

A Monkey's Tale Retold

And so it is said
the Wise One he
did take sad leave
of his brotherhood halved
in witless claims fought
so to stake out and again
his own private peace
down the deepening wood.

Where came unto him
the old primal king
carrying combs of honey
this second time free
of any unborn and still yet to be
so the Sweet Sage drank deep
not knowing his smile's might
pierce the monkey king's heart.

Till here until now
this last verse first unspoken –
That the death of the monkey
did the Wise Man's eyes open
to the plight of his brothers
dharma's difficult call
to mend men's rifts
to restore the All.



It is said that In the ninth year of the Buddha's ministry a quarrel arose between two parties of monks. One party consisted of experts in the disciplinary code, or the Vinyasa rules; the others were experts in the Dharma, or the teachings. The Buddha tried to settle the quarrel peacefully, but finally, when his efforts failed, he left them without a word, taking only his bowl and robes, and retired to the Paileyayaka Forest. During his time in the forest, a monkey king, ministering to the needs of the Buddha, brought him honeycomb as an offering. The Buddha first refused the gift, for living larvae were in the comb. So the monkey king brought fresh comb of which the Buddha gratefully ate. The monkey was so overcome with joy when the Buddha accepted his gift, that it broke the his heart. The Monkey King died but was rewarded for his generosity by being granted a place in heaven.