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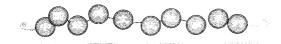
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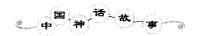
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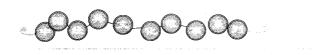
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### 1. 财 神

赵公明是个穷汉,住在干年古柏下一间四面透风的茅草屋里,养着一只鸡、一只狗。鸡的眼瞎了,狗也仅有两条腿,全靠主人喂养。

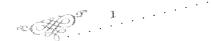
每天早上,赵公明去找饭吃,鸡和狗在家看门。他天天出去挣钱,但都把钱接济别人了,每天晚上只带回来一口救命饭。好在鸡、狗知足,有什么吃什么,从不挑食,从不吵闹。

有一年的年三十,赵公明很晚才回家,两手空空,十分愧疚 地对鸡和狗说:"唉,穷人太多了,没办法……叫你们跟着我挨饿!要是有钱,我会送给穷人,让他们有钱看病,有钱穿衣,有 钱吃饭。我们也不用再饿肚子了。"

第二天早上,赵公明刚睁开眼就发现茅草屋里金光闪闪的,原来是鸡和狗的屁股上各挂着一串金锭和银锭。赵公明十分高兴,揣着财宝出了门。

晚上,赵公明兴冲冲回来了,带回了饺子、牛肉、点心和酒。他边喂鸡喂狗,边对它们说:"今天这些金子和银子可帮了我的大忙。西河上的桥垮了,官府征税修桥,许多人家拿不出钱,大过年的哭哭啼啼。我拿这些钱帮他们交了税,足足交了八十四家。回来的路上,我还琢磨,今天晚上吃什么?冷不丁一个人迎面过来,拦住了我就叫'恩公'。原来是十年前我帮过的一个小伙计。当年他在绸布庄当学徒,掌柜诬陷他偷了柜上十吊钱,要把他绑起来惩罚他。碰巧我卖柴卖了十吊钱,就替他还了。没想到十年后这小伙计当了东家。这顿饭菜就是他执意送的。来,大家今天多吃点。看来真的是善有善报啊!"

第二天早上,赵公明看见鸡和狗身上又吊着金锭和银锭,就





又把这些钱拿出去帮助穷人。以后,鸡和狗每天都产金锭和银锭,他每天都拿去接济百姓,自己却还是住破茅屋,饱一顿饿一顿的。

渐渐地,百姓都知道了赵公明的大名,十分感激他的救助之恩。但是有几个贪财的人很嫉妒赵公明。一天夜里,他们放火烧了赵公明住的茅屋。等大伙赶到山下救火时,茅屋已化作灰烬,赵公明不知去向。



后来,有许多穷人总是在困难之际得到意外的帮助,时间长了,人们都说赵公明是神仙,只有神仙才会帮助穷人,只有神仙才会逃过劫难。

原来,赵公明真的成仙了。那只鸡和那条狗就是玉皇大帝派来的仙鸡仙狗。茅屋被火烧的当晚,仙鸡和仙狗就带着赵公明升天了。玉皇见他心怀百姓、不贪求钱财,就正式封他为财神,仙鸡和仙狗变成了一对可爱的童男童女,名字分别叫招财和进宝。

人间的百姓不时地得到财神的救济,就在他原来住的破茅屋的地方修了一座庙,将他供奉起来。百姓家家都挂财神像敬他,求他送财。财神有时会送错财,有时干脆不送财。玉皇大帝念他一片善心,并不怪罪他,一直让他当财神爷。

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可见, 有善心的人, 方可作财神。



#### God of Wealth

Zhao Gongming was a poor man who lived with a hen and a dog in a shabby thatched hut under a thousand-year-old cypress tree. The hen was blind, while the dog had only two legs. So they depended on their master.

Every morning Zhao went out to look for some food, leaving the hen and dog at home. He went out to earn money every day, but he usually gave his money to those who were in need. Thus every evening he came home bringing very little food merely enough for the hen and the dog. But they were content with what they had, never complaining about their food.

On the eve of a lunar New Year, Zhao returned home very late, empty-handed, about which he felt very uneasy. He said out of his regret and sorrow to the hen and dog, "Alas! There are too many poor people, and I can't help them all... You have to go hungry with me. If I had money, I would give it to them so that they could have money for medicine, clothing, and food. In addition, we wouldn't be tortured by hunger."

The next morning, the moment he opened his eyes, Zhao found that something was shining in the hut. Oh, the hen and the dog each were carrying a chain of gold ingots and silver ingots on their hips. Zhao was delighted and went out at once with the ingots.

In the evening, Zhao came home happily with some dumpling, beef, light refreshments and liquor, while feeding



his hen and dog, he told them, "Today these ingots did help the common people. The bridge over the West River went down, so the local government began to levy taxes for building a new bridge. But a number of families were out of money, and they could do nothing but cry. I used these ingots to pay for them, eighty-four families in all. On my way home, I was wondering what to have for supper. All of a sudden, a person walked very quickly towards me, caught me by the hand, and called me his benefactor. It was the shop assistant that I helped ten years ago. At that time he worked as an apprentice for a silk shop, but the shopkeeper accused him of having stolen ten strings of money from the shop, and wanted to bind him for punishment. Having sold the firewood, I happened to have the same sum of money, so I paid for him. Surprisingly, ten years later, he has become a boss. This meal as a sign of his goodwill is on him. Come on. Help yourself to the food. It is true that good is rewarded with good."

The following day, Zhao saw gold and silver ingots on the hen and the dog again, and took them to help the poor. Since then, the hen and the dog produced ingots every day, and Zhao gave them to the poor people. But he still lived in the shabby hut, suffering hunger from time to time.

Gradually, people kept in their heart Zhao's name and were obliged to him for his help. However, some greedy persons envied him for his kindness, and set fire to his hut one night. When people hurried down the mountain and put out the fire, the hut was burnt to ashes, showing no trace of Zhao.

Later on, people could get unexpected help when they were in difficulty. As to this, people began to spread their

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belief that Zhao was a supernatural being, who was willing to help the poor, and who was able to avoid the disaster.

Zhao did turn into a supernatural being. The hen and the dog were immortals sent by the Jade Emperor (the Supreme Deity of Taoism) to assist Zhao. That night when the hut was burning, they took him to heaven. The Jade Emperor knew that Zhao was always caring about the common people and was not greedy for wealth, and therefore named him officially the God of Wealth. The dog and the hen thus turned into a pair of lovely boy and girl, named "Zhaocai" and "Jinbao", which meant to let riches and treasures come into the house.

The common people received assistance from the God of Wealth from time to time, so they had a temple built on the ruins of the burnt hut to worship him. Every household hung his portrait too in order to pray for wealth. He sometimes sent the wealth to a wrong person or sent no wealth at all, but the Jade Emperor never blamed him and had him as the God of Wealth all the time.

This tale shows that only a kind person can become the God of Wealth.

~c∰<sup>3° 3</sup>...



## 2. 茶神陆羽

饮茶在中国有着悠久的历史,而且与茶神陆羽的传说有关。 从前有一座山,山上有一个寺院,寺院香气环绕,不时传出 诵经声。一天早上,寺院的门打开了,一个下山挑水的和尚走出 了寺院,他轻快地跃下石阶,很快到了山下的河边。

和尚正要将水桶放入河中,忽然听到一阵清脆的婴儿啼哭声。他想,难道是自己听错了?还是这山里真有婴儿在啼哭?他满心好奇地循声在河边的杂草丛中搜索。"呼啦啦",一只水鸟惊飞而过,一根白色的羽毛轻轻地飘落在地。一个冻得通红的男婴在湿润的草地上哭着。和尚看了看四周,未见其他人影。和尚闭目合手念经,然后满怀慈悲地抱起了这个可怜的婴儿,并用自己的衣服把他裹紧,不让小家伙再冻着。很快,男婴停住了哭啼,露出了纯真的笑容。

回到寺院,和尚立即向住持讲述了这件事的来龙去脉。住持听了,叹息道:"救人一命,胜造七级浮屠,留他在寺院里吧。你快去厨房端些热米汤来,先喂喂他吧。"

住持为这个男孩取姓为陆, 意为在岸边捡到的; 取名为羽, 字鸿渐, 意为被水鸟庇护过。

陆羽在寺院中渐渐长大,长得黑瘦,但很有灵气,讨人喜欢。他在寺院中烧过饭,挑过水,打扫过寺院,砍过柴,种过菜,什么苦活、累活都干过。有些和尚欺负他无父无母,常常趁住持外出时欺负小陆羽。陆羽十九岁的时候,不堪忍受寺内单调乏味的生活以及师兄弟的欺负,跑出寺院,浪迹江湖去了。他以表演戏曲为生。尽管他很有天赋,表演诙谐滑稽,但他却渴望成为一个文人。经过艰苦自学,陆羽的文学修养日渐提高,并且结交了一

些文豪。

陆羽的大名渐渐在长安城内传扬,皇帝派人请他为朝廷效力,担任官职。但陆羽作诗答复,谢绝了皇帝的好意。

陆羽有一个爱好,喜欢饮茶,而且茶术极高。他常年游历于 名山胜水间,采茶、制茶、品茶,乐在其中。朋友来访时,他会 亲自为朋友泡上一杯沁人心脾、回味悠长的清茶以款待好友。

在好友的鼓励下,陆羽决心将自己关于茶的心得及茶术写成书,以传后世。从此,陆羽隐居在深山中,专心著书,历经曲折,终于完成了自己的专著——《茶经》。

陆羽去世后,许多茶商将陆羽的陶像供在茶室内,一是纪念 陆羽,二是祈求茶神保佑自己生意兴隆。



#### Lu Yu, God of Tea

Tea-drinking has a very long history in China, and it is closely related to the legend of Lu Yu, the God of Tea.

One upon a time, there was a mountain in which stood a temple. The temple was full of the fragrance of burning incense and the chanting of scriptures. One morning, a monk went out of the temple, stepped down a flight of stone steps, and quickly got to the river to fetch water for the temple.

When the monk was about to put the pails into the river, he suddenly heard a baby's crying. "Is it really a baby here? Why is it crying on such an early morning? Am I wrong?" he thought. Because of curiosity, he began to search in the weeds along the river, following the direction of the drifting sound.

"Whoo-la-la!" a water bird was startled out of the weeds and flew away, dropping a white feather to the ground. There a baby boy, who was red with coldness, was uttering cries on the damp grassland. The monk looked around but saw nobody else. Then he recited scriptures, picked up this pitiable baby, and immediately wrapped him up with his own clothes to warm him. After a while, the baby stopped crying, smiling sweetly to the monk.

Back to the temple, the monk immediately hurried to report to the abbot the whole story from beginning to end. After hearing what the monk said, the abbot sighed and said, "There is greater merit in saving a life than in building a seven-tier pagoda. Leave him in the temple. Go to the kitchen to fetch a bowl of warm thin rice and feed him now."

Later, the abbot gave the boy "Lu" as his family name, which meant the "bank" where he had been found, and "Yu" as his first name, which meant "feather" in Chinese. He also styled him "Hongjian", which meant he had been under the protection of a water bird.

Lu Yu was growing up in the temple, dark and thin, but very smart and popular. He did all kinds of hard work like starting a fire in the kitchen, fetching water from the river, sweeping the floor, chopping firewoods, and planting vegetables. Sometimes, little Lu Yu was bullied by some monks when the abbot was not in. At the age of 19, when he could no longer stand the dull temple life and the bullying, Lu Yu left the temple forever. He wandered from place to place, making a living by acting. Though he was gifted in acting, usually humorous and comical, he desired to become a man of letters. Thus he read extensively literary works to improve himself, and got to know some great writers.

By and by, Lu Yu's name became known to the whole city of Chang'an, capital of that time. The emperor sent his men to persuade Lu Yu to serve the royal court. However, Lu Yu wrote a poem in reply declining the emperor's kindness.

Lu Yu had a hobby of drinking tea. He was deep in tea drinking. He spent lots of time visiting famous mountains and rivers, picking tea leaves, preparing tea, and tasting tea. He found great pleasure in it. Whenever a friend was paying a visit, he would make an inviting tea to entertain him.

Encouraged by his friends, Lu Yu decided to write about his practice of tea making and drinking so as to hand it down to later generations. Since then, he lived alone in the mountains, focusing on his writing. At last he managed to