

My Three Dogs

Let me tell you about my three wonderful dogs, they're enormous black Labrador Retrievers, weighing about 80 pounds apiece. These are a special breed of dog called "Wit Hounds." They normally are of good humor, except under certain circumstances which I will explain later. They're wonderful companions and we romp the meadows together joyfully exploring, discovering and playing together. However, they are picky eaters and won't share one another's food. I feed them scraps—scraps of my beliefs and experiences. Cosmo eats bits of belief about the world, Otto feasts on beliefs and experiences about myself and Xeno feeds exclusively on my beliefs and experiences about other people. If I feed them platitudes they get very hungry and want real meat, so I must be careful to feed them properly. They have voracious appetites and are extremely loyal.

As I said before, they're not always good natured. There are times when one of them gets moody and the other two have to protect me so that I don't get attacked. Sometimes when they're playing with each other the play turns pretty vicious and I think they may be trying to kill each other. The biggest trouble is that I can never get all three of them to go along with me in an orderly manner. So while we have great times together—I can't say that I'm really their master. There are things I want to do and places I want to go and things I wish to accomplish but I'm always having to deal with one or another of them misbehaving.

I spoke with a mentor friend of mine who told me about a special harness I could use to control them, a golden harness. In order to accomplish the things I would like I would have to go on a quest for that special yoke. Which brings me to my special problem.

Beyond the fields and forests where I dwell are two hills, upon which sit two ancient castles. One of the castles is nearly in ruins and the other is seemingly new and festive. In the newer one, imprisoned somewhere is a very special princess who has become the object of my desire. However, the only way to free her is with a special key that is kept in the other ruined castle. Within those decaying castle walls lurks an enormous fire breathing dragon that dwells in the dungeon of the castle, guarding an enormous hoard of gold. Most of the time the dragon just sleeps, partially because he doesn't want to deal with my dogs. You see they keep him bottled up there most of the time. However, at any time the dragon can rush by my guard dogs and fly about the country pillaging and destroying the entire landscape. Fortunately, my dogs are diligent in their duty so that rarely happens.

The dilemma is this. In order to get the key to free the princess, I must drink a special elixir that is kept in the festive castle. However, unless the elixir of joy is mitigated by a bit of the dragon's gold it is toxic to me, as are our most intense desires unless they are mitigated by our fears. If I drink the elixir, I don't have to fear the dragon's breath or size—I'm impervious to its devilish ways. But it will not share its gold with anyone and will reek revenge if even the smallest particle is stolen. So before I can drink the elixir I must snatch some of the gold, pour it in the cup, drink the then tonic mixture, return to

the dragon's lair, secure the key, return to the princess and free her. However, in order to do all that I need my dogs to work together with me, which is where the golden harness comes in.

With the golden harness, my wit hounds, who have feasted on my experiences and beliefs, can assist me in the arduous task which lay ahead. If I don't get control of them however, they will stand between me (protecting me from both fear and desire). If I go anywhere near either of those two castles all three turn on me and chase me away. It's very frustrating, so I've got to deal with them before I can make any progress toward solving my dilemma.