

The Love of a Monkey Mother



Long, long time ago, there was a monkey mother and her children living in a forest. The children loved one another. They lived and played in harmony and happiness. However, the youngest monkey was rather naughty, and often argued with the others, including his mother.

One day, there was a huge bush fire. All animals including the monkeys tried to escape from the fire. This was the first time that the youngest monkey saw a bush fire. He found that the fire was very beautiful and interesting. He argued why they had to leave, not stay to watch a rare show. However, there was no time to explain, and the mother had to lead her children running away from the fire. The young monkey eventually had to follow the family, but with dissatisfaction.

Later, the monkeys arrived at a brook with very strong currents. There was no way to go to the other side of the forest except crossing the spring. This was difficult for the children but not for the mother. She found a creeper plant and made a strong rope out of it. After tying one end of the rope to a tree and the other to her body, the mother swung across the spring. However, the rope was just long enough for her to reach a branch of a tree on the other side. The fire was spreading too quickly. The mother asked the children to move by clinging, one by one, along the rope then step over her body to climb onto the tree. All monkeys, except the youngest, had arrived at the other side.

- “How colourful the fire is!” The youngest monkey said.
- “Brother! Hurry up!” one monkey yelled.
- “It is very bright, sister! I haven’t seen it before.”
- “Brother! Mum is too tired now.”

At last, the young monkey clang on the rope. However, to show his disappointment, he stepped heavily on the mother’s body before reaching a tree branch. A little crack was heard from her backbone, the mother felt paralysed. Her arms loosened from the tree branch. She fell on a rock and died instantly. The rope still tied her body to the tree...

It was told that, the mother monkey was a previous incarnation of the Sakya-Muni Buddha, and the young monkey was that of Devadata.

Based on a story in “Hoa-Nien”, a monthly journal of GDPT Dalat (1960?)

