



The Stone Cutter



It is all that I want in the world.

Once upon a time, there was a poor stonecutter who lived alone.

He was a pious, compassionate man and God listened to his prayers.

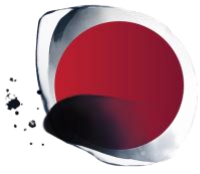
He prayed to be rich and powerful.

One morning he awakened to find he had riches beyond his dreams.

He announced to the world, "I am the most powerful."

The sun mocked him and said,

"Are you powerful enough to make the plants grow?"



He was not. The pleasure his riches brought him began to fade.

So he prayed, "Make me as powerful as the sun."

The next morning, he arose with the sun, because he was the sun.

His pleasure knew no bounds.

He warmed the Earth, made the plants grow, and scorched the fields of those who did not love God.

He announced to the world, "I am the most powerful."

The wind mocked him and said,

"Are you powerful enough to move the ships through the ocean, to move the rain and the clouds so they block out the sun?"

His pleasure again began to fade.

So, he prayed, "Make me as powerful as the wind."

The next morning, he awakened to find that he was the wind.

He swirled and blew and took great pleasure in moving the clouds and ships in the ocean.

He announced to the world,

"I am the most powerful."

The mountain heard his boast and mocked him,

"Are you powerful enough to move me?"

He blew and he blew yet he could not move the mountain.

His delight faded and soon he began to pray to God to make him as powerful as the mountain.

One morning he awakened to find that he was a mountain.

He delighted in the majesty of his form.



The wind blew and could not move him.

The sun shone but could not reach behind the giant shadow that he cast.

He was indeed powerful.

Yet one day his attention was drawn to a chip, chip, chipping sound.

Below, a stonecutter was knocking away big chunks of stone and carrying them away to make a house.

He growled, “I am the most powerful, go away!”

The stonecutter smiled,

“If you are so powerful, you go away. I am busy.

I am building a house to keep my family dry and warm.”

The mountain sighed.

He had wanted to be the most powerful.

It was a long time before he prayed again to God,

“Make me as powerful as the stonecutter.”

God spoke, “Are you sure?”

He replied,

“It is all that I want in the world.”

And the next morning the stonecutter awoke in his bed and his joy knew no bounds.

Reference:

Adapted from Doug Lipman’s retelling of a Chinese folktale.

Simmons, Annette. The Story Factor (pp. 219-221). Basic Books. Kindle Edition.

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