



The
Long Path
to Wisdom

TALES
from
BURMA

Jan-Philipp Sendker

Author of *The Art of Hearing Heartbeats*

· THE ·
Long Path
· TO ·
Wisdom



Tales from Burma



OTHER PRESS / NEW YORK

Copyright © 2017 by Jan-Philipp Sendker

Originally published in German as *Das Geheimnis des alten Mönches: Märchen und Fabeln aus Burma* in 2017 by Karl Blessing Verlag, Munich

Translation copyright © 2018 by Jan-Philipp Sendker

Production editor: Yvonne E. Cárdenas

Text Designer: Jennifer Daddio

*This book was set in Centaur MT and Tagliente by
Alpha Design & Composition of Pittsfield, NH*

I 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from Other Press LLC, except in the case of brief quotations in reviews for inclusion in a magazine, newspaper, or broadcast. Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper. For information write to Other Press LLC, 267 Fifth Avenue, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10016. Or visit our Web site: www.otherpress.com.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data TK

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	xiii
<i>My Burma</i>	1
The Little Boy and the Tiger	35
The Old Monk's Secret	41
The Four Marionettes	45
How the People of Bagan Started to Lie	53
The Sorrowbird	57
Five Silver Coins	61
The Skylark's Revenge	65
Saw Min Kyi and the Ruby	71
The Night the Moon Fell into the Well	77
Little Monkey Goes Looking for Trouble	79
The Farmer's Revenge	83
The Fisherman and His Wife	87
The Pious Queen	91

Nan Kyar Hae and the Guardian Spirit	95
A Battle Between Two Sculptors	97
The Village of Endless Sermons	101
The Long Journey	105
On Gratitude	115
The Traveling Threesome	121
How the Hare Became a Judge	125
Mouse and Elephant	133
How the Thrush Lost Her Colorful Plumage	135
The Just King	143
The Blacksmith's Children	147
The Little Snail	153
A Troop of Monkeys and One Greedy Neighbor	155
Nan Ying and Her Little Brother	159
The Fear Virus	165
On the Rationality of Astrology	169
On Sharing	173
Life's Many Tribulations	177
The Power of Karma	189
The Boy with the Harp	197
The Honest Merchant	203
The Magic Comb	205
A Mother's Warning	209

The Timid Son	213
The Grateful Serpent	219
The Starving Orphans	225
The Flood	227
The Wise Teacher and His Student Maung Pauk Kyaing	231
The Omen	241
How to Spell "Buffalo"	251
The Tale of Two Merchants	255
The White Crow and Love	259
Mu Yeh Peh and the Wages of Love	271
The Beautiful Woman and the Lazy Dimwit	275
The Fisherman's Reward	283
The Best Storyteller	287
The Crocodile and the Monkey	295
The Clever Monkeys	299
Three Women and One Man	305
The Story of the Father and His Son, Or Where the Wind and Water Got Their Power	313
The Long Path to Wisdom	323
<i>Epilogue</i>	331
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	345