

A Journey to Your Heart



A Fable From the Series "Under the Old Apple Tree"

by Giggie

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“We can never obtain peace in the outer world until we make peace with ourselves.”¹

—Dalai Lama

¹ Permission granted.

If asked, “What has this universe come here to say”?

Love would be my answer and the way,
Be kind to your self is the answer I would say.

For

We are that shining star we wished would go

Far

And the belief in who we are Waits for us, and isn’t very far

So this is what my answer would be:

“Be kind to one another in every best way, And be best ‘my’ friend forever
and a day”

—Flint

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Somewhere, not far from here, there is a place we all can go. It is a journey to your heart and there is a wonderful white bear named One Song, who will take your hand and help you find your way.

Atop a hill that looked out over a meadow sat an old apple tree. Every evening One Song sat under that tree. It was his favorite place to be.

A wise, old friend had taught One Song about being true to his heart and the importance of love. So, every evening in honor of the wise man's teachings, One Song sat under that old apple tree and thought about the choices he had made that day.

He asked himself, 'Did I care for others today the way I hope to be cared for?' Then he closed his eyes, went inside himself and listened to the quiet. The peacefulness filled his ears. Spending time this way helped him find his way to his heart.

One day, while One Song was sitting there with his eyes closed, a lightning bug that was flying from here to there bumped right into him. One Song hardly felt a thing, but the little bug was stopped in mid-air.

The lightning bug, getting back up on his feet, took one look at the big white bear and gasped, "You're the biggest, fattest bear I've ever seen! How come I didn't see you?"

One Song lowered his head a little, remembering how many times he had heard those same words before.

"Yes." One Song whispered, "I know I am oversized." One Song had learned that self-worth does not come from the way you look; it comes from the way you act.

“It can be hard to see some things even when they are right there in front of you,” whispered One Song.

The lightning bug was puzzled by what the white bear said, but he was more interested in a pair of shoes lying there on the ground. “Are those your shoes?” he asked.

“Yes. They came from a wise, old man. He gave me these shoes to remind me to try to feel what it is like to walk in someone else's shoes. He said if I could do that, I would be a little wiser about the way that person feels.”

The lightning bug drew in a deep breath so that he could get in some words of his own.

“First of all, why do you always whisper?” asked the lightning bug with his shoulders raised to his ears.

“I whisper to remind myself to listen more carefully to my heart. We all have truth there; all we have to do is listen to it.”

“There's a lot of reminding going on around here! And that reminds me, why didn't you get mad at me for calling you big and fat?” asked the lightning bug squinting his eyes at One Song.

“I could have called you a ‘pest’, but I care if I hurt your feelings,” whispered One Song.

“You care about my feelings?” asked the lightning bug, shining a little brighter than before.

“Yes, my little friend. Those shoes remind me that we are the same, we are one. When I care for you, it is just like caring for me,” whispered One Song.

The lightning bug was quiet for a minute or two, thinking about what One Song had said. “Well,” said the lightning bug,

alighting on the edge of one shoe, “I like this feeling of being cared for.”

One Song looked over at the lightning bug and whispered, “I would like to introduce myself. My name is One Song. What is yours?”

“I don't have a name; I didn't know bugs had names,” said the lightning bug shrugging his wings up and down.

“If you like, I have the perfect name for you. It is Flint. A flint makes the spark that helps to light up the world.”

“Flint! I like that name a lot!” said the lightning bug, starting to glow.

“From this day forward you will be called Flint! Come sit by my side awhile...”



I

While sitting with One Song under his favorite old apple tree, Flint looked at him. How kind his face looked. “Did your wise, old friend tell you anything else?”

“Yes, he told me many wondrous and beautiful things. Most importantly, he told me about a pathway to love. He said that we are all born with love in our hearts. The way we show our love is by caring and that starts with ourselves. Every True Heart Is a Caring Spirit, he said. He said it was easy to remember this because the first letters of each word spell out the word: Ethics.”

“Your heart will always tell you the truth about how you feel. If you listen to your heart, you will make the right choices for you. Your heart will guide you to show respect and to act with respectability. It will help you to be responsible and to accept responsibility for what you do. It will help you to be truthful and honest, and to show your love by caring.”

“Oh my, One Song, that is so much information, it makes my antenna quiver,” said Flint taking a deep breath and shaking his head.

One Song leaned back against the tree and whispered, “Every evening I sit under this old apple tree and think about all the choices that I made this day. That helps me to be my best self.”

Flint listened to every word One Song said. He had such a feeling of peacefulness under that old apple tree.

“One Song, you were right. Calling me a ‘pest’ would have hurt my feelings. I didn't care how my hurtful words made you feel,” said Flint.

As he lowered his head, Flint caught sight of himself. Turning from side to side he looked himself over, front and back, and said, “Don't you think I'm pretty good looking, that is, for a bug? I have a few bumps here and there, but my big problem is this one bent antenna,” said Flint, looking up.

“Other bugs make fun of it. That really hurts my feelings and it makes me think something is wrong with me. And when I think something is wrong with me, I feel angry, and I want to go and pick on someone else to make myself feel better. That is the truth.”

Flint lowered his voice and added, “I'm pretty sure that's why I called you big and, well, you know.” Not really needing an answer from One Song, Flint looked up and said, “This is where respect comes in, isn't it?”

One Song bowed. “You see, Flint, your antennae are your sensors. They pick up information. Some messages made you think something was wrong with you, and you learned to believe them. Every time that happened, your antenna bent a little. The more it bent, the more you got picked on for it. Then, one day, you turned around, and picked on someone else. You became the bully. Bullies do not respect anyone and mostly they don't respect themselves.”

Flint sat quietly for a little while, remembering his past with some of the hurt that had come his way. He took a deep breath, and let it out slowly.

“Flint, I found this small piece of tape. I will use it as a bandage around your antenna to help straighten it. Remember, it took a long time for it to bend that way. It just has to start to bend back a little. It can happen. Sooner or later, you will understand things better. That is called Awareness. You will start to see the truth in your heart about who you are and the world around you. That is called Enlightenment. And when you treat yourself and others with Respect, you will be known as someone with Respectability!”

Flint sat quietly thinking about what One Song said.

He looked up into the old apple tree and followed it branch by branch and thought how truly beautiful it was. He started watching a bee that was flying from here to there, from one sweet blossom to another. Suddenly, Flint realized the bee was headed for the flower blossom behind One Song's ear.

Flint mustered all the courage he had and aimed himself straight for the bee, and took off, scaring the bee away!

“Thank you, Flint. That was so brave of you,” whispered One Song, bowing his head.

Flint looked at him, and felt his heart beat a little faster.

“You must be tired from all this excitement. Come rest with me,” whispered One Song.

Flint flew around to nestle next to One Song's soft, fuzzy body. Just as he settled in, a feather fluttered down in front of him. Flint tried to catch it, and One Song helped him.

Flint looked up at One Song and said, “I know! I can keep this feather to help me remember how caring and brave I can be. It will be a reminder like your shoes.”

One Song, taking the blossom from behind his ear whispered, “I’ll tuck the feather here until we can find a safe place to keep it.”



II

Flint was beginning to have a different feeling inside, but he couldn't put it into words. Then, as they were talking, Flint saw a bee on the ground, not moving.

“One Song, look over there, on the ground behind you, I think it's the bee I scared away. I didn't mean to hurt him! I'll go see if I can help.”

Flint flew down to the motionless bee and said, “Hello, are you all right?” Hearing a voice, the bee began to move and twitch, and suddenly, his whole body woke up.

“I'm... I'm okay, a little dizzy, though,” said the bee stumbling to his feet.

“You really scared me, I was feeling ... ah...” Flint was at a loss for the right words and was feeling something odd. He looked over at One Song.

“That feeling you are feeling, well, it is telling you that you feel responsible for the bee getting hurt,” whispered One Song.

“Responsible?” questioned Flint.

“Yes, Responsible. You are starting to feel who you are. Your feelings help you to decide if the choice you made was the right one for you. Some choices make us feel good, and some choices make us feel not so good. If it doesn't feel right...”

“I get it! I get it,” interrupted Flint flying up and down, “if it doesn't feel right, it's because it probably isn't!” said Flint, excited about beginning to understand.

“That's right, Flint. You felt that one of your choices caused the bee to get hurt. Seeing if you could help him was the responsible thing to do. You took full responsibility for your actions!”

Flint was listening to One Song when he noticed that clouds were rolling in, threatening rain.

“Look at those clouds, One Song. I think we should get the bee off the ground; he can't take care of himself yet,” said Flint.

Flint, thinking about what he could do to help the bee, spotted a spider web in the branch just above One Song's head.

“One Song, stand up, and put your ear into the spider web just above your head. Don't worry, One Song, no one is home!”

One Song did exactly as he was asked. The web caught on hairs on both sides of his ear and hung there like a hammock. Flint found a leaf to place inside the web to make it soft. Flint tucked the bee safely into his bed just as the rains came down. Trusting that the bee was as safe as he could be for the night, Flint curled up in One Song's ear and it lit up just like a tent.

Flint let out a long sigh and snuggled his chin into his arms and asked, “Is this Enlightenment?”

One Song just smiled.

“Flint, I would like to say a little more about responsibility. One of the most important roles in life is being a parent. Parents have a responsibility to teach their children about Ethics. The best way is by setting a good example so their children, in turn, can teach Ethics to their children.”

Flint knew what One Song said was important, “How we are treated really does matter. I want to matter. I want to learn to set a good example so I can be the best I can be, just like you, One Song, just like you...” whispered Flint.

One Song bowed his head.

III

When Flint awoke in One Song's ear the next morning, he stretched his little arms and legs and felt his antennae. His bent antenna seemed to have a little more bounce in it. He knew he was feeling better and it was beginning to show.

"One Song, when we met, you said it was hard to see things even when they are right in front of you. What did you mean?"

"Your question is not an easy one to answer, Flint. It does not mean the kind of seeing you do with your eyes, it means to see it or feel it in your heart. That is what makes it hard," whispered One Song. "Take truth, it is always there, whether we want to see it or not. We do not always want to see or admit to the truth because we think it will hurt us. Sometimes when we make a mistake, as we all do, we think not telling the truth will keep us out of trouble. But then you have two problems: first, the mistake, and second, not telling the truth! If you tell the truth right from the beginning, your mistake becomes a lesson, something you learn from. By not telling the truth... well, now you have let yourself down. Remember the word responsible? How would you feel about not telling the truth? Close your eyes, go inside yourself and listen to the quiet. You will hear your heart. Every true heart comes from the same place... a place of truth. It takes courage to stand in your own truth."

"Flint, there is a communication tool called a Talking Stick which is a tradition used by many Indigenous cultures to speak truthfully. If the talking stick is used in a family,

usually the eldest in the family holds the talking stick and says what is in their heart without being interrupted.

When they finish, they pass along the stick to next person who wants to talk. If the next person does not want to speak, they pass it on until it returns to the eldest in the family. You have to listen carefully with respect, and not repeat what's already been said. The stick carries respect for free speech and assures the speaker the freedom to say whatever is in their heart, without reprisal or humiliation.”

“Hold it! Hold it! Hold it! Reprisal and what?”

“Humiliation, Flint. Humiliation happens when someone tries to make you feel badly or ashamed for what you said or did. Reprisal means finding a way of getting back at you, like hurting you in some way for something you said or did that they did not like.”

“I see what you mean. Oh, tell me more.”

“Now, let's see, where was I? Oh yes, a feather tied to the talking stick gives the speaker the courage and the wisdom to speak truthfully.

“Flint, I have made this talking stick for you. The tie that holds your feather was taken from my shoe.” One Song bowed his head and handed Flint his very own talking stick.

“Oh, One Song, this is for me? I don't know what to say!” whispered Flint.

Flint's heart grew that day. He felt love for One Song and also for himself. He was learning to recognize the truth in his heart. He

felt power from inside himself that made him glow brighter than ever before.



IV

While they were resting under the old apple tree, with Flint atop his very own talking stick, One Song, in a voice a little louder than a whisper, and shaking his head from side to side, said he could hear a funny noise inside his ear.

“Hold on, One Song, I will take a look around.”

Flint didn't want to disturb the bee that was still sleeping, so as quietly as he could, he crawled around inside One Song's ear. He spotted the trouble and let out a yell at the top of his lungs...

“I see it! I see it!” Flint was hardly able to talk. “It's a caterpillar eating the bee's bed! He could hurt the bee! Hurry, One Song, do something!”

“Bee, wake up, you are in danger! Wake up! Oh, please!” pleaded Flint.

Right in the nick of time, the bee woke up and flew out of One Song's ear, just as the caterpillar ate right through the leaf where the bee had been.

Flint, trying to calm down, turned to the caterpillar, eye-to-eye, and said, “Do you mind?”

“What?” asked the caterpillar, very surprised, “I can't see beyond the nose at the end of my face, I mean no harm.” And with that, he went back to doing what he did best, eating milkweed leaves.

Flint flew into the air turning around and around until he spotted the bee on an apple blossom. He was so glad to see his friend was okay.

The bee said he was feeling much better, and without much hesitation, went on to talk about where he had come from and what his life was like. The bee said he was born with an intention, and explained that there were many different bees that use different body parts and they all have very important, but different jobs to do. He said they all had what it takes for a happy, fulfilling life. "We are all born that way, perfect just the way we are and we all work together in harmony with Mother Earth. We help the flowers and flowers help us make honey." After a little while of sharing stories, the bee said he felt restless to be back home.

"Bee, before you go, do you have a name?" whispered One Song.

"No, I don't. I didn't know bugs had names!" replied the bee.

"I have the perfect name for you, if you like it. It is Hamlet."

"That is a nice name! Thank you, One Song."

"From this day forward, you will be called Hamlet," whispered One Song.

Hamlet felt a warmth and friendship there he knew he would never forget and said, "Thank you, Flint and One Song, for everything. The cozy bed, the helpful light; and the warmth of caring. I will always remember both of you..."

As Hamlet flew off, One Song bowed his head, and Flint started to blush, feeling the glow of appreciation from Hamlet.

"Excuse me, may I ask a question?" asked the little caterpillar.

“What is intention? What is that?”

“Oh, One Song, may I answer the caterpillar's question?”
asked Flint.

One Song bowed his head.

Flint was thinking about Hamlet, and said the name very slowly: “H A M L E T... I get it!” Flint raised his finger into the air and said, “‘To bee or not to bee!’ Why of course, it's everyone's reason for being here, it's your intention. Hamlet's intention is to be the best bee possible, and he has everything he needs to do just that.” Flint looked over at One Song and saw him bow his head and Flint smiled.

“And when you were born,” One Song whispered, “Your intention was placed in your heart, too, little caterpillar, just like Hamlet’s.”

The little caterpillar thought a minute and said: “All my life, all I can see is the ground around me, roots in front of me, and things that frighten me. Everywhere I go, it's a struggle. I have to crawl inch by inch and sometimes, because it takes me so long to get to where I want to go, by the time I get there, I don't want to be there anymore. But sometimes, when I close my eyes, and start dreaming, I see myself flying. I don't know how that's possible,” said the caterpillar looking down at herself with no wings in sight!

“Caterpillar, do you have a name?” whispered One Song.

“No, I don't. I didn't know bugs had names.”

“If you like, I have a name for you. It is Meta. It is short for Metamorphosis, which means a change in character or appearance.”

“Yes, that is a nice name, thank you.”

“From this day forward, you will be called Meta,” whispered One Song.

Meta, who was feeling very tired, began yawning and yawning. She closed her eyes and started dreaming she was flying. Most of her dreams started that way... Soon Meta was fast asleep. While she was sleeping her whole body became covered with a warm cocoon and she stayed that way for a long, long time. Meta was about to get the surprise of her dreams.

When she awoke her dreams had come true! She sprouted the most beautiful wings of a Monarch Butterfly, and could now have the joy of truly flying to her heart's content.

“I HAVE A DREAM...”

-Martin Luther King

Flint looked at One Song and whispered, “Oh, One Song, now I know why you said some things are hard to see. All you really have to do is believe in yourself and follow your heart.”

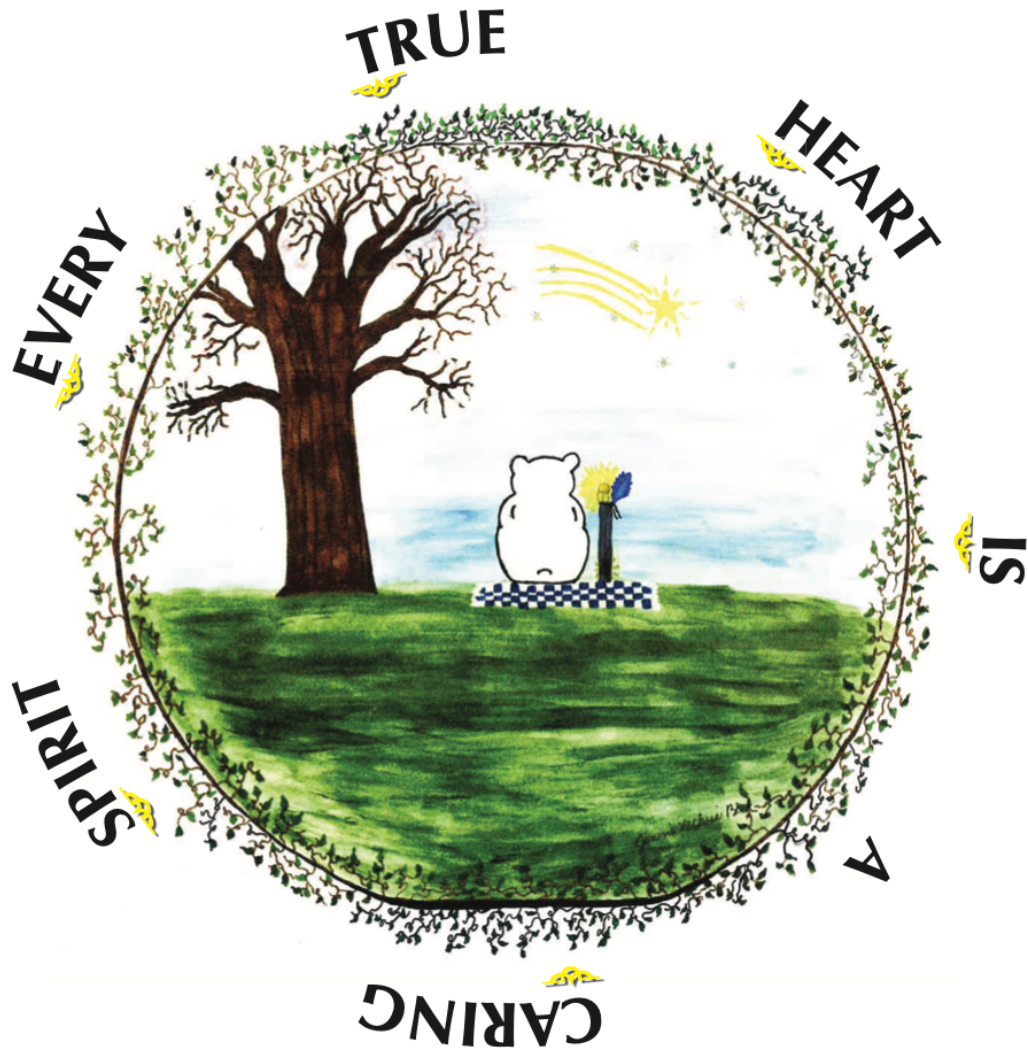
“That is right, Flint,” whispered One Song as he bowed his head...

We are each gifted in a unique and important way. It is our privilege and our adventure to discover our own special light.

—Mary Dunbar

Understand your purpose in life by feeling your heart's desires.

—Anonymous



As Flint and One Song looked off into the night sky, they both saw a shooting star and made the exact same wish. They wished for...

PEACE

Acknowledgements

Where do I start after 15 years of handing out this heart-felt fable? I wish to thank my family, first of all, who have been there for me, day in and day out with, answering question like “What do you think of this?” Their kindness and never-ending love and support emotional and technically, if you know what I mean!

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To all the countless people I have given this fable to and all their kindness in reading it and providing their helpful feedback; allowing me to stay on track.

And of course, the universe, who continues to guide me every step of the way. —Giggie xxoo

A letter from One Song

To All It May Concern:

The spirit of love is caring. It is the caring for that shows your love.

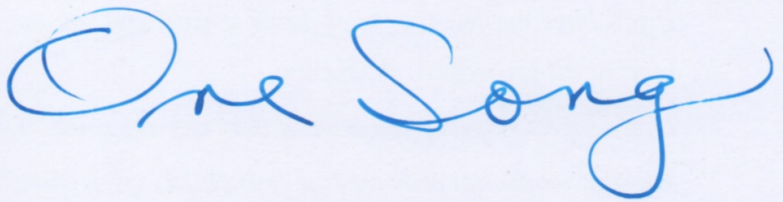
Every True Heart Is a Caring Spirit

- I. Respect and Respectability
- II. Responsible and Responsibility
- III. Truth and Honesty
- IV. Love and Caring

These words will lead you to be the best you can be. "True nobility is not being better than anyone else, it is being better than you used to be."³

The One Song of the Universe is Love.

A New Beginning



ONE SONG

The spirit of many whispers

³ Dr. Wayne Dyer. *The Power of Intention*, Hay House

Quotes

A teacher opens the door; you enter by yourself. —Chinese proverb

A real friend helps us think our best thoughts, do our noblest deeds, be our finest selves. —Anonymous

The spirit is the true self. —Cicero

Truth is the only safe ground to stand on. —Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Life is the sum of all our choices. —Albert Camus

It is wisdom to believe the heart. —George Santayana

The heart is wiser than the intellect. —Joseph Holland

Listen to your heart. It knows all things because it comes from the spirit of the world, and it will one day return there. —Paulo Coelho

Don't expect respect from a child that receives none. —Buck Lilton

Unkind words not only wound your child's spirit but also teaches them how to be unkind. —Anonymous

Children are likely to live up to what you believe of them. —Lady Bird Johnson

I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true. I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live by the light that I have.

—Abraham Lincoln

The day the child realizes that all adults are imperfect he becomes an adolescent; the day he forgives them, he becomes an adult; the day he forgives himself, he becomes wise. —Aiden Nowlan

Character is doing the right thing when nobody is looking.

—Anonymous

Character - the willingness to accept responsibility for one's own life is the source from which self-respect springs.

—Joan Didion, *Slouching Towards Bethlehem*

Recommend to your children virtue; that alone can make them happy, not gold. —Ludwig van Beethoven

It is easy to love the people far away. It is not always easy to love those close to us. Bring love into your home for this is where our love for each must start. —Mother Theresa

It is within the families themselves where peace can begin. —Susan Partnow

Example is not the main thing in influencing others; it is the only thing. —Albert Schweitzer

Love yourself. It is perhaps the greatest example you can set.
—Anonymous

The longest journey is the journey inward. —Dag Hammarskjöld

*One word frees us of all the weight and pain of life:
that word is*

Love.

—Sophocles [496BC-406BC]

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