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THE DULL PRINCE- A SHORT STORY WHICH YOU ALL SHOULD READ

#storytimethread

Once, the king was in the forest with his four sons on a hunt. The king was an ace shooter. Arrows flew from his bow like bolts of lightning, and they hardly missed their mark.

1/15

The first three princes were as good as their father.
But it was quite different with the youngest prince.

He did not share their enthusiasm for hunting.

In the evening, the king relaxed and took stock of his sons' achievements.

2/15

He was proud of his eldest son, quite happy with the next two sons, but disappointed with the fourth.

"I am ashamed of him," he murmured.**

The king bade the members of his party to proceed to the palace, carrying their game with them.

3/15

He wanted to spend some time in the company of a hermit who lived in the forest. A little after sunset, the king and his sons reached the hermit's dwelling.

The hermit's disciples entertained the royal party. Soon, the king was alone with the hermit.

4/15

"Why do you look so pensive, dear king?" asked the hermit.

"Well," answered the king, "I 'm worried about my youngest son.

He is so dull!

I wonder what I'm going to do with a good-for-nothing boy like him."

5/15

"What makes you think that he is good-for-nothing?" asked the sage.

"Today, while each of my three sons bagged some game, the youngest failed to kill any," replied the king.

"Imagine a prince who can't shoot straight!"

The hermit was silent for a moment.

6/15

He then called the youngest prince and questioned his actions.

The prince looked thoughtful and answered in a soft voice, "To kill just for sport appeared meaningless to me."

Meanwhile, the king had sent for his other sons.

7/15

The king whispered to the sage, "Just watch. I shall give all four of them the same task.

I'm sure the youngest will take longer to do it than the rest."

The king then gave one guava to each prince and said, "Go in different directions.

8/15

Eat the fruit when no one is observing you and come back to us."

The princes dispersed. The eldest prince returned soon, and said triumphantly, "I went near the stream. No one was there. I finished eating the guava."

The second prince returned a while later.

9/15

"I went near the stream. But in the moonlight I saw a monkey watching me. I then hid behind a bush and ate the fruit," he said.

The third prince arrived and said, "I'm sorry for being late. But I knew the owls can see in the night.

10/15

So I went into the meadow and ate the fruit."

The sage and the king asked the three princes to return to the palace. The two sat waiting for the youngest prince. Time passed.

"Didn't I tell you? See how long he takes to do such a simple thing!" the king fumed.

11/15

The youngest prince returned at last, the guava still in his hand!

"So you failed to find the right place to eat your guava, eh?" burst out the king.

The prince looked at him with sadness in his eyes, but kept quiet.

12/15

But the hermit stood up and received the boy with great warmth and asked, "Why haven't you eaten the guava, my son?"

"O sage! I was asked to eat the fruit when no one observed me. But I could find no such place.

13/15

Is there a time or place when I am beyond the vision of God?" asked the prince.

The sage embraced him. Looking at the king, he said, "O king, this boy is not meant for you. He is a great soul. Leave him here."

14/15

The king realised that his youngest son was destined for greatness. The prince remained with the hermit and later became a yogi

15/15