

HELPING AN OLD WOMAN

Tshe dbang rdo rje ཚེ་དབང་རྡོ་རྗེ། (Caixiangduojie 才项多杰)

One day, on the way to the turnip seller's home, Uncle Ston pa saw an old woman weeping by the road and asked, "Dear Aunt, why are you crying?"

The old woman wiped her tears away replying, "My husband is sick and I'm too weak to plow the field."

"Don't you have any children?" asked Uncle Ston pa.

"I do. I have three sons."

"Don't they live with you?"

"Yes, we all live in one yard, but they..." and the woman started wailing more loudly.

"Dear Aunt, please don't cry and tell me more. I'll help you," comforted Uncle Ston pa.

"My sons took our family property from my husband and me after they married. Now my husband and I only have our family's oldest room and this unyielding field. My husband got sick this morning and I'm too weak to do any heavy labor. I really don't know what to do!"

"Don't worry," comforted Uncle Ston pa. Then he asked, "Which is your home?"

"That one," replied the woman, pointing at a house near a big tree by the Yellow River.

"I see," Uncle Ston pa commented, thought for a while, and then said, "Go home and rest. You and your husband should just say 'No' to everything from today on."

The woman thanked Uncle Ston pa and went home. While the woman's sons were all at home, Uncle Ston pa knocked on the door and said loudly, "I'm a fortuneteller and I'm very thirsty. May I ask for some water?"

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"No," said the old woman from the shanty.

"I'll tell your fortune if you give me a bowl of water," yelled Uncle Ston pa.

"No," said the old woman.

"I know you don't believe me," yelled Uncle Ston pa. "Let me tell your family fortune first and you give me a bowl of water if I'm right." He chanted loudly for a few seconds and then said, "You have three sons, right?"

"No," said the old woman.

Her sons and their wives thought, "He is right" and started listening closely to the conversation.

"Your sons took your family property, leaving you an old room and the worst field, right?"

"No," said the old woman.

Her sons and their wives looked at each other and listened even more carefully.

"Yesterday, while your husband was plowing the field, he found treasure and he started pretending to be sick, right?"

"No," said the old woman. Her sons and their wives looked at their father and noticed that he was lying in bed. They wondered, "Why is Mother lying to this fortuneteller? What he says is true!"

"The treasure is very small, but it is worth as much as all the properties that your village temple has, right?"

"No!" the old woman yelled back.

"You and your husband divided the treasure into several parts, and hid it in many different places, right?"

"No!" yelled the old woman again. Her greedy sons dashed out, opened the gate, invited Uncle Ston pa into their rooms, offered him their best tea and food, and asked him where the treasure was and how they could find it. Uncle Ston pa said the same thing secretly to each of the three sons, "According to my divination, they're in three places: the room, field, and clothes of your parents. They will give them to the kindest of you three children."

From that day on, the three sons and their wives were very nice to their parents. Hoping to get the treasure, the wives washed their parents' clothes, cleaned their room, and cooked good food for them every day. The sons plowed, irrigated, and harvested the field with great care until their parents passed away.

NON-ENGLISH TERM

ston pa ལྷོན་པ།

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