Karna statue type



Un-Photoshopped picture taken by amateur photographer using instant camera





(West Java's Sundanese ethnic style, adaptation of Hindu epic Mahabharata) The brave hero, the courageous spirit, the loyalist and generous warrior.

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Description

KARNA

(West Java's Sundanese ethnic style, adaptation of Hindu epic Mahabharata)

The brave hero, the courageous spirit, the loyalist and generous warrior.

Karna was the first son of Kunti and the sun God Surya. Thus he was the eldest of the Pandavas. An armour and a pair of earrings from God Surya were attached to him from birth. Since Kunti was unmarried, she abandoned Karna, setting him afloat in a box in a river until he was picked up by a charioteer. The bond between Karna and his foster family was one of pure love, respect and affection despite the lack of blood relationship. His foster parents never hid from him the fact that he was not their biological child.

As he grew into adulthood, Karna sought to be a warrior. He approached Dronacharya, who was training the princes Pandavas and Kauravas, requesting admission into his school. Dronacharya refused to teach him due to his low caste, as he was a son of a charioteer. Karna realized his caste would continue to be a barrier. Karna then approached Parashurama, who accepted Karna as his student. Karna was described as a diligent student. Parashurama trained him to the point where Parashurama declared Karna to have surpassed him in the art of war.

Karna's son was Wresasena. In Javanese version, Karna was married to Surtikanthi.

Friendship with Duryodhana

Dronacharya held a tournament to display the skills of the princes. Arjun emerged as a particularly gifted archer. Karna arrived at the tournament and after surpassing Arjun's feats, challenged him to a duel. However, the duel was refused as Karna was asked first about his clan and kingdom. According to the rules of dueling, only a prince might challenge Arjun who was a prince. Duryodhana, the eldest of the Kauravas, offered Karna the throne of Anga, so that Karna would be a king and thus be more than eligible to duel with Arjun. When Karna asked him what he could do to repay him, Duryodhana told him all he wanted was his friendship. "I want your heart" he told Karna, to which Karna said it was already his. The event established key relationships, namely, the strong bond between Duryodhana and Karna, the intense rivalry between Karna and Arjun, and the enmity in general between the Pandavas as a whole and Karna.

Generosity

Karna was famous for his generosity. When a beggar came to him asking for sandal wood to cremate his wife, Karna knowing that cremation had to be done at certain timing decided to give the sandal wood as fast as he could. At the time Karna was in one of his mansions and noticed the pillars were made of sandal wood. He quickly got an axe and chopped the pillars giving the beggar his sandal wood, causing the house to collapse. He explained, "My house can be given to me again, but not my duty to people".

Loss of armour

Indra, king of gods and father of Arjun, realized that formidable Karna would be invincible in battle as long as he had the armour and earrings that he was born with. When war was imminent, Indra took it upon himself to weaken Karna. He decided to approach Karna as a Brahman since he knew that Karna would never refuse any request of a Brahman or beggar during his mid-day worship. Karna's father, the sun God Surya had warned Karna in a dream about this. Surya exhorted him not to give away his protection. However, when disguised Indra approached him with the request; Karna, despite knowing that the armour and earrings were his protection, readily gave them away as alms without flinching. Indra, shamed into generosity by Karna's gesture, reciprocated by giving him the boon to use Indra's most powerful weapon Konta, but only once. Even God could not get rid of this weapon.

Kunti and Karna

Kunti, fearing the war, approached Karna and revealed her identity as his mother. The two shared a touching moment together. Upon her requesting him to come with her, however, Karna refused. He told Kunti that, had she been willing to call him 'Kaunteya' (Kunti's firstborn) many years ago when he appeared at the tournament, things might have been different, but now it was too late to do so. He owed Duryodhana too much. He was Duryodhana's friend first and foremost, he had to fight the Pandavas as doing his duty to protect his country. Karna promised Kunti that he would not kill any of the five, thus saved Arjun. He told Kunti that she would always have five sons. Karna requested his mother to keep their relationship a secret, so that Arjun could fight him full-heartedly. Only after his death she might reveal to the world that he was actually her first born. It was noteworthy that Karna denied revealing the secret which made him the eldest of the Pandavas, rightful king.

The fourteenth day of the Kurukshetra war

Duryodhana saw Ghatotkacha fight the Kaurava's forces. When it seemed that Ghatotkacha would decimate all the forces, he asked Karna to salvage the situation. Karna fought Ghatotkacha who deployed hit and run tactics. This caused Karna angry. He finally used Konta weapon on Ghatotkacha. After killing Ghatotkacha, the weapon returned to God Indra. Karna was now without Konta weapon and his impregnable armour and earrings as well; he did not have the divine weapon that was a serious threat to Arjun, who was equipped with a wider range of divine weaponry.

The seventeenth day of the war

Karna and Arjun fought a long and intense duel. At the end, Arjun used a divine arrow to kill Karna. Just as Karna's soul left his dead body, God Vishnu got out of Krishna's body and changed his appearance into a Brahman. The Brahman approached Karna's soul who stood still looking at his dead body. As the Brahman asked for alms from him, Karna's soul said that he had died and let the Brahman take any valuables from his dead body. Thus Karna was the only one who ever gave alms to God Vishnu. The touched God Vishnu said that as a Brahman, he could help cremate Karna's dead body at any place that Karna desired. Karna's soul said sadly that in his life, he lived separated from his mother and all brothers; and he did not know any place suitable for him. So, if the Brahman knew the best place for him, Karna's soul asked the Brahman to cremate his dead body there. Upon hearing the request, the Brahman promised to cremate Karna's dead body at the holiest place in the world. The Brahman changed back to God Vishnu, cremated Karna's dead body in his palm and brought Karna's soul to heaven.

After Karna's death

After Karna's death, his mother Kunti informed the Pandavas that she was Karna's mother and that he was the eldest of the Pandavas. The Pandavas grieved for Karna.

Karna's decision to highly honour the importance of following duty makes him serve as an excellent example of a gifted, righteous and brave individual. For millions of Hindus to this day, he remains a brave hero, a courageous spirit who braved impossible odds in his whole life and died with terrific courage.

Product specification:

Wood: Alstonia spp.
Process: Hand made.
Colour: Full colour.
Height: ± 35 cm.
Weight: Approx. 2.5 kg (including packaging).