

## Hunger Games

Learning and growing from experience

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Imagine, we are all lean with hunger; there is no food. We get just enough water from the morning dew to sustain us, and keep us from dying.

Everyone else around us is lean and hungry like us. Some fall sick, some survive, but most die.

### Stories

Then, we hear stories told by others of those who have the food that we only talk or dream about, or we read about in our sacred texts. These stories are fascinating; we hope they are true. We hope we will get that kind of food. But none of these stories will feed us. They remain stories. We remain hungry, sick and die.

We do not even know how these people get their stories. Perhaps, they claim that they have heard it from others, and they from others still. These are still more stories. We remain hungry and weak; we die. Our strength is just enough to go about our simple daily duties, without food and water.

### The lean prophets

Then, we actually meet someone who says that he is enjoying good food. He tells us to believe him. Believe and be FULL. As proof of faith, we must sacrifice our morning dew, the ambrosia that keeps us alive, to be given to him.

This Thin Prophet claims that the dew is useless to us here. After giving him the dew, when we die, we would be reborn in Food Heaven, with all the food we need, and where everyone has a healthy and beautiful body.

### Food by name

Then, there are other Prophets, just as thin as we are. One keeps declaring: There is the Buddha of Food in the West, just keep calling his name. When we die, we will be reborn there with all the food we need. We will live forever there.

Other Prophets, said to be from the Far Mountains, just as lean as everyone else, go around proclaiming: no need morning dew! Just keep reciting the Mantra: Food, Food, Glorious Food. Our food needs will be granted. Many start to chant.

They form Chanting Groups, and chant the Food Mantra. Some become delirious and shout out: I see Food, Good and Glorious! They chant even louder. They begin to die, one by one. Their living chanters can only say: May you be reborn in Food Heaven.

### Growing food

Then, someone wise comes along and tells his friends. Notice how other animals live in the forests: they eat some plants but not others. Let us eat those plants, too. They carefully choose those plants as food in some quiet place far away from the Hungry Crowds and Hungry Cities.

Then, they learn to grow these plants, and they begin to have more food to share. They become healthier. Then, in groups, sometimes alone, they go into the Crowds and Cities and teach them to grow these plants. Those who listen and do just that (nothing much to see: they look like any plants), eat them rightly and regularly, become healthier and happier.

#### True food

It is said that, in time, everyone learned about these food plants, and how to grow them. They cannot be stored, and must be eaten fresh. Hence, they cannot be sold, but can be shared. We only need a little each day.

This is a fable about how difficulties can overwhelm us. There will always be the foolish and deluded telling us foolish and deluded stories. Then, there are those who learn how we can live healthily and be wise. When we learn from the healthy and the wise, we, too, become healthy and wise.

It is as simple as that. True health and real freedom start here, by knowing the right food, growing and sharing it; eating it and living happily. Greater good will then come to us.

R786 Inspirations 454  
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