh ones will grow for us to enjoy. I won't have to waste my time bargaining when I can take the price already set and make my profit."

So he agreed to let his friend go first. This friend was sure he'd fooled him and gotten the best of him - so he set out first on the journey.

²⁹ http://www.buddhanet.net/bt1_01.htm

The merchant who went first had a troublesome time of it. They came to a wilderness called the 'Waterless Desert', which the local people said was haunted by demons. When the caravan reached the middle of it, they met a large group coming from the opposite direction.

They had carts that were mud smeared and dripping with water. They had lotuses and water lilies in their hands and the carts. The head man, who had a know-it-all attitude, said to the merchant, "Why are you carrying these heavy loads of water?

In a short time, you will reach that oasis on the horizon with plenty of water to drink and dates to eat. Your bullocks are tired from pulling those heavy carts filled with extra water - so throw away the water and be kind to your overworked animals!"

Even though the local people had warned them, the merchant did not realize that these were not real people, but demons in disguise. They were even in danger of being eaten by them. Being confident that they were helping people, he followed their advice and had all his water emptied onto the ground.

As they continued on their way they found no oasis or any water at all. Some realized they'd been fooled by beings that might have been demons and started to grumble and accuse the merchant.

At the end of the day, all the people were tired out. The bullocks were too weak from lack of water to pull their heavy carts. All the people and animals lay down haphazardly and fell into a deep sleep. Lo and behold, during the night the demons came in their true frightening forms and gobbled up all the weak defenseless beings.

When they were done there were only bones lying scattered around - not one human or animal was left alive.

After several months, the second merchant began his journey along the same way. When he arrived in the wilderness, he assembled all his people and advised them - "This is called the 'Waterless Desert' and I have heard that it is haunted by demons and ghosts.

Therefore we should be careful. Since there may be poison plants and foul water, don't drink any local water without asking me." In this way, they started into the desert.

After getting about halfway through, in the same way, as with the first caravan, they were met by the water-soaked demons in disguise. They told them the oasis was near and they should throw away their water.

But the wise merchant saw through them right away. He knew it didn't make sense to have an oasis in a place called 'Waterless Desert'. And besides, these people had bulging red eyes and an aggressive and pushy attitude, so he suspected they might be demons.

He told them to leave them alone saying, "We are businessmen who don't throw away good water before we know where the next is coming from."

Then seeing that his own people had doubts, the merchant said to them, "Don't believe these people, who may be demons, until we find water. The oasis they point to maybe just an illusion or a mirage. Have you ever heard of water in this 'Waterless Desert'?"

Do you feel any rain-wind or see any storm clouds?" They all said, "No", and he continued, "If we believe these strangers and throw away our water, then later we may not have any to drink or cook with - then we will be weak and thirsty and it would be easy for demons to come and rob us, or even eat us up! Therefore, until we really find water, do not waste even a drop!"

The caravan continued on its way and, that evening reached the place where the first caravan's people and bullocks had been killed and eaten by the demons. They found the carts and human and animal bones lying all around. They recognized that the fully-loaded carts and the scattered bones belonged to the former caravan. The wise merchant told certain people to stand to watch around the camp during the night.

The next morning the people ate breakfast and fed their bullocks well. They added to their goods the most valuable things left from the first caravan. So they finished their journey very successfully and returned home safely so that they and their families could enjoy their profits.

The moral is: One must always be wise enough not to be fooled by tricky talk and false appearances.