

THE LANDLORD CUTS DOWN A TREE

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

Uncle Ston pa was a young man who lived in a shanty near a landlord's big orchard. These trees included a big *dngul sdong*¹ that shaded Uncle Ston pa's house from morning till evening. Uncle Ston pa was so unhappy about this that he devised a clever plan.

One afternoon, Uncle Ston pa carried a few bundles of *dngul sdong* branches as the landlord was walking around the orchard. The landlord saw Uncle Ston pa and asked, "Where are you going with those branches?"

"I'm going to sell them in town," said Uncle Ston pa.

"Who'll buy them?" asked the landlord.

"A Chinese merchant. This morning, I saw him paying a high price for *dngul sdong*. He told me that he wouldn't be in town for very long, so I've got to hurry!" Uncle Ston pa lied.

The landlord thought, "I have a big useless *dngul sdong* in this orchard. Why don't I sell it and make some money?!"

"Ston pa, wait for me," said the landlord. "I'll sell my big *dngul sdong* tree to the Chinese merchant."

"Oh, you'll make a lot of money with that big *dngul sdong*," said Uncle Ston pa. "But you've got to act quickly! The merchant won't stay in town for long."

The landlord called several of his servants to cut down the big *dngul sdong*. Then Uncle Ston pa, the landlord, and the servants started off for town - all with *dngul sdong* on their backs. However,

Tshe dbang rdo rje. 2017. The Landlord Cuts Down a Tree. *Asian Highlands Perspectives* 47:217-218.

¹ The *dngul sdong* 'silver tree' is similar to the desert date. These trees have silver-colored leaves and yellow, strong-smelling flowers. Locals often break off branches and bring them inside their homes for decoration and purification in the fifth lunar month, especially on the fifth day, which is Dragon Boat Festival, which is called Vavare in the local Tibetan dialect and Duanwujie in Chinese.

the *dn gul sdong* was heavy and they didn't reach town until sunset. By this time, there were few people in the streets and they couldn't find the merchant.

The landlord scolded Uncle Ston pa, "Liar! Where is the Chinese merchant?!"

"He must have left. I told you he wouldn't be in the town for long!" Uncle Ston pa said.

The landlord and his men were exhausted from carrying the heavy *dn gul sdong* so they left it in the street and returned home.

The next morning, Uncle Ston pa's house was comfortable and bright with warm sunshine.

NON-ENGLISH TERMS

dn gul sdung དངུལ་སྒྲིང་།

Duanwujie 端午节

ston pa ལྷོན་པ།

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

vavare, ba ba re བ་བ་རེ།