

A CLEVER MAN

Tshe lha ཚེ་ལྷ།

One day, a king asked one of his servants, "What is your name?"

"My honorable king, my name is Clever," the servant replied.

"What? My name is Clever. How is it possible that you could have the same name?" the king shouted in surprise.

The servant said, "My honorable king, there is no reason my name is Clever."

The king replied, "You can't be named Clever without a reason."

The servant asked, "Why should I have a reason for my name?"

"Fine, if you are really clever, let's see if you can steal this jewel from around my neck. If you can steal it from me in seven days, I'll allow you to keep your name and I'll also give you half of my property."

The jewel was the king's soul and he was safe only if the jewel was safe. If the jewel was broken, the king would die.

The king worked hard to protect himself. He ordered many of his servants, including women, to guard his house, both inside and outside. Then he sent his horsemen to guard his palace. Everyone waited for Clever to try and steal the jewel.

Six days passed and nothing happened. The guards were exhausted and sleepy. On the last day, Clever put on a woman's robe, carried a bucket of liquor, and walked to the palace. Nobody recognized him.

A horseman asked, "What are you doing here?"

Clever replied, "I'm coming here to offer you some liquor."

The horseman, "Have you seen Clever recently?"

Clever said, "No, I haven't seen him for a long time."

The horseman nodded and then said, "Okay, then we will have some liquor."

After some time passed, the horsemen and the other servants were all dead drunk on the ground. Clever tied the women servants' hair together, set the end of their hair on fire, put a stone in each of the servant's sleeves, went to the king's bedroom, and stole the jewel from where it hung around the king's neck.

The king soon woke up, discovered his jewel was gone, and shouted. This awakened the women servants. Realizing their hair was burning, they swatted at the fire with their sleeves. Not understanding that there were stones in their sleeves, they beat each other to death. The horsemen, who had drunk a great deal, remained unconscious.

The next day, Clever went to the king's palace and asked the king to keep his promise.

Instead, the king said, "You took my jewel, so I'm going to punish you."

Clever was very angry that the king would not keep his promise and broke the jewel. The king then died and Clever became the new king.

NON-ENGLISH TERM

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