

ILLUSION

Once upon a time, in a land called Gaway Drashi Yegy, were a man and his wife who were farmers. They were of gentle disposition, honest character, industrious at their work, and happy to give charity. To them was born a beautiful and attractive son. They said, "We're grateful that god gave us this son." Not only did they take care of him as dearly as their own very hearts and eyes, but they lived their lives with ever more faith in god above and giving ever more alms to beggars below.

One day they lay their son down at the foot of a tree in the orchard. They picked fruit from above in the tree and piled them at the foot. That evening some monkeys that were in the orchard imitated the couple and picked many fruits piling them at the foot of the tree. The next day the couple saw that pieces of fruit had piled up of their own accord. They said, "Again this is due to the grace of god," and they were very happy.

Since the couple had no farm work to do that day, they gave their son his first haircut, and then, while talking about the sweet taste and size of the fruit, they fell asleep.

Suddenly they awoke with a fright from their sleep. A troop of monkeys had run off to their own place. The couple saw the monkeys had plucked off their own beloved son's head, and dropped it on the ground. "Dear god," they said, "if the monkeys had not picked the fruit a few days ago, would this have happened?" and they fainted dead away.

—Chab 'gag Rdo rje tshe ring, *Qinghai Folk Literature* 1, 1991.