

Chapter 12 of 'The Monkey King'

Adopted from the classic Chinese tale

Breakfast Serials
Good Books Unbound

STORY SO FAR: Monkey, head of the Celestial Peach Garden, has been eating the peaches. But seven fairies sent by Jade Emperor discover the disappearance of the peaches.

Monkey quickly realized that if he did not act quickly, the fairies were going to report his theft of the peaches to the Jade Emperor!

In a blink, he transformed back to himself and jumped down from the tree.

"Thieves! Thieves!" he yelled at the seven fairies. "How dare you steal my peaches!"

The fairies fell trembling to their knees. "Master, we are not thieves!" they cried. "We were sent by the Jade Emperor to fetch peaches for the Peach Banquet!"

"Ah," said Monkey, becoming instantly friendly. "So you serve the Jade Emperor?"

"Yes, master." "Well, well. Get up and tell me about this Peach Banquet. What is it?"

"It's the biggest banquet ever given by the Jade Emperor. It is held once every thousand years at the Jade Pond," one of the fairies replied timidly.

"Who will be there?" "Great Buddha, for one. Goddess Guan-yin for another. And many others, such as the Emperors of the Four Quarters, the Five Spirits of the Pole Star. . .

All the important high beings will be there."

"All the important beings?" Monkey snapped. "Then why haven't I been invited? I am the Magnificent Monkey King, head of the Celestial Peach Garden, am I not? How dare the Jade Emperor not invite me?"

"I don't know," said a fairy, beginning to tremble before Monkey's anger.

"Very well," said Monkey, "Since he didn't invite me, I shall invite myself." He straightened his court hat and robes and groomed his fur. But then, out of the corner of his eye, he saw the seven fairies edging away.

Monkey lifted a hand, recited a magic formula, and shouted, "Stay!"

The fairies froze in mid-motion.

Monkey laughed. "That will keep you for a while," he told them. "And now for the banquet!" He somersaulted out of the Peach Garden and headed for the Jade Pond.

As he was hurrying along he saw an old goddess in elegant court clothing riding a cloud in front of him.

Monkey ran after her. "Respectable goddess, where are you going?" he called.

"To the Jade Pond," the goddess replied.

Monkey goes to a Banquet

A *Breakfast Serials* story

"I, Lotus-Foot Immortal, have been invited to the Jade Emperor's Peach Banquet," she said proudly.

Monkey feigned surprise. "Ah, haven't you heard? Jade Emperor has asked all the guests to go to the Cloud Palace instead of the Jade Pond this time. It's a little further away, but it's more spacious."

"Really?" said the goddess. "Then I had better hurry or I will be late." With that she turned her cloud about and flew off in the opposite direction.

As soon as she had gone, Monkey transformed himself into an identical twin of Lotus-Foot Immortal. "Clever monkey!" Monkey congratulated himself. "Now you are invited!" Then he headed for Jade Pond.

When Monkey King got there, however, no guests had arrived. Instead, servants were running back and forth carrying dishes and refreshments, going over the last details for the great banquet.

Monkey was wondering what to do when he smelled something truly marvellous. It was a fragrance sweeter than honey, light as fine air, delicate as the scent of the rare green rose. It was coming from the kitchen.

He hurried over to it and there, bubbling over a small

flame, he saw an immense silver pot. It bore a label: LAUGHING LIQUID.

Monkey listened. Sure enough, the bubbling liquid made a sound like laughter. He closed his eyes and breathed in the aroma. It so tickled his nose, he giggled.

Oh, he thought, for just one tiny taste!

Monkey checked the kitchen door. No one was watching. He reached into the pot, put the tip of his little finger into the liquid, and licked it. Delicious!

But then Monkey tittered. Wanting another taste, he put his paw in the liquid and scooped out a mouthful. A delectable current flowed down his tongue, his throat, his stomach, until it seemed to reach everywhere inside his body.

But then Monkey chuckled.

Wanting still more, he put his whole head into the pot and drank and drank and drank. Within moments nothing of the liquid was left.

Feeling a little giddy, Monkey sat on the floor.

The next moment he began to laugh.

He tried to stop, but he couldn't. It started with little laughs, chortles, giggles, snickers and chuckles. Very quickly the laughs became bigger.

Soon Monkey was guffawing, belly laughing, slapping his legs, howling, whatever kind of laugh there was, Monkey was bursting with them all and could not stop.

In the midst of his laughter a great gong sounded. Then the booming voice of the Jade Emperor could be heard: "Let the Peach Banquet begin! Bring in the Laughing Liquid. We will each have a drop. It shall give us all a touch of glee!"

(To be continued next week...)

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CHAPTER 12

Activity Guide



Just the Facts

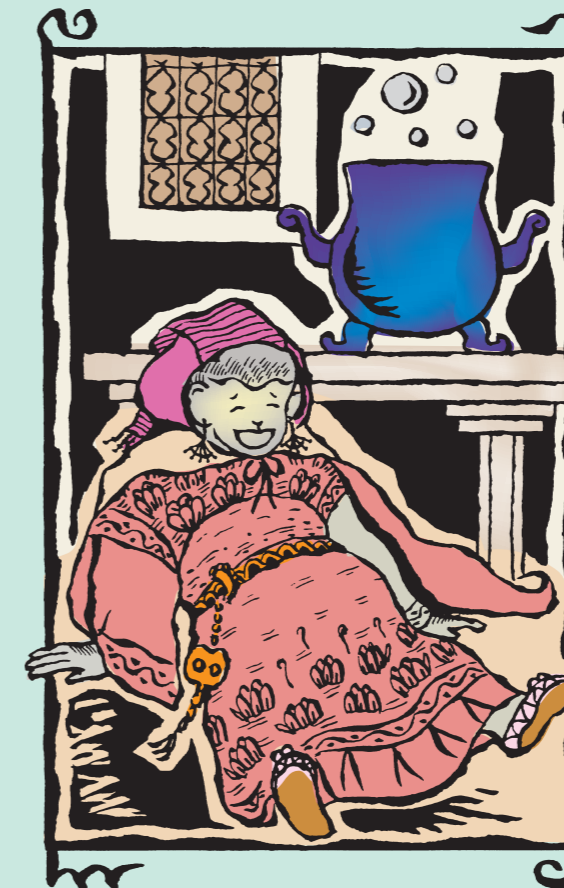
1. Why were the fairies gathering the peaches?
2. Who did Monkey turn himself into, in order to get into the banquet?
3. What was the label on the silver pot Monkey found in the kitchen?

Between the Lines

4. Which "high beings" were invited to the banquet?
5. How did Monkey keep the fairies from reporting his theft to the Jade Emperor?
6. How did Monkey react when he drank the Laughing Liquid?
7. How much of the Laughing Liquid was each guest supposed to receive?

Let's Discuss

8. Why did Monkey drink all the Laughing Liquid?
9. Should Monkey have gone to the banquet? Why or why not?
10. Make a prediction: What will happen when Monkey arrives at the banquet?



VOCABULARY

banquet, (noun)
a large fancy meal for many people

chortles, (n)
excited laughter

edging away, (verb)
moving in a gradual way

froze in mid-motion, (v)
stopped suddenly

groomed his fur, (v)
cleaned and combed

guffawing, (v)
very loud laughter

snickers, (n)
laughter that is being hidden

tremble, (v)
to shake with fear



USE IN NEWS FOUNDATION

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Competition

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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)

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