

KARMA



BY TOM MATHEW

“Dad. Are you happy?” asked Karma.

“Son, you remind me of the time I was at a bar in Golden Mountain and someone attempted to do some type of mind exercise on me,” answered the Farmer. “The man just wanted to get a rise out of me. You have to be careful when you are in the center of Ran Rold’s power. You have no idea who is a spy and who is just asking a silly question. It was a silly question.”

“How did you reply?” his son enquired.

“I told him the truth. Of course, I am happy. I have two grown children. My wife and I decided to go out on our own decades ago. And after years of struggle, we finally have some basic comforts and looking at a future of basic middle class security,” the Farmer replied.

“What did the bar patron say?”

“Nothing. By the time I finished, he had lost interest. A young woman had entered the bar and he focused his geriatric eyes on the local talent,” the Farmer said.

“So, are you happy? I mean you have me and Maya, Lollipop and Mom. And this farm in Mojave County. Is this all there is?” his son asked.

The Farmer chuckled. Then he started to laugh real hard. “Son, of course I am happy. Our nation is based on freedom. We have had 1,000,000 Ran Rold’s and we will have millions more in the decades to come. Megalomania enables us to have new products, employment opportunities and abundance.

‘That doesn’t mean it will give me happiness. Decades ago, I left Ran Rold and bought this farm. Finally, we are getting to some security in our lives.

“Happiness, son, is not just state of mind, but also the ability to have savings and to create opportunities for your progeny. When I was working for Ran Rold, he would not let me have opportunity. He was extremely jealous, about one split pea’s worth, that Chutney was in love with me. There was no way he would promote me or let me have the income to get married and to have a family.

“Ran Rold’s entire life is about money. After that it is power. Look at him. Without the entrapments of race, class and tax-free inheritance, the hallmarks of wealth in all nations, Ran Rold would just be like me. There is no level playing field son, not even in communist or socialist countries.

“He is on his own chess board; I am not even a pawn on the game boards he plays.

Maybe after twenty years of working for Ran Rold, I could be a middle manager in his vast hierarchy. After thirty years, I would be allowed to retire. Live off my savings and federal social security. I didn't want that out of my life.

"Your mother and I had a lot of up and downs. There were many times I missed the comfort of a middle class pay check.

"Being a farmer in Mojave County is not what was expected of me. If Ma and Pa, your grandparents, were still alive, they would have been disappointed in me. But I am not disappointed in myself.

"Ran Rold, like all the oppressors of this planet, did everything he could to make sure we went under. The rest were market forces that are beyond even the most sophisticated of farmers.

"But after seven years of good productivity, our farm has capital. We have land that has been set aside to increase its fertility. We now have the ability to rotate our crops to maintain the productivity of our land. That is all proper land management.

"I didn't figure all of that out myself. The Agricultural Department has representatives who helped me. Subsidies from the federal government enabled us to switch crops as well as buy better pumps.

"My success is not just me. It has a lot to do with your mother. As well as you and your sister. Lollipop keeps the derelicts and the coyotes off the farm."

Karma reiterated, "Is this all you wanted out of life?"

"Karma," replied the Farmer softly. "Son, the media (television, movies and magazines) and the internet make everything look possible on Golden Mountain. It is all make believe.

"Capitalism is the basis of our civilization. Based on this system, there is a price for success. And not every bargain is affordable," the Farmer stated.

"I was luckier than most men. I met someone who wanted to spend her life with me. We decided before we got married that we wanted to be three. And then we became four. And then Lollipop came along.

"Be weary of the word "happy" in Golden Mountain. Golden Mountain is full of illusions. And the greatest mirage in this beautiful barren wilderness is success. Success leads you to seek more things. All of this leads to envy and anger. Soon your achievements lead to unhappiness."

Karma retorted, "I do not understand, father. How?"

“Success makes you work harder. The cycle of achievement, success and envy starts over. Your success will lead to envy in others. In racist, white supremacist organizations, envy will turn into anger. These individuals will work with others in authority to destroy your life. Paranoia develops in your brain. Eventually it leads to failure. Neurosis eventually develops and calcifies your outlook. Finally, a heart attack or a stroke.

“Every day, in our society, people rise and fall. There is no permanence,” the Farmer stated.

“Dad! Stop it. Why are you talking like a priest, or worse, the surgeon general?” yelled Karma.

“I am sorry, son. There is no success in Golden Mountain,” the Farmer replied succinctly. “It is Ran Rold’s town. The government decided long ago that he runs this town.

“Enconium from Ran Rold means nothing. Mr. Rold rewards achievements in his miserly way. Like the trillionaires of our nation’s past, he will reach into his dusty pockets and pull out a silver dime and place it in your hand as a reward. Come Monday morning, you will be back at your desk and working even harder to make more money for Ran Rold’s corporations.

“When they take you out on the gurney after your second stroke or your third heart attack, you will realize the falsity of working so hard,” the Farmer stated.

“Dad. Dad. Dad!” Karma retorted. “I asked if you were happy?”

“Happy? I hope Ran Rold’s satellites are not listening,” the Farmer whispered. “Of course, I am happy, son. The happiest day of my life was when I met your mother. Years later, we decided to get married.

“And then, she supported me in buying this farm in Mojave County. That was decades ago.

“Years later, your sister and you came along. That was two more days of happiness for me. Years after that, the farm became productive and profitable.

“I am happy, son and thankful we are healthy, still together as a family and successful. These streets are not the crossroads of your life. Look out the window, and see the enchanted vista of our county. What a view! Gaze at the derelicts, hangers on, drug addicts, prostitutes and hoodlums of our county. We are nothing like these imbeciles,” explained the Farmer.

“In all these decades of travail in my life, I never lost faith in God or cursed His teachings. Our prosperity is entirely based on Him.

“No one can control the outcome. Not me. Not Mom. Not Maya. Maybe Lollipop. Ha Ha Ha!” laughed the Farmer.

Karma and the Farmer laughed hard. Lollipop looked up from his restful sleep. He looked at the Farmer and Karma laughing and then rolled onto his back and went back to sleep.

“Nothing I say can prepare you for the vicissitudes of adult married life.”

“What does that mean?” asked Karma.

“You need to go to college to understand what those words mean”, answered the Farmer.

“Dad, why do I need to go to college?” asked Karma.

“You do not need to go,” the Farmer stated unenthusiastically. “Where we live, no one wants to go to college. Rain forest sloths have more ambition than some of your peers. They are all imbeciles here. Either they worship the dollar to Rupee exchange rate or they are addicted to narcotics. There are many here who worship miracles and magic tricks done by wizards who have been dead for thousands of years. Many more worship gigantic statues made in Europe.”

“What are you saying?” Karma enquired.

“God is a manifestation of our id.”

Karma stared at his father quizzically. “What does that mean?”

“I don’t know. But you will understand that statement after you finish college,” said the Farmer.

“Huh?”

“Language is what separates the rich from the poor,” the Farmer stated. “The television, in order to sell bikini wax, will state that the color of your skin is the most important aspect of your life. But they never show the suntanned educated derelicts of Golden Mountain. Hopefully, you will study psychology, sociology and also language and writing.”

The Farmer added, “Your understanding will develop and you will see how other civilizations worshipped statues and then collapsed. Easter Island and Angkor Wat are two great examples. So are Rome and Petra. You will learn about revolutions and alternative economic systems such as caste, mercantilist, communist, pagan and hedonist, for example.

“Do not be fooled by the word college, son. It is a simple word describing a physical place and a phase in your development as a human being.

“We live in a democracy and for you to take the full rights of citizenship, you have to understand propaganda, double speak and the vast innuendoes our educated politicians speak.

“What you do for a living is meaningless to me,” stated the Farmer. “The word job is slang for occupation. To get many occupations you will need to have an education. Do not be fooled by the press. The men who have no education will tell you that college education is overrated. I disagree 100%,” the Farmer exclaimed.

“You need to be exposed to new vistas. You need an education to find a wife, to invest your savings, to know when to switch careers and also to educate my future grandchildren.

“Listen we need, as adults, to understand the difference between the Trojan Horse and foolish miracles. Adulthood, for you, will be a lot easier if you do not believe in this nonsense.

“In the metaphors we read in ecclesiastical texts, there are no occupations. Almost all of the language in religious dogma are based on farming and animal husbandry. Sometimes there are discussions about trades. But there is limited explanation of lawyers, insurance, military, service economies, modern science, medicine, psychology or urban economies.

“Few if any occupations in the Bible have salaries. Even fewer are paid by the hour. No character in the religious texts have lost their jobs or pensions. There is no explanation as to how a nation’s economy works.

“God is wonderful. But He is impossible for any of us to fathom.

“You know, on Golden Mountain, God has a name. His name is W. Edwards Deming. He wrote the principles of quality that allowed us to be successful as a civilization. We also have a Jesus Christ. His name is Eugene O’Neill. Unlike Jesus, Mr. O’Neill has left us a bevy of biographical detail, a corpse and also endless writings detailing his teenage years, his loves, petty jealousies and hatreds. We know about his wives, his mistresses and also his children. This man is our greatest playwright. His plays enable us to understand the terrestrial manifestation that is human life,” the Farmer elucidated.

“I never heard of these men,” uttered Karma.

The Farmer added, “Ran Rold University can also state that these men were irrelevant. Your job at university is to learn about these men and to spend a lot of time writing. Improve your writing skills.”

“But I already know how to write,” Karma said.

“Everyone says that,” the Farmer stated. “You’re no longer in high school. Now you will be in college. When you get out of college, you have to compete with men a lot older than you. They can write better than you.

“Do not be fooled by the internet. There will be periods in your life when you have long periods of unemployment. During those arduous times, you will need to rely on your education to know which steps to take forward. Education. Divorce. Start a family. Etc...

“Make sure you understand one thing,” the Farmer said.

Karma enquired, "What's that, Dad?"

"You are going to school for yourself. Not for me. Not for your mother. Not to compete with your sister.

There is only one person to worry about in college. You. Make new friends. Date girls outside of your circle. Figure out how you can make a path out of this beautiful barren wilderness. Don't worry about the farm. I can handle that. Ignore all the negative news on television. Focus on your growth. That is all that matters.

"Try to take some difficult courses," imparted the Farmer. "So you have an edge over your peers. The world is extremely competitive. Don't worry about getting A's. The most important thing in life is to understand the multiple facets of your life."

Karma asked, "Why is this important?"

"The purpose of education," the Farmer delineated, "is to develop the mettle to withstand the vicissitudes of adult married life. This way you and your wife develop the psychosocial security to have children and are able to raise your children into independent adults."

Dear reader,

Chapter 3 is available only in the physical book. Available for sale at your favorite bookstore or you can purchase directly from Trademark Universal, Inc.

Thank you.