

ONE OF A KIND

The Stonecutter

(A Tale from China)

A stonecutter was chipping away at the face of a mountain. Clink. Clink. Clink.

The sun was hot, and the stonecutter was tired. "The life of a stonecutter is hard and miserable," he said. "How I wish I was a great and powerful emperor!"

No sooner said than done, the stonecutter found himself transformed into an emperor. He was dressed from head to toe in silks and brocades, riding a carriage of pure gold.

But wait. He was hot inside all those clothes. The sun was beating down on him.

"So," said the stonecutter, "the life of an emperor is not much better than the life of a stonecutter."

"I wish,
I wish,
I wish to be more powerful...
I wish to be the sun!"

In a flash, his wish was granted. He was the great sun in the heavens, the most powerful of all.

But wait. Something was covering him up. Something was more powerful even than the sun. It was a cloud!

"I wish,
I wish,
I wish to be more powerful...
I wish to be a cloud!"

In an instant, his wish was granted. He was a great billowing cloud in the sky, most powerful of all!

But wait. Something was making him move. Something was pushing him across the sky. Some-

thing

was even more powerful than the cloud. It was the wind!

"I wish,
I wish,
I wish to be more powerful...
I wish to be the wind!"

And he became the wind. Joyfully he raced across the sky, swooped down to the earth to bend the trees, and stir up the waves in the ocean.

But wait. Wham! Something made him stop. He couldn't move. Something was even more powerful than the wind. It was a mountain.

"I wish,
I wish,
I wish to be more powerful...
I wish to be the mountain!"

And he became the mountain—tall, old, and mighty. "Nothing is more powerful than I," he thought.

But wait.

What was that noise?

It was hammer of a stonecutter, chipping away at the mountain. The stonecutter was even more powerful than the mountain.

"I wish,
I wish,
I wish to be more powerful...
I wish to be a stonecutter once again."

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