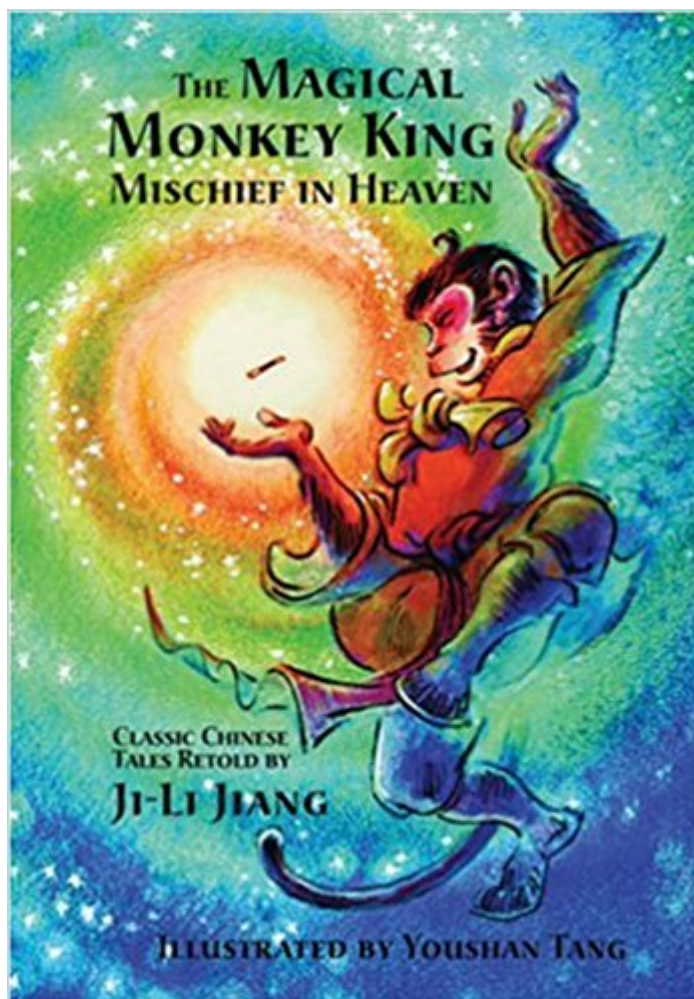


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The Magical Monkey King: Mischief In Heaven



Synopsis

The ALA Notable author of *Red Scarf Girl* presents traditional tales about the Monkey King, the irrepressible trickster hero of Chinese legend. Embellished with Hui Hui Su-Kennedy's charming black-and-white illustrations, these hilarious stories bring the Monkey King and his friends to life.

Book Information

Paperback: 124 pages

Publisher: Shen's Books (March 15, 2004)

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Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.3 x 7.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 13 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #397,433 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #53 in Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > Asian #177 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Asian & Asian American #309 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Asia

Age Range: 7 - 10 years

Grade Level: 2 - 5

Customer Reviews

Grade 2-6-One of the best-loved figures in Chinese popular culture is the trickster Monkey King. Early traditional stories about him coalesced into Wu Cheng-en's 16th-century epic novel *Journey to the West*, which uses 100 chapters to chronicle the insouciant, courageous hero's adventures. In this engaging version of his story, Jiang begins with Monkey's birth on the Mountain of Flowers and Fruits. After proving himself to the monkey tribe, who choose him as their king, Monkey tries to learn the secret of immortality, travels under the sea to steal a powerful weapon from the Dragon King, and wreaks havoc at the heavenly court of the Jade Emperor. Only Buddha can stop his mischief, and does so in a scene that works as exciting action and profound metaphor. Lively, colloquial language distinguishes this telling, and Su-Kennedy's black-and-white woodcuts enhance the action. Jiang's format serves the old tale better than the two picture-book retellings currently available, Ed Young's *Monkey King* (HarperCollins, 2001) and Robert Kraus and Debby Chen's *The Making of Monkey King* (Pan Asian, 1998). David Kherdian's *Monkey: A Journey to the West*

(Shambhala, 1992) abridges the entire story for adults and is accessible to middle and high school students. Jiang's is the best version for elementary school students, and libraries will want it as a good story for younger fantasy lovers, whether or not it is used as an introduction to authentic Chinese literature. Margaret A. Chang, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, North Adams
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Gr. 3-5. Monkey, born of both heaven and earth, is a lively trickster. Like all tricksters, he is quick-witted and full of himself, seeking knowledge and helping his people but also wreaking more than his share of havoc. In this cycle of related stories, readers learn of Monkey's miraculous birth, his bold success in finding a new home for his people, and his clever manipulations of his enemies and his betters--including Jade Emperor and other celestial bodies whom Monkey has tried to trick. It takes Buddha himself to rein Monkey in and lock him up until he learns from his mistakes. Jiang, the author of *Red Scarf Girl* (1997), provides a lively telling, and the stories move briskly. Accompanying black-and-white pictures have the look of woodcuts but with a cartoonish appearance that displays less polish than the stories. This may have use for children studying China. See the "Read-alikes: Beginning Buddhism" in the January 2002 issue for other recent titles of interest. Denise Wilms
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I won't call this a dumbed down version of the text, but instead a great introductory read for readers who are a bit younger and maybe not ready to tackle a more complete translation. It's a great story. The adult title is often just *Monkey*, but more appropriately known as *Journey to the West*. Young and old readers alike should enjoy this. I know I did.

This is a lively, highly enjoyable retelling of some of the *Monkey King* stories. I highly recommend it for readers of any age.

Given as gift

I purchased this book, hoping it would stimulate my ten year old grandson to enjoy his introduction to *The Monkey King*, and want more. It did just that! He has enjoyed the action, and the unique stories, and is now ready to delve further into a more mature rendering of *The Monkey King*. This

book is an excellent first step into this magical world.

My 8 years old daughter love it!!

My high school ESL students (intermediate level) LOVED this book. We read it as a class and, the boys especially, couldn't wait to get to class and read the next chapter each day.

This was a very fun read! The main character, The Monkey King, is a very brave and mischievous soul who loves to stir up trouble. His haughty personality gets him into many problems. My favorite part is when Monkey gets banished from his school and realizes that not everything will go his way--an important life lesson. It is written for children, so the language is simple and straightforward. Rather than being boring however, the story is so active and action packed that you hardly notice the simplicity of the style. The style does not detract from the lovely descriptions of people and scenery. The book can be read in a matter of 30-60 min and will keep you on your toes. Personally, I could not put it down! I would recommend this book for those of you out there that love some classic folk tales and of course the Chinese culture! The book is only 124 pages and is great for those of us who don't like to read as much. There is also a few references to the Buddha novel. Most importantly, this collection of Chinese tale is FULL of different moral and ethical lessons that should be taught to children and refreshed for adults. I love the simplistic writing style of Jiang and the remarkable illustrations by Youshan Tang. The mythical things that The Monkey King experiences and learns from can easily be applied to our everyday lifestyle. I definitely recommend this book for those of you who have some small amount of time on hand and need some moral cleansing!

I've long been a fan of trickster type characters and their stories from various cultures, and you can't peruse these stories without eventually running into the Monkey King. I've seen and heard snippets about him all over the place, and heard references to "The Journey to the West", but I'd never been entirely sure where or how his tale began, or where to look for it. I stumbled across this book by chance and decided to give it a go, in spite of being about ten grades beyond the recommended reading level. It was perfect, exactly what I've been looking for. Technically below my reading level, but, to be honest? I didn't really notice, because for the most part I was having as much fun reading about the Monkey King's adventures as he was having them. It's a book for kids, but I can easily see myself sharing it with the recommended age group or with some of my older friends. It felt like

the first time I read stories about Coyote or Anansi as a kid, like a piece of childhood I had completely forgotten about slotted into place. Simple without being condescending or dull, descriptive without being confusing, I feel fully prepared to go find some more complex versions of the stories this book contains. But I'll still be pulling this one out to read again now and then!

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