

THE WISDOM OF A SAGE, A QUEEN & A RING

Once a Queen called upon all of her wise women and asked them, “Is there a mantra which works in every situation, in every circumstance, in every place and in every time – in every joy, every sorrow, every defeat, and every victory – one answer for all questions? Something which can help me when none of you is able to advise me? Tell me, is there any mantra?”

All the wise women were puzzled by the Queen’s question. After a lengthy discussion, an old woman suggested something which appealed to all of them. They went to the Queen and gave her a ring with words engraved into it, with a condition that the Queen was not to read it out of curiosity. Only if, in extreme danger, when the Queen finds herself alone and there seems to be no way out, only then she can read it. The Queen wore the ring without reading the engraving.

Sometime later the neighbours attacked the commonwealth. The Queen tried to come to peaceful terms with them but lost the battle. The Queen fled on her horse and the enemies followed her. The Queen found herself standing at the mouth of a deep ditch. If she jumped into it, there would be no way out. The sound of the enemy horses were approaching fast and the Queen became restless. There was nowhere else to go.



The Queen remembered her ring and about the engraving. She decided to read the message.



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"This, too, shall pass."

The Queen read it again and again until something struck her. Yes! This, too, will pass. Only a few days ago, I was enjoying the commonwealth; I was the fairest of all the Queens. Yet today, the commonwealth and all its pleasures are gone. I am trying to flee from my enemies. But just as those days of luxuries have gone, this time of danger will pass, too. Calm swept over the Queen. She remained still and silent. The Queen looked around at the place where she was standing and realized how beautiful it was. She had never known that such a beautiful place existed in the commonwealth.

The revelation of the ring's message had a great effect on her. She relaxed and forgot about pursuing enemies. After a while, she realized that the noise of galloping horses had receded and that her enemies had lost her.

The Queen gathered herself and reorganized her advisors and sent an ambassador of peace with a message. She defeated the enemy with her love of justice, equity, ideals of peace and love for all and reclaimed her empire. When she returned to the city after the victory, she was received with much fanfare.

The whole capital was rejoicing and everyone was in a festive mood. Flowers rained down upon her from every house, from every terrace as she trotted by. People were dancing and singing. At this moment the Queen thought to herself, "I am one of the most beloved and greatest Queens. It is not easy to defeat me." In all of the celebration, an ego emerged in the Queen.

Then a ray of sunlight caught the Queen's ring and sharply flashed a beam of light into her eye reminding her of its message, "This, too, shall pass."

She lowered her gaze and her valiant expression changed to one of humility.

She realized, again, that if this, too, is going to pass, it is not yours. The defeat was not yours. The victory was not yours. You are just a player. Everything passes by. We are witnesses of all of this. We are the beholders.

Happiness comes and goes. Sorrow comes and goes. And Life?

This, too, shall pass.



This story was adapted from a Sufi Tale, in the original story it was a King who was the main subject and battle ensued. In our story here, the feminine principal is adopted.