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LEGENDS OF ALTAI

3 STORIES - SAMPLE BOOK



A SAMPLE STORY FROM
EACH BOOK IN THE SERIES

PAOLO F. TIBERI

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Legends of Altai

Sample Stories

(One Story from each of the 3 Books)

By
Paolo F. Tiberi

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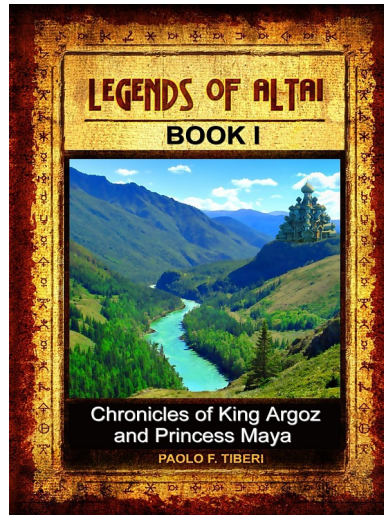
Letter to Parents

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From Book I

Princess Maya's Plan



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Maya was a very smart young girl. Within a few months, she learned how to read and her desire for knowledge grew with each passing day. King Argoz had already a son. Prince Ultan. He was twelve years old, and they both liked to share adventures and stories about great Kings, wizards, healers, and teachers. They certainly always looked forward to when a wise man would come to visit the court.

Everyone noticed that Maya was different and had a very special gift. She remembered every person's name in the castle and everyone's personal stories. Also, she had the most wonderful ability to make each and every person know that they were truly important.

In fact, every time one of the servants would tend to her room, she would stop them, look them in the eyes and say something like, Maria, I thank you for tidying this room so well. I love how you always are so attentive and how you pay attention to even the tiniest of details. I really appreciate that. Thank you.

One of Maya's favourite things to do was go into the palace kitchen and speak with the chefs, cooks, and even the servants as they

washed the dishes. Once again, she would stop them, look them in the eyes, and say, Abenzio, Arland, Maralek, I truly appreciate your efforts. You always look for the freshest ingredients and the best recipes for us. We are truly honoured to get to feast on your creations. I always love meal times.

Then Maya looked at the servants washing the dishes stopped, and said, Conall, Kimball, I am always so impressed with how clean the dishes are. There is always a beautiful smell to them. What do you use?

Milady, we use white vinegar, water, soap, and lemon juice, said the servant.

That's great. And how is your wife doing, Kimball?, continued Maya

She is getting better, Milady. Thank you for asking, Kimball replied appreciatively.

One day Ultan and Maya spoke about ways to improve the Kingdom. After much thinking, they came up with a few great ideas. Maya began, When father came and found me, he said something very important. Something that I will never forget. He said, 'Everyone matters, every person in this Kingdom is part of a family. No one should be left behind. Everyone, no matter who they are can make a difference.' That statement made all the difference in my life, and I believe it could in other people's lives too.

Maya continued, When people do not feel special enough, they often end up feeling alone. They start to feel like their efforts go unnoticed. I have realized that when I compliment people, they do a better job, they feel prouder and feel that their life has a purpose.

That's very true, said Ultan. So how do we make people feel more appreciated and special?

We can start a small revolution of recognition! exclaimed Maya. She was very excited at the thought and began to create a plan.

What do you mean? Ultan asked.

Ultan, if I recognise the hard work of one person and then that person feels better and feels proud, they will go home feeling happy and content. That could make them want to do the same thing for their wife, husband, or children. Then they will feel good, too. They will then spread this kindness to those they see. Before you know it, this Kingdom and perhaps the world will be a better place. Maya was so confident in her idea and had a big smile on her face.

We are so young, you are just eight years old. Do you truly think we can change the world? questioned Ultan.

Yes, our age and the size of the job does not matter, it's the intention that counts. Look how many people were willing to help me once father started to help. They didn't even know that he was the King. Father said that the first step of any idea is to actually start the journey. He also said that even the longest journey starts with a simple intention. He believes that the journey is more important than the destination itself! I do, too!, Maya explained. Hmm, true, true. You are right, but how do we test your strategy? I am sure it works, but we must find a way to test it.

Oh, you boys like to test everything! Maya laughed. She and Ultan laughed a lot when they were together.

Well, I thought about creating a potion, Maya said. She had a twinkle in her eye.

But you don't know how to prepare a potion, Ultan replied.

Silly, it is not a potion developed from medicine. It is just a make-believe potion made from water and food coloring!

Ah, a placebo! yelled Ultan.

What's a placebo?

It is a fake medicine. People think that what you are giving them is like medicine, but in reality it is just colored water with a flavoring of sugar in it. Ultan explained.

Yes, we can use a placebo for our potion. I like that a lot!

And how are you going to use this potion? asked Ultan

Well, Conall, one of the servants who washes the dishes, is quite old and has been married to his wife for more than 25 years. When I am in the kitchen sometimes I hear him calling his wife nasty names.

Like what? Ultan asked. He couldn't help but be intrigued by Maya's words.

Usually silly things like, 'That old cow cannot appreciate all the work I do here in the kitchen. She does not even clean the house; all she does is spend, spend, spend', you know awful things like that.

Ok, so how do you intend to save their marriage with your magical potion?

Well, it is not really physical magic because the magic happens in the mind. This potion is all about changing someone's attitude and belief system or altering their state of mind.

You see, all people live their lives based on the beliefs they have within themselves. These beliefs then define their attitude, how they see the world and react to people or situations. So if someone wants to have a completely different experience in their life, they must first change their belief. Maya indicated.

I like it Maya. Ok, so how are you going to apply this plan with Conall?

Come with me and I will show you! exclaimed Maya. As they walked towards the kitchen, she showed Ultan an electric blue liquid sealed inside a small glass tube.

Maya smiled and whispered cheekily, Placebo. Ultan and Maya headed towards the kitchen and as usual, Maya stopped to congratulate everyone for their great work. She reached the area where the dishes were being washed and asked Conall if she could have a word with him in private.

How can I be of service, milady? asked Conall.

It is not what you can do for us, dear Conall. But rather, what we can do for you. Maya replied respectfully.

Conall listened intently.

You know we always get very interesting gifts at court....
Especially from great healers and wise men

Yes milady you do

Well.... Maya removed the glass flask with the beautiful color from behind her back as she spoke.

This flask contains a very special, unique potion that can bring out the best that any woman has within herself. She would transform into a beautiful angel both beautiful inside and out. She would be a woman whom any man would be blessed with.

A long silence followed, but Conall still listened.

This gift is for you, Conall. I have decided to give it to you!

Conall cried, Milady, I am not worthy of such a gift.

Maybe not yet, but an angel needs someone to take special care of her. The only way the transformation can happen is if every day, in every possible way, you make this angel feel special, accepted, appreciated and make her feel like she is a true goddess.

When you do these things, this will activate the magic potion and transform your wife into an angel. You are worthy of this gift and taking care of the angel is just as important as the potion. Do you understand? asked Maya.

I do, Conall replied. How can I repay you? This is so much to give.

No need. You and your wife's happiness is my reward, said Maya. She smiled tenderly.

How do I give her the potion? asked the man.

Here are two silver coins. Go and buy her favourite wine. Pour a glass for her and add the potion into it. It might taste a bit fruity.

The changes will happen almost immediately. It might take a few months for the full transformation to take place.

I am so grateful, but I still don't understand why you would choose me for this.

Because you need it more than any other person I know. Like my father said, every person has a purpose and every person is important. No matter what they decide to do, they have a choice to do the right things to show other people that they matter. You are worthy of this gift, and it will make your relationship with your wife and life special until the end of your days!

They embraced.

Please keep me informed on your wife's transformation, Conall, said Maya, smiling tenderly.

I will, replied Conall with glee.

Ultan and Maya left Conall in the kitchen. He was looking at the blue glass tube in awe. That night the old dishwasher went home a different man. He looked at his wife in a new way. She noticed him watching her and felt a bit uncomfortable. She was not used to that kind of attention.

Are you drunk? she asked sarcastically.

No, but maybe we will both be later. I bought your favourite wine to celebrate the day I first met you. I am so happy that you are in my life and I am thankful for all you have done for me all these years, he answered.

She was stunned and speechless. Her plump cheeks turned rosy from blushing. She ran to the bathroom and made sure her hair and make-up looked good. She had not worn any make-up in years. She even dusted off her most precious dress out of the closet, which she had been saving for special occasions.

Conall was amazed. He thought, Gosh, she is already transforming even before taking the potion. He gave her a glass of her favourite red wine.

For the first time in almost fifteen years, they discovered how to laugh once again and remembered why they fell in love in the first place.

As his recognition for his wife grew, she began to take better care of herself. Their home, which was once dark and gloomy, became spotlessly clean and full of fresh flowers. The walls which were once colored with a brownish grey tone, now repainted in light pastel colors.

One day Conall went home from a long, hard day at work. He took note of his wife and noticed that she had lost weight, her hair looked different, and she looked at least ten years younger. He looked at her with all the love, gratitude and passion of a newlywed and appreciatively said: I love you, my beautiful wife.

Conall had not said those words in over ten years. Tears streamed down his wife's cheeks. They embraced and she looked at him tenderly and whispered, I love you, too, you are back, my love.

Weeks went by when Maya went back to the kitchen with Ultan. Conall was there washing the dishes as always, but this time whistling a happy tune and he seemed to be glowing.

Tell me, Conall. What happened? asked Maya.

The potion worked just like you said it would. Every day my wife became more beautiful. I thank you for the gift you have given us, I will never forget it.

Ultan looked at Maya.

Maya smiled and said: Thank you, Conall, for sharing your story.

Ultan and Maya left the kitchen. She was beaming with joy.

Any miracle can happen when someone truly believes, she whispered. More importantly, it can happen when love, appreciation and gratitude are present.

Ok, it works. How do we spread this to everyone? asked the brother.

What do you think? replied Maya

I am not sure if you are doing this because you truly care about others or you simply appreciate their roles in your life? wondered Ultan.

You've just given me a great idea, big brother! I normally thank eight to ten people every day. When I do that, I stop and pay attention to what they are saying and look them in the eyes and see them as a complete being, an equal. When I develop that connection, I make sure that they know the wonderful contribution they have made in my life.

That's great, Maya. I never really thank people the way you do. I've never stopped to connect with them or to truly see the difference they have made in my life, Ultan confessed.

Ok, it is time to see the bigger picture, big brother. You see, I do this with at least eight people every day. Those eight people usually interact with at least another eight people. So, indirectly, I am helping brighten the day of more than 500 people.

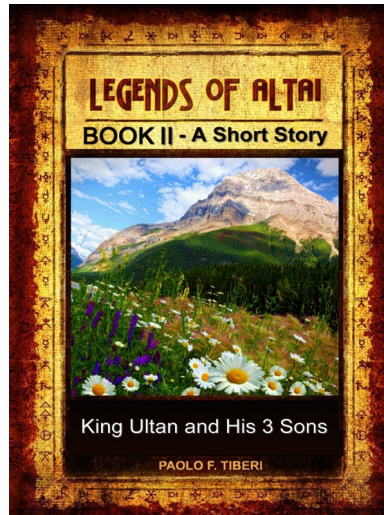
Maya was pleased. But imagine this multiplying even more once people start getting into the habit of thanking and appreciating others. It is so easy to do. Just by telling someone that who they are makes a wonderful difference and who they are matters.

Ultan looked around every time people walked by. They all acknowledged Maya with huge, sincere smiles like she was a part of their family. Ultan was touched.

That day Ultan realised that creating a better world did not include war, money or politics. It just took one open heart with a beautiful idea.

From Book II

King Ultan and His 3 Sons



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There once was a King known by all as Ultan. He was the son of the great King Argoz. He was blessed with three sons. They were triplets and were born only one minute apart.

He had to decide which of his three sons would one day take over the Kingdom. This was a dilemma that caused him great anxiety. He didn't believe that the rule of the oldest son applied in this case. He wanted to find out which of his sons was the most just, wise and brave of heart. The people of his land deserved that type of King

The King invited the wise men and women of the land to seek their counsel and guidance as his father did before him. Surely these great men and women could help him decide which of his sons would be the most suitable to reign over the Kingdom.

As the wise men spoke, one by one they offered advice to the King and asked him questions. One wise old man asked, "Why don't you set up a test of bravery and strength?" The King did not like that idea. He was not looking for strength. He wanted an overall

sense of justice, fairness, compassion and leadership from the future King.

Maya, Ultan's sister, who was renowned for her wisdom was also present. She had returned from her travels to help her brother for she knew how important it was to be governed by a wise and just King. Maya suggested a very good idea.

He called his sons at once. "Dear children, I am heading off on a pilgrimage to seek answers. I am not sure how long this journey will take. It could be a year, perhaps even longer. While I am gone the Kingdom will be ruled by the 'round table.' The round table will be comprised of the three of you, your mother the Queen, Princess Maya, and a group of wise advisors."

The sons looked at their father curiously. They could not believe their father would abandon the Kingdom he loved so much for a pilgrimage. Because they honoured their father, they withheld their questions while he continued to speak.

"Each of you will be given a box of seeds.

The seeds are for fruit trees, ornamental tree, herbs, vegetables, and flowers. All these things grow and bloom throughout our entire region. In a year or more, I will be back and see what you have done with these seeds. Whichever one of you protects your seeds the best and makes the best use of them will be the rightful heir to the throne when I am no longer here. Do you understand, my sons?" Explained King Ultan.

The three sons nodded and knelt before their father in appreciation. They wanted to honour their father by being the best protector of the seeds.

Although all three sons looked very similar, they all thought very differently.

One of the sons called Aaron went and asked some farmers for the best way to preserve seeds. The farmers responded that if they were kept in a cool area with no humidity the seeds should preserve well for several years without fear of rotting. He decided to follow the farmer's advice and that it would be wise to lock the seeds in a secured box.

He placed that box in a cool, dry place and wrapped it in layers of cloth to help prevent any humidity from seeping in. When his father returned, he would give him the valuable seeds back.

The second son, Niall, thought for days about what he should do. After careful consideration he decided to go to the market place to sell the seeds.

With the money from the sale of the seeds, he would invest it to earn more. Upon his father's return, he would take the money and purchase even more seeds to present to his father. He felt most confident that these wise choice would help him get the crown.

The third son, Ryan, decided to plant the seeds in the royal fields.

They would create both beauty throughout the Kingdom and a productive oasis.

As time went by, the seeds grew into small trees, flowers, herbs, vegetables, and fruit. Ryan kept harvesting the seeds and used them to plant more. The Kingdom kept growing more beautiful and was rich in resources for all the people of the Kingdom. As you looked across the land you could see the beautiful colors of the blossoming flowers and lush plants. The air was filled with the sweet fragrance of bountifulness.

To show his loyalty to the Kingdom he took one extra step. He let it be known that any willing family could harvest from the oasis on one condition. They needed to reap any extra seeds they had after growing their own food and provide those seeds to other families to use. No seed that produced life and food should be discarded. They were to be used for its intended purpose.

Three years soon passed by. The King finally returned and all the people rejoiced at the sight of him. It was a great day and the entire Kingdom was preparing a feast to celebrate the return of their great King.

Niall, after learning that the King had returned, ran to the market and purchased nearly double the amount of seeds he had started with. His money grew great interest over those three years. He was very proud and hoped his father would see how clever he

was. One thing the second son noticed was that the roads of the Kingdom looked more lush and colorful than they had ever been before.

Once settled back in the Kingdom, the King called his three sons to appear before him. He had missed them and was very intrigued to hear about how they had used their seeds.

Before the King listened to his sons, he said, "Dear sons, there are no right or wrong ways when it comes to these seeds. Every one of you has done the best you could do, based on the way you perceive life. A chef would see water as a beautiful tool for great creations and as an indispensable ingredient for many of his recipes. A farmer may look at water as a tool for growing his crops and creating life. Engineers would view water as a way to produce endless energy. People use the gift of water differently. All ways are good and necessary to better one's life. Therefore, do not be discouraged if you are not chosen to become the King. Each of you will have a purpose and fulfil a precious role in this Kingdom."

"Wouldn't one be more important than another?" Aaron asked.

"Dear one, can the heart survive in a body without a stomach? Or can the nose and breathing exist in a body without a lung? They cannot. All of the parts are integral for the system to work. One needs the other to work together effectively. Everyone plays an important role in life, whether they are a cleaner, teacher, doctor or a leader. We all need each other for the whole system to work properly. Every one matters.

The test with the seeds, is not just about determining who will become King. It is also about learning your path in life," explained King Ultan.

The King smiled tenderly. Then he asked his sons to show him their results one by one.

Aaron got the box of seeds his father had given him and opened the box. King Ultan looked at the well-preserved seeds. He hugged his son and said: "My son, you have done well. It looks like you would take good care of managing our produce and crops that are harvested in the Kingdom. Thank you for your great effort. I am proud."

Niall opened a bigger container showcasing double the amount of seeds. The King asked, "Son, are these my seeds?"

"No, father. I sold your seeds and reinvested the money from the seeds. Upon your arrival back to the Kingdom, I ran to the market and purchased double the seeds with the money I had earned."

The King hugged Niall and said, "You, my son, are a great visionary with seeing the potential of things and helping them to grow. You would take great care in managing the Kingdom treasury. Thank you for your great effort. You have made me proud."

The King looked to the third son, Ryan. "What did you do with your seeds, son?"

Ryan asked his father to follow him outside. He showed him the royal fields and gardens. "Those, my King, are the fruit of your seeds. The Kingdom is now producing fruit for both the court and the people of the Kingdom. The extra seeds that the trees, vegetables, herbs, and ornamental flowers have created were distributed to families around the Kingdom with only one condition. They must share the seeds their plants generated with others so that they, too, may have food. The seeds are gifts that will keep on giving for all time. I do not have any seeds with me at the moment as all had been sowed to give life to new plants.

However, if you be patient a bit longer all the plants will produce their fruit and their seeds can be harvested."

The King embraced his son. "You, my son, will be a great King and leader! You have shown everyone that the idea of one single man can change an entire Kingdom!"

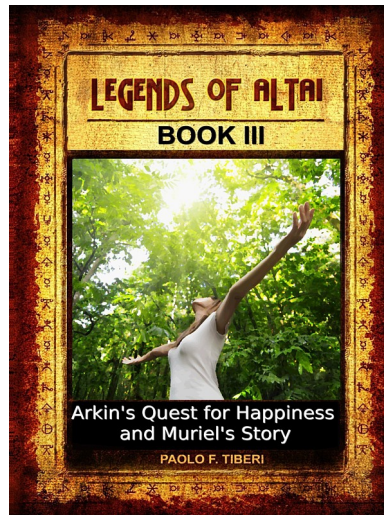
The seeds of the earth that grew within King Ultan's flourishing Kingdom continued to give. It is said that the Kingdom lived in great abundance. As friends and relatives from neighbouring Kingdoms visit, they would be given seeds to take back to their homes. Their only condition was the one that had initially been set by the young prince. Any excess seeds were to be given to others for free. All of the citizens of the Kingdom organised to give the seeds to villagers of other Kingdoms. The visitors delivered the

seeds. Now, Kingdoms far and wide flourished with bountiful harvests and fruit.

Visitors to the Kingdom were always astounded and entranced by the richness, prosperity and beauty of the Kingdom. Ryan was truly a great leader. Visitors decided to replicate what they had done in this Kingdom in their own homelands. They too wanted to create such beauty, bounty and giving.

From Book III

The Merchant Learns a Life Lesson



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There once lived a very noble man. He resided in the Kingdom of Argoz the Great. He was of most noble descent and a very successful merchant; he had many ships and brought in goods from all over the world.

The nobleman was known to all as Lord Deverell. He had two sons, Brian and Arkin. They were aged 10 and 12. As the sons grew up, their differences were most obvious. Brian had great ambition and desire to learn all about being a successful merchant just like his father. Arkin, on the other hand, was dedicated to learning all about people and helping others.

One day Lord Deverell reached his limit for patience. Arkin was his eldest son, but did not show any interest in the merchant business. Instead, he spent time reading and contemplating life under an oak tree. Lord Deverell often reflected within himself whether Arkin was really his son.

After much contemplation, Lord Deverell decided to take his son to a trip to the poorest part of the country. His sole purpose was to

show him how poor people struggled and lived. If that didn't inspire him to want to learn the family trade, nothing else would.

How could somebody not understand how fortunate they were after spending a week with two very poor families that had no noble background, such as Arkin had? So, he organized the trip in great detail. He offered the two families that would host his son some money in exchange for helping him.

Arkin was excited about the trip. He always welcomed an opportunity to spend time with new people. The first day was spent at the farm of a very poor family. Lord Deverell was confident about his plan and started a conversation. "Please Eoin, tell my son how hard your life is here on the farm."

"Yes. Life can be hard for us. We have to wake up early to feed the animals and milk the cows. Then we must work in the fields, the fruit orchard, and the vegetable garden to make sure that the crop will grow well for the harvest. Some years are harder than others. But, I have a good wife, good soil, and the Great One always provides for us." The farmer smiled. Then he reached over and patted his plump wife's arm.

"Come with me," said Eoin. Lord Deverell, Arkin, and the farmer walked out to the vegetable garden. The farmer got down on his knees and grabbed a handful of the rich, fertile soil. He held it proudly in his hands.

"You see. This soil is so good that you could almost eat it! Smell it, feel it; it's so good, you could grow anything!

The secret my friends are the cows', horses', and chickens' manure. It does miracles for the plants." Arkin stood proudly. He felt that he had just revealed one of the biggest unknown secrets to people who did not work the land.

Eoin continued, "It's nice we work together as a family, since we can't afford help.

When we finish, it is time to prepare dinner together. That is when we talk about values, life adventures, and what is happening in the Kingdom.

After that, if we are not too tired, we dance, play instruments and enjoy much laughter!

Working the land is very rewarding work, but there are nights when our bodies are very weary and tired. Those are the nights that we look forward to going to bed. We certainly get a good night's sleep!"

You could see Eoin light up as he discussed the land. His love and passion for it were most obvious. "It's a shame that you did not join us for the morning milking of the cows. You would have seen a most marvelous sunrise!" said Eoin as he entered his small adobe.

The dinner table was very simple. Eoin's wife brought a loaf of bread that had been baked in the wood fire oven, a salad from the garden with red plum tomatoes and crisp lettuces, plus a chicken that was beautifully roasted with potatoes and rosemary. While the table was simple, the meal smelled divine and everybody was excited to eat it.

"This is a special occasion. That's why we are having chicken tonight," the farmer's wife smiled with her merry eyes.

"So, you don't have this abundance normally?" asked Lord Deverell. His eyes twinkled because he saw the opportunity to show Arkin hardship.

"No, my Lord, we have plenty of cheese conserves, potatoes, vegetables and bread. Meat is more of a rarity. Still, we are blessed because the land has always provided for us all we need."

After the wonderful supper, the farmer's wife inquired if Lord Deverell and Arkin would be staying the night. "I am sorry that we do not have a guest room. As our guests, we would be honored to have you sleep in our bed. We do not mind sleeping in the stable. If you stay the night, you might be able to see one of our cows, Bella, deliver a calf."

"That is most generous and I thank you both for your kindness. We have made prior arrangements, however. Thank you for your help and hospitality," Lord Deverell responded, believing Arkin had

developed an appreciation for the luxurious life he had been provided.

As they left the farm, the father was happy. He thought that his point was made clear and pleasantly assessed the day. He said to himself, "Life is hard. It is better to follow in my footsteps and have a pampered life in a magnificent palace. You can be rich and prosperous with servants at your disposal. That is how you fulfill your desires. It is much better than having to work so you could eat and live."

"Where are we going tomorrow?" Arkin asked.

"To see the life of a prison cleaner," his father said.

"Good," said Arkin. He was indeed curious about what this person's life would be like.

After an indulgent, satisfying breakfast, they headed to a prison on the outskirts of the Kingdom. A man named Constantine worked there as a cleaner. As they entered the secured area where some of the prisoners were, they were directed by a guard to a big man with a gentle facial expression. "That," the guard said, "is Constantine."

Arkin and Lord Deverell walked over to Constantine and warmly greeted the big man. After they were seated the father inquired, "Tell us about your life."

"Well, there's not much to tell, really. My life is simple. I clean the prison cells."

"Are the prisoners dangerous?" asked Lord Deverell.

"They can be at times. Before they embrace their healing process, they perceive everybody as the enemy. At the start, no one wants to know your name," the janitor said. Lord Deverell looked pleased.

"Do you get paid a lot of money for being in this violent environment?" Lord Deverell continued.

"I get paid well, I guess. The funds I get give me the possibility to do what I love best."

"What is that?" asked the father.

"After paying taxes to the King and providing food for my family, I use some of the funds for my rehabilitation program."

"You have a rehabilitation program?" asked Lord Deverell. This was very surprising.

"Yes, all of the people here are in prison for different reasons. When you look past the fear, anger and aggressiveness in their eyes, you can truly see that everyone is the same. All people want the same things and all people deserve the gift of life. It's the gift of life and acts of love that provide the blessings we all desire."

"How do you do this?" asked Arkin. He had been listening and was quite intrigued.

"The first step is to give them a 'disabled' or scared dog. If none are available, they get a little puppy. Many of these dogs have been hurt badly or can't walk.

Maybe the dog is emotionally scarred and doesn't trust men anymore. Since both the man and dog have damaged souls, they can help heal each other. Once a dog trusts its owner, it will offer that owner unconditional love. The dog does not know what the man has done in the past. It does not have any prejudice, judgment, or fear in regards to the man's past. This is the first step."

Arkin and Lord Deverell were silent. The gentle eyes of Constantine looked at them both. He took a thoughtful pause and then continued. "Then I organize for a small patch of land that their families or a benefactor has offered to buy them.

The land is still guarded and sealed with high fences, but in this space the prisoner can plant trees and seeds supplied by farmers and people who support this project.

They spend a few hours working the land with the company of their dog. Of course, they must take care of their dog during that time.

Growing food on the land with their dog helps heal their minds and mend their hearts. It helps subside their anger and open up their minds to a better way of living.

As their farms produce food, it is given back to to feed the prisoners and their families. Any surplus is sold and put into an account for the prisoner to enjoy once their prison term is finished. If they are in prison for life, they may give the funds to whomever they desire. One of the most beautiful things we have seen here is that many of the prisoners begin to help other prisoners. They choose to re-invest their funds to help other prisoners get the same gifts they've been given. They became a 'benefactor'."

"This is a very noble and kind deed," said Arkin.

"It is very noble," whispered Lord Deverell. He was quite taken by the cleaner's program.

"My life is very simple and I enjoy that. I have come to realize that we are all the same. Each of us have dreams, aspirations, desires and fears. I try to follow my path and help others as I continue in my life's journey. It is all about showing the prisoner that while they might have made mistakes in the past, even big ones, their life still counts and can have renewed meaning. I want them all to know that they can make a difference."

"Thank you," said Lord Deverell. He was now worried about what Arkin's reaction would be.

It was a quiet walk out of the prison.

As they traveled in their chariot on the way back home, both father and son silently contemplated their experiences in the last two days.

Just before they reached the outskirts of their Kingdom, the father asked his son, "So, how was the trip? What did you get out of it? Would you like to share your thoughts?"

"Sure, it was very interesting, father. I have learned a lot!" Arkin was still deep in his thoughts and didn't elaborate more.

"Did you see how the poor people live and how hard their life is?" the father asked. He wanted to see if he'd accomplished his goal for the trip.

"Yes."

"And what did you learn?"

The son looked at his father as he prepared to answer his questions. "From the farmer I learned that they use dogs to help them hunt, not just to have as pets. These dogs are also valuable for protecting the house, horses, cows, goats, chickens, and other animals that provide them all they need for life."

Arkin kept looking at his father when he spoke to him. He paused in case his father had questions, but he just nodded and encouraged him to continue.

"They make their own cheese, conserves, and other food products exactly the way they want using what the land provides. It is fresh and it is natural. We rely on somebody else to find and purchase those things for us. We have a bathtub with silver feet. They both have a spring and a creek with crystal clear water that run in abundance. They can go and cleanse themselves whenever they please. The water is so pure, they can even drink it."

Lord Deverell was silent. He had a feeling that his son had not absorbed the lessons he'd hoped for him to learn on their journey.

Arkin took his father's silence as a sign to continue talking. "We have imported lamps and exotic oils that fragrantly burn in the garden; they have bright and beautiful stars that shine down upon them while the scent of their gardens and fruit trees fill the air. Our property ends with a view of a tall wall with metal gates to protect us from the envious eyes of jealous people and intruders. The farmer has the entire horizon with no barriers or walls to temper his view or mood."

"Father, I know we have a lot of money and most of the time, mother tells us that you can't sleep worrying about your possessions, funds, and ventures. It seems to me that the only thing that the farmer worries about is what he is going to eat that night and if he has to work a bit harder to help his crop grow. He sleeps well and in a peaceful state. He knows his land so well and

believes in its ability to provide for him and his family. He just knows that everything will be all right. He embraces the present moment and doesn't agonize over what the future holds or what happened in the past."

"My beloved father, I know you seek to know the lesson that I have learned from observing the farmer and it is this. I have learned that living the farmer's life might be hard, but he still has time to enjoy his family and his friends. For us, we have lives full of parties and celebration with people we do not even like. So, while the farmer may not have very much, he has great abundance in areas where we have none. The generosity of his family even extended to giving us their bed to rest upon for the night while they would sleep in the stable. We have so much in our family, but are so scared to give to others."

There was nothing for Lord Deverell to say or do at that moment. His son was young, but he spoke with much passion and fervor.

"They celebrate life every day through the birth of a new animal or the blossoming of a tree. They do not have much, but they are fulfilled, happy, and serene with what they do have."

Arkin paused for a moment. "From the prison cleaner, I have also learned a great deal."

"What have you learned from Constantine the cleaner, son?"

"That all people are the same deep inside and all men have the same red blood flowing through them. We all have doubts and experience fears, regrets and aspirations. Each of us has a lesson to learn. Life is the school. Some lessons might seem trivial and others appear to be very important.

It does not matter though. If they are present in our lives, they are all worth experiencing."

"Father, pain and suffering can create actions that we may regret. Some of those actions can even make a person end up in prison. Just because a person has a wounded soul does not mean that they are not worth helping. With Constantine, people may not have thought much about what he was doing and his desire to help those prisoners. Yet, he did it because that was the right thing for him to do and he felt it was very important. His actions have

helped both wounded dogs and prison inmates heal. It also helps supply the prisoners with fresh produce to eat. That means his deed not only helped the prisoners, but their families and the community too" Arkin added.

"Now I realize that it does not matter how much or little a person has. It is what you do with what you have that really counts and makes a difference. The cleaner's actions showed me that even the most humble of servants has the power to change their environment and turn it from a negative place to a place filled with growth, love, and empathy."

There was a long silence. Lord Deverell was unable to speak or respond to his son.

"Father, does your life really make you happy?" Arkin asked. He was very sincere and direct with his simple question. Yet, the answer was anything but simple. His father remained silent, so Arkin continued. "Thank you, father, for showing me how poor we truly are! And for showing me what is truly important in life."

After that day Arkin vowed to dedicate his life to helping others. It was difficult for his father to watch at first. After time, as his father saw the difference his son was making in the Kingdom, he became very proud of him and tried to help him all he could. Lord Deverell started to appreciate the gifts he had been given in life and vowed not to squander them with greedy thoughts.

AN IMPORTANT LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parents,

We all come from different cultural backgrounds, religions, and belief systems. However, the stories in this book can easily be adapted to fit any personal viewpoint. I believe it is better to equip our children with some form of self-awareness, wisdom, and knowledge than none at all.

We live in a society where our children have been unconsciously trained to disassociate themselves from feelings of compassion, empathy, or guilt. False heroes found in most video games, television shows, internet and movies often set this silent training.

Many of our leaders have forgotten that you cannot have a functional, balanced and caring society without functional children, therefore they allow this silent training to be ever present.

In a society where instant gratification has replaced true labor and dedication, children have grown to expect everything immediately. They want instant soup instead of a finely brewed broth, even though the latter is more flavorsome and better for them.

It is sad that we have found ourselves living in a world where success is measured by how many toys one possesses. Kids are subtly and passively trained to desire materialistic things more and more, and never feel content. We do have a way to step in and give our children positive guidance for a more enriching future.

Through your life, your words and actions and through the gifts (like this little book) you give your child, you have the ability to make a positive, profound choice for your child's life. You can become their beacon of light by teaching them to become loving, caring, and wiser beings. This is what the true gifts of life are about.

I ask you to help us change society one small child at the time through this little book of wisdom.

I hope that after having read this story, you will feel that it is worth sharing.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paolo Tiberi is a Published Author, Certified Hypnotherapist, NLP Practitioner, Motivational Speaker, Life Coach and Alternative Medicine Therapist. Through his books, seminars, radio and TV appearance Paolo influenced many people with his messages on spirituality, motivation, wealth and abundance, and how to live an unlimited and fulfilling life.

For most of his early years, Paolo explored the subject of self-discovery, which led him to travel to Europe, Africa, Asia, India, North & South America to work and receive training from the best thinkers in the areas of spirituality and human behavior. After he successfully frequented different institutes across the globe, by the early 1990's Paolo began his career as a teacher, transmitting his knowledge and personal experience of self discovery-awareness and life strategies, unifying eastern and western philosophies, methodologies and science.

For more information please visit:

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