Wearing clothes of golden brocade,
Waving a jade–handled whisk.
Wearing clothes of golden brocade
He feasted in pavilions by the Jasper Pool;
Waving a jade–handled whisk
He dusted the steps of the purple palaces.
At his side hung an immortal's tablet;
And on his feet were sandals.
He was a true winged adept,
Elegant and remarkable.
Having won immortality via practice he lived in a wonderful land,
Cultivating eternal life and escaping from worldly dust.
The holy priest did not recognize the stranger on Vulture Peak,
There comes the Gold–crested Immortal of yesteryear.

The Great Sage Monkey did, however, recognize him. "Master," said Monkey, "this is the Great Gold–crested Immortal who lives at the Jade Truth Temple at the foot of Vulture Peak. He is here to greet us. Only then did Sanzang realize who he was and step forward to salute him.

"You have finally arrived here this year," replied the Great Immortal with a smile. "I was fooled by the Bodhisattva Guanyin. Ten years ago she went to the East at the Buddha's command to find the Pilgrim who would fetch the scriptures. She told me then he would be here within two or three years. I have been waiting for years on end with no news of you at all. I never thought that it would be this year before we met."

Putting his hands together in front of his chest, Sanzang replied, "I am very grateful to you for your kindness, Great Immortal, very grateful." Sanzang and his three disciples led the horse and carried the baggage with them into the Taoist temple, where they were introduced to all the Great Immortals there. Tea and a vegetarian meal were then ordered, and the Taoist boys were told to heat scented water for the holy monks to bathe in before climbing to the Buddha land. Indeed:

When achievements are complete it is right to bathe;
The fundamental nature has been trained to be in tune with innate truth.
Many thousand troubles and difficulties and today:
The nine prohibitions and triple surrender lead to renewal.
The monsters all done with, they climb to the Buddha land;
With demons eliminated they see the Sramana.
Dirt and filth now washed away, they are wholly pure;
Returning to the fundamental, their bodies are imperishable.

(Sramana: designation for enlightened novice monk)
By the time master and disciples had bathed the day was drawing to a close. They spent the night in the Jade Truth Temple.

The next morning the Tang Priest changed into his brocade cassock, put on his Vairocana mitre and grasped his monastic staff in his hand to climb the steps of the main hall and take his leave of the Great Immortal. "Yesterday you were in rags," the Great Immortal said with a smile, "but today you are dressed in splendor. I can see from your appearance that you are indeed a son of the Buddha." Sanzang then bowed in farewell.

"Wait a moment," the Great Immortal said. "I will see you off."

"There's no need for you to see us off," Monkey replied. "I know the way."

"What you know," said the Great Immortal, "is the way by cloud. The holy monk has never gone by cloud. He must go by the overland way."

"You're right," replied Monkey. "Although I've been here several times I've always come and gone by cloud. I've never come here on foot. If there's an overland route I'll trouble you to see us along it. My master is very serious about worshipping the Buddha, so I'd be very grateful if you could hurry up about it." The Great Immortal chuckled as he took the Tang Priest by hand and led the Incense to the gate of the Dharma. The way led not out by the temple's front entrance but through the main hall and out through the back gate.

Pointing towards Vulture Peak, the Great Immortal said, "Holy monk, do you see the auspicious light of many colours and the richly textured aura in the sky? That is the summit of Vulture Peak, the holy territory of the Lord Buddha." As soon as he saw it the Tang Priest bowed low.

"Master," said Brother Monkey with a smile, "we haven't got to the place for bowing yet. As the saying goes, 'The mountain may be in view, but your horse will collapse before you get there.' We're still quite a long way from the place, so why start bowing now? If you bow all the way from here to the top, however many times will you have to hit your head on the ground?"

"Holy monk," said the Great Immortal, "You, the Great Sage, Marshal Tian Peng, and the Curtain-raising General have now reached the blessed land and seen Vulture Peak. I am going back now." Sanzang took his leave of the Great Immortal and continued on his way.

The Great Sage led the Tang Priest and the others slowly up Vulture Peak. Within a couple of miles they reached a river of mighty rolling waves some three miles wide. There was no sign of anyone anywhere around.

"Wukong," said Sanzang with alarm, "we have come the wrong way. I wonder if the Great Immortal
misdirected us. This river is so wide and the waves so big, and there are no boats to be seen. How are we to cross it?"

"He didn't send us the wrong way," replied Monkey with a smile. "Look over there. That's a bridge, isn't it? Once we're over that we'll have completed the true achievement." When the venerable elder and the others went closer to look they saw a tablet beside it on which were written the words CLOUDTOUCHING CROSSING. Now this bridge was only a single log. Indeed:

From afar it seemed to span the void like a beam of jade;  
Seen closer, the bridge was but a withered spar crossing the water.  
To bind a river and frame the sea is easier  
Than walking along the trunk of a single tree.  
The glow of a myriad rainbows spread out all around;  
A thousand lengths of fine white silk stretched to the edge of the sky.  
It was narrow, slippery and hard to cross,  
Unless one was a god who could walk on coloured clouds.

"Wukong," said Sanzang in fear and trembling, "no mortal man could cross that bridge. Let us look elsewhere to find the way."

"But this is the way," replied Monkey with a smile, "this is the way."

"Nobody's going to dare cross that even if it is the right way," said Pig with alarm. "The river's so wide, and there are those terrible waves, and all there is is that narrow, slippery tree–trunk. We couldn't take a single step."

"You all stand there while I go on it to show you," replied Monkey.

The splendid Great Sage strode forward and sprang on the single–trunk bridge. He quickly ran across to the other side, swaying as he went, and called out, "Come over, come over." The Tang Priest waved in refusal, while Pig and Friar Sand bit their fingers and said, "It's much too hard."

Monkey then ran back again from the far side and pulled at Pig. "Come with me, you idiot," he said, "come with me."

"It's too slippery, it's too slippery," said Pig, lying down on the ground. "I could never cross it. Please spare me that and let me cross by wind and mist."

Monkey held him down as he replied, "This is no place for you to be allowed to go riding wind and mist. You can only become a Buddha by crossing this bridge."
"Brother," said Pig, "I'll never make it. Honestly, I can't walk across."

As the two of them were pulling at each other and fighting, Friar Sand went over to talk them round. Only then did they let go of each other. Sanzang then looked round to see a man poling a boat towards them from downriver and shouting, "Ferry! Come aboard."

"Stop fooling around, disciples," said a delighted venerable elder. "There is a ferry—boat coming." The other three sprang to their feet and all watched together as the boat drew closer. It was a bottomless craft.

Monkey had already spotted with the golden pupils in his fiery eyes that this was the Welcoming Lord Buddha, who is also known as Ratnadhvaja, the Royal Buddha of Brightness, but instead of giving this away he just kept calling, "Over here, punt, over here."

A moment later the ferryman had punted his boat up to the bank and was again shouting, "Ferry! Come aboard!" Sanzang was once more alarmed at the sight. "Your boat has no bottom," he said, "so however could you ferry anyone across?"

"Has been famous since Chaos was first divided,
   How luckily it has been punted by me without any changes.
   It is stable in wind and stable in waves,
   Enjoying great peace with no start and no end.
   Untouched by the six types of dust, it returns to the One,
   Carries on calmly through all kinds of calamity.
   Hard it is for a bottomless boat to cross the oceans,
   But since ancient times it has ferried all creatures."

The Great Sage Monkey put his hands together in front of his chest and thanked him with the words, "I am grateful to you for your generosity in coming to welcome my master. Step aboard, Master. That boat of his may have no bottom, but it's stable, and won't capsize even in wind and waves." The venerable elder was still very doubtful, but Monkey seized him by the arms and pushed him forward. Unable to keep on his feet, the master tumbled into the water, where the ferryman grabbed hold of him at once and stood him on the boat. The master shook his clothes and stamped his feet, complaining about Monkey, who led Friar Sand and Pig to stand on board bringing the luggage and the horse with them.

Gently and strongly the Buddha pushed off, at which a corpse came floating downstream, to the horror of the venerable elder. "Don't be frightened, Master," said Monkey. "That's you."

"It's you, it's you," said Pig. Friar Sand clapped his hands as he said, "It's you, it's you!"
The boatman gave a call, then also put in, too, "It's you! Congratulations! Congratulations!" The three of them all joined in these congratulations as the ferryman punted the boat quickly and steadily over the immortal Cloud-touching Crossing. Sanzang turned around and sprang lightly ashore on the opposite bank. There is a poem about this that goes:

When the womb-born flesh and body of blood is cast aside,
The primal Shen finds kinship and love.
On this morning of actions completed and Buddhahood attained
The thirty-six kinds of dust from the past are washed away.

This was indeed what is meant by great wisdom, the boundless dharma of crossing to the other bank. When the four of them climbed the bank and looked back the bottomless boat had already disappeared, goodness knew where. Only when Brother Monkey explained that it had been the Welcoming Buddha did Sanzang find enlightenment. At once he turned round to thank his three disciples.

"Let's not exchange thanks," said Monkey. "We've helped each other. You saved us three, Master, and showed us the way to win merit so as to complete the true achievement. And we have protected you, Master, holding to the faith and helping you happily to cast off your mortal body. Master, look at the magnificent scenery ahead. Flowers, grasses, pines and bamboo, as well as phoenixes, cranes and deer. Compare it with those places where evil beings created illusions through transformation. Ask yourself which is beautiful and good, and which ugly and evil." Sanzang was full of expressions of gratitude. All of them were now light of body and cheerful as they walked up Vulture Peak. Soon the ancient Thunder Monastery could be seen:

Its rooftops touched the heavens,
Its roots joined with the Sumeru range.
Amazing peaks spread out in serried rank;
Craggy rocks formed interlocking shapes.
Under the hanging scar were wonderful plants and flowers;
Beside the winding path grew magic mushrooms and orchids.
Immortal apes were picking the fruit of the peach trees,
Like gold amid burning flames;
White cranes perched in the branches of the pines
As if they were jade creatures amid smoke.
Coloured phoenixes in pairs,
Green phoenixes two by two.
The pairs of coloured phoenixes
Brought blessings on the world as they called to the sun;
The green phoenixes two by two
Danced in the wind, a rare and wonderful sight.
On the gleaming golden tiles were figures of mandarin ducks;
The brilliantly patterned bricks were set with agate.
To East and West
Were flowers of palaces and pearls of gateways;
To North and South
Were endless precious pavilions and high buildings.
The Devaraja Hall streamed with coloured light; Purple flames rose before the Lokapalas Chamber. 
Stupas stood out, 
And fragrant were the blossoms of the udumbara tree. 
Truly this was a place so fine it might have come from heaven, 
Where the days seemed long as leisurely clouds wander around. 
Away from the mortal world, all fates came to an end; 
All kalpas went by without bringing any damage to the Dharma hall.

As master and disciples walked freely and at their ease up to the summit of Vulture Peak lay people could be seen under the green pines, and pious men and women amid the jade–coloured cypresses. The venerable elder bowed to them politely, whereupon all the lay men and women, monks and nuns all hastened to put their hands together and say to him, "Do not bow to us, holy monk. Come back and talk with us when you have seen Sakyamuni."

"It's a bit early for that," replied Monkey with a grin. "Let's go and worship the boss."

The venerable elder waved his arms and performed a ritual dance as he followed Monkey straight to the gates of the Thunder Monastery, where four great vajrapanis greeted them with the words, "Have you arrived now, holy monk?"

"Yes," Sanzang replied with a bow, "Your disciple Xuanzang has arrived." Having given this reply he was about to go in through the gateway.

"Please wait for a moment, holy monk," the vajrapanis said. "Let us report before you come in." The vajrapanis sent a report of the Tang Priest's arrival to the four great vajrapanis on the middle gates, who in turn reported it to the inner gates, inside which were divine monks making offerings.

As soon as they heard of the Tang Priest's arrival they all hurried to the Mahavira Hall, where they announced to the Tathagata Sakyamuni Buddha, "The holy monk from the Tang Court has arrived at your noble monastery to fetch the scriptures."

The Lord Buddha was very pleased. He called together his Eight Bodhisattvas, Four Vajrapanis, Five Hundred Arhats, Three Thousand Protectors, Eleven Heavenly Shiners and Eighteen Guardians, who drew themselves up in two lines and passed on the Buddha's command summoning the Tang Priest to enter. Thus it was that the invitation was sent down from one level to the next: "Let the holy monk come in." Observing the requirements of ritual, the Tang Priest went in through the gate with Wukong and Wujing, who were leading the horse and carrying the luggage. Indeed:

In the past he had struggled to fulfill his commission
After leaving the emperor at the steps of the throne.
At dawn he had climbed mountains in mist and in dew;
At dusk he had slept on rocks amid the clouds.
He had carried his stick across three thousand rivers,
And climbed up countless crags with his monastic staff.
His every thought had been set on the true achievement,
And today he was finally to see the Tathagata.

As the four of them arrived in front of the Mahavira Hall they all prostrated themselves and kowtowed to the Tathagata, then to their left and right. After they had each completed three rounds of Worship they then knelt before the Buddha to present their passport. When the Tathagata had read it carefully he handed it back to Sanzang, who bowed his head low and reported, "Your disciple Xuanzang has made the long journey to your precious monastery at the command of the Great Tang emperor to beg for the true scriptures that will save all living beings. I implore the Lord Buddha in his goodness to grant them at once so that I may return to my country."

The Tathagata then opened his compassionate mouth and in the great mercy of his heart said to Sanzang, "Your Eastern land is in the Southern Continent of Jambu. As the sky is lofty there, the soil deep, its products many, and the people multitudinous there is much covetousness, murder, debauchery, lying, deception and dishonesty. They do not follow the Buddhist teaching, do not turn towards good destinies, and do not honour the sun, moon and stars or value the five grains. They are not loyal, filial, righteous or kind. In the delusion of their hearts they mislead themselves, cheating on weights and measures, taking life and killing animals, thus creating such boundless evil karma and such a superabundance of sin and evil that they bring the catastrophe of hell on themselves. That is why they must fall for ever into the dark underworld to suffer the torments of being hammered, smashed, ground and pounded, or are reborn as animals. Many of them take the shape of furry, horned creatures to pay back the debts they owe from earlier lives and feed others with their own flesh. It is for such reasons that some fall into the Avici Hell, from which they never emerge to be reborn. Although Confucius established the doctrine of benevolence, righteousness, correct behavior and wisdom, and although successive emperors have applied the penalties of imprisonment, exile strangulation and beheading, none of this affected those stupid, benighted, self-indulgent and unrestrained people. Why? I have Three Stores of scriptures that offer deliverance from suffering and release from disaster. Of these Three Stores one is the Store of Dharma that deals with Heaven; one is the Store of Sastras that deal with the Earth, and one is the Store of Sutras that can save ghosts. There are thirty-five scriptures altogether, in 15,144 scrolls. These are indeed the path to the truth, the gateway to goodness. They include everything about the astronomy, geography, personalities, birds beasts trees, flowers, objects of use and human affairs of the world's four continents. Now that you have come from afar I would present them all to you, but the people of your country are stupid and coarse. They are slanderers of the truth who cannot understand the mysteries of our teachings. Ananda, Kasyapa," he called, "take the four of them to the foot of the jewel tower and give them a vegetarian meal. After the meal open up the pavilion, select a few rolls from each of the thirty-five scriptures in my Three Stores, and tell them to propagate these scriptures in the East, where they may eternally grant their great goodness."

Acting on the orders of the Buddha the two arhats then led the four pilgrims to the bottom of the tower, where no end of rare and wonderful jewels and treasures were set out. Here the divinities who made offerings set out a vegetarian banquet, with immortal food, immortal delicacies, immortal tea, immortal fruit,
and every kind of culinary delight not to be found in the mortal world. Master and disciples bowed their heads to the ground in thanks for the Buddha's kindness and proceeded to eat to their hearts' content. Indeed

Precious flames and golden light dazzled the eye,
While the rare incense and delicacies were marvelously fine.
The thousand-storied golden pavilion was infinitely lovely,
And pure sounded immortals' music on the ear.
Meatless food and magic flowers of the sort that are rare on earth,
Fragrant teas and exotic dishes that give eternal life.
After a long period of enduring a thousand kinds of suffering,
Today comes the glorious happiness of the Tao completed.

This was a piece of good fortune for Pig, and a great, benefit to Friar Sand as they ate their fill of the food in the Buddha's land that gave eternal life and new flesh and bones for old. The two arhats kept the four of them company till the meal was over, after which they went to the treasure pavilion, where the doors were opened for them to go in and look. Over this all was a thousandfold aura of coloured light and auspicious vapors, while brilliant mists and clouds of good omen wafted all around. All over the scripture shelves and on the outside of the cases were pasted red labels on which were neatly written the titles of the scriptures. They were the

Nirvana sutra 748 rolls
Bodhisattva sutra 1,021 rolls
Akasagarbha sutra 400 rolls
Surangama sutra 110 rolls
Collection of sutras on the meaning of grace 50 rolls
Determination sutra 140 rolls
Ratnagarbha sutra 45 rolls
Avatamsaka sutra 500 rolls
Sutra on Worshipping Bhutatathata 90 rolls
Mahaprajnaparamita sutra 916 rolls
Mahaprabhasa sutra 300 rolls
Adbhuta–dharma sutras 1,110 rolls
Vimalakirti sutra 170 rolls
The Three Sastras 270 rolls
Diamond sutra 100 rolls
Saddharma sastra
Mahaprabhasa sutra 300 rolls
Adbhuta–dharma sutras 1,110 rolls
Vimalakirti sutra 170 rolls
The Three Sastras 270 rolls
Diamond sutra 100 rolls
Saddharma sastra
Buddhacaritakavya sutra 800 rolls
Pancanaga sutra 32 rolls
Bodhisattva–vinaya sutra 116 rolls
Ananda and Kasyapa led the Tang Priest to read the titles of all the scriptures.

"You have come here from the East, holy monk," they said to him. "Have you brought us any presents? Hand them over right now, then we can give you the scriptures."

When Sanzang heard this he said, "Your disciple Xuanzang has come a very long way, and I did not bring any with me."

"That's very fine," the two arhats said with a laugh. "If we hand the scriptures over for nothing, they'll be passed down through the ages and our successors will have to starve to death." Monkey could not stand hearing them talking tough like this and refusing to hand the scriptures over, so he shouted, "Let's go and report them to the Tathagata, Master. We'll get him to give me the scriptures himself."

"Shut up!" said Kasyapa. "Where do you think you are, acting up like this? Come here and take the scriptures." Pig and Friar Sand, who were keeping their own tempers under control, calmed Monkey down.

They turned back to accept the scriptures, which were packed one by one into the luggage. Some of it was put on the horse's back, and the rest tied up as two carrying–pole loads that Pig and Friar Sand shouldered. They all then returned to the Buddha's throne, kowtowed, thanked the Tathagata and went straight out. They bowed twice to every Buddha and every Bodhisattva they met. When they reached the main entrance they bowed to the bhiksus, the bhiksunis, the laymen and the laywomen, taking their leave of each one. Then they hurried back down the mountain.

The story tells not of them but of the Ancient Buddha Dipamkara, who had been quietly listening in the library when the scriptures were handed over. He understood perfectly well that Ananda and Kasyapa had handed over wordless scriptures. "Those stupid monks from the East didn't realize that those were wordless scriptures," he thought with a smile to himself. "The holy monks journey across all those mountains and..."
rivers will be a complete waste. Who is in attendance here?” he called, and the arhat Suklavira stepped forward.

"Use your divine might," Dipamkara instructed him, "and go after the Tang Priest like a shooting star. Take the wordless scriptures from him and tell him to come back to fetch the true scriptures." The arhat Suklavira then flew off on a storm wind that roared away from the Thunder Monastery as he gave a great display of his divine might. That splendid wind really was

A warrior from the Buddha's presence,
Greater than the two wind gods of the Xuan trigram.
The angry roars from his divine orifices
Were more powerful by far than the puffs of a young girl.
This wind made
Fish and dragons lose their dens,
While the waves flowed backwards in rivers and seas.
Black apes could not present the fruit they carried;
Yellow cranes turned back to the clouds as they sought their nests.
Ugly rang the song of the red phoenix;
Raucous were the calls of the multicolored pheasants.
The branches of hoary pines were broken
As the flowers of the udumbara blew away.
Every cane of green bamboo bowed low;
All the blooms of golden lotus swayed.
The sound of the bell was carried a thousand miles
While the chanting of sutras flew lightly up the ravines.
Ruined was the beauty of flowers under the crag;
The tender shoots of plants were laid low by the path.
The brilliant phoenixes could hardly spread their wings;
White deer hid beneath the cliffs.
The heavens were heavy with fragrance
As the clear wind blew right through the clouds.

The Tang Priest was walking along when he smelt the fragrant wind, but he paid no attention to it, taking it for an auspicious sign of the Lord Buddha. Then a noise could be heard as a hand reached down from midair to lift the scriptures lightly off the horse's back, which gave Sanzang such a shock that he beat his chest and howled aloud. Pig scrambled along in pursuit, Friar Sand guarded the carrying poles loaded with scriptures, and Brother Monkey flew after the arhat. Seeing that Monkey had almost caught up with him, and frightened that the merciless cudgel would make no bones about wounding him badly, the arhat tore the bundle of scriptures to shreds and flung it into the dust. When Monkey saw the bundle falling in pieces that were being scattered by the fragrant wind he stopped chasing the arhat and brought his cloud down to look after the scriptures. The arhat Suklavira put the wind and the clouds away, then went back to report to Dipamkara.

When Pig, who was also in pursuit, saw the scriptures falling he helped Monkey to collect them up and carry them back to the Tang Priest. "Disciples," the Tang Priest exclaimed, tears pouring from his eyes, "even in
this world of bliss evil demons cheat people." After gathering up the scattered scriptures in his arms Friar Sand opened one of them up and saw that it was as white as snow: not a word was written on it.

Quickly he handed it to Sanzang with the remark, "There's nothing in this scroll, Master." Monkey opened out another scroll to find that it had nothing written in it either. Pig opened another and it too had nothing in it.

"Open them all for us to examine," said Sanzang. Every single scroll was blank paper.

"We Easterners really do have no luck," he said, sighing and groaning. "What point is there in fetching wordless scriptures like these? How could I ever face the Tang emperor? I will have no way of avoiding execution for the crime of lying to my sovereign."

Monkey, who already understood what had happened, then said to the Tang Priest, "Say no more, Master. Ananda and Kasyapa gave us these scrolls of blank paper because we hadn't got any presents to give them when they asked for them. Let's go back, report them to the Tathagata and get them accused of extortion."

"That's right," shouted Pig, "that's right. Let's report them." The four of them then hurried up the mountain again, and after a few steps they were rushing back to the Thunder Monastery.

Before long they were once more outside the gates of the monastery, where everyone raised their clasped hands in greeting. "Have you holy monks come to exchange your scriptures?" they asked with smiles. Sanzang nodded and expressed his thanks. The vajrapanis did not block them, but let them go straight in to the Mahavira Hall.

"Tathagata," yelled Monkey, "our master and the rest of us have had to put up with endless monsters, demons, troubles and hardships to get here from the East to worship you. You gave the orders for the scriptures to be handed over, but Ananda and Kasyapa didn't do so because they were trying to extort things from us. They conspired and deliberately let us take away blank paper versions without a single word written on them. But what's the point in taking those? I beg you to have them punished, Tathagata."

"Stop yelling," replied the Lord Buddha with a smile. "I already know that they asked you for presents. But the scriptures cannot be casually passed on. Nor can they be taken away for nothing. In the past bhiksys and holy monks went down the mountain and recited these scriptures to the family of the elder Zhao in the land of Sravasti. This ensured peace and safety for the living and deliverance for the dead members of the family. All that was asked for was three bushels and three pecks of granular gold. I said they had sold the scriptures too cheap, so I saw to it that Zhao's sons and grandsons would be poor. You were given blank texts because you came here to fetch them empty−handed. The blank texts are true, wordless scriptures, and they really are good. But as you living beings in the East are so deluded and have not achieved enlightenment we'll have to give you these ones instead. Ananda, Kasyapa," he called, "fetch the true scriptures with words at once."
Choose a few rolls from each title to give them, then come back here and tell me how many."

The two arhats then led the four pilgrims to the foot of the library building and once again asked the Tang Priest for a present. Having nothing else to offer, he ordered friar Sand to bring out the begging bowl of purple gold and presented it with both hands. "Your disciple is poor and has come a very long way," he said, "and I did not bring any presents with me. This bowl was given to me by the Tang emperor with his own hands to beg for food with on my journey. I now offer it to you as a token of my heartfelt feelings. I beg you arhats not to despise it but to keep it. When I return to my court I shall report this to the Tang emperor, who will certainly reward you richly. I only ask you to give me the true scriptures that have words to save me from failing in my imperial mission and making this long, hard journey for nothing."

Ananda accepted the bowl with no more than a hint of a smile. The warriors guarding the precious library building, the kitchen staff responsible for the spices and the arhats in charge of the library rubbed each other's faces, patted each other's backs, flicked each other with their fingers and pulled faces.

"Disgraceful," they all said with grins, "disgraceful. Demanding presents from the pilgrims who've come to fetch the scriptures!" A moment later Ananda was frowning with embarrassment but still holding the bowl and not letting go. Only then did Kasyapa go into the library to check the scriptures through one by one and give them to Sanzang.

"Disciples," called Sanzang, "take a good look at them, not like last time." The three of them took the rolls and examined them one by one. All had words. 5,048 rolls were handed over, the total in a single store. They were neatly packed up and put on the horse, and those left over were made into a carrying−pole load for Pig to take. Friar Sand carried their own luggage, and as Brother Monkey led the horse the Tang Priest took his staff, pushed his Vairocana mitre into position, shook his brocade cassock, and went happily into the presence of the Tathagata. Indeed:

Sweet taste the True Scriptures of the Great Store,
Created fine and majestic by the Tathagata.
Remember what Xuanzang suffered to climb this mountain:
Ananda's greed was something ridiculous.
What they did not notice at first Dipamkara helped them to see;
Later the scriptures were real and they then found peace.
Successful now, they would take the scriptures to the East;
Where all could be refreshed by their life−giving richness.

Ananda and Kasyapa led the Tang Priest to see the Tathagata, who ascended his lotus throne and directed the two great arhats Dragon−queller and Tiger−subduer to strike the cloud−ringing stone chimes that summoned all the Three Thousand Buddhas, Three Thousand Protectors, Eight Vajrapanis, Four Bodhisattvas, Five Hundred Arhats, Eight Hundred Bhiksus, the host of laymen, bhiksunis, laywomen, and the greater and lesser honoured ones and holy monks of every cave, every heaven, the blessed lands and the magic mountains. Those who were supposed to sit were asked to ascend their precious thrones, and those who were supposed to stand stood on either side. All of a sudden heavenly music rang out from afar and magical sounds wafted around. The air was full of countless beams of auspicious light and of aura upon aura as all
the Buddhas gathered together to pay their respects to the Tathagata.

"How many rolls of scripture have you given them, Ananda and Kasyapa?" the Tathagata asked. "Please tell me the numbers one by one."

The two arhats then reported, "We are now handing over for the Tang court the

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sutra</th>
<th>Number of Rolls</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nirvana sutra</td>
<td>400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bodhisattva sutra</td>
<td>360</td>
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<tr>
<td>Akasagarbha sutra</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Surangama sutra</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collection of sutras on the meaning of grace</td>
<td>40 rolls</td>
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From the thirty-five scriptures in all of the stores we have selected 5,048 rolls to give to the holy monk. These will be kept and handed down in Tang. They have now all been packed neatly and put on the horse or made into carrying–pole loads. The pilgrims are only waiting to express their thanks."

Sanzang and his three followers then tethered the horse, put down the loads, joined their hands in front of
their chests and bowed in worship.

"The achievement of these scriptures is immeasurable," the Tathagata said to the Tang Priest, "Although they are the source of foreknowledge and reflection for my school they are truly the origin of all Three Schools. If they reach your Southern Continent of Jambudvipa they must not be treated with disrespect when they are shown to all living beings. Nobody who has not bathed, avoided eating meat and observed the prohibitions may open the rolls. Treasure them. Honour them. They include the esoteric mysteries of the way of immortality and wonderful methods for discovering all transformations." Kowtowing in thanks, Sanzang faithfully accepted these instructions and determined to carry them out, did three more circuits of homage round the Lord Buddha then with dutiful and sincere obedience accepted the scriptures and went out with them through the third of the monastery gates, where he thanked all the holy beings one by one again. Of him we will say no more.

After sending the Tang Priest on his way the Tathagata dissolved the assembly that had been called to pass on the scriptures. The Bodhisattva Guanyin then stepped forward from the side, put her hands together and submitted to the lord Buddha, "It has been fourteen years from the time when your disciple went to the East that year to find the man who would fetch the scriptures to his success today. That makes 5,040 days. May the World-honoured One allow the holy monks to go back East from the West within eight days, so as to complete the number of rolls in one store, and then your disciple may report his mission as completed."

"What you say is quite right," replied the Tathagata with delight. "You are permitted to report the completion of your mission." With that he instructed the Eight Vajrapanis, "You are to use your divine might to escort the holy monks back to the East, where they will hand the true scriptures over to be kept there. After escorting the holy monks back, you may return to the West. This must be done within eight days in order to match the number of rolls in one store. There must be no disobedience or delay."

The vajrapanis caught up with the Tang Priest. "Come with us, scripture-fetchers," they called; and the Tang Priest and the others became light and strong as they floated up on clouds after the vajrapanis. Indeed:

To see one's buddha-nature, to have one's mind awakened, they visited the Buddha;
All meritorious deeds be finished completely and all spiritual act done fully, they flew aloft.

If you do not know how they passed on the scriptures after returning to the East, listen to the explanation in the next installment.
PART 15  Whole Procedure of Alchemy Practice

15-1. Chuang Tzu / Chapter 4 The Human World

Yen Huei went to see Confucius, and asked leave to take his departure.

"Where are you going to?" asked the master.

"I am going to the State of Wei," replied Yuen Huei.

"And what do you propose to do there?" continued Confucius.

"I have heard that the ruler of Wei State is in the vigor of his years, and consults none but himself as to his course. He deals with his state as if the people were of no account, and has no perception of his own faults. He thinks lightly of human lives, and their corpses lie about like so much under growth in a marsh. The people know not where to turn for help. I have heard you, master, say, ‘Leave the state that is well governed; go to the state where disorder prevails. At the door of a physician there are many who are sick.’ I wish through what I have heard from you to think out some methods of dealing with Wei State, if peradventure the evils of the state may be cured."

Confucius said, "Alas! The risk is that you may go to suffer the punishment! For Tao should abstain from something disorderly. Otherwise disorder leads to the excessive. Excessiveness leads to perturbation. From perturbation comes apprehension, and from apprehension comes the stage of being beyond hope. The perfect men of old first sought to restore and install his own, and afterwards they sought to restore and install others. Before one has settled what he seeks to restore and install, where is there any leisure to attend to the cure of the others’ evils?"

"Moreover, do you know wherein Te becomes liable to be dissipated, and wherein knowledge proceeds to come into being? The dissipation of Te is due to the pursuit of the name, and the arising of knowledge originates from contention. The pursuit of name provides the source for men overthrowing one another; the knowledge becomes a weapon of contention. Both are instruments of evil, and should not become conducting principle to be on free course."

"Supposing one's virtue to be great and his integrity firm, yet both of these quality falls short of affecting the wills of others whom he wishes to influence; and supposing he is free from the disposition to strive for name and reputation, yet such quality falls short of affecting the minds of others—when in such a case he forcibly insists on benevolence, righteousness and code of conduct, setting them forth before the tyrant, then he will be easily understood as showing up his excellences at the expense of others’ ugliness. He should be called the one who brings harm to others. He who brings harm to others is sure to be harmed by others in return. Indeed you will hardly escape being harmed by others!"

"Further, if perchance he takes pleasure in men of worth and hates those of an opposite character, what is the use of you seeking to make yourself out to be different from men around him? Unless you keep silent, he, as king and ruler, will take advantage of you for victory by applying his eloquence. Your
eyes will be dazzled, you will try to compromise with him, your words will hedge about, your expression will show humbleness and you will lend your heart to conform to his. In this way you behave as though using fire to save fire, and water to water, which is known as increasing what is already much. And if things proceed in such way, there will be no hope of rescue. Furthermore, failing in arousing his belief, you make your sincere advice all the same, you are sure to die at the hands of such a tyrant.”

15-2. Chuang Tzu / Chapter 20 The Mountain Trees (山木)

Chuang Tzu was walking in the mountains, when he saw a huge tree with bulky branches and luxuriant foliage. A wood-cutter paused by its side but made no move to cut it down. When Chuang Tzu asked the reason, he replied, "There is nothing it could be used for!" Chuang Tzu said, "Because of its worthlessness, this tree is able to live out its natural term of years Heaven gave it."

Down out from the mountain, Chuang Tzu lodged in the house of an old friend. The friend, delighted, ordered his waiting-lad to kill a goose and prepare it for entertaining Chuang tzu. "One of the geese can cackle and the other cannot," said the waiting-lad, "May I ask, please, which of them shall I kill?"

"Kill the one that can not cackle," said the host.

Next day, his disciples asked Chuang Tzu, saying, "Yesterday the tree on the mountain would live out its years because of its worthlessness. Now our host's goose got killed because of its worthlessness. Which position, Master, would you prefer to take in such a case?"

Chuang Tzu laughed and said, 'I would prefer to be in a position halfway between worth and worthlessness. That would seem to be the right position, but it would not be so, for still it would not put me beyond being involved in trouble; whereas one who takes his ride upon the Tao and Te, and goes ease drifting and wandering, shall be not exposed to such a contingency. He is above the reach both of praise and of detraction; now he mounts aloft like a dragon, now he keeps beneath like a snake; he is transforming with the changing character of the time, and is not willing to addict himself to any partiality; now high and now low, he is in harmony with all and takes it as his principle; he enjoys himself at ease with the Author of all things; he dominates things as things, and is not a thing to be dominated—where is his liability to be involved in trouble? This was the principle Shan Nung and Yellow Emperor held onto."

As to the circumstances of the ten thousand things and the drifting practice of human world, it is not so with them in this fashion. Union brings on separation; success, overthrow; sharp corners, the use of the file; honor, critical remarks; active exertion, failure; worthiness, being schemed against; inferiority, being despised and swindled:—how could be done to be beyond the reach of the trouble? Alas! Remember this, my disciples. Let your abode be here—only in the realm of Tao and Te.”
I-liao from south of the market (Shih Nan-tzu)² called upon the marquis of Lu. He found him have worried look on the face. "You respectable bears the worried look. What is the reason?" asked Shih Nan-tzu.

The marquis said, 'I have studied the ways of the former kings, and carried on the undertakings left by my predecessors. I reverence the spirits of the departed and honor the men of worth, doing this with personal devotion, and without the slightest intermission. Notwithstanding, I can not seem to do without disaster and trouble, and that is why I'm so worried.'

15-3. Chuang Tzu / Chapter 21 Thian Tzu-Fang  （田子方）

Thian Tzu-Fang¹, sitting in attendance on Marquis Wen of Wei², several times quoted the words of Hsh’i Kung³ (praised). Marquis Wen asked, "Is Sh'i Kung your teacher?"

"No," replied Tzu-fang. "He comes from the same neighborhood as I do. Speaking and talking in a most reasonable and appropriate way - that's why I praise him."

"Then you have no teacher?" asked Marquis Wen.

"I have," said Tzu-fang.

"Who is your teacher?"

"Master Tung-kwo Shun-tzu," said Tzu-fang.

"Then why have you never praised him?" asked Marquis Wen.

Tzu-fang said, "to be the kind of man he is sincerity and simplicity; of appearance of common human being yet his Heaven keeps empty. To follow along with what is natural he keeps in preservation of the True; pure and void of any contents he accommodates all things. Whatever do without Tao, he can put on the right accommodation to effect the natural enlightenment, and in consequence their intentions melt away and disappear. But how could I be fit to find the sufficient words in praise of him!"

Tzu-fang retired from the room and Marquis Wen, at a loss, sat for the rest of the day in silence. Then he called to the ministers who stood in attendance on him and said, "How unfathomable he is - the gentleman of Complete Te! Formerly I thought the words of the wisdom of the sages, and the practices of benevolence and righteousness, to be the utmost we could reach to. Since I have heard about Tzu-fang's teacher, my body has fallen apart and I feel no inclination to move; my mouth is manacled and I feel no inclination to speak. What I have learnt is nothing but the earth block - nothing more! This state of Wei is in truth only a burden for me!"
Wen-po Hsueh-tzu⁴, on his way to Ch’i, once lodged along the way in the state of Lu⁵. A man of Lu⁶ requested an interview with him, but Wen-po Hsueh-tzu said, "No indeed! I have heard of the gentlemen of these middle states – clear about the subject of ritual principles and righteousness but superficially shallow in their understanding of men's heart-mind. I have no wish to see any such person."

He went on to reach his destination in Ch’i, and on his way back, he lodged again in Lu when the man once more requested an interview. Wen-po Hsueh-tzu said, "When on the way to Ch’i he made an request to see me, and now on the way back he's trying again. He undoubtedly has some means by which he can 'refresh' me!"

He went out to receive the visitor and returned to his own rooms with a sigh. The following day, he received the visitor once more, and once more returned with a sigh. His servant said, "Every time you receive this visitor you come back sighing. Why is that?"

1. Thian Tzu-Fang, a worthy man in Wei state and the tutor responsible for teaching marquis Wen of Wei. His second surname is Wu Ch’u.
2. Marquis Wen of Wei, the emperor of Wei state.
3. Hsh’i Kung, a worthy man in Wei state whose family name is Hsh’I, surname Kung.
5. State of Lu, where Confucius lived.
6. Phai-li Hsi, a worthy man in Yu state, whose family name is Meng, literature name Phai-li Hsi. He made a living by feeding ox after Chin invaded and annexed Yu state. Duke Mu of Chi’in. heard of his worthiness, entrusted him with national ruling affairs.
7. Po-hun Wu-ren, a fabricated figure. Po-hun in Chinese means wandering without discernment; Wu-ren in Chinese means cherishing no sense of ego and others. Such name in Chinese has some meaning indicating man’s behavior or character already.
8. Yellow Springs, a term denoting hell in Chinese.
9. Sun-shu Ao, a famous figure in Spring and Warring times and once served as prime minister in Ch’u state.
10. Lord of Fan, the ruler of Fan state which is a small country King of Ch’u longed for annexing it.

15-4. Journey to the West / Chapter 3 （西游记）

The Four Seas and Thousand Mountains All Submit
In the Nine Hells and Ten Categories His Name Is Struck Off the Register

We have related how the Handsome Monkey King returned home in glory, bringing a large sword he had captured when he killed the Demon King of Confusion. From then on they practiced the military arts everyday. He asked the little monkeys to cut down bamboo to make spears, carve swords out of wood, and learn to use banners and whistles. They learned to advance and retreat, and build a camp with a stockade round it. They spent a lot of time playing at this.
Once Sun Wukong was sitting in his seat of meditation when he wondered: "What would happen to us if our games were taken for the real thing? What if it alarmed some human monarch or gave offence to some king of birds or beasts? They might say that we were having military training for a rebellion, and attack us with their armies. You would be no match for them with your bamboo spears and wooden swords. We must have really sharp swords and halberds. What are we to do about it?"

When the monkeys heard this they all said with alarm, "Your Majesty has great foresight, but there's nowhere we can get them." When it was the turn of four older monkeys to speak—two bare-bottomed apes and two gibbons—they came forward and said, "Your Majesty, if you want sharp weapons they can be very easily obtained."

"How could it be easy?" asked Sun Wukong.

"To the East of our mountain," they replied, "there is a lake some seventy miles wide that is the boundary of the country of Aolai. That country has a princely capital, and huge numbers of soldiers and civilians live in the city. It must have workshops for gold, silver, bronze and iron. If you went there, Your Majesty, you could either buy arms or get them made; then you could train us to use them in the defense of our mountain. This would give us long-term security." Sun Wukong was delighted with the suggestion.

"Wait here while I go there," he said.

Splendid Monkey King! He leapt on to his somersault cloud, crossed the seventy miles of lake, and saw that on the other side there was indeed a city wall, a moat, streets, markets, ten thousand houses, a thousand gates, and people coming and going in the sunlight.

"There must be ready-made weapons here," Sun Wukong thought, "and getting a few by magic would be much better than buying them." So he made a magic with his fist and said the words of the spell, sucked in some air from the Southeast, and blew it hard out again. It turned into a terrifying gale carrying sand and stones with it.

Where the thunderclouds rise the elements are in chaos;
Black fogs thick with dust cloak the earth in darkness.
Boiling rivers and seas terrify the crabs and fish;
As trees are snapped off in mountain forests tigers and wolves flee.
No business is done in any branch of commerce;
And no one is working at any kind of trade.
In the palace the king has gone to his inner quarters;
And the officials in front of the steps have returned to their offices.
The thrones of princes are all blown over;
Towers of five phoenixes are shaken to their foundations.

Where the storm blew, the prince of Aolai fled in terror, and gates and doors were shut in the streets and markets. Nobody dared to move outside. Sun Wukong landed his cloud and rushed straight through the gates of the palace to the arsenal and the military stores, opened the doors, and saw countless weapons: swords,
pikes, sabres, halberds, battleaxes, bills, scimitars, maces, tridents, clubs, bows, crossbows, forks, and spears were all there.

At the sight of them he said happily, "How many of these could I carry by myself? I'd better use the magic for dividing up my body."

Splendid Monkey King. He plucked a hair from his body, chewed it up, spat it out, made the magic with his fist, said the words of the spell, and shouted "Change!" It turned into hundreds and thousands of little monkeys, who rushed wildly about grabbing weapons. The strong ones took six or seven each and the weaker ones two or three, and between them they removed the lot. He climbed back up on the clouds, called up a gale by magic, and took all the little monkeys home with him.

The monkeys big and small of the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit were playing outside the gates of the cave when they heard the wind. At the sight of countless monkey spirits flying through the air they fled and hid. A moment later the Handsome Monkey King landed his cloud, put away his mists, shook himself, replaced his hair, and threw all the weapons into a pile beside the mountain.

"Children," he shouted, "come and get your weapons." When the monkey masses looked they saw Sun Wukong standing by himself on some level ground, and they all rushed over to him to kowtow and asked what had happened. Sun Wukong told them the whole story of how he had raised the gale and taken the weapons. After all the monkeys had thanked him they snatched sabres, grabbed swords, seized battleaxes, fought for pikes, drew bows, stretched crossbows, shouted, yelled, and so amused themselves for the rest of the day.

The next day they paraded as usual. Sun Wukong assembled all the monkey host and they numbered over forty-seven thousand. This had alarmed all the strange beasts of the mountain—wolves, monsters, tigers, leopards, deer, muntjac, river—deer, foxes, wild cats, badgers, raccoons, lions, elephants, horses, orangutans, bears, stags, wild boar, mountain cattle, antelopes, rhinoceroses, little dogs, huge dogs. The kings of various kinds of monsters, seventy—two in all, all came to pay homage to the Monkey King. They offered tribute every year and attended court in each of the four seasons. They also took part in drill and paid their seasonal grain levies. Everything was so orderly that the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit was as secure as an iron bucket or a wall of bronze. The kings of the monsters sent gongs, drums, coloured flags, helmets, and armour in great abundance, and every day there were military exercises.

One day, amid all this success, the Handsome Monkey King suddenly said to the other monkeys, "You are now expert in the bow and crossbow, and highly skilled in other weapons; but this sword of mine is too clumsy for my liking. What shall I do about it?"

The four veteran monkeys came forward and submitted a suggestion: "Your Majesty is an Immortal, so mortals' weapons are not good enough for you. We wonder if Your Majesty is able to travel underwater."

"Since hearing the Way," Sun Wukong replied, "I have mastered the seventy—two earthly transformations. My somersault cloud has outstanding magical powers. I know how to conceal myself and vanish. I can make spells and end them. I can reach the sky and find my way into the earth. I can travel under the sun or moon without leaving a shadow or go through metal or stone freely. I can't be drowned by water or burned by fire.
There's nowhere I cannot go."

"If Your Majesty has these magical powers, the stream under our iron bridge leads to the Dragon palace of the Eastern Sea. If you are willing to go down there, go and find the Dragon King and ask him for whatever weapon it is you want. Wouldn't that suit you?"

"Wait till I get back," was Sun Wukong's delighted reply.

Splendid Monkey King. He leapt to the end of the bridge and made a spell with his fist to ward off the water. Then he dived into the waves and split the waters to make way for himself till he reached the bed of the Eastern Sea. On his journey he saw a yaksha demon who was patrolling the sea.

The yaksha barred his way and asked, "What sage or divinity are you, pushing the waters aside like that? Please tell me so that I can make a report and have you properly received."

"I am the Heaven−born Sage Sun Wukong from the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit, and your old Dragon King's close neighbour. How is it you don't know me?"

When the yaksha heard this he hurried back to the crystal palace and reported, "Your Majesty, Sun Wukong, the Heaven−born Sage from the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit who says he is your neighbour, is coming to your palace." Ao Guang, the Old Dragon King of the Eastern Sea, leapt to his feet and went out to meet Sun Wukong with his dragon sons and grandsons, his prawn soldiers, and his crab generals.

"Come in, exalted Immortal," he said, taking Sun Wukong into the palace where they introduced themselves, seated him in the place of honour, and offered him tea. Then the Dragon King asked him, "Exalted Immortal, when did you find the Tao, and what magic arts did you acquire?"

"After my birth," said Sun Wukong, "I renounced the world and cultivated my conduct, and thus obtained an immortal and indestructible body. Recently I have trained my sons and grandsons to guard our cave, but unfortunately I have not yet found myself a weapon. I have long heard that my illustrious neighbour enjoys the delights of a jade palace with gate−towers of cowry, and I was sure that you must have some magic weapons to spare, so I have come especially to beg one of you."

Not wishing to refuse this request, the Dragon King sent Commander Perch to fetch a large sword and offer it to Sun Wukong.

"I don't know how to use a sword," said Sun Wukong, "so could I ask you to give me something else?" The Old Dragon King then sent Colonel Mackerel and Guard Commander Eel to fetch a nine−pronged spear.

Sun Wukong leapt down from his seat, took it, tried it out, then flung it down, saying, "It's too light, far too light; and it doesn't suit me. I beg you to give me another."

The Dragon King smiled as he said, "Exalted Immortal, don't you see that this weighs three thousand six hundred pounds?"
"It doesn't suit me, it doesn't suit me at all," protested Sun Wukong.

The Dragon King, feeling frightened now, ordered Provincial Commander Bream and Garrison Commander Carp to bring out a patterned heavenly halberd for warding off spells that weighed seven thousand two hundred pounds.

As soon as he saw it Sun Wukong bounded forward to take it. He tried a few postures and thrusts with it then stuck it in the ground between them. "Still too light, far too light."

The Dragon King, now really terrified, said, "Exalted Immortal, that halberd is the heaviest weapon in my palace."

"As the old saying goes," said Sun Wukong with a grin, "'Never think the dragon king has no treasures.' Have another look, and if you find anything satisfying I'll give you a good price for it."

"I really have nothing else," the Dragon King replied.

As he was speaking, his dragon wife and dragon daughters came in from the back of the palace and said, "Your Majesty, by the look of him this sage must be really somebody. The piece of miraculous iron that anchors the Milky Way in place has been shining with a lovely rosy glow for the last few days, and creating a most auspicious atmosphere. Perhaps it has started to shine to greet this sage."

"That piece of miraculous iron is one of the nails that Yu the Great used to fix the depths of rivers and seas when he brought the waters under control," said the Dragon King. "What use could it be?"

"Never mind whether it's useful or not," his wife replied. "Just give it to him and let him do with it as he pleases. At least you'll get him out of the palace."

The Dragon King did as she suggested and described the piece of iron to Sun Wukong, who said, "Bring it out and let me see."

"It can't be moved. You will have to go and look at it yourself, exalted Immortal."

"Where is it? Take me there," said Sun Wukong.

The Dragon King took him into the middle of the sea treasury, where all of a sudden they could see ten thousand rays of golden light. Pointing at it, the Dragon King said, "That's it, where all the light is coming from."
Sun Wukong hitched up his clothes and went to give it a feel. He found that it was an iron pillar about as thick as a measure for a peck of grain and some twenty feet long. Seizing it with both hands he said, "It's too thick and too long. If it were a bit shorter and thinner it would do." As soon as these words were out of his mouth this precious piece of iron became several feet shorter and a few inches thinner.

Sun Wukong tossed it in his hands, remarking that it would be even better if it were thinner still. The precious iron thereupon became even thinner. Sun Wukong was taking it out of the sea treasury to have a look at it when he saw that it had two gold bands round it, while the middle part was made of black iron. There was a line of inlaid writing near the bands which said that it was the AS−YOU−WILL COLD−BANDED CUDGEL: WEIGHT 13,500 POUNDS.

Sun Wukong was delighted, though he did not show it. "I think that this little darling will do whatever I want." As he walked along he weighed it in his hand and said reflectively, "If it were even smaller still it would be perfect." By the time he had taken it outside it was twenty feet long and as thick as a rice bowl.

Watch him as he uses his magical powers to try a few routines with it, whirling all round the crystal palace. The Old Dragon King was trembling with fright, and the little dragons were scared out of their wits. Terrapins, freshwater turtles, seawater turtles and alligators drew in their heads, while fish, shrimps, lobsters and giant turtles hid their faces.

Holding his treasure in his hands, Sun Wukong sat down in the main hall of the palace of crystal and said with a smile to the Dragon King, "Many thanks, worthy neighbour, for your great generosity."

The Old Dragon King humbly acknowledged his thanks, and Sun Wukong went on, "This piece of iron will be very useful, but there is one more thing I want to ask."

"What might that be, exalted Immortal?" asked the Dragon King.

"If I hadn't got this cudgel, that would be the end of the matter, but as I have got it the problem is that I don't have—the clothes to go with it. What are we to do about it? If you have any armour here, I'd be most obliged if you gave me a suit." The Dragon King said he had not any.

"A guest should not have to trouble two hosts," said Sun Wukong. "I won't leave without one."

"Please try some other sea, exalted Immortal—you may find one there."

"It's better to stay in one house than to visit three.' I beg and implore you to give me a suit."

"I really don't have one," replied the Dragon King. "If I had I would present it to you."

"If you really haven't, then I'll try this cudgel out on you."
"Don't hit me, exalted Immortal, don't hit me," pleaded the Dragon King in terror. "Let me see whether my brothers have one that they could give you."

"Where do your brothers live?"

"They are Ao Qin, the Dragon King of the Southern Sea, Ao Shun, the Dragon King of the Northern Sea, and Ao Run, the Dragon King of the Southern Sea."

"I'm damned if I'm going there: as the saying goes, 'Two in the pocket is better than three owing.' So be a good chap and give me one."

"There is no need for you to go, lofty Immortal," the Dragon King replied, "I have an iron drum and a bronze bell. In an emergency we strike them to bring my brothers here in an instant."

"In that case," said Sun Wukong, "hurry up and sound them." And indeed an alligator general struck the bell while a terrapin marshal beat the drum. The sound of the bell and the drum startled the other three dragon kings, who had arrived and were waiting together outside within the instant.

One of them, Ao Qin, said, "Elder Brother, what's up? Why the drum and the bell?"

"It hurts me to tell you, brother," the Old Dragon King replied. "There's this so-called heaven-born sage from the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit who came here this morning saying that I was his neighbour, then demanded a weapon. I offered him a steel-pronged spear but he said it was too small, and a patterned halberd that he said was too light. Then he picked up the miraculous iron that fastens the Milky Way and tried a few movements with it. Now he's sitting in the palace and demanding a suit of armour, but we haven't got one. That's why I used the bell and the drum to call you here. You three must have some armour. Please give him a suit, then we can get rid of him."

When Ao Qin heard this he said in a fury, "To arms, brothers. Arrest the criminal."

"No! No! It's out of the question," said the Old Dragon King. "If that iron cudgel of his gets you you're done for, if it hits you die, if it comes close your skin is broken, and if it so much as brushes against you your sinews are smashed."

Ao Run, the Dragon King of the Western Sea, said, "Second brother, you must not attack him. Instead we should put a suit of armour together for him, then send him away. We can send a memorial about it to Heaven, then Heaven will of course punish him."

"You're right," said Ao Shun, the Dragon King of the Northern Sea. "I have a pair of lotus-root cloud-walking shoes."

"I've brought a suit of golden chain mail," said Ao Run, the Dragon King of the Western Sea.

"And I have a phoenix-winged purple gold helmet," added Ao Qin, the Dragon King of the Southern Sea. The Old Dragon King was very pleased, and he brought them into the palace to meet Sun Wukong and
present the equipment to him.

Sun Wukong put on the golden helmet and the armour and the cloud—walking shoes, then charged out, waving his cudgel and saying to the dragons, "My apologies for disturbing you." The four Dragon Kings were most indignant, but we will not go into their discussions on the protest they sent to Heaven.

Watch the Monkey King as he parts the waters and goes straight back to the iron bridge, where the four senior apes can be seen waiting for him at the head of the monkey host. Sun Wukong suddenly leapt out of the waves without a drop of water on him and gleaming with gold.

As he came across the bridge the monkeys were so astonished that they fell to their knees and said, "How splendid you look, Your Majesty, how splendid." Sun Wukong, his face lit up with youthful vigor, climbed up to his throne, thrust his cudgel into the ground in their midst. The foolish monkeys all tried to grab this treasure, but it was as futile as a dragonfly trying to shake an iron tree: they were unable to move it in the slightest.

Biting their fingers and sticking out their tongues they said, "Grandpa, it's so heavy, how can you possibly lift it?"

Sun Wukong went over, lifted it with one hand, and laughed as he said to them, "Everything has its rightful owner. This little treasure has been lying in the sea treasury for goodness knows how many thousands of years, but it just happened to start shining this year. The Dragon King thought it was just a piece of ordinary iron, and said it was the miraculous treasure that holds the bed of the Milky Way in place. None of his men could move it, so he had to ask me to go and fetch it myself. It was more than twenty feet long then, and as thick as a peck—measure. When I picked it up I felt that it was too big, and it shrank till it was several times as small. I told it to get even smaller, and it did that too; then I told it to get smaller still, and it got many times smaller again. I hurried out into the light of day to look at it, and I saw that there was an inscription on it that read 'AS YOU WILL GOLD—BANDED CUDGEL: WEIGHT 13,500 POUNDS'. Stand aside, and I'll make it change again."

Holding his treasure in his hand he said, "Shrink, shrink, shrink," and it became as small as an embroidery needle, tiny enough to be hidden in his ear.

"Your Majesty," the monkeys cried out in astonishment, "bring it out and play with it again."

So the Monkey King brought it out of his ear again, laid it on the palm of his hand, and said, "Grow, grow, grow." It became as thick as a peck again and twenty feet long. Now that he was really enjoying himself he bounded over the bridge and went out of the cave. Clasping his treasure he used some of his heaven and earth magic, bowed, and shouted, "Grow."
He became a hundred thousand feet tall; his head was as big as a mountain, his waist like a range of hills, his eyes flashed like lightning, his mouth seemed to be a bowl of blood, and his teeth were as swords and halberds; the cudgel in his hands reached up to the Thirty-third Heaven and down to the Eighteenth Hell. The tigers, leopards and wolves, the beasts of the mountain, and the seventy-two monster kings all kowtowed and bowed in terror, trembling so much that they went out of their minds. A moment later he reverted to his proper size, turned his treasure into an embroidery needle, hid it in his ear, and went back to the cave. The panic-stricken kings of the monsters all came to offer their congratulations.

There was a great display of banners and drums, and the air resounded to the sound of gongs and bells. Rare delicacies were set out in great quantities, cups brimmed with coconut toddy and the wine of the grape, and the Monkey King feasted and drank with his people for a long time. Then training went on as before.

The Monkey King named the four senior apes as his four Stalwart Generals: he named the two bare-bottomed apes Marshal Ma and Marshal Liu, and called the two gibbons General Beng and General Ba. He entrusted the stockade, questions of discipline and rewards to these four. Thus freed from cares, he mounted the clouds and rode the mists, wandering round the four seas and enjoying the thousand mountains. He practiced his martial arts, visited many a hero, used his magical powers, and made a wide and distinguished circle of friends. He met with six sworn brothers of his: the Bull Demon King, the Salamander Demon King, the Roc Demon King, the Camel King, the Macaque King, and the Lion King. With him included they made seven. For days on end they talked about politics and war, passed round the goblet, strummed, sang, piped, danced, went off on days out together, and enjoyed themselves in every possible way. A journey of thousands of miles seemed to them to be no more than a walk in the courtyard. It could be said that they traveled a thousand miles in the time it takes to nod one's head, and covered three hundred with a twist of the waist.

One day he instructed his four Stalwart Generals to arrange a feast for the six other kings. Oxen and horses were slaughtered, sacrifices were made to Heaven and Earth, and the assembled monsters danced, sang, and drank themselves blotto. When he had seen the six kings out and tipped his senior and junior officials Sun Wukong lay himself down under the shade of the pines beside the bridge and was asleep in an instant. The four Stalwart Generals made the others stand round and guard him, and they all kept their voices down.

In his sleep the Handsome Monkey King saw two men approach him with a piece of paper in their hands on which was written "Sun Wukong." Without allowing any explanations they tied up his soul and dragged it staggering along till they reached a city wall. The Monkey King, who was gradually recovering from his drunken stupor, looked up and saw an iron plate on the wall on which was inscribed WORLD OF DARKNESS in large letters.

In a flash of realization he said, "The World of Darkness is where King Yama lives. Why have I come here?"

"Your life in the world above is due to end now," his escorts said, "and we were ordered to fetch you."
To this the Monkey King replied, "I have gone beyond the Three Realms, and I am no longer subject to the Five Elements. I don't come under King Yama's jurisdiction. How dare you grab me, you idiots?" But the fetchers of the dead just went on tugging at him, determined to drag him inside.

The Monkey King lost his temper, pulled his treasure out of his ear, and gave it a shake. It became as thick as a rice bowl. It only took a slight movement of his arm to smash the two fetchers of the dead to pulp. He untied his bonds, loosed his hands, and charged into the city whirling his cudgel, so terrifying the ox−headed and horse−faced devils that they fled in all directions for cover.

All the devil soldiers rushed to the Senluo Palace and reported, "Your Majesty, disaster, disaster! A hairy−faced thunder−god is attacking us out there."

Stricken by panic, the Ten Kings who sit in the ten palaces, judging the criminal cases of the dead, hurriedly straightened their clothing and went out to look. When they saw his ferocious expression they lined up in order and shouted at the tops of their voices, "Please tell us your name, exalted Immortal."

"If you don't know who I am," replied the Monkey King, "then why did you send men to bring me here?"

"We wouldn't dare do such a thing. The messengers must have made a mistake."

"I am Sun Wukong, the Heaven−born sage of the Water Curtain Cave on the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit. What are your posts?"

"We are the ten kings."

"Tell me your names at once if you don't want a bashing."

To this the ten kings replied, "We are the King of Qinguang, the King of Chujiang, King Songdi, King Wuguan, King Yama, King Impartial, the King of Mount Tai, the Metropolitan King, the King of Biancheng, and the King of the Ever−turning Wheel."

To this Sun Wukong replied, "You are all kings, and have esoteric understanding, so why don't you know any better? I, Sun Wukong, have cultivated the Tao of Immortality and will live as long as Heaven. I've soared beyond the Three Realms and leapt outside the Five Elements, so why did you send your men to get me?"

"Please don't be angry, lofty Immortal," the ten kings said. "Many people in the world share the same name, so perhaps the fetchers of the dead went to the wrong place."

"Nonsense, nonsense. As the saying goes, 'The magistrate may be wrong and the sergeant may be wrong, but the man who comes to get you is never wrong!' Go and get the Register of Life and Death for me to see." The Ten Kings invited him to come into the palace and look through it.

Sun Wukong went into the Senluo Palace with his club in his hand, and sat down in the middle of the hall.
facing South. The Ten Kings then ordered the presiding judge to fetch the register, and the judge hastened to his office and brought out five or six documents and ten registers. He looked through them all one by one, but could not find Sun Wukong's name in the sections devoted to hairless creatures, hairy creatures, feathered creatures, insects, or scaly creatures. Then he looked through the monkey section. Now although monkeys looked like men, they were not entered under the humans; although they were like the hairless creatures, they did not live within their boundaries; although they were like running animals, they were not under the jurisdiction of the unicorn; and although they were like birds, they were not ruled by the phoenix. There was another register, and Sun Wukong looked through this one himself. Under "Soul No. 1350" was the name of Sun Wukong, the Heaven–born stone monkey, who was destined to live to the age of 342 and die a good death.

"I won't write down any number of years," said Sun Wukong. "I'll just erase my name and be done with it. Bring me a brush." The judge hastily handed him a brush and thick, black ink.

Sun Wukong took the register, crossed out all the names in the monkey section, and threw it on the floor with the words, "The account's closed. That's an end of it. We won't come under your control any longer." Then he cudgelld his way out of the World of Darkness. The Ten Kings dared not go near him, and they all went to the Azure Cloud Palace to bow in homage to the Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha and discuss the report they would send up to Heaven. But we will not go into this.

After charging out through the city wall the Monkey King tripped over a clump of grass, tried to regain his balance, and woke up with a start. It had all been a dream. As he stretched himself he heard his four Stalwart Generals and the other monkeys saying, "Your Majesty, time to wake up. You drank too much and slept all night."

"Never mind about my sleeping. I dreamt that two men came for me. They dragged me to the city–wall of the World of Darkness, where I came round. I showed them my magic powers and went yelling all the way to the Senluo Palace, where I had an argument with those Ten Kings and looked through the Register of Life and Death of us. Wherever there was mention of your names in the register, I crossed them out. We won't come under the jurisdiction of those idiots anymore."

All the monkeys kowtowed to him in gratitude. The reason why from that time on so many mountain monkeys have never grown old is that their names are not on the books of the officials of the Underworld. When the Handsome Monkey King had finished telling his story, the four Stalwart Generals informed the other monster kings, who all came to offer their felicitations. A few days later his six sworn brothers also came to congratulate him, and all were delighted to hear how he had struck the names off the books. We will not describe the daily feasts that followed.

Instead we will describe how one day the Supreme Heavenly Sage, the Greatly Compassionate Jade Emperor of the Azure Vault of Heaven, was sitting on his throne in the Hall of Miraculous Mist in the Golden–gated Cloud Palace, surrounded by his immortal civil and military officials at morning court, when the Immortal Qiu Hongji reported, "Your Majesty, Ao Guang, the Dragon King of the Eastern Sea, has presented a memorial outside the Hall of Universal Brightness, and is awaiting a summons from your Imperial Majesty."

The Jade Emperor ordered that he be called in, and the Dragon King came to the Hall of Miraculous Mist.
When he had done obeisance an immortal page came from the side to take his memorial. The Jade Emperor read it through. It ran:

*Your Subject Ao Guang, the Humble Dragon of the Eastern Sea of the Eastern Continent of Superior Body in the Nether Watery Regions Reports to the Jade Emperor of the Azure Vault of Heaven*

*Recently one Sun Wukong, an immortal fiend born on the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit now living in the Water Curtain Cave, bullied this humble dragon and occupied my watery house by force. He demanded a weapon by displaying magical prowess; he insisted on having armour by showing off his evil powers. He terrified the watery tribe and made the tortoises and alligators flee in terror. The dragon of the Southern Sea trembled, the dragon of the Western Sea was made miserable, the dragon of the Northern Sea had to hang his head and come in submission, and I, your subject Ao Guang, humbled myself before him. We had to present him with a miraculous iron cudgel, a golden phoenix-winged helmet, a suit of chain mail, and a pair of cloud-walking shoes; and we escorted him out politely. He continued to show off his martial arts and magic powers, and all he had to say for himself was, "My apologies for disturbing you." There is truly no match for him, and he is uncontrollable. Your subject now presents this memorial, and respectfully awaits your sage decision. I humbly beg that heavenly soldiers be sent to arrest this evil demon, so that the sea and the mountains may be at peace, and the ocean may enjoy tranquillity.*

When the Jade Emperor had read this through he ordered, "Let the Dragon God return to the Sea; we shall send generals to arrest the demon." The Old Dragon King bowed till his head touched the floor and took his leave.

Then the Venerable Immortal Ge, a heavenly teacher, reported, "Your Majesty, the King of Qinguang, one of the ministers of the Underworld, has come with a memorial from the Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha." A jade girl messenger took the memorial, which the Jade Emperor read through. It ran:

*The regions of darkness are the negative part of the Earth. Heaven contains gods while the Earth has devils; Positive and Negative are in a constant cycle. Birds and beasts are born and die; male and female alternate. Life is created and change takes place; male and female are conceived and born; this is the order of nature, and it cannot be changed. Now the evil spirit, the Heaven-born monkey of the Water Curtain Cave on the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit, is presently giving full rein to his wicked nature, committing murders, and refusing to submit to discipline. He killed the devil messengers of the Ninth Hell with his magic, and he terrified the Ten Benevolent Kings of the Underworld with his power. He made an uproar in the Senluo Palace and crossed some names out by force. He has made the race of monkeys completely uncontrollable, and given eternal life to the macaques. He has annulled the law of transmigration and brought them beyond birth and death. I, impoverished monk that I am, importune the might of Heaven by presenting this memorial. I prostrate myself to beg that Heavenly soldiers be despatched to subdue this fiend, bring the positive and Negative back into order, and give lasting security to the Underworld.*
When the Jade Emperor had read this through he ordered, "Let the Lord of Darkness return to the Underworld. We shall send generals to arrest the demon." The King of Qinguang then bowed till his head touched the floor and took his leave.

His Celestial Majesty then asked all his civil and military officials, "When was this monkey demon born? What is his origin, that he should have such powers?"

Before he had finished speaking, Thousand–mile Eye and Wind–accompanying Ear came forward from the ranks of officials and said, "This demon monkey is the stone monkey who was born of heaven three hundred years ago. At the time nobody paid any attention to him, and we do not know where he refined himself and became an Immortal in recent years, so that he has been able to make the tigers and dragons submit to him and to strike his name off the register of the dead."

"Which divine general shall be sent down to capture him?" asked the Jade Emperor, and before he had finished speaking the Great White Planet stepped forward, bowed down, and submitted, "All beings in the Three Realms that have nine apertures can become Immortals. This monkey has a body that was created by Heaven and Earth and conceived by the sun and moon. His head touches they sky and his feet stand on the earth; he drinks the dew and eats the mist. How does he differ from humans, if he has succeeded in cultivating the Tao of immortality and can subdue dragons and tigers? I beg Your Majesty to remember your life–giving mercy and hand down a sage edict of amnesty and enlistment, summoning him to this upper world and inscribing his name on the list of officeholders, thus keeping him here under control. If he obeys Your Majesty's heavenly commands, he can later be promoted; and if he disobeys, he can be arrested. This will both avoid military operations and be a way of winning over an Immortal."

The Jade Emperor, delighted with the suggestion, ordered that it should be put into effect. He told the Wenqu Star Officer to compose the edict, and commanded the Great White planet to persuade the monkey to accept the amnesty.

The Great White Planet left Heaven by the Southern Gate, and brought his propitious cloud down by the Water Curtain Cave, where he said to the little monkeys, "I am an envoy from Heaven, and I am carrying a divine edict inviting your great king to the upper world. Go and tell him at once." The little monkeys outside conveyed the message by relays into the depths of the cave: "Your Majesty, there's an old man outside carrying a document on his back. He says he's an envoy from Heaven with an invitation for you." The Handsome Monkey King was delighted.

He said, "I'd been thinking of going up to Heaven to have a look round for the past couple of days, and now a heavenly envoy has come to invite me."

"Ask him in at once," he shouted, hastily straightening his clothes and going out to meet the envoy.