

*SPIRITUAL STORIES FOR  
THE NEW WORLD*



Regiena Heringa

## The Twins and the Sacred Forest

Lithan and Sian, twin brothers, escaped before sunrise from their grass-covered dwelling in the meadowlands to explore the great forest beyond. They were anxious to have a day away from the endless squabbles in their village, not realizing that they themselves were the origin of these noisy and pointless arguments. Self-absorbed, Lithan and Sian did not consider that their parents might be worried. Their minds were filled with other things: curiosity, adventure and stubbornness.

Peoples from many regions around had always spoken in awe about the great forest and its sacred lake which offered voyages to other worlds and golden light to those of pure heart. Often times they would whisper “Mareithia” with closed eyes and a warm gentle feeling of encouragement and freedom would invade them. “Mareithia,” which in the ancient tongue means “place of holy abode.”

Walking quickly through the wildflowers which were just awakening from a good night’s sleep and ignoring the intricate design of the dew-covered cobweb and the first flutterings of a small white butterfly, the boys tramped on to the forest.

“When I get there, I’m going straight to the lake and jump in,” said Sian. “I’m hot, and I’m hungry, and I’m tired and ...”

“Keep quiet,” retorted Lithan. “Let’s just get there.”

After a long period of trampling and complaining, they closed in on their goal: the forest, twinkling and shimmering with the call of birds and the murmuring of pine and oak. Another few minutes and they would be inside.

They shouted out “Mareithia...Maaareeithia...MAREEEEEEEITHIA,” and absolutely nothing happened. Not a bird sang the sweet song of welcome. Not a tree swayed in greeting. Not even the few pure white puffy clouds overhead moved. The forest had become dark, silent and closed. A tremendous invisible force had moved up from within the earth and had swung itself around to encompass the entire perimeter of the forest from left to right. This holy abode had become untouchable.

The boys, infuriated, threw themselves upon the invisible protective shield and stumbled backwards with biting frustration. “I have a knife” spewed out Sian. Pointing to an elegant and wise old oak the boy muttered with a hard mouth, “I’ll throw it at this tree and we’ll break the shield that way.”

The knife, although poorly thrown, traveled through the shield to hit the majestic tree. Immediately, before either twin could scream his victory, the tree disappeared and in its place was a gigantic column of golden light. The knife had been thrown back and lay changed into two very small balls of gold at the feet of the trembling boys.

“Sit down,” commanded the column of light in their minds and the boys as if mesmerized sat down at the edge of the forest. “Bring up your greatest fear,” commanded the light and the boys brought up in their minds moments when they were very afraid. “Bring up your greatest love,” commanded the light and the boys brought up nothing. “Now pick up the golden ball,” commanded the Light with a touch of gentleness and both Lithan and Sian stooped down with shaking hands each to pick up the beautiful glowing sphere which lay quivering near his foot. The loveliness of the globe that sparkled in each boy’s hand was so overwhelming that the twins couldn’t even think of owning it let alone of selling it for profit. For the first time in their lives Lithan and Sian were able to recognize and admire beauty and their hearts were opened.

No other words were spoken. The boys remained seated at the edge of the silent and closed forest in complete admiration of these exquisite creations cradled in their hands which began to exude the perfume of a thousand pink roses. The twins felt love and gentleness, compassion and tenderness, moving through them like a sun-warmed stream. The mysterious and magnificent globes slowly melted away much like the morning dew on the cob webs in the meadows. Only the sweet fragrance of the roses remained. Looking up, they saw that the column of light had once again become the majestic oak in front of them.

As much as they wanted to, neither Lithan nor Sian could penetrate the shield to touch the oak with forgiving and thankful fingers. But some day they knew it would be possible. This gave them great courage and their hearts brought forth joyful thoughts as they carefully walked back home through the nodding flowers and grasses. Behind them in shimmering Mareithia, a bird began its song to the Glory of Creation.

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