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The Worthy One

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A King who had ruled his country very poorly died and left behind four sons who quarreled over the crown after his death.

Then the King's advisors and the wise old men of the people came together and said, "Neither the first, nor the second, nor the third, nor the fourth will become King. Only the Worthy One will be King."

And they spoke to the princes, "List the crimes of your father! Whoever knows and confesses the most, and avoids them themselves, is the Worthy One and must become King."

Then the first prince began and listed one hundred sins and injustices of his father. No one knew as much as he did, he thought, and he would surely get the crown now.

However, the second prince listed two hundred crimes and said the worst things about his father; he too thought he was now sure to get the throne.

But when it was the third prince's turn, he told of three hundred scandals about his father and now believed he would certainly become King.

The fourth, on the other hand, said, "It grieves me to hear my brothers speak so shamelessly and without scruple about my father. Even if I could name three thousand injustices, my heart would regret them, but my lips would keep them silent, because the deceased King was my father."

Then the King's advisors and the wise men of the people stood up and embraced him, shouting with joy, "You are the Worthy One, you must be our King."



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