

A Story About An Owl Who Cherished A Dead and Decaying Mouse

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(**Clearwisdom.net**) Zhuangzi and Bianji were good friends. They were both very outstanding and knowledgeable people.. However, they were different in many respects. Zhuangzi was not very concerned with seeking fame and wealth, while Bianji was a Prime Minister who valued his position in society. Zhuangzi believed that enlightened people should give up the pursuit of wealth, fame and gain and the seeking of official power. He felt that this caused a person to be polluted by the big dye vat of common society. Therefore Zhuangzi was going to try and persuade Bianji to give up this position of power and instead travel with him around the world.

However Bianji knew that Zhuangzi was coming to visit him and he felt quite uneasy. He thought, "Zhuangzi is much more knowledgeable than me and he is probably going to try and take over my country. Is he coming to fight for the position of Prime Minister?" Out of fear, Bianji ordered that Zhuangzi be arrested when he arrived. Zhuangzi was very surprised when this actually happened but he managed to escape. When he saw Bianji, he looked him straight in the eye and walked towards him.

Bianji was dressed very lavishly while Zhuangzi was dressed very simply. However, this did not matter at all to Zhuangzi. When Bianji asked why he came, Zhuangzi said, "Let me tell you a story." There was a most noble bird named Saint Crane who stood nowhere but in a phoenix tree, and ate nothing but phoenix tree leaves. No other bird could compare with it in terms of nobility. Every year, Saint Crane

would fly towards the east coast, all the way from the northwestern mountains. One time when it was crossing the grasslands, he saw an owl eating a dead and decaying mouse. The dead mouse tasted so good to the owl. The owl saw Saint Crane and felt threatened as he held on tightly to the dead mouse. He shouted at the crane, "Who dares to rob me of my dead mouse?"

Zhuangzi then sternly asked Bianji, "Did you suspect that I wanted your dead and decaying mouse?" Bianji understood immediately and lowered his head in disgrace.

CATEGORY: Traditional Culture