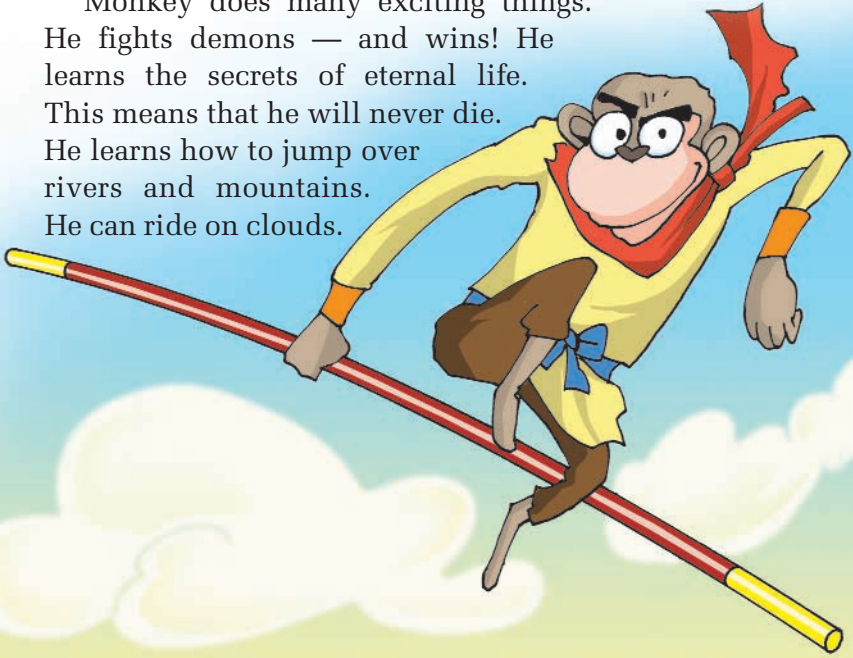


Introduction

The *Monkey King* is a Chinese story. Wu Cheng'en (c.1500–1582) wrote it down. But the story is much older. People in China told this story to each other for hundreds of years. Monkey's Chinese name is Sun Wukong. In the early twentieth century, Arthur Waley wrote the story into English. He introduced Monkey to the rest of the world.

The story is set in ancient China. This China is special. It is a magic place. A magic stone cracks open like an egg. Monkey jumps out! He is not afraid of anyone or anything. Forget about Superman, Batman and all the other strong, brave people in books, on television and in films. Monkey is *the* superhero. Monkey is *magic*.

Monkey does many exciting things. He fights demons — and wins! He learns the secrets of eternal life. This means that he will never die. He learns how to jump over rivers and mountains. He can ride on clouds.



He can live under the water like a fish. Nobody can hurt him, and nobody can kill him.

Monkey meets some interesting people on his adventures. Some of these are:

kings and queens, emperors and empresses ...



The Jade Emperor of Heaven



The Dragon King

gods and immortals ...



Buddha



Guan Yin

and demons and monsters.



A demon



Horse Face

The story that follows is the story of Monkey's many exciting adventures.

I

A Special Monkey

The magic rock

Long ago, the gods made an island in the Eastern Sea. On that island they built a mountain. Its name was the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit. On that mountain the gods put a magic rock. 5

For thousands of years the rock lay on the mountain. The sun shone on it every day. The moon and stars shone on it every night. The rain and snow fell on it.

Then one day — crack! The rock broke open. Out of the rock came a monkey. He jumped up and looked around. A golden light shone from his eyes. 10

Above the clouds, in heaven, was the Cloud Palace. The Jade Emperor of Heaven lived there. He saw the golden light.

‘What’s happening?’ thought the Jade Emperor. ‘Is it a new star?’ 15

‘Councillor!’ shouted the Jade Emperor.

The Chief Councillor went to the Jade Emperor. He bowed. The Chief Councillor was old and wise. He knew many things. 20

‘Chief Councillor,’ said the Jade Emperor. ‘There is a strange light. Where is it coming from?’

The Chief Councillor went to the Great East Gate. He looked down at the world below. He saw the island. He saw the mountain. Then he saw the monkey. At the monkey’s feet were pieces of broken rock. 25

‘This is strange,’ the Chief Councillor said to himself.

He went back to the Jade Emperor. ‘A rock has broken open,’ he said. ‘A monkey has come out of it. A golden light is shining from its eyes.’ 30