



Chapter 17 of 'The Monkey King'

Adopted from the classic Chinese tale

Breakfast Serials
Good Books Unbound

What Happened to Monkey King

A Breakfast Serials story

STORY SO FAR: Unrepentant, indestructible, and still a troublemaker, Monkey is given one chance to prove himself by the Great Buddha.

Buddha looked at Monkey and softly said, "You say you can jump. If you can jump out of the palm of my hand in one somersault, I shall let you rule Heaven. But if you fail, you must accept my punishment. Do you agree?"

Monkey could hardly believe his ears. "I just told him I could jump one hundred and eight thousand leagues!" he said to himself. "Perhaps Buddha is hard of hearing. He must be foolish indeed to make such a bet with me."

"If I do what you ask, will you keep your promise?" Monkey asked out loud.

"Oh yes, we have many witnesses here."

"And this is an honest deal?" Monkey demanded.

"As honest as I can be," returned Buddha with a smile. "Do you agree?"

"Of course I agree," Monkey replied with a laugh. "Any fool would."

Calmly, Buddha held out his hand. Monkey climbed into his palm. He stretched

his legs and arms and wiggled all his fingers and toes. Then, just as he had done so many years ago at the great waterfall, he crouched down, closed his eyes, took a deep breath and leaped with all his might.

After a long moment he landed on his feet, quite certain he had gone at least one hundred and eight thousand leagues away from where he had started.

After all, in front of him was an unfamiliar landscape, a boundless flat plain with five pillars soaring straight into the sky. Monkey walked about, looking for landmarks, but he couldn't find anything telling him where he was.

"Oh well," he said, "I must have jumped even farther than I thought! This must be the end of the world. But I suppose it would be a good idea to make a mark to prove I came so far."

So Monkey plucked a

hair from his chest and cried, "Alalalalola!"

The hair became a paintbrush. Monkey dipped the brush in ink, approached one of the pillars, and wrote, "Magnificent Monkey King was here."

Then he cloud-soared back to Heaven, very pleased that he had won his bet with Buddha.

He jumped off the cloud and found he was standing again in Buddha's hand. Monkey looked up in triumph. "All right, where is my throne?"

"Silly monkey," Buddha said with a laugh. "You never left my palm."

"I knew you wouldn't believe me." Monkey grinned. "That's why I left my mark on one of the pillars at the end of the world."

"Ah, really?" Buddha couldn't stop smiling. "Look down."

Monkey looked. At the base of one of Buddha's fingers he saw handwriting: "Magnificent Monkey King was here."

"It's... it's impossible!" Monkey sputtered. "I was

at the end of the world. It's a trick! Let me try again." He crouched down and was just about to make another jump, but Buddha quickly flipped his hand over and trapped Monkey in his grip. He then transformed his five fingers into a mountain range with five snow-capped ridges.

"To tell you the truth, Monkey," Buddha said, "you will never be able to jump out of my hand, because my hand is always the smallest hand in the world and the largest, at the same time. Monkey, your mischief is done. You must stay under my mountain until you use your power wisely and usefully."

"Will I never get out?" Monkey cried. He knew that this time he was truly trapped.

"That is up to you," said Buddha. "When you have learned from your mistakes, I will release you. You have my word. And I promise I'll visit you in five hundred years to see what you have understood."

"Five hundred years!" Monkey wailed from

beneath the mountain.

But no one answered.

Monkey sighed, then lay back with his head resting on a rock. He closed his eyes. After a few moments he broke into a grin. "After all, five hundred years... well, that's not so much!" He tapped his chin thoughtfully. "It should give me just enough time to make a new plan!"

And Monkey began to laugh.

(End)

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CHAPTER 17

Activity Guide



Just the Facts

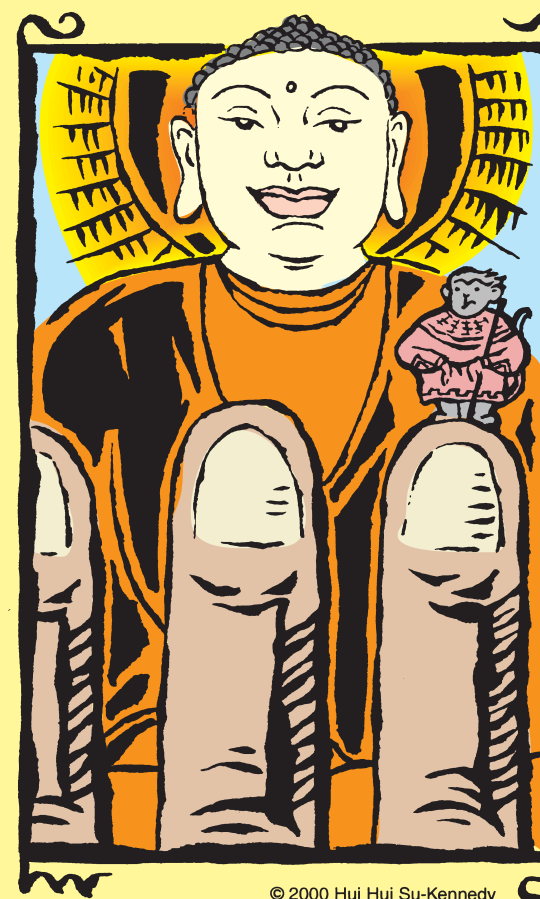
1. What was Buddha's test?
2. How would Buddha reward Monkey if he passed the test?

Between the Lines

3. Where did Monkey's somersault land him?
4. What did Monkey do to prove he had jumped as far as he said he would?
5. Where did Monkey land?
6. How did Buddha punish Monkey?

Let's Discuss

7. What does Buddha's test tell you about Buddha?
9. How could Monkey use his power wisely? What should he do?
10. Make a prediction: Will Monkey change? Explain your prediction.



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VOCABULARY

boundless flat plain, (adjective), (noun) endless area of level, treeless land

crouched down, (verb) got low to the ground by bending knees

landmarks, (n) an object or building that people use to identify a specific place

punishment, (n) action someone takes against you because you did something wrong

thoughtfully, (adverb) in a serious, careful manner

triumph, (n) a spectacular win

Monkey **wailed**, (v)

cried out in an unhappy, noisy way

witnesses, (n)

people who watch something happen



In the Real World

Find a news story or an advice column about someone who learned an important life lesson. Write a paragraph describing the situation and explain how it might have changed someone's behavior.

Competition

Hey kids!!! Send in your answers to the Activity Guide for each chapter and win great prizes, with the compliments of Vijitha Yapa Bookshops. The best entry each week will be awarded a book voucher for Rs. 1,000.

These weekly entries will also be eligible for lots of exciting prizes at 'The Monkey King' Grand Competition at the end of the serial story. (See page 9 for details)

World Association of Newspapers

