

9) makawao Hongwanju  
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a. Charlotte's web

A <sup>the</sup> word CAN BE POWERFUL BECAUSE OF THE MEANING IT HAS FOR PEOPLE.

BUT, ACTUALLY, ~~WORDS IN GENERAL~~ <sup>ALSO</sup> ~~HAVE POWER BECAUSE OF THE MEANING~~  
~~THEY CONVEY.~~ THE STORY OF CHARLOTTE'S WEB TEACHES US THIS LESSON.

CHARLOTTE WAS A SPIDER WHO LIVED WITH HER BARNYARD FRIENDS ON MR. ZUCKERMAN'S FARM. HER BEST FRIEND WAS WILBUR THE PIG WHO WAS GROWING BIGGER AS ANY PIG WOULD. THE SHEEP NOTICED WILBUR GETTING BIGGER AND TOLD HIM, "I DON'T LIKE TO SPREAD BAD NEWS BUT, THEY'RE FATTENING YOU UP BECAUSE THEY'RE GOING TO <sup>have you for dinner,</sup> ~~KILL YOU,~~ THAT'S WHY." SO WILBUR THE PIG WENT AROUND SCREAMING, "I DON'T WANT TO DIE! SAVE ME, SOMEBODY! SAVE ME!"

CHARLOTTE, THE SPIDER, BEING VERY SYMPATHETIC AND ALSO VERY SMART, DECIDED TO HELP WILBUR. SHE THOUGHT AND THOUGHT ABOUT IT / AND FINALLY DECIDED WHAT SHE HAD TO DO. ONE NIGHT, IN THE BARN, UP ABOVE WHERE WILBUR LAY FAST ASLEEP, CHARLOTTE SPENT MANY HOURS WEAVING A WEB WHICH WAS <sup>M</sup> ~~SOETHING~~ DIFFERENT. NEXT MORNING WHEN THE FARM HAND CAME TO FEED WILBUR, HE SAW THE WORDS "SOME PIG" WRITTEN IN BLOCK LETTERS IN THE CENTER OF THE WEB THAT CHARLOTTE HAD WOVEN. HE COULDN'T BELIEVE HIS EYES. HE CALLED MR ZUCKERMAN TO SEE THE WORDS "SOME PIG" AND THEY BOTH TREMBLED AND BECAME FRIGHTENED. MR. ZUCKERMAN WENT BACK TO HIS HOME AND TOLD HIS WIFE, "A SIGN HAS OCCURRED HERE ON EARTH, RIGHT ON OUR FARM, AND WE HAVE NO ORDINARY PIG." SECRETS ARE HARD TO KEEP AND PEOPLE FROM MILES AROUND CAME TO LOOK AT WILBUR AND TO READ THE WORDS ON CHARLOTTE'S WEB. NEXT CHARLOTTE WEAVED THE WORD "TERRIFIC." IT CREATED ANOTHER MIRACLE AND MRS. ZUCKERMAN CALLED THE NEWSPAPER TO TELL WHAT HAPPENED. MR. ZUCKERMAN ORDERED HIS FARM HAND TO HAVE CLEAN, BRIGHT STRAW EVERYDAY FOR WILBUR'S BEDDING. CHARLOTTE NEXT WROTE THE WORD "RADIANT" AND WILBUR REALLY LOOKED RADIANT , JUST AS MUCH

AS HE LOOKED TERRIFIC WHEN HE STOOD UNDER THE WORD "TERRIFIC".

MR. ZUCKERMAN JUST HAD TO ENTER WILBUR IN THE COUNTY FAIR CONTEST BECAUSE HIS DISTINGUISHED PIG'S FAME HAD SPREAD TO THE FAR CORNERS OF THE EARTH. CHARLOTTE WROTE THE WORD "HUMBLE" OVER HIS CAGE, <sup>at the fair</sup> AND TO NO ONE'S SURPRISE WILBUR WON THE FIRST PRIZE BLUE RIBBON. EVERYONE BELIEVED THAT WILBUR WAS NOT AN ORDINARY PIG ANYMORE AND MR ZUCKERMAN TOOK GOOD CARE OF WILBUR THE REST OF HIS DAYS AND NOBODY FORGOT THE MIRACLE OF THE WEB.

THIS STORY TELLS OF THE POWER OF WORDS AND HOW POSITIVE WORDS CAN HELP MAKE LIFE POSITIVE. *And negative words can cause hurt and suffering. That is why we recite the Golden Chain of Love*

NAMOAMIDABUTSU IS A POWERFUL POSITIVE WORD NOT ONLY FOR JUST ONE ANIMAL OR JUST ONE PERSON, BUT FOR ALL <sup>animals and all people.</sup> ~~SENTIENT BEINGS~~. EVEN

IF SOMEONE SAYS, "I'M NOT TERRIFIC, OR I'M NOT RADIANT" NAMOAMIDABUTSU TELLS US, "YOU ARE PRECIOUS JUST AS YOU ARE. WAKEUP TO

WHAT IS TRUE AND REAL WITHIN YOUR HEART. LET US CLOSE WITH THE

*following passage:*

(PLEASE BOW IN GASSHO)

THE BUDDHA IS WHEREVER NAMOAMIDABUTSU IS RECITED.

YOUR VOICE IS THAT OF YOUR OYASAMA (I.E., AMIDA

BUDDHA). NAMOAMIDABUTSU IS THE BUDDHA.

AND THE BUDDHA IS NAMOAMIDABUTSU.

--NAMOAMIDABUTSU--

*Namoamidabutsu affirms us just as we are. Dr. Ty Ueno says "The fundamental purpose of the Name, ~~is~~ Namamidabutsu, is awakening to the incomparable worth of this unrepeatable life, this limited, finite life that is inseparable from boundless, infinite life."*

*a-Charlotte's Web*

A word can be powerful

Story - Charlotte's Web

Namocmidabtsu -  
affirms us just  
as we are.