

The Twelve Seekers

There were once twelve seekers, who traveled the world in search of Power, Truth, Love, and Knowledge. Abandoning all other concerns, and forsaking all of Life's pleasures, they traveled land and sea seeking a wise man who knew the answer that would allow them to secure at last their heart's desire.

At each town and every village, they asked the local people where they could find such a man. But always it was the same story; "Yes," they said, "such a man as this once lived near here, loved and respected by everyone, but no longer." So, the twelve continued on.

One evening, tired and hungry, they sat down together at a small inn in a tiny village. The innkeeper offered them only bread and water. "What kind of inn is this?" they scolded him. He apologized, and said times were hard, and he was doing the best he could with what little he had.

"What have you come here for?" asked the innkeeper. They told him they'd come seeking a wise man who could help them find Power, Truth, Love, and Knowledge. "Is that so?" said the innkeeper. "Then you seek Ka, the Mountain King. Rest here tonight. In the morning, follow the steps to the door of the Holy Mountain. There you will find Ka."

The seekers set out at dawn, doubtful but desperate. When they arrived at the door, they were immediately admitted and brought into a large, well lit chamber. There, on the throne, sat a magnificent king, dressed in fine robes and attended on either side by a beautiful woman. As they approached, they saw it was none other than the innkeeper who had served them the previous night!

"I am Ka" said the king. "Who among you seeks Power? Let him stand forth". Four of the twelve stepped forward. Each was presented with a gleaming sword, a suit of the finest armor, a chest of gold, and titles of land. "These are yours", said Ka, "if you agree to be my Generals, and accept responsibility for all military affairs". The four agreed, and stood aside.

"Who seeks Truth?" said the king. "Let him stand forth." Three more of the twelve stepped forward. Each was presented with a glowing robe, every bit as magnificent as the king's. To each was given a finely bound book of the Law, and the keys to the prison gates. "These are yours", said Ka, "if you agree to be my Judges, and accept responsibility for separating Truth from Lie, and administering justice to all my subjects. The three agreed, and stepped aside.

"Who seeks Love?" said the king. "Let him stand forth." Two more stepped forward. Immediately the two women descended from the throne, and each kissed one the men warmly, and placed her head on his shoulder. "These are yours", said Ka, "if you agree to be my sons, and accept responsibility as husbands to my daughters and princes of my kingdom." The two agreed, and stood aside.

"Who seeks Knowledge?" said the king. "Let him stand forth." Only one of the remaining three stepped forward. He was given a simple white robe. He was also given maps of the kingdom, including the great hall and all its secret doors and chambers. He also received the keys to the treasury, temple, and royal library. "These are yours" said Ka, "if you agree to be my Guru, and accept responsibility to advise, teach, and minister to the needs of the hearts and minds of my people. The one agreed, and stepped aside.

Now only two of the twelve remained. "And what" said the king "do you seek?" One of the two stepped forward.

"Oh, great Ka!" said he. "Never before have I seen such Power, such Truth, such Love, and such Knowledge! If only I could be as you are!" Without hesitation, the king arose from the throne, and descended directly to where the man stood. He removed his crown, and placed it on the man's head. "This, and everything else that is mine, I give to you, if you agree to be the Mountain King, and accept responsibility for the leadership and protection of all the realm." The man, overcome with joy, nodded gratefully as the king removed his robe and placed it over his shoulders.

Turning to the one remaining seeker, Ka threw his arm over the other's shoulder, and gave him a firm bear hug. "Only you and I" said Ka, "have won our freedom today! Let us go now, for there is much to do!" And they were on their way.

Tudka