

Lions of Virtue

— PART ONE —

THE WARRIOR AND THE CHILD

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Aviilokín K'shi

www.aviilokinshi.net

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Lions of Virtue is a contemplative vision of the mystical state of being at one with Tao, the eternal "Way" cultivated for millennia by Taoist mystics in ancient China. Rather than trying to explain the "Way that cannot be spoken", in the silent heart of the most esoteric teachings in the East, the author illustrates these ancient precepts through a fictional tale in rhythmic prose with elements of Early-modern English, a phonetic device that works well here. Lions of Virtue is also a parable for our times of the long running battle between the forces of the Dark and the Light that is now looming in our world.

— Daniel Reid, bestselling author of *The Tao of Health, Sex and Longevity*

Author Aviilokín K'shi has crafted a gorgeously penned work of fiction with plenty of poetic delights, memorable phrases, and key spiritual wisdom to offer readers. This is a work that straddles the worlds of fact and fiction so beautifully, allowing us to escape into a well-told fable-style story of spiritualism and reflection, but also underpinning each significant moment with the opportunity to learn about Taoism and the serenity and wisdom that this mystic philosophy has to offer us all.

— Readers Favorite 5-star review (by *K.C. Finn*; [read full review](#))

I normally prefer a book I can't put down, but I had to put this one down several times to reflect upon my own life. It's emancipating, but at the same time this story locks you in, rips you apart and then sets you free.

— Bookbub 5-star review (by *Alan Michael Youngblood*)

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Table of Contents

Introduction
Lingual Conventions
The Silence and the Vow
Lion's Blood
The Bear and the Tigress
Namensis
The Pariahs' Voice
Strong Horse Ascending Dragon
The Conclave of Lísha
Wanderers Foregather
Kiss of Void

Introduction

Due to humble inborn mystical abilities am I able to remember and reintegrate some aspects of my previous lifetimes, including lifetimes as a Taoist mystic. *Taoism* is a form of ancient Chinese mysticism that pursues a mystical union with nature, and went ever hand in hand with esoteric warriorhood. The Tao is not only the source of life but naturally also *the universal essence of all things*. Because the Tao is the universal essence of all things, it has a *bridging function* between all things, as if it enables a neural network to exist between the myriad facets of life. Those whom abide in the state of silent, empty calm actively share in this universal essence, tapping into this transcendental, cosmic neural network, allowing a deep mystical communion with the facets and dimensions of nature (i.e. life/reality; existence). This allows a state of natural wisdom and natural harmony. Because this process transcends religion, culture and tradition, have I decided to apply this mystical state of being to my characters within a fictional world that is not intended to resemble traditional China. This also implies I do not seek to represent Taoism in any of its official (religious) forms. But it is upon the spirit of the esoteric Taoist warrior that I have called when I wrote this book, *Lions of Virtue*.

It would certainly be correct to say that *Lions of Virtue* may be interpreted to allegorically tell of a journey from weakness unto strength while

facing the myriad forms of resistance that a spiritual person must endure upon this world, and is indeed a reflection of my own personal journey through life. Of course, where the characters should resemble highly enlightened and mystically accomplished beings, all resemblance to my humble self ends.

The wisdom that this book conveys, if I may call it that, is not necessarily intended to be understood on a conceptual level. The aim of *Lions of Virtue* is to allow its readers to glimpse into the transcendental consciousness of the Taoist mystic, his mode of conduct, and his realm of feeling. In order to achieve this, I call upon the skill of *mystical penmanship*. Quantum physics tells us that everything actually consists out of vibrational energy. When a mystic is given to the art of penmanship, he naturally manifests the energetic patterns of harmony of his mystical constitution into patterns of phonological harmony in speech, meaning his sentences attain a certain harmonious rhythm inspired by his oneness with higher things. In this manner does he seek to cause a certain resonance in the inner world of his audience, so that on a deeper level they come to partake in the realm of experience of the mystic, and the spiritual principles that underlie that realm. This means that through the art of storytelling I do not necessarily seek to *introduce* certain principles but rather to *induce* them. *Lions of Virtue* is intended to be a meditative journey, and is best read (or listened to) by making

oneself calm and present in the moment. I hope that with this book spiritual people will get a sense of the Taoist mystical state of being, and feel inspired to find the spiritual warrior within themselves. Like this, I hope that the Light upon this world may grow stronger and stronger, and last beyond the challenges and hardships that we as a humanity must endure.

The Silence and the Vow

— CHAPTER ONE —

Grey was the land for a moon immortal,
silvern in a cloudless sky; by a dream
of visions was he summoned deep
into the forest in the night, below the wake of
the moon so that his eyes could see in the sable
shadow of late eventide. And so he sat by a tree
that was ancient, and its great gnarling roots
reached deep into the earth, unto lands and
times forgotten that trees alone remember. And
they rose high above and about him, and
seemed somehow a sylvan throne of wisdom,
and screened him from eyes that might see, but
not understand.

He sat in deep-most meditation, a lore so
native to his soul, and his hands rested in his
lap, as if emptiness he embraced.

And the transcendental Stillness which he
entered great words cannot describe, yet
inspires the quills of masters.

Through the quiet mind is life truly seen,
through the clarity of the Still are nature's ways
felt and revealed, bestowing harmony and
apprehension upon those who enter it.

The golden halls of lofty houses may surround
him who knows not this gem found within, a
beggar he is to one who can sit naked under a
tree, knowing this greatest jewel. The
unenlightened mind may attain learning, and yet
has he no personal unification with nature nor
his own true self, and so a fool he is to the wise
unlearned, for the latter his silent smile out-does

the ten-thousand canons of the schools of prestigious lore, and yet no-one sees it. And so it is the wise appear foolish, and the foolish greatly wise.

Na'kar opened his eyes: a deep sense of serenity had spilled into the glade before him, and beheld that from the moon hazed a slender beam of silvern light, that with a gentle lambency parted the dark of eventide. But within that light there was a greater light; it was smaller but so bright it should have hurt the eye of he who beholds it, and yet it but soothed his nerves and his mood. The silence of the woods seemed to yield to a deeper silence still, a voice ethereal that spoke unto the stillness of his heart.

He felt called; his hand passed through the light, and it felt cool like the springs that usher from mountains immortal clad in deadless snow.

A gentle power commanded him so that his hand closed into his palm, and rays of gentle silvern light ushered through the seams of his fingers. He felt a thing of hardness.

A vision came to him: he saw a pyramid of white diamond stone, and from deep within his being there awoke a feeling of some ancient vow. It was strong and clear, and yet he could not see what truly it was, as if it was the voice of one whom deeply you know, but the wind sweeps away the words and casts them into valleys of far mountains beyond, and only distant echoes remain.

But now the lunar light faded, so that the moon now stood silvern and alone beyond the foliage

of the trees, with the light of stars enwound.
Na'kar opened his eyes and looked into his hand, and beheld there a lucent diamond sized no greater than a finger nail; and it shone bright, and he again felt that vow from deep within his heart, though now somehow mingled it was with a sense of deepest grief. And he looked upon the moon and spake, "o silvern light of plenilune, what gift bestowest thou upon me, and what purpose puts it upon the errands of my soul?"

The following morning he arose from his meditation, and in his heart he wondered if he should return to that house where he lives homeless among the dwellings of Man. But he picked up a leaf and he said:

*Like the wind
So am I
Infinity destined
Ne'er grasped
Yet at home in all places
Like this leaf am I fallen
From tradition's house
Sailing upon the eternal blow*

Let the rime of the wild the warmth of my soul kindle, for the hearths of the ignorant and the craven but leave it cold and quivering, so was his thought; and with that nameless vow in his heart he began upon what seemed a quest.

For long he followed a river while its sound murmured into the woods, and at whiles birds

whom live by the banks ascended in flight,
wings flapping, changing the destiny of winds.
But when the day was young no-longer he came
upon the road, sundered in the dappled gloom
of sylvan shadow.

Na'kar descended down the banks of the river
to drink ere he would begin his journey upon
the road, but there he found an old man sitting
on his haunches whom was filling his flask. He
wore a wide, dome-shaped wicker hat.

“Thou wanderest, I thus behold, but not with
gear or provision,” said the man without
looking up at Na'kar.

“Sit, o wanderer; my heart bade me a worthy
traveller was to cross my road, so that I took
with me more than is my own need.”

Na'kar bowed and sat down aside the stranger.
The old man removed his hat; long silky white
hair flowed down his back. His face was old but
not at all worn or feeble; and great depth was in
his eyes that seemed to hold oceans of great
vitality, and yet those eyes were not charged like
swift rivers, but rather to the power of a calm
and ancient sea.

Na'kar inclined into a gentle bow, “those who
have Found must wander e'er homeless in the
Cities of the Lost.”

To that the old man smiled upon him, and it
was as if the light of a gentle summer sun
slanted into the hardships that lay deep in his
heart. “It makes me glad there are yet those
who may say such things. And what is it that
you have Found?”

Feeling trust, Na'kar spoke of his
transcendental achievement:

*It neither perishes nor does it arise
Night and day compare it not
It is not the realm of skies
The deeps of the earth it is not*

*And yet it is the wind and windless day
It is the rain and bluest sky
It is the Stillness and rattling branches' sway
It is the Far and all things nigh*

*It is the very question thou dost ask
It is thy roaming search
And in blessings each shall bask
It is beyond the need of church*

To that the old man smiled and held his hand
before him, "how us mortals are shaped to
grasp, and so alone understand attainment.
Many must aeons walk, ere the principle of the
Lostless is perceived."

Feeling trust in his heart, Na'kar wanted to
reach for the diamond stone that he held in his
robes, and tell the old man of all that had
passed; but the old man interceded, perceiving
Na'kar's intent, "that which you carry is not for
my eyes to see, nor for my mind to understand.
But I shall say to you it long has waited for you
to find it. It is old, o wanderer, older even than
the deeps of the Age of Shadow, when Light
faded and hope for Spring was not. The hand
that touched it last was of a high maiden mystic

whom concealed it by mystiques beyond the Arts that I master. Even then she has Seen you, and knew you would find It and start upon a quest that shall decide the rise or fall of what is deeply sacred. More I can read not.”

But now the old man’s face came both sad and confident, as of a man whom beholds a powerful friend that is about to start upon a journey of peril that shall require strength and virtue to the utmost. And Na’kar read this in the eyes of the old man, but he looked within and remained silent.

“Come, let us break bread — Dosan is my name.”

“I rest in what is Nameless, but the people call me Na’kar, and many things unwholesome,” said Na’kar.

Dosan smiled, “he who is sane in the asylums of the mad shall be said ill hearts to suffer, and those who have Found in the Cities of the Lost shall be said to have gone astray. Many walk those roads by Man contrived, but few seek the Way. But eat now, Na’kar of Clear Vision.”

And so they ate in silence by the gentle song of the river, whose silvern water was flecked with patches of shimmering golden light. In their stillness was revealed the ancient bond that was between their souls, greatly veiled still by the forgetful shadows that the body imparts upon the mind.

“I shall walk with you down this road, o wanderer, like I have walked with you in lifetimes before this lifetime,” said Dosan when they had finished eating. “If only I could walk

with you longer, but the valleys that beckon you require a path of stillness and solitude both, for so you must hear the silent voice of your soul and place your faith in that foremost, and rely not overmuch on a friend and deem him wiser than yourself. Remember, Na'kar of Clear Vision, the world has not been as a mirror unto you, and showed you an image of yourself that is false and spiteful; look!"

Dosan bade Na'kar look into the water; the glimmerings of the sunlight suddenly shimmered bright, and morphed and suffused and images formed in them. Na'kar saw the many springs from which the river ushered, high in the mountains of Ethiniël that Men of old named Ashûr, whence came the nomadic people of Arakh to reclaim the land long lost to them to the Age of Shadow. It flowed through valleys clad in eternal snow set against snow-capped summits touched by the golden light of the immortal sun. Then it fell down an endless stairs of moss-clad boulders in a deep mountain forest, meandering into the Vales of Valenya where live the people of Kisha. Na'kar saw women washing clothes by the river, wrenching the cloth and slapping it upon flat river stone — *wrenching and slapping, wrenching and slapping*. He heard the laughter of children.

A ripple of light passed over the river, the images shifted: he saw the river as a silvern lace, meandering its way through rolling fields of rye that shimmered like golden in the sun. He saw himself as a young boy, alone and lonesome with a sorrowful heart, full of want for his

father summoned to war. He saw Sarrenn and his cronies running up from behind; they grabbed him and threw him down. They spat upon him and kicked and taunted him, for there was a light in Na'kar his eyes and a silence in his heart for which Men feared and shunned him.

The images shifted: he saw himself in his present age, but he walked in robes of silvern-grey and not of blue. And silvern-grey were his eyes also, lucent and contrasting in a face stern and solemn touched by the dusts of journeys. His mien was as of a mountain; silent, unchanging, patient and immortal — looming above the transient ways of Man, as of one whom has beheld with eternal detachment the countless ages of the world. Others were there with him, clad like himself; warriors of higher cultivations sworn to some sacred path.

The images faded into the shimmerings of the golden light and, as if they were liquid, were washed away down the stream.

Dosan looked upon him, “remember: both the Light and the Dark that you shall meet shall be a reflection of the true strength that is in you, but the old and false shall must fade ere what is true may reclaim its rightful seat in your heart of hearts.”

Na'kar looked into the grey eyes of Dosan; deep, calm and full of honour and wisdom. He bowed to him and was silent.

“For all the paths that I have walked with you in ages before this age, in lifetimes before this lifetime, it was ordained that I should meet you here in this very moment, and give unto you

these few things ere you begin upon yet another road — a road that this time you shall must walk without me.” Dosan gave unto Na’kar a bag full of provisions: bread, nuts and dried fruit and seeds of hemp, and his flask and his hat he gave unto him also. “Worry not for me,” Dosan said, “my home now is near, but I cannot invite you, I fear, for I shall but delay you from your path.”

And so they walked in long silence, for both were men whom have long lost interest in what can be spoken, and but speak in natural compliance with cosmic shiftings. The road was silent and empty and mostly steady, with an occasional gentle bend or rare slope. It was a very ancient road that once connected the three Dales with the settlements of the Shahîr, whom dwelt deep in the mountains of Pánnendor. But when the black power of the Dark Arkanum brought the world into an age of shadow the Shahîr, like many other peoples, were vanquished, or scattered with the winds of war into all directions of the world, ultimately to forget who once they were. The cob stones of the road were mostly buried in the deep sands bestown by the hand of ages, but some were pushed up by the roots of great trees that have lived beyond the span of more than one-thousand generations of Men. And hollows would form there in which rain would gather into small pools, reflecting the skies above like silvern mirrors whose surface gently rippled when birds came to drink from them. Few now ever came upon this road, unless it would be a

rare herbalist such as Dosan, whom honour the herbs that grow in the deep woods, or in the slopes of the mountain, and he would oft listen to the stillness and hear of the memories of stones and immortal springs.

The road had started climbing; to their left the forest sank away from the road. At length Na'kar saw that far below him, further north, the forest suddenly ceased upon the brinks of great stalwart cliffs; they seemed as impassable walls arisen from the deeps of the earth to the need of some beleaguered god. Some ninety fathoms below this, the stone feet of the cliffs fell into the grasslands of the Leas of Mánon that would form a bay in the north-west as it came enclosed in the embrace of the twilit mountain.

“Our roads now part, o wanderer, but in the silent realm of Origin remain ever joined, as one seed from which sprouted the stars that are countless.”

For a silent moment their eyes locked, then they bowed and silently Dosan disappeared down a narrow shepherd's trail that wound its way down into the forest below.

Na'kar then continued to walk alone, alone in the growing darkness of eventide. Quietly unto himself he sang a song:

*Lonely wanderer, I wander so alone
In a grain of sand all stars I descry
Yet lonesome dusty paths I roam
And the people frown as I pass them by*

*But a Man cannot judge another
For his Self even knows he not
How may he understand his brother?
I embrace the virtue of the empty heart*

*Yet each a Man read I his eyes
For approval, or love or damn
But I cannot live by mortal lies
And dwell forever homeless in the house o'
Man*

*And by the Ways of the Mother do I abide
Removed from those by mores doomed
Thus solitary do I walk — forever eremite
Wanderer, o wanderer,
Beatific and illumed*

Purchase *Lions of Virtue I: The Warrior and the Child* on Amazon::

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Readersfavorite.com 5-star Review
by K.C. Finn

Lions of Virtue: The Warrior and the Child is a story told in poetic verse in the inspirational, motivational, and emotional writing subgenres, and was penned by author *Avilokín K'shi*. The work is intended for the general adult reading audience and follows a fictional journey which is an allegory for the Taoist way of being in Chinese spirituality. Following the events after protagonist Na'kar Runelayer discovers a diamond in the moonlight, the metered verses take readers on a meditative, expressive, and spiritual journey to find themselves. What results is a highly engrossing poetic tale that is sure to keep readers turning the pages from cover to cover, and teach them something inspirational about themselves along the way.

Author *Avilokín K'shi* has crafted a gorgeously penned work of fiction with plenty of poetic delights, memorable

phrases, and key spiritual wisdom to offer readers. This is a work that straddles the worlds of fact and fiction so beautifully, allowing us to escape into a well-told fable-style story of spiritualism and reflection, but also underpinning each significant moment with the opportunity to learn about Taoism and the serenity and wisdom that this mystic philosophy has to offer us all. A beautiful parable with a message as strong in the modern world as it ever was, this is a book that I could see myself returning to again and again. Overall, I would highly recommend *Lions of Virtue: The Warrior and the Child* to fans of emotive and inspirational works, fictional stories set deep in true meaning, and for readers of stories in verse everywhere.