

# ONE AXE

*shall overthrow a king*

*C*ome war, the soldier earns his trade.  
Beat the drums; my heart inspire.  
Bring me my iron blade,  
My helmet rivet on.  
Bring me the prancing horse  
Gird on my sword of fire.

Nay, come there many boots,  
On cobblestones that ring?  
Disarm me where the waters course.  
My iron helm unhinge,  
A riverboat shall be my horse  
One axe shall overthrow a king.

In the night the soldier creeps,  
Midway from shore to shore.  
High above the murky deep  
He finds a slender wooden floor.  
“Twill one man safely keep,  
Whose axe shall end a war.”

*- Taken from “The Bridge” by Jeri Massi.*

It is a fascinating journey to go back and savor the stories that drew me so deeply when I was a kid. Time and time again I discover that my spirit often knew in the echoes of time what would someday be the resonating notes of experiential truth.

This poem is from one of such stories. There was a tiny kingdom of brave men fighting for what was good and true, and a sinister, powerful kingdom fighting to swallow them whole. The primary source of safety for the good kingdom was a river that divided the two and a bridge they could guard. When betrayal entered their ranks, and the guard at the bridge finally fell, it seemed as if nothing would prevent the close of the enemy’s fist upon their kingdom.

“In the night the soldier creeps,  
Midway from shore to shore

High above the murky deep  
He finds a slender floor,  
'Twill one man safely keep,  
Whose axe shall end a war.”

High above the river, in the beams and structures of the bridge was a secret platform, its location hidden just as skillfully as in the words of the poem. Just above the platform was a single cross beam that could easily be chopped with an axe. And when that was done, the integrity of the entire structure was breached. There was no way it could bear the weight of an advancing army.

“One axe shall overthrow a king.”

You see, this poem was actually a song, sung by the castle guard of the tiny kingdom. It had been passed on for generations as their anthem; citizens of both kingdoms had heard them sing it. But still it lay as hidden truth, never exposed to the enemy, cleverly concealed in the words created by the wise architect of the bridge, until one day, someone who was themselves wise and good could decipher it.

For all of us, there are different kinds of stories that capture our spirits and imaginations, often because it is truth from our King speaking straight to our hearts.

I know why my spirit loved the story. It is a celebration of a strategist who knows how to leverage something small. It is the triumph of truth hidden in plain sight, the snatching of victory from the enemy, the turning of the tide, just when he thought he had sealed the fate of his victim.

As an adult, I can look back and see that even in those early years my spirit knew how deeply I would resonate to our King as the Master Strategist, one bold enough to leave truth in plain sight, but so cleverly disguised that the enemy would never see it. Again and again in my life I see how my King leveraged one key piece of truth, or revealed a new flavor of my design that the enemy had not trampled, and felt the flood of joy when my spirit knew the enemy’s plans would collapse like that bridge.

I celebrate the elaborate strategy of our King. What man can do in a single realm, our King can do in the realms of complexity that we cannot comprehend. He is relentlessly one step ahead of His foe, and He always has one more card to play. He lets the enemy take his turn, but only for so long, He lets the enemy hurt us, but not without reason, and He always, always, always knows the hidden meaning of the song.

“One axe shall overthrow a king.”

Megan Caldecourt  
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