



• MAGICAL OR WONDROUS FAIRY TALES

The protagonists of most Mongolian magical or wondrous tales are mainly kings or knights who had gone to fight in distant places. These stories often include the appearance of monsters, devils, demons, apparitions, and ghostly beings. There is also the use of white magic, such as racing horses that can fly and other such beings. In the fairy tale of the golden and silver ankle-bones of a cow there is an eight-footed horse. In the fairy tale of the mischievous old fellow there is a horse that flies. The eight-footed horse means that he is the swiftest horse on earth.

A Mischievous Old Fellow

Once upon a time was an old man whose name was (Boldoggüi Bor Övgön), a mischievous old fellow. This old man had seven brown ewes and two grey horses. One horse could fly but the other could not. The mischievous old fellow lived in a hut on a hill where he tended to his seven brown ewes. His flying grey horse was hitched to the western side of his hut and his non-flying grey horse was tethered to the eastern side of his hut. The mischievous old fellow said to himself that he should let the small-eared brown ewe put forth a white-faced lamb. "I want to immolate it to the goddess Indra (The Lord of Heaven)," he said. One day, the small-eared ewe gave a birth to white-faced lamb and the mischievous old fellow determined to offer it as sacrifice.

He put this lamb in a bag and put it beside him as he spent the night under the stars. But a carrion-crow from the goddess Indra flew in and pecked out the eyes of the white-faced lamb. The mischievous old fellow became furious by this and mounted his flying grey horse and flew to the next of the carrion-crow where he replaced the bills of the crows with wooden bills.

After this, Indra sent out two wolves to eat the mischievous old fellow's flying grey horse, but the fellow had foreseen this and had switched his two horses. He tethered his non-flying grey horse to the eastern side of his hut and his flying grey-horse to the western side of his hut. The two wolves came and ate his non-flying grey horse and went away. The mischievous old fellow then mounted his other flying grey horse and went to overtake the two wolves. When he came upon them he flayed these wolves' skins up to their snouts.

The goddess Indra was determined to subdue the mischievous old fellow and sent out his two devils. One was named Orion-headed, the other was named Pleiades-headed. The mischievous old fellow was boiling horses' cuds. The two devils arrived to his hut, pierced its walls of his hut and looked inside. The mischievous old fellow threw the boiling cuds and scalded their eyes and faces.

After this the goddess Indra became even more furious and sent out two dragons. The mischievous old fellow had foreseen this, too, while tending to his seven brown ewes on the hill, and he erected a brown scapegoat filled with betula exilis and crept away to hide. The two dragons struck the hut with lightning, reducing it to burnt coals. The mischievous old fellow mounted his flying grey horse and overtook the dragons, cutting off their tails.

Indra became even more furious and sent out a messenger to summon this mischievous old fellow with the purpose of executing him. The mischievous old fellow came to the home of



Indra upon the summons.

Indra asked, "Why did you replace the horny bills of the crows with the wooden ones? The mischievous old fellow replied, "I said to myself that I should let the small-eared ewe put forth a white-faced lamb. If she does this then I would sacrifice it to the goddess Indra. The ewe gave a birth to the white-faced lamb. I was happy, but then the carrion-crow flew in and pecked out the lamb's eyes. Then I got angry and replaced their bills."

Indra said, "In this case, what you did was correct, but why did you flay the skins of the two wolves up to their snouts?" The mischievous old fellow responded by asking, "Did you not send them to eat up my flying grey horse?" Indra replied, "I sent them to eat up the flying grey horse." The mischievous old fellow replied, "So your wolves ate my non-flying grey horse. So I did it."

Indra replied, "You are correct." Then Indra asked, "Why did you scald the faces of my two devils?" The mischievous old fellow asked, "Did you not send them to harm me or pierce the wall of my hut?" Indra replied, "I sent them to harm the mischievous old fellow." The mischievous old fellow said, "They pierced the wall of my hut instead of harming me. So I scalded their eyes and faces." Indra replied, "You are correct."

Indra asked, "Why did you cut off the tails of the two dragons?" The mischievous old fellow asked, "Did you not send them to strike me or my hut by lightning?" Indra said, "I told them to strike the mischievous old fellow by lightning." The mischievous old fellow replied, "They struck my hut on the hill with lightning instead of striking me. So I cut off the tails of the two dragons." Indra said, "So you are correct." After this, the mischievous old fellow with his seven brown ewes and flier-grey-horse lived happily ever after.