

THE CRAB AND THE MONKEY

Once a crab and a monkey went for a walk. Along the way the monkey found a persimmon seed, and the crab found a rice ball. The monkey wanted the crab's rice ball, and he persuaded the crab to trade the rice ball for the persimmon seed. The monkey quickly ate the rice ball.

The crab couldn't eat the persimmon seed, but he took it home and planted it in his garden, where it began to grow. The tiny seed finally became a big tree, and one autumn day the crab saw that it was full of beautiful persimmons. The crab wanted to eat the persimmons, but he couldn't climb the tree. So he asked his friend the monkey to pick the persimmons for him. Now, the monkey loved persimmons, and once he was up the tree he began eating all the ripe persimmons, and the only ones he threw down to the crab were hard and unripe.

The crab was angry and asked three of his friends, a mortar and a hornet and a chestnut, to help him punish the monkey. The three friends hid themselves around the crab's house, and the crab invited the monkey to come to tea.

When the monkey arrived he was given a seat by the fireplace. The chestnut was hiding in the ashes, and suddenly he burst out of the fireplace and burned the monkey on his neck. The monkey screamed and jumped up.

In an instant the hornet flew down and stung the monkey with his tail. The monkey tried to run away, but the mortar was hiding above the door and fell down with a thud on the monkey.

The monkey saw there was no escape. He bowed down to the crab and said, "I did a bad thing when I ate the crab's delicious persimmons and threw the unripe ones to him. I promise never to do such a bad thing again. Please forgive me!"