

# The Shadow Giant

**'Greed is my game and Power is my name'**

... a story for children at a time of floods, bush fires, tsunamis, earthquakes and man made disasters ...

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*My work with therapeutic story-writing has taken me to many countries over the years, and as I travel I am meeting more and more requests for therapeutic stories for our 'global crisis' situation, from peoples in Africa to Asia to the UK and the US. This story was written in the wake of the earthquakes in Haiti and New Zealand, the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, the floods and bushfires in Australia, the tsunami and nuclear disaster in Japan and the growing concern over chemical pollution and food shortages, especially in third world countries. It's aim is to reach primary and high-school children in an imaginative way to encourage discussion and debate. Its message has been described by an Australian environmentalist as 'simple but poignant'.*

Once upon a time, in the not so distant past, there lived a Giant. This giant was the strongest, largest and most destructive creature ever to have lived on the earth.

The mysterious thing was that no-one had ever seen this giant, but many had experienced its dark shadow as it travelled around the earth, leaving destruction behind it wherever it went. The people called it the Shadow Giant.

The Shadow Giant was continually busy, day and night, night and day, moving around the world, stamping its dark presence, on the earth, in the ocean and in the air ..... deep black cracks in the ground, engulfing waves of black water and mud on the coastlines, burnt and blackened forests in the valleys and the mountains, and swirling masses of polluting fog everywhere.

No-one knew where the Shadow Giant came from and where it lived. And no-one knew when and where it would next use its dark force.

Nothing was safe from this Giant – not the peoples of the world, nor the animals of the land, nor the creatures of the sea. All were vulnerable to its power. Even the birds, who usually could fly fast enough to escape its path of destruction, were slowly being affected by the swirling black fog that was spreading through the air.

The Queen of the Heavens, who lived high up in her Silver Castle above the clouds, was hearing news of these terrible events from her feathered messengers, the birds. She was growing more and more concerned about this Shadow Giant and the evil work it was doing on the earth below. She decided to call a meeting and sent out an invitation to all the birds around the world.

On the day of the meeting, the Queen of the Heavens was seated on her silver throne, resplendent in her flowing rainbow gown. All around her were gathered many birds, birds from every part of the world, birds of all colours and shapes and sizes, birds of the land and birds of the sea, birds of the day and birds of the night.

Patently and intently the Queen of the Heavens listened to each and every bird – between them they had seen every kind of destruction caused by this Shadow Giant. When all the stories had been told, the Queen spoke to the gathering:

“There must be a way to overcome this dark force that is taking over the earth. Every enemy has a weakness! Fly back to where you have come from and try to find where this Shadow Giant lives – then you can observe what the weakness of this creature could be. Report back to me as soon as you can .... I don't think we have much time!”

So the birds flew back to their homes around the world and kept a vigilant watch on the Giant's path of destruction, trying as much as they could to track down where it lived. Days passed, weeks passed, months passed.

When it was almost a year since the birds had been sent on their quest, an old owl finally found the answer the Queen was looking for. He was flying into a deep mountain cave, searching for something to eat, and he followed a tunnel which led into a large rock cavern.

Inside this cavern was a huge, dark, mumbling, rumbling figure. It was of no definite shape, in fact its shape seemed to change size and form with every sound it made. Sometimes it filled most of the cavern like a giant squid with many writhing tentacles, other times it turned into a monstrous bear-like figure and stamped angrily around the room.

The owl hid in a far corner of the cavern and watched and listened, as owls can do very well. After a while he began to make some sense of the mumbblings and rumbblings, as they seemed to be chanted over and over again.

*All for me and me for all, devouring all things big and small,  
Greed is my game and Power is my name.*

Finally the hideous dark creature curled itself into a large ball and fell asleep. The owl quickly and quietly flew out of the deep mountain cave. Then he began the long journey across the sky, all the way to the castle of the Queen of the Heavens. As he flew higher and higher, he kept chanting the awful mumbling rumbblings so he would not forget them.

*All for me and me for all, devouring all things big and small,  
Greed is my game and Power is my name.*

When the Queen of the Heavens heard the story of what the Owl had experienced, she had no doubt that the Owl had found the home of the Shadow Giant. And when she heard the mumbling rumbling chant, she immediately recognized the Giant's weakness:

*"The Shadow Giant only cares for itself – it only wants power for itself!"*

Then the Queen of the Heavens called for her feathered helpers. 'Fly out around the world and sing this message to the people. If they work together and care for each other then they can slowly but surely overcome this dark shadow that is affecting the earth.'

*"Strength in caring, strength in togetherness, can overcome the giant's selfishness."*

The birds flew out to all parts of the world, birds of all colours and shapes and sizes, birds of the land and birds of the sea, birds of the day and birds of the night. And as they flew, they sang the message from the Queen of the Heavens for all on the earth to hear.

And to this day, the birds are still singing their song. Sometimes they even drop feather messages which flutter softly to the ground. When the people find these beautiful feathers lying on the ground ... in the garden, on the street, in the forest and on the beach ... they know that this message has been sent directly to them. They pick up the feathers, they wonder at their form and beauty, and they remember the message that has been sent to them by the Queen of the Heavens.

*"Strength in caring, strength in togetherness!"*

And slowly but surely, the wisdom of the *Song of the Birds* is helping the people of the world to overcome the dark power of the Shadow Giant.