

## GENTLE SEASONS STORIES: THE TROUBADOUR'S SONG

by: Christine Scioli

CHAPTER ONE – wherein we meet the amicable King O-Nan, who is worried about fairness and kindness in his kingdom

Once upon a time, there lived a well meaning Barbarian king named O-Nan, who ruled over the two lands once united, called Cale Fornia. Because the people of the land could not get along, they had separated into a southland and a northland, some years ago, and while at the time the leaders thought this would be a great idea, as time went on, it turned out to be a very bad idea. O-Nan was forced to take tithing from all the villages and towns, so the richer lands could help take care of the poorer lands.

CHAPTER TWO – wherein we discover the magical town of Gentle Seasons

This tithing did not go over well with the tribe of councils in one particular hamlet, known as Gentle Seasons. Gentle Seasons was in the northland and was a very beautiful place, nestled in a valley between large hills that protected it from the harsh winds and fog that some other towns had to contend with. That is why the seasons were so gentle and therefore the name the town was given. The tribe of councils consisted of five of the wisest people in Gentle Seasons, (or so they thought).

CHAPTER THREE – wherein we meet a nasty and nosey hag who collects junk

There was also a town crone who was very involved in all the goings on in the village, (or so she thought). She always wore a pretty flower in her hair but when she talked, she would only say bad things about what the tribe of councils was doing regarding any particular issue, and especially concerning the tithing. The crone traveled all around Gentle Seasons in a old wagon, loaded with junk. No one knew why she had all that junk in her wagon, but she did, and it seemed to mount up, every single day.

CHAPTER FOUR – wherein we meet the troubadour of Gentle Season and his wife, who has a great secret

There were a few more very interesting people in Gentle Seasons. There was a lovely woman, Lady Victoria, who was married to the town troubadour, Sir Bruce. They had moved to Gentle Seasons from Baulenes, because it was so cold and foggy there, and it made Sir Bruce's fingers too stiff to strum. While once a long time ago, Sir Bruce played his mandolin for the great King O-Nan in his royal court, he now played his songs throughout the streets of Gentle Seasons, and the villagers loved these songs very much. There was much talk about Lady Victoria, too. It was said that she had a great secret but she could not reveal it. People called it "Victoria's secret."

CHAPTER FIVE – wherein we meet the gregarious Constable Fianna who hails from the Land of the Leprechauns

There was also a friendly and brave constable in Gentle Seasons. Her name was Fianna and she came from the Land of the Leprechauns. In early Celtic times, the Fianna warriors were equal in all things, male and female, and her parents knew she would grown up to be fair and equal in all things, and that is why they gave her this name. The constable kept law and order in the town of Gentle Seasons, and because she spent every day, walking and talking to all the people, she was able to do her job very well, because she got to know them and care about them.

CHAPTER SIX – wherein we meet the kind Green Knight who journeys far to find a land where people would work together to solve their problems

And finally, there was the gentle Green Knight. The Green Knight came from a land far away, called Independence. In that town, people always were very honest and good, but they liked to be independent of each other, and therefore the town had that name. The Green Knight felt happier when people really cared about everyone else and worked together to solve their problems, so one day he left Independence and eventually, after a very long journey, arrived in Cale Fornia.

CHAPTER SEVEN – wherein the Green Knight walks and walks and finally enters the court of King O-Nan

Because the Green Knight did not believe in wasting just about anything, he walked all the way to Cale Fornia, so he wouldn't tire out any horses. He carried very little with him, so he didn't need a wagon, either. When he arrived, he went directly to the King's court.

As soon as King O-Nan met the Green Knight when he arrived at court, O-Nan could see what a wise man he was. He was very pleased that the Green Knight might be able to help the people with his good ideas, so he quickly knighted him and sent him off to Gentle Seasons, and to his old friends, Sir Bruce and Lady Victoria, who would welcome him there. From that time on, the Green Knight represented the people of Gentle Seasons at the court of O-Nan, and he never did one thing at court without thinking about what would be best for the town, as well as all of Cale Fornia.

CHAPTER EIGHT – wherein the Green Knight learns from the Constable Fianna to walk and to talk to all of the people

The Green Knight could see very well, that the tribe of councils was very, very upset about the tithing and it made him feel very bad that the people of Gentle Seasons would have to give up so much of their wealth to help others in the land. So, he took the example of Constable Fianna, and began to walk and walk and talk and talk to all the people to try to figure out what they could do to solve their problem. Everyone found the

Green Knight very considerate and caring, so they were able to share their concerns with him about how to help the citizens in the southland in a manner that was fair to all.

CHAPTER NINE – wherein the Green Knight thinks long and hard after meeting the crone

On one particular day, the Green Knight came to a fork in the road and there sat the crone, in her wagon loaded with junk, blocking both directions. When he asked her why she was doing this, she told him that this way no one could get in to or out of town, and therefore no tithing could be brought to the king, and this would solve the problem. The Green Knight was so kind that he politely explained to the crone that this would really not solve the problem at all, just postpone it for a short time, probably until Constable Fianna was called upon to remove her so that the roads would be open and safe for all the townsfolk. And then the Green Knight took a good look at her wagon, and asked her what she was doing with all that junk and debris. She really had no answer to give him other than the fact she always collected all the junk in town as she wandered around, but she didn't know what to do with it. This made the Green Knight think long and hard about that.

CHAPTER TEN – wherein the Green Knight thinks long and hard about the Whole Foods store

So, the crone continued on her way, and so did the Green Knight. At the far end of town he saw the store where the villagers gathered to trade their food with each other. They called it Whole Foods, and it had an abundance of things to eat – meat, grains and more. The problem was, everything was whole. There were huge fish, just caught in the local creek, but they were so big, there would have to be 20 people in the family to eat it all. There were gigantic shafts of wheat 6 feet high. Everywhere the people were trying to find things that they could put in their wagons and bring home. The Green Knight asked a few of them why they sold everything whole but they really had no answer other than this is the way it had always been done. The Green Knight thought long and hard about that.

CHAPTER ELEVEN – wherein the Green Knight things long and hard about the golden eggs

Then finally, the Green Knight came upon the local dairy farm. It was called The Golden Egg House and he was very puzzled as to why, so he asked the proprietor. He told him that once a day, one of the chickens laid an egg that was gold. Not just the color gold, but an egg that was solid gold. Whoever was buying their eggs at that time, always took the golden egg home, though they couldn't do much with it, as you cannot eat an egg that is made of gold. Almost everyone in Gentle Seasons had a few golden eggs in their homes, sitting on a shelf somewhere. The Green Knight was amazed at this news, and thought long and hard about it.

CHAPTER TWELVE – wherein the Green Knight helps unveil Victoria's secret

Finally, after a long day, the Green Knight went to visit Sir Bruce and Lady Victoria to tell them all about what he had seen and heard. They listened very, very carefully as the Green Knight said he was sure that these adventures could make some sense – that they could help the people of Gentle Seasons work out their problem with the tithing owed to the king. He said there just had to be a secret clue to all of this. There had to be some common link between the problem, the situation and the solution, especially if the people of the town all worked together and truly cared about each other. He was sure there was a secret connection!

All of a sudden Lady Victoria jumped up excitedly for she realized something very special was about to happen and then she told the kind knight about her secret, Victoria's secret, a secret that she had quite forgotten about until just this very minute! Many, many years before, the old king, named Burton, told her that one day she would come upon a very confusing situation, that would have something to do with Cale Fornia and Gentle Seasons, and what the folks there could do to work together to solve a most vexing problem. King Burton told her at that time she could reveal the secret. She said the old King told her the secret would be in a song that Sir Bruce would play most spontaneously.

#### CHAPTER THIRTEEN – wherein the Troubadour's song presents solutions

And that is just what happened. As soon as Lady Victoria remembered her secret, her husband, Sir Bruce, was compelled to play a particularly plucky song that he had forgotten about too, Here are the words to the song that Sir Bruce sang on that very special day:

lyrics to the song, sung to the tune, "It's a Small, Small World."

*There's a special town in a special place  
Where the people laugh with a certain grace.  
Where there's so much to share  
And there's so much to spare  
When you love, care and be fair.*

Then the Green Knight, realized that **together**, they could save all the people of Cale Fornia. He quickly gathered all the townsfolk together, every single one. They all listened excitedly to the solutions.

#### CHAPTER FOURTEEN – wherein we learn the solutions

##### Solution 1

The crone would take all the junk she had collected and give some pieces to everyone who could make use of them again. Therefore they would not have to spend as much money for new things, and they could give some of the money they saved to O-Nan to distribute to the needier folks. Right away this idea made the crone smile a great big

sharing and caring smile, for the first time ever! And, from this time on, she always wore two flowers in her hair (which represented to her that she wasn't alone, but part of the community), and every day she happily collected things from folks that didn't need them any more, and gave them to other folks that did.

#### Solution 2

The townspeople at Whole Foods would divide their food into smaller pieces and sell some to everyone. Therefore they would not have to buy as much, so they could give some of this money to O-Nan as well.

#### Solution 3

And finally, everyone that had an extra gold egg lying around their house, would donate one to O-Nan to distribute to all the people of Cale Fornia who did not have one. Since there were many, many golden eggs, the Green Knight thought that each and every family would be able to have their own egg, and in fact, they could. This alone made the entire kingdom north and south equally rich.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN – wherein the people of Gentle Seasons cooperate and celebrate

The people cheered and shouted and praised the Green Knight.

But the Green Knight humbly said it was due to the music of Sir Bruce.

Sir Bruce humbly said it was due to Lady Victoria's secret.

Lady Victoria humbly said it was due to the words of the old King Burton.

BUT, King O-Nan proudly said it was due to the cooperation of all of the people of fair Gentle Seasons, who worked together to solve their problems because they cared and shared and loved everyone the very best that they could.

And this made the Green Knight so glad he walked that long distance from the town of Independence and he smiled a great sharing, caring smile.

And, the mapmakers, at the behest of King O-Nan, placed GENTLE SEASONS, in bold letters, on the map of the newly reunified land of Cale Fornia. It said, under the name GENTLE SEASONS,

THE VILLAGE THAT SAVED CALE FORNIA.

The end.

