**Chapter 1: The Birth of the Monkey King**

**Poem:**  
In the beginning, chaos reigned, heaven and earth in disarray,  
No one witnessed the vast, endless expanse.  
Since Pangu's mighty blow, the universe unfolded,  
Clear and murky separated, the cycle began.

The heavens nurtured all living things with utmost benevolence,  
Illuminating the creation of all, in perfect harmony.  
To comprehend the mysteries of creation's origin,  
One must read the tale of the Monkey King's journey to enlightenment.

**Narrative:**

In the grand tapestry of time, a cycle consists of 129,600 years, divided into twelve periods, each represented by an animal of the zodiac. Every period spans 18,800 years. Just as a day is divided into twelve hours, each with its unique characteristics, so too are the periods of the grand cycle. When the cycle reaches its end, the world plunges into darkness, and all living things cease to exist, marking the beginning of a new cycle.

After 5,400 years of darkness, the cycle restarts, and the world gradually awakens. Another 5,400 years pass, and the universe is reborn. The heavens open at the beginning of the new cycle, marked by the appearance of the sun, moon, stars, and the four symbols of the zodiac.

Similarly, after another 5,400 years, the earth solidifies, and the five elements (wood, fire, earth, metal, and water) emerge. The cycle continues, and after another 5,400 years, all living things are born. This marks the beginning of the three realms: heaven, earth, and humanity.

**The Birth of the Monkey King:**

In the Eastern Continent of Superior Body, there existed a country called Aolai. Near the coast, a magnificent mountain, Flower-Fruit Mountain, stood tall. This mountain was the ancestral home of the ten continents and the birthplace of the three islands. Within the mountain, a divine stone, 36.5 feet tall and 24 feet in circumference, had been nourished by the heavens and the earth for eons. The stone finally cracked open, giving birth to a stone monkey.

The monkey, with its five senses and four limbs fully formed, quickly learned to walk and play. As it gazed up at the sky, two beams of golden light shot out of its eyes, startling the Jade Emperor in the Heavenly Palace.

**The Monkey King's Early Life:**

The monkey, now the leader of a troop of monkeys, lived a carefree life in the mountains. One day, while playing, the monkeys stumbled upon a waterfall and decided to explore its source. Behind the waterfall, they discovered a beautiful, iron-bridge-like structure, which led to a heavenly abode. The monkey, who would later become the king, was the first to enter and explore the dwelling.

Upon returning, the monkey described the wonders it had seen, and the troop, in awe, begged it to lead them to this paradise. The monkey, now hailed as the "Great King," ruled over the troop, and they all lived in harmony within the heavenly abode.

**The Monkey King's Quest for Immortality:**

As time passed, the Monkey King began to worry about his mortality. He sought the counsel of his troop, expressing his desire to find a way to achieve immortality. A wise old monkey suggested that the Monkey King seek out the three types of beings who could help him: Buddhas, Sages, and Immortals.

The Monkey King bid farewell to his troop and set out on a journey to find these enlightened beings. He traveled across the seas, braving the elements, and eventually arrived at the Western Continent. There, he encountered a woodsman who was singing a song that hinted at the presence of a Sage.

**The Encounter with the Woodsman and the Sage:**

The Monkey King approached the woodsman, who revealed that he was not a Sage but a humble laborer. However, he did know of a Sage, Patriarch Subhuti, who lived in a nearby cave. The woodsman provided the Monkey King with directions to the cave.

Upon arriving at the cave, the Monkey King was greeted by a young disciple, who led him to the Patriarch. The Patriarch, sensing the Monkey King's presence, had anticipated his arrival. However, upon learning of the Monkey King's claimed origins from the Eastern Continent, the Patriarch was skeptical.

**The Monkey King's Audience with Patriarch Subhuti:**

The Monkey King explained his journey and his desire to achieve immortality. The Patriarch, though initially hesitant, began to see the Monkey King's potential. He decided to give the Monkey King a surname, "Sun," which symbolized the harmony between the celestial and the earthly.

The Patriarch then bestowed upon the Monkey King the name "Sun Wukong" (Aware of Emptiness), as it was the tenth name in the sequence of twelve names used by his disciples. The Monkey King, overjoyed, accepted his new name and began his journey under the Patriarch's guidance.

**The Monkey King's Discipleship:**

Sun Wukong, with his new name, felt an overwhelming sense of joy and gratitude. He prostrated himself before the Patriarch, thanking him for the gift of a surname and a name. The Patriarch, pleased with Sun Wukong's humility, began to teach him the fundamentals of spiritual cultivation.

Sun Wukong proved to be a diligent student, quickly grasping the concepts of the Patriarch's teachings. He spent his days studying the scriptures, practicing meditation, and honing his martial skills. The Patriarch, impressed by Sun Wukong's progress, decided to impart more advanced knowledge to him.

**The Patriarch's Warning:**

One day, the Patriarch summoned Sun Wukong and said, "Your natural endowment is exceptional, and your progress is remarkable. However, I must warn you: your innate mischievous nature and impulsiveness may hinder your spiritual growth. You must learn to temper your emotions and cultivate self-control."

Sun Wukong, taking the Patriarch's words to heart, vowed to be more mindful of his actions. He rededicated himself to his studies, striving to balance his energetic personality with the wisdom of the Patriarch's teachings.

**The Monkey King's Mastery of the Seventy-Two Transformations:**

Under the Patriarch's guidance, Sun Wukong mastered the art of the Seventy-Two Transformations. This ancient technique allowed him to change his form at will, adapting to any situation. With his newfound abilities, Sun Wukong's confidence grew, and he began to see himself as a true disciple of the Patriarch.

**The Patriarch's Departure:**

As the years passed, the Patriarch, sensing that his time on earth was drawing to a close, decided to return to the heavens. He summoned Sun Wukong and the other disciples, saying, "My time has come to an end. I must return to the celestial realm. Sun Wukong, your talents are vast, but remember to always cultivate humility and self-awareness. Do not let your abilities consume you."

With those final words, the Patriarch vanished into a beam of light, leaving behind a grieving Sun Wukong and the other disciples.

**Sun Wukong's Return to the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit:**

After the Patriarch's departure, Sun Wukong, feeling a deep sense of loss, decided to return to the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit. He bid farewell to the other disciples and set off on the long journey back to his homeland.

Upon his return, the monkey troop, overjoyed to see their king, welcomed him back with open arms. Sun Wukong, however, was not the same carefree monkey he once was. His experiences with the Patriarch had changed him, and he now carried himself with a newfound sense of purpose and wisdom.

**The Monkey King's Ascension:**

As Sun Wukong settled back into his life on the mountain, he began to share the wisdom and knowledge he had gained from the Patriarch with his troop. The monkeys, in awe of their king's newfound wisdom, looked up to him with even greater reverence.

Sun Wukong's reputation as a wise and powerful leader spread far and wide, attracting the attention of the heavenly authorities. The Jade Emperor, taking notice of Sun Wukong's remarkable abilities, decided to invite him to the heavenly court.

**The Heavenly Invitation:**

A heavenly messenger arrived at the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit, bearing an invitation for Sun Wukong to attend the heavenly court. The messenger presented Sun Wukong with a golden plaque, adorned with the Jade Emperor's seal, requesting his presence at the celestial gathering.

Sun Wukong, honored by the invitation, accepted the golden plaque and prepared to embark on his journey to the heavens. The monkey troop, though sad to see their king depart, understood the significance of this opportunity and bid him farewell.

**The Journey to the Heavens:**

Sun Wukong, with the golden plaque in hand, set off towards the heavens. As he soared through the skies, he marveled at the wonders of the celestial realm. The heavenly messenger, who had delivered the invitation, escorted Sun Wukong to the gates of the heavenly court.

Upon arrival, Sun Wukong was greeted by the heavenly guards, who were both astonished and intimidated by his formidable presence. The guards hastily announced Sun Wukong's arrival to the Jade Emperor, who, intrigued by the monkey's reputation, summoned him to the throne room.

**The Audience with the Jade Emperor:**

Sun Wukong, with utmost respect, approached the throne and prostrated himself before the Jade Emperor. The Emperor, pleased with Sun Wukong's humility, invited him to rise and take a seat. The heavenly officials, curious about the monkey's abilities, gathered around to observe the encounter.

The Jade Emperor inquired about Sun Wukong's background, and the monkey king recounted his tale, from his birth on the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit to his discipleship under Patriarch Subhuti. The Emperor, impressed by Sun Wukong's story, decided to offer him a position in the heavenly court.

**The Appointment as the Keeper of the Heavenly Horses:**

The Jade Emperor appointed Sun Wukong as the Keeper of the Heavenly Horses, a prestigious position responsible for the care and maintenance of the divine equines. Sun Wukong, though honored, felt that the role was beneath his abilities. However, he accepted the appointment, intending to prove himself and potentially gain a more suitable position in the future.

**The Heavenly Horses and the Monkey King's Frustration:**

Sun Wukong threw himself into his new role, diligently caring for the heavenly horses. However, he soon grew frustrated with the mundane tasks and the lack of challenge. The heavenly horses, sensing Sun Wukong's discontent, began to misbehave, and the stable's conditions deteriorated.

The heavenly officials, displeased with Sun Wukong's performance, reported his shortcomings to the Jade Emperor. The Emperor, though disappointed, decided to give Sun Wukong another opportunity to prove himself.

**The Monkey King's Rebellion:**

Sun Wukong, feeling underappreciated and overqualified, began to resent the heavenly authorities. He started to secretly gather a group of disgruntled heavenly officials and demons, sowing the seeds of rebellion against the Jade Emperor's rule.

As tensions escalated, Sun Wukong's actions did not go unnoticed. The heavenly authorities, aware of the growing threat, prepared to take action against the rogue monkey king.

**The Heavenly Horses' Lament**

(A poetic verse describing the heavenly horses' discontent with Sun Wukong's care)

Heavenly steeds, with coats of gold,  
Once well-groomed, now with manes grown old.  
Their stalls, once clean, now filled with grime,  
Reflecting Sun Wukong's lack of prime.

**The Monkey King's Inner Turmoil**

(A supplementary description of Sun Wukong's emotional state)

As Sun Wukong's frustration grew, his heart became a maelstrom of conflicting emotions. His pride, wounded by the mundane tasks, clashed with his desire for recognition and respect. The heavenly court, once a symbol of grandeur, now seemed suffocating, fueling his discontent.

**The Gathering Storm**

(A poetic verse foreshadowing the impending rebellion)

Dark clouds gather, thunder rumbles near,  
The monkey king's rebellion draws anear.  
Heavenly authorities, blind to the signs,  
Will soon face chaos, born from Sun Wukong's designs.

**The Jade Emperor's Unawareness**

(A supplementary description of the Jade Emperor's state of mind)

The Jade Emperor, serene and detached,  
Remained unaware of the impending storm's depth.  
His attention focused on the celestial ballet,  
He failed to notice the monkey king's growing malcontent.

**Chapter 7: The Monkey King's Escape from the Eight Trigrams Furnace and His Confinement under the Five Elements Mountain**

**The Monkey King's Imprisonment and the Jade Emperor's Plea for Help**

The Jade Emperor, exhausted from the Monkey King's antics, sought the help of the Buddha to subdue the mischievous deity. The Buddha, accompanied by his disciples, Ananda and Kasyapa, arrived at the heavenly palace and proposed a wager to the Monkey King: if he could jump out of the Buddha's palm, the throne of heaven would be his. The Monkey King, confident in his abilities, accepted the challenge.

**The Wager and the Monkey King's Failure**

The Monkey King, with a mighty leap, soared into the air, but unbeknownst to him, the Buddha's palm was boundless. The Monkey King wrote "The Great Sage Equal to Heaven has arrived" on a pillar, thinking he had reached the end of the heavens. However, upon his return, he found the same inscription on the Buddha's finger. Realizing his mistake, the Monkey King attempted to flee but was caught by the Buddha, who transformed his fingers into the Five Elements Mountain, trapping the Monkey King beneath.

**The "Ancestral Heaven Gathering" and the Celebration of the Monkey King's Confinement**

The Jade Emperor, relieved by the Monkey King's confinement, hosted the "Ancestral Heaven Gathering" to celebrate the restoration of peace. The Buddha, along with various deities and immortals, attended the grand assembly. The Queen Mother presented the Buddha with a gift of peaches, while the Star of Longevity offered a rare, thousand-year-old lingzhi mushroom.

**The Arrival of the Red Footed Great Immortal and the Conclusion of the Gathering**

The Red Footed Great Immortal arrived, bearing gifts of pears and dates, and paid his respects to the Buddha. As the gathering concluded, a heavenly official reported that the Monkey King had begun to stir beneath the Five Elements Mountain. The Buddha, with a compassionate heart, posted a warning on the mountain, ensuring the Monkey King's confinement.

**Poetic Verses and Conclusion**

The chapter concludes with poetic verses, highlighting the Monkey King's confinement and the gathering's celebration. The Buddha's actions are portrayed as a demonstration of his boundless power and compassion.

**The Monkey King's Confinement**

(A poetic verse describing the Monkey King's imprisonment)

Five Elements Mountain, weighty and strong,  
Confining the Monkey King, right where he belonged.  
No escape from this earthly bind,  
Until his karma's cleared, his heart and mind aligned.

**The Buddha's Compassion**

(A supplementary description of the Buddha's actions)

The Buddha, with a compassionate heart,  
Ensured the Monkey King's confinement, a brand new start.  
A warning posted, a lesson to share,  
The Monkey King's antics, no longer beyond care.

**The Gathering's Conclusion**

(A poetic verse describing the end of the "Ancestral Heaven Gathering")

The gathering concluded, with joy and delight,  
The Buddha's power, a wondrous sight.  
The deities departed, with smiles so wide,  
The Monkey King's confinement, a peaceful tide.

**The Five Elements Mountain's Significance**

(A supplementary description of the mountain's importance)

The Five Elements Mountain, a symbol of balance and harmony,  
Confining the Monkey King, a lesson in humility.  
The five elements, in perfect sync,  
A reminder of the delicate balance, within and without, to link.

**The Monkey King's Future**

(A poetic verse hinting at the Monkey King's future)

Though confined, the Monkey King's fate's not sealed,  
A future awaits, with trials revealed.  
The Tang Monk's journey, a path yet unknown,  
The Monkey King's redemption, a story to be sown.

**Chapter 15: The Snake Pan Mountain Gods Provide Secret Assistance, and the Hawk's Grief Stream Brings Forth a Horse**

**The Journey Continues, and the Monkey King's Frustration Grows**

As the Tang Monk and the Monkey King journeyed on, they encountered the treacherous Snake Pan Mountain and the Hawk's Grief Stream. The Monkey King, frustrated by the lack of progress, sought to subdue the dragon that had eaten their horse. However, the dragon proved to be a formidable foe, and the Monkey King was forced to retreat.

**The Arrival of the Gold-Headed Awakened Being and the Summoning of Guanyin**

The Gold-Headed Awakened Being arrived, bearing a message from Guanyin, who had been informed of the Monkey King's struggles. Guanyin descended upon the scene, and with her divine powers, she transformed the dragon into a horse, restoring the Tang Monk's mode of transportation.

**The Tang Monk's Gratitude and the Monkey King's Reluctance**

The Tang Monk expressed his gratitude to Guanyin, while the Monkey King remained skeptical, questioning the motives behind Guanyin's actions. Guanyin reassured the Monkey King, explaining that the dragon was, in fact, a former heavenly being, sent to aid the Tang Monk on his journey.

**The Bestowal of the Three Life-Saving Hairs**

Guanyin bestowed upon the Monkey King three life-saving hairs, which would protect him in times of peril. The Monkey King, though still hesitant, accepted the gift, and Guanyin departed, leaving the duo to continue their journey.

**The Encounter with the Mountain God and the Land God**

As the Tang Monk and the Monkey King proceeded, they encountered the Mountain God and the Land God, who were responsible for the region. The Monkey King, ever vigilant, questioned their intentions, but the gods reassured him, explaining that they were, in fact, sent by Guanyin to provide assistance.

**The Arrival at the Liyuan Temple and the Meeting with the Old Man**

The duo arrived at the Liyuan Temple, where they met an old man who introduced himself as the temple's caretaker. The old man, however, was revealed to be the Mountain God, who had taken on a human form to provide aid to the travelers.

**The Gift of the Saddle and the Bridle**

The old man, with a warm smile, presented the Tang Monk with a beautifully crafted saddle and bridle, which had been prepared especially for him. The Monkey King, though initially skeptical, was pleased with the gift, and the duo prepared to depart.

**The Revelation of the Mountain God's True Identity**

As the Tang Monk and the Monkey King bid farewell, the old man revealed his true identity as the Mountain God, who had been sent by Guanyin to provide assistance. The duo, with gratitude, continued their journey, and the Mountain God vanished into thin air.

**The Journey Continues, and a New Destination Comes into View**

As the Tang Monk and the Monkey King journeyed on, they encountered a new destination, shrouded in mystery. The Monkey King, ever cautious, advised the Tang Monk to proceed with caution, and the duo approached the unknown location, ready to face whatever challenges lay ahead.

**The Tang Monk's Inquiry and the Monkey King's Response**

As they journeyed on, the Tang Monk asked the Monkey King, "Disciple, what is that place ahead of us?" The Monkey King replied, "It's not a palace, but rather a temple. Let's hurry and seek shelter there for the night."

**The Approach to the Temple and the Encounter with the Old Man**

The Tang Monk and the Monkey King hastened towards the temple, and as they arrived, they met an old man who greeted them warmly. The old man, with a kind smile, presented the Tang Monk with a beautifully crafted saddle and bridle, which had been prepared especially for him.

**The Poetic Verse Describing the Saddle and Bridle**

(A poetic verse describing the saddle and bridle)

Embroidered saddle, shining bright,  
With silver stars, like a celestial sight.  
The bridle, adorned with golden threads,  
A masterpiece, crafted with skillful heads.  
The saddle's cushion, soft as a cloud,  
Inviting the rider, with a gentle crowd.  
The bridle's reins, strong and yet so fine,  
Guiding the steed, with a gentle design.

**The Monkey King's Caution and the Tang Monk's Gratitude**

The Monkey King, though initially skeptical, was pleased with the gift, and the Tang Monk expressed his gratitude to the old man. The old man, with a warm smile, bid them farewell, and as they departed, he revealed his true identity as the Mountain God.

**The Revelation of the Mountain God's True Identity**

The old man, with a gentle voice, said, "I am the Mountain God, sent by Guanyin to provide assistance. May you, noble monks, safely reach your destination." With that, he vanished into thin air, leaving the duo in awe.

**The Journey Continues, and a New Destination Comes into View**

As the Tang Monk and the Monkey King journeyed on, they encountered a new destination, shrouded in mystery. The Monkey King, ever cautious, advised the Tang Monk to proceed with caution, and the duo approached the unknown location, ready to face whatever challenges lay ahead.

**Chapter 27: The Corpse Demon's Three Tricks on Tang Sanzang, and the Holy Monk's Anger towards the White Monkey King**

**The Journey Continues, and the Monkey King's Antics**

As the Tang Monk and his disciples journeyed on, they encountered a mountainous region. The Monkey King, ever vigilant, led the way, clearing a path through the dense foliage. Meanwhile, the Tang Monk inquired about finding food, and the Monkey King offered to fetch some peaches from a nearby mountain.

**The Encounter with the Female Corpse Demon**

As the Monkey King departed, a female corpse demon appeared, disguised as a beautiful woman. She approached the Tang Monk, offering him a meal of "rice and noodles." However, the Monkey King, upon his return, recognized the demon and attempted to strike her down. The demon, using her magical powers, escaped and left behind a fake corpse.

**The Tang Monk's Disbelief and the Monkey King's Warning**

The Tang Monk, unaware of the demon's true nature, scolded the Monkey King for his actions. The Monkey King warned the Tang Monk, explaining that the woman was, in fact, a corpse demon. However, the Tang Monk refused to believe him, and the situation escalated, with the Monkey King being forced to endure the "tightening headband" punishment.

**The Corpse Demon's Second Disguise**

The corpse demon, seeking revenge, transformed into an elderly woman and approached the group, feigning distress. The Monkey King, recognizing the demon's disguise, attempted to strike her down once more. The demon, again, escaped, leaving behind another fake corpse.

**The Tang Monk's Anger and the Monkey King's Plea**

The Tang Monk, enraged by the Monkey King's actions, banished him from the group. The Monkey King, desperate to return, pleaded with the Tang Monk, explaining his past and his desire to continue their journey together. However, the Tang Monk refused, and the Monkey King was forced to depart.

**The Monkey King's Departure and the Tang Monk's Regret**

The Monkey King, with a heavy heart, bid farewell to the group and departed. The Tang Monk, soon realizing his mistake, regretted his decision to banish the Monkey King. However, it was too late, and the Monkey King was gone.

**The Monkey King's Departure and the Tang Monk's Regret**

The Monkey King, with a heavy heart, bid farewell to the group and departed. He thought to himself, "I'll just go back to the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit, and resume my old life as the Monkey King." However, as he journeyed on, he couldn't shake off the feeling of regret and longing for his master, Tang Sanzang.

**The Tang Monk's Regret and the Disciples' Concern**

Meanwhile, the Tang Monk, accompanied by Zhu Bajie and Sha Wujing, continued on their journey. However, the Tang Monk couldn't help but feel a sense of regret for banishing the Monkey King. Zhu Bajie and Sha Wujing, noticing their master's distress, approached him and asked, "Master, why are you so troubled?"

**The Tang Monk's Explanation and the Disciples' Reassurance**

The Tang Monk explained the situation, and Zhu Bajie and Sha Wujing reassured him, saying, "Master, don't worry. We'll protect you on our journey. Besides, the Monkey King's behavior was becoming increasingly troublesome." The Tang Monk, though still concerned, felt slightly better, and the group continued on their way.

**The Corpse Demon's Third Disguise**

As they journeyed on, the corpse demon, still seeking revenge, transformed into a young monk and approached the group. The demon, with a charming smile, greeted the Tang Monk and his disciples, saying, "Greetings, noble monks. I am a fellow traveler, and I've been searching for a master to follow. Might I join your esteemed group?"

**The Disciples' Suspicion and the Tang Monk's Naivety**

Zhu Bajie and Sha Wujing, sensing something amiss, exchanged a wary glance. However, the Tang Monk, oblivious to the demon's true nature, welcomed the young monk with open arms, saying, "Ah, a new disciple! We can always use another pair of hands on our journey."

**The Demon's Plan and the Disciples' Vigilance**

The corpse demon, delighted with the Tang Monk's naivety, thought to himself, "Ah, this is perfect. I'll just wait for the right moment to strike, and then I'll devour them all!" Meanwhile, Zhu Bajie and Sha Wujing, still suspicious of the new disciple, kept a watchful eye on him, ready to intervene at the first sign of trouble.

**The Demon's Plan and the Disciples' Vigilance (Continued)**

The corpse demon, biding his time, waited for the perfect moment to strike. He thought to himself, "I'll just pretend to be a diligent disciple, and once they let their guard down, I'll devour them all!"

(Zhu Bajie and Sha Wujing, still wary, kept a close eye on the demon, ready to intervene at the first sign of trouble.)

**The Tang Monk's Fatigue and the Demon's Opportunity**

As the sun began to set, the Tang Monk, exhausted from the day's journey, suggested setting up camp for the night. The demon, seeing his chance, offered to gather firewood, saying, "Master, please rest. I'll take care of the fire."

**The Disciples' Quick Thinking and the Demon's Foiled Plan**

Zhu Bajie and Sha Wujing, sensing something amiss, quickly exchanged a glance. Zhu Bajie, pretending to assist, followed the demon, while Sha Wujing kept a close eye on the Tang Monk. As the demon attempted to cast a spell, Zhu Bajie swiftly intervened, striking the demon with his rake.

**The Demon's True Form Revealed**

The demon, defeated, transformed back into his true form: a giant corpse. The Tang Monk, shocked, realized his mistake in trusting the demon. Zhu Bajie and Sha Wujing, relieved, stood guard, protecting their master from further harm.

**The White Bone Demoness's Sister's Next Disguise**

The demon, who had survived Sun Wukong's second attack, praised the Monkey King's exceptional discernment. She transformed into an old man, resembling a benevolent elder, and approached Tang Sanzang.

**Tang Sanzang's Misconception and Zhu Bajie's Warning**

Tang Sanzang, delighted by the old man's appearance, exclaimed, "Ah, Amitabha! The Western Region is indeed a land of blessings! Even this old man, who cannot ascend, is reciting scriptures!" Zhu Bajie cautioned, "Master, do not praise him yet; he might be the root of trouble." Tang Sanzang inquired about Zhu Bajie's concerns, and the latter speculated that the old man might be the father of the previously slain demons, seeking revenge.

**Sun Wukong's Intervention and the Demon's True Nature**

Sun Wukong, overhearing the conversation, approached the old man and inquired about his intentions. The demon, underestimating Sun Wukong, revealed a fabricated story about his daughter and son-in-law. Sun Wukong, recognizing the demon's deceit, threatened to strike him down. The demon, realizing his mistake, attempted to flee but was ultimately slain by Sun Wukong.

**Tang Sanzang's Reaction and Sun Wukong's Explanation**

Tang Sanzang, witnessing the demon's demise, was shocked to see the body transform into a pile of bones with the inscription "White Bone Demoness." Sun Wukong explained that the demon was, in fact, a malevolent spirit that had been terrorizing the region.

**Zhu Bajie's Slander and Tang Sanzang's Rebuke**

Zhu Bajie, however, slandered Sun Wukong, suggesting that he had intentionally killed the demon to deceive Tang Sanzang. Tang Sanzang, influenced by Zhu Bajie's words, rebuked Sun Wukong, citing his brutality and the potential consequences of his actions in more populated areas.

**Sun Wukong's Defense and Tang Sanzang's Banishment**

Sun Wukong defended his actions, emphasizing that the demon had indeed been a threat to Tang Sanzang. However, Tang Sanzang, unmoved by Sun Wukong's explanation, banished him once more. Sun Wukong, resigned to his fate, lamented the circumstances, feeling that he had been wrongly accused and that his loyalty had been repaid with ingratitude.

**The Decree of Banishment and Sun Wukong's Departure**

Tang Sanzang, in a gesture of finality, wrote a decree of banishment, warning Sun Wukong that if they were to meet again, he would suffer the consequences of falling into the Avici Hell. Sun Wukong, accepting the decree, bid a sorrowful farewell to Tang Sanzang and departed, leaving the group to continue their journey without him.

**Sun Wukong's Parting Advice to Sha Wujing**

Before departing, Sun Wukong cautioned Sha Wujing to be vigilant and protect Tang Sanzang, especially from Zhu Bajie's manipulative words. He also instructed Sha Wujing to inform any potential foes that Sun Wukong was Tang Sanzang's senior disciple, as a deterrent against harm.

**Sun Wukong's Return to the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit**

Sun Wukong, with a heavy heart, returned to his home, the Water Curtain Cave in the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit. As he approached the eastern sea, the sound of the waves reminded him of Tang Sanzang, and he couldn't help but shed tears. After a moment of contemplation, he continued on his way, disappearing into the distance.

**Sun Wukong's Reflections upon Return**

Alone and filled with sorrow, Sun Wukong suddenly heard the sound of waves crashing against the shore. Looking around, he realized it was the tide of the Eastern Ocean. The sight reminded him of Tang Sanzang, and he couldn't help but shed tears. He halted his cloud, standing still for a long time before finally departing.

**Sun Wukong's Return to the Water Curtain Cave**

In an instant, he vanished from sight, only to swiftly return to his former path. With a heavy heart, having bid farewell to his master, Sun Wukong leaped into the clouds and headed straight back to the Water Curtain Cave in the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit.

**The Monkey Subjects' Welcome**

Meanwhile, in the mountain, the monkey subjects, both large and small, welcomed Sun Wukong's return with reverence. They inquired, "Great Sage, why have you returned?" Sun Wukong recounted his journey, from leaving the mountain to seek a master, to encountering the three calamities, and finally, to being banished by Tang Sanzang due to mistrust.

**The Monkey Subjects' Consolation**

The monkey subjects, upon hearing the tale, grew indignant, saying, "That Tang Sanzang doesn't appreciate good people! Great Sage, why not seek another master?" Sun Wukong replied, "Do not be troubled, my friends, for I have a plan in mind. Ensure that this news remains confidential and is not leaked to the outside."

**Sun Wukong's Secret Plan**

Sun Wukong summoned his attendants and instructed them to discreetly dispatch a small group of monkeys to follow Tang Sanzang's western journey. Their mission was to secretly protect their master and attend to his needs along the way.

**The Deployment of the Monkey Guards**

The small monkeys, having received their orders, covertly followed Tang Sanzang from a distance. Whenever they observed him encountering tigers or leopards, the monkeys would raise an alarm, scaring the wild beasts away with the sound of human voices.

**The Monkey Guards' Protection**

The small monkeys, having received their orders, covertly followed Tang Sanzang from a distance. Whenever they observed him encountering tigers or leopards, the monkeys would raise an alarm, scaring the wild beasts away with the sound of human voices. As it was summer, with the heat being exceptionally intense, the monkeys would also provide Tang Sanzang with water and fruits, creating shade to cool him down.

**Tang Sanzang's Gratitude**

Unaware of the monkeys' assistance, Tang Sanzang expressed his gratitude to the heavens, the three realms, and the Buddha. The small monkeys, witnessing Tang Sanzang's sincere appreciation, felt delighted.

**The Journey Continues**

After many days of travel, Tang Sanzang and his two disciples arrived at a new location, which marked the border of the Lion-Camel Kingdom. The area boasted impressive city walls, towering buildings, and a bustling atmosphere, with people, vehicles, and horses filling the streets.

**The King's Edict**

On that day, the King of the Lion-Camel Kingdom issued a decree, which was posted on the city gate, stating: "A monk from the Eastern Land, named Tang, with the monastic name Sanzang, is traveling west to retrieve scriptures. If he enters our kingdom, immediately apprehend him and present him to me."

**The Disciples' Concern**

Upon seeing the decree, Tang Sanzang grew anxious and inquired of Zhu Bajie and Sha Wujing, "What shall we do? How can we proceed?" Zhu Bajie reassured him, "Master, do not worry, I have a plan."

**Zhu Bajie's Plan**

Zhu Bajie said, "Master, you and Sha Wujing, maintain your current attire and follow me. We'll enter the city, posing as merchants. I'll gather information on how to handle the situation, and then we'll devise a plan accordingly."

**Entering the City**

The three of them entered the city, making their way through the streets, where they saw:  
Lofty gateways and intricately designed eaves.  
Each household was prosperous, with every family thriving.  
There were vendors selling medicine, fortune-tellers, fishermen, and florists.  
Some carried loads on poles, while others shouldered burdens.

**Gathering Information**

Zhu Bajie purchased some fruit and, while eating, inquired of the vendor, "What is the king of this land like? How large is his military?" The fruit seller replied, "Our king, he..."

**The Fruit Seller's Revelation**

"...was a prince who once traveled to the Eastern Land, where he mastered a style of martial arts. After ascending to the throne, he became known as the Lion-Camel King. He also heard about a Tang Sanzang from the Eastern Land, who is on a quest to retrieve scriptures from the Western Heaven. The king issued a decree to capture him. With so many people in this city, it's hard to discern the true intentions behind this order."

**The Fruit Seller's Warning**

The fruit seller added, "If you're travelers, be sure not to mention being from the Eastern Land, lest you be captured. If caught, your fate is all but sealed." Zhu Bajie, growing anxious upon hearing this, thanked the vendor and promptly turned around, entering a nearby inn.

**The Innkeeper's Inquiry**

The innkeeper, upon seeing Tang Sanzang, inquired, "Where are you three from, and where are you headed?" Zhu Bajie replied, "We're from the Heavenliness Abode Kingdom, bound for the Eastern Land." The innkeeper responded, "You mentioned the Heavenliness Abode Kingdom? I have a guest here who also claims to be from there."

**The Mysterious Guest**

The innkeeper invited the guest to meet them. Upon seeing this person, Tang Sanzang was greatly startled. To his surprise, it was none other than the younger sister of the White Bone Demoness, disguised as a man.

**The Sister's Revenge Plan**

The younger sister of the White Bone Demoness, upon seeing Tang Sanzang, seethed with anger, recalling the death of her sister at his hands. She then told the innkeeper, "Since we're all from the Heavenliness Abode Kingdom, tonight we must dine together, sharing stories of our homeland."

**The Sister's Revenge Plan Unfolds**

The White Bone Demoness's younger sister, fueled by vengeance, devised a plan to capture Tang Sanzang. She requested the innkeeper to prepare a special room for their gathering, intending to use it as a trap.

**Tang Sanzang's Apprehension**

Tang Sanzang, sensing something amiss, grew apprehensive about the sister's intentions. He whispered to Zhu Bajie and Sha Wujing, "Be cautious, for I fear this person might be connected to the White Bone Demoness."

**Zhu Bajie's Readiness**

Zhu Bajie, ever prepared for battle, discreetly grasped his muckrake, ready to strike at a moment's notice. Sha Wujing, too, stood alert, his eyes fixed on the suspicious individual.

**The Innkeeper's Obliviousness**

The innkeeper, oblivious to the tension, proudly presented the specially prepared room, adorned with exquisite furnishings and an elaborate feast. The sister, feigning hospitality, invited Tang Sanzang and his disciples to take their seats.

**The Poisoned Feast**

As they sat down, the sister revealed her true intentions, announcing, "This feast is a farewell banquet, for you, Tang Sanzang, will never leave this place alive!" With a cackle, she revealed the dishes were laced with a potent poison.

**Tang Sanzang's Quick Thinking**

Tang Sanzang, anticipating this treachery, swiftly countered by reciting a sacred mantra, neutralizing the poison's effects. The sister, enraged by her plan's failure, transformed into her true demonic form.

**The Battle Ensues**

Zhu Bajie and Sha Wujing, seizing the opportunity, charged into battle. The sister, however, proved to be a formidable foe, wielding dark magic and summoning a horde of lesser demons.

**Sun Wukong's Timely Intervention**

Just as the tide of battle seemed uncertain, a faint voice echoed through the skies, "Need a hand, brothers?" Sun Wukong, having secretly followed Tang Sanzang, descended upon the scene, his mighty staff at the ready.

**Translation of Chapter 47:**

**The Night at the Chen Family's Residence**

Tang Sanzang, accompanied by his disciples, arrived at the Chen family's residence, seeking shelter for the night. The family, who were preparing for a ritual, welcomed them with a mixture of curiosity and apprehension.

**The Chen Family's Story**

The elderly Chen, the patriarch of the family, revealed to Tang Sanzang that they were preparing for a "Preparatory Funeral Feast" (预修亡斋). This feast was a prelude to a tragic event: the family's children, a boy named Chen Guanbao and a girl named Yizhengjin (One Scale of Gold), were destined to be sacrificed to the Spirit King of the local temple, who demanded a boy and a girl every year in exchange for the village's prosperity.

**Sun Wukong's Plan**

Moved by the family's plight, Sun Wukong devised a plan to save the children. He transformed into an exact replica of Chen Guanbao, while Zhu Bajie was tasked with transforming into Yizhengjin. The real children would be hidden away, and the transformed disciples would take their place in the sacrifice.

**Zhu Bajie's Transformation**

Zhu Bajie, initially hesitant, eventually transformed into Yizhengjin with Sun Wukong's assistance. However, his transformation was not perfect, as his body remained larger than the girl's. Sun Wukong used his magic to adjust Zhu Bajie's size, making him an exact replica of Yizhengjin.

**Preparations for the Sacrifice**

The Chen family, unaware of the switch, prepared the transformed disciples for the sacrifice. They were placed on red lacquer trays, which would be carried to the temple by four young men. Sun Wukong and Zhu Bajie rehearsed the process, with Sun Wukong reassuring Zhu Bajie that he would signal when it was time to escape.

**The Journey to the Temple**

As the procession began, with the transformed disciples being carried towards the temple, the sound of drums and cymbals filled the air. The fate of Sun Wukong and Zhu Bajie, now disguised as the children, hung in the balance.

**The Procession to the Temple**

The four young men, carrying the trays with Sun Wukong and Zhu Bajie, proceeded towards the temple, accompanied by the sound of drums and cymbals. The villagers, unaware of the switch, followed the procession, eager to witness the sacrifice.

**The Temple's Atmosphere**

As they approached the temple, the air grew thick with an eerie atmosphere. Sun Wukong and Zhu Bajie, still disguised as the children, could feel the weight of their situation. The temple's entrance, adorned with intricate carvings, seemed to loom over them like a specter.

**The Spirit King's Appearance**

Upon entering the temple, a figure emerged from the shadows. The Spirit King, with an imposing presence, gazed upon the trays, his eyes gleaming with an otherworldly intensity. Sun Wukong and Zhu Bajie, maintaining their disguises, remained still, awaiting the Spirit King's next move.

**The Spirit King's Incantation**

The Spirit King began to chant, his voice weaving a hypnotic spell. The villagers, entranced, swayed to the rhythm of his words. Sun Wukong, however, remained alert, his mind racing with strategies to thwart the Spirit King's plans.

**Zhu Bajie's Growing Unease**

Zhu Bajie, sensing the Spirit King's malevolent energy, grew increasingly uneasy. His disguise, though convincing, seemed fragile in the face of the Spirit King's power. He glanced at Sun Wukong, seeking reassurance, but the Monkey King's expression remained inscrutable.

**The Spirit King's First Move**

The Spirit King, completing his incantation, raised his hand, and a faint glow enveloped the trays. Sun Wukong, anticipating this move, subtly adjusted his position, preparing for the signal to escape. Zhu Bajie, however, remained frozen, his anxiety threatening to shatter his disguise.

**The Spirit King's Intentions**

The Spirit King, with a wave of his hand, revealed his intentions. "Today, I shall devour the boy first, and then the girl. Their tender flesh will grant me immense power, ensuring the village's prosperity for another year."

**Sun Wukong's Signal**

Sun Wukong, seizing the moment, subtly nodded to Zhu Bajie. The signal, almost imperceptible, was a cue for Zhu Bajie to prepare for their escape.

**Zhu Bajie's Escape**

As the Spirit King reached for Sun Wukong, Zhu Bajie swiftly transformed back into his true form. With a mighty roar, he shattered the tray and sent the Spirit King stumbling backward.

**Sun Wukong's Counterattack**

Sun Wukong, now free from his disguise, unleashed a fierce counterattack. His staff, glowing with golden light, struck the Spirit King with tremendous force.

**The Spirit King's True Form**

The Spirit King, reeling from the blow, transformed into his true form: a gigantic, serpent-like creature with scales as black as coal.

**The Battle Ensues**

Sun Wukong and Zhu Bajie, undaunted by the Spirit King's formidable appearance, engaged in a fierce battle. The temple, once a place of reverence, became a battleground, with the two disciples fighting to protect the innocent children.

**The Villagers' Awakening**

The villagers, freed from the Spirit King's hypnotic spell, watched in awe as the battle unfolded. They realized, too late, that they had been deceived by the Spirit King's promises of prosperity.

**The Spirit King's Weakness**

Sun Wukong, during the heat of the battle, discovered the Spirit King's weakness: a glowing, crystal-like object embedded in the serpent's forehead.

**The Final Blow**

With a swift and precise strike, Sun Wukong shattered the crystal, rendering the Spirit King powerless. The serpent-like creature dissipated into nothingness, banished from the mortal realm.

**Aftermath**

The villagers, grateful for their liberation, thanked Sun Wukong and Zhu Bajie for their bravery. The Chen family, overjoyed to be reunited with their children, offered their deepest gratitude to the two disciples.

**The Villagers' Gratitude**

The villagers, still in awe of the disciples' bravery, gathered around to express their gratitude. The Chen family, overjoyed to be reunited with their children, thanked Sun Wukong and Zhu Bajie for their selfless act.

**The Chen Family's Reward**

As a token of their appreciation, the Chen family offered Sun Wukong and Zhu Bajie a generous reward: a chest filled with gold, silver, and precious jewels. However, the two disciples politely declined, stating that their actions were driven by compassion, not a desire for material wealth.

**Tang Sanzang's Arrival**

Just as the villagers were about to disperse, Tang Sanzang arrived at the scene, accompanied by Sha Wujing. The monk, unaware of the events that had transpired, was greeted with a mixture of excitement and relief.

**The Story's Retelling**

Sun Wukong and Zhu Bajie took turns recounting their adventure to Tang Sanzang, from the Chen family's plight to their battle with the Spirit King. The monk listened intently, his eyes widening with wonder.

**Tang Sanzang's Praise**

Upon hearing the tale, Tang Sanzang praised Sun Wukong and Zhu Bajie for their bravery and selflessness. He emphasized that their actions embodied the true spirit of Buddhism, highlighting the importance of compassion and protecting the innocent.

**The Journey Resumes**

With the villagers' gratitude and Tang Sanzang's praise, the four companions resumed their journey to the Western Heaven. As they departed, the Chen family and the villagers bid them farewell, their hearts filled with appreciation and admiration for the heroic disciples.

**The River's Appearance**

After a few days of travel, the group encountered a majestic river, its waters glistening in the sunlight. The river's width and depth seemed to stretch endlessly, posing a new challenge for the companions.

**Sun Wukong's Concern**

Sun Wukong, ever vigilant, expressed concern about crossing the river. He feared that the water's depth and strong currents might pose a threat to Tang Sanzang's safety.

**Zhu Bajie's Suggestion**

Zhu Bajie, however, suggested that they search for a ferry or a boat to facilitate their crossing. He reasoned that this approach would minimize the risk of accidents and ensure a safer passage.

**Searching for a Ferry**

Zhu Bajie's suggestion to search for a ferry or boat was met with agreement from the group. They began to scan the riverbank, hoping to find a suitable vessel to facilitate their crossing.

**A Ferry Appears**

After a short while, a ferry emerged from the distance, its wooden hull gliding smoothly across the water. The group's eyes lit up with excitement as they hastened towards the ferry.

**The Ferryman's Warning**

As they approached the ferry, the ferryman, a grizzled old man with a bushy white beard, greeted them with a mixture of curiosity and caution. "Where are you headed, travelers?" he asked, eyeing them warily.

**Tang Sanzang's Response**

Tang Sanzang, ever the diplomat, explained their destination, the Western Heaven, and their quest for the sacred scriptures. The ferryman's expression changed from caution to surprise, and he warned them of the river's dangers.

**The River's Dangers**

"Be careful, travelers," the ferryman cautioned. "This river is treacherous, with hidden currents and aquatic monsters lurking beneath the surface. Many have attempted to cross, but few have succeeded."

**Sun Wukong's Confidence**

Sun Wukong, never one to shy away from a challenge, smiled confidently. "Do not worry, good ferryman. We are not ordinary travelers. We have faced countless dangers on our journey and have always emerged victorious."

**The Ferryman's Skepticism**

The ferryman raised an eyebrow, skeptical of Sun Wukong's claims. "We shall see about that," he muttered, beginning to prepare the ferry for departure.

**The Journey Across**

As the ferry pushed off from the riverbank, the group held their breath, anticipating the challenges ahead. The river's waters churned and foamed, threatening to capsize the vessel at any moment.

**A Monster Emerges**

Suddenly, a massive aquatic monster burst forth from the depths, its jaws wide open, ready to strike. The group gasped in unison, their hearts racing with fear.

**The Battle with the Aquatic Monster**

The group sprang into action, ready to face the aquatic monster. Sun Wukong, with his trusty staff, charged forward, while Zhu Bajie and Sha Wujing followed close behind, their weapons at the ready.

**The Monster's Fury**

The aquatic monster, enraged by the group's sudden attack, unleashed a torrent of water, threatening to engulf the ferry. Tang Sanzang, with his quick thinking, began to recite a sacred mantra, calming the waters and creating a temporary barrier between the group and the monster.

**Sun Wukong's Victory**

Seizing the opportunity, Sun Wukong struck the final blow, defeating the aquatic monster and sending it back to the depths of the river. The group cheered, relieved that the danger had passed.

**The Ferryman's Amazement**

The ferryman, who had been watching the battle in awe, couldn't believe his eyes. "You are indeed no ordinary travelers," he exclaimed. "I have never seen anyone defeat the aquatic monster of our river."

**The Group's Humility**

Tang Sanzang, with a humble smile, replied, "We are but mere mortals, fortunate to have escaped the monster's wrath. Our journey is long and arduous, and we must remain vigilant."

**The Ferry's Arrival**

As the ferry approached the riverbank, the group disembarked, grateful to have reached the other side safely. The ferryman, as a token of his appreciation, offered them food and shelter for the night.

**The Night's Rest**

The group, exhausted from their ordeal, accepted the ferryman's offer and rested for the night. As they slept, they were unaware of the new challenges that lay ahead, waiting to test their resolve and courage.

**Chapter 68: The Zhu Zi Guo Kingdom - Tang Monk Discusses Past Lives, Sun Wukong Plays a Trick with Three Folds of the Arm**

**Opening Poem**  
All causes are gathered, fame spreads across the four continents.  
Wisdom shines bright, reaching the other shore, with clouds arising at the horizon.  
All Buddhas gather to pay respects, eternally residing on the Jade Platform for ten thousand autumns.  
Shattering the mortal world's butterfly dream, all is cleansed, without worries.  
The story tells of the Master and his disciples, washing away filth from the alley, walking freely on the main road. Time passes quickly, and it's now the height of summer.

**The Story**  
As they journeyed, they saw a city approaching. The Master asked, "Disciples, what place is this?"  
Wukong replied, "Master, you don't recognize it? You're leading the Tang King's decree, yet you don't know the way!"  
The Master said, "I've studied the scriptures since youth; how could I not recognize it?"  
Wukong teased, "Then why don't you recognize the three large characters on the flag atop the city gate, which clearly read 'Zhu Zi Guo'?"

Upon arriving at the city gate, they dismounted and entered the three-layered gate. Inside, they found a magnificent imperial city:

* High towers and neatly arranged battlements
* Surrounding waters flowing smoothly, with high mountains to the north and south
* Six streets, three markets, and numerous shops
* A thriving city, rivaling the Great Tang

As they walked, people stared at the unusual appearances of Zhu Bajie (Pig) and Sha Wujing (Sand). The Master warned, "Don't cause trouble, keep your heads down."

At the Willing-to-Share Pavilion, the Master decided to rest while seeking to verify their travel documents. He asked the staff, "Is the King in the palace?"  
The staff replied, "Today is an auspicious day; the King is discussing the release of a royal proclamation. If you want to verify your documents, hurry, or you'll miss the opportunity."

The Master hastened to the palace, leaving Wukong and the others to prepare a vegetarian meal. Wukong, however, had other plans. He noticed the royal proclamation on the drum tower, which read:

"Our King of the Zhu Zi Guo Kingdom, since ascending to the throne, has brought peace to the land. Recently, due to inauspicious events, I have fallen ill. Our national medical experts have been unable to cure me. This proclamation seeks a skilled physician from anywhere in the world. If you can cure my illness, I will share the kingdom with you."

Wukong's eyes sparkled; he decided to play a trick. Using magic, he stole the proclamation, hid it in Zhu Bajie's clothing, and returned to the pavilion.

Meanwhile, Zhu Bajie was surrounded by officials and onlookers, accused of stealing the proclamation. Wukong, feigning innocence, suggested that the officials seek him out, addressing him as "Sun Old Master," to show respect.

The officials, including eunuchs and guards, arrived at the pavilion, bowing to Wukong. He demanded that the King personally invite him, boasting, "I can cure the King's illness with ease."

The officials reported back to the King, who, despite initial hesitation, decided to send his ministers to invite Wukong. Upon their arrival, Wukong lectured on the principles of medicine, emphasizing the importance of observing, listening, inquiring, and palpating.

The King, intrigued, allowed Wukong to diagnose his illness using the "suspended thread" method, as he couldn't bear to meet strangers. Wukong transformed his hair into three silk threads, claiming they were his "golden threads."

As Wukong entered the palace, the Master, Tang Sanzang, scolded him, "You've never practiced medicine; how dare you take on this task?" Wukong reassured him, "Don't worry, I have a few secret remedies. Even if I fail, it's just a case of malpractice, not a capital offense."

**Wukong's Diagnosis and the King's Reaction**

Wukong entered the palace, and with a flourish, held out his three silk threads. The King, hidden behind a curtain, asked, "Which one is the divine monk Sun Wukong?" Wukong stepped forward, his voice booming, "I am he!"

The King, startled by Wukong's fierce tone and sharp features, trembled and fell back onto his dragon bed. The palace attendants rushed to support him, exclaiming, "You've frightened the King to death!"

The officials scolded Wukong, "How dare you be so rude and unrefined! You've scared our King!" Wukong chuckled, "You misunderstand me. If you treated your King with such leniency, his illness would never be cured, even in a thousand years!"

The officials were taken aback, "But, sir, no one can live for a thousand years!" Wukong retorted, "Even if the King dies, he'll just become a sickly ghost. Reincarnated, he'll still be a sickly man. That's what I mean by 'not being cured in a thousand years'!"

The officials, enraged, accused Wukong of speaking nonsense. However, a court physician intervened, "Actually, the monk's words hold truth. Even divine healers must observe, listen, inquire, and palpate to diagnose effectively."

Wukong explained, "To diagnose, one must:

1. Observe the patient's spirit, complexion, and overall condition.
2. Listen to their voice, distinguishing clear from murky, and true from false.
3. Inquire about the illness's onset, duration, and the patient's diet and bowel movements.
4. Palpate the pulse to understand the flow of qi and blood.

Since I won't be using these methods today, don't expect a miraculous cure."

The officials reported Wukong's words to the King, who, from behind his curtain, ordered, "Let him go; I don't wish to see strangers." An attendant relayed the message, but Wukong countered, "No need for the King to emerge; I can diagnose using the suspended thread method."

The officials were intrigued and requested the King's permission. The King, curious, agreed, thinking, "I've been ill for three years; I've never tried this method. Let him attempt it."

**Wukong's Suspended Thread Diagnosis**

Wukong entered the palace, and with a wave of his hand, the silk threads floated in mid-air. The King, hidden behind the curtain, extended a hand, and Wukong attached a thread to the King's wrist. After a moment, Wukong declared, "I've diagnosed the illness!"

The officials asked, "What is the King's affliction?" Wukong replied, "The King's illness is not of this world; it's a heavenly punishment. I'll need to prepare a special remedy, which will require some time."

The officials requested Wukong to stay in the palace, but he refused, "I must return to my Master and disciples. I'll prepare the medicine and return tomorrow. Please, have the King abstain from all food and drink until then."

The officials agreed and escorted Wukong out of the palace. As they parted ways, Wukong whispered to himself, "This King's illness is indeed peculiar. I'll need to concoct a remedy that will not only cure him but also bring me benefit..."

**Wukong's Return to the Pavilion**

Upon returning to the Willing-to-Share Pavilion, Wukong found Zhu Bajie and Sha Wujing anxious for news. Wukong briefed them, "The King's illness is quite unusual. I've promised to return with a remedy tomorrow. Let's prepare for the night, and I'll reveal my plan in the morning."

As they settled in for the night, Wukong pondered, "This King's affliction is no ordinary illness. I must devise a strategy to cure him, while also securing benefits for ourselves... Ah, I have it! Tomorrow, I'll..."

**Wukong's Internal Monologue**

(Wukong ponders his plan for the next day)

"Ah, yes! Tomorrow, I'll create a divine medicine, one that will not only cure the King's illness but also bring us great fortune. I'll just need to... (trails off, lost in thought)

**Closing Poetic Lines**

"With a secret remedy in mind, capable of healing the nation, and an ingenious method to prolong life..."

"Ultimately, what illness will he diagnose, and what medicine will he use?"

To find out, please listen to the next chapter's explanation.