小猴子的桃子宴

山顶上有一棵桃树，是小猴子种下的。那年春天，他把一颗桃核按进土里，浇了一瓢水，拍拍土说，你要好好长。桃树真的好好长了，第一年蹿出枝条，第二年开出满树粉花，第三年，挂满了毛茸茸的大桃子。

桃子熟的那天，小猴子围着树转了三圈。他挑了一个最大最红的，捧在手里闻了又闻，口水都快下来了。可是他没有咬。他想，去年桃树开花的时候，小兔子路过，夸过花好看；小松鼠帮他把掉下来的果子捡回筐里；老山羊爷爷每次上山，都给他带一把新炒的松子。桃树结果了，这些事也该还了。

小猴子忙起来。他摘了一筐最大最甜的桃子，先给小兔子送去两个，说周六上山吃桃宴。小兔子跳起来说好。他又给小松鼠送两个，给老山羊送两个，一路上桃香飘了一路。他还用大树叶垫了石桌，摆好果盘，数了数，请了七个朋友，加上他自己，八个。

周六那天，朋友们都来了。桃宴开始，小猴子把最大的桃子切开，一人一瓣，汁水甜得大家眼睛都眯起来。小兔子说这是她吃过最甜的桃。小松鼠说当然甜，这树是小猴子浇了三年水浇出来的。老山羊慢悠悠地说，桃甜是一半，人多是一半，凑在一起才是桃宴。

吃到月亮升起来，筐空了，果核堆成小山。小猴子把果核收起来，一颗颗埋回树下，说明年它们又会长成小树，结更多桃，请更多朋友。朋友们七嘴八舌说好，还说明年每家带一样东西来，小兔子带萝卜糕，小松鼠带松子，老山羊带一壶热茶。

第二年夏天，桃树上的桃子更多了，石桌也换成了两张。桃宴从太阳落山开到星星满天的时候，数一数，来了十五个。小猴子站在树下想，一棵树最甜的时候，不是桃子熟的那天，是树下坐满了朋友的那天。

The Peach Banquet of the Little Monkey

On the top of the hill stood a peach tree, planted by the little monkey. That spring he pressed a peach pit into the soil, watered it with a ladle of water, patted the earth, and said, grow well. And the tree really did grow well. In the first year it shot out branches, in the second it bloomed with pink flowers all over, and in the third it hung heavy with big fuzzy peaches.

The day the peaches ripened, the little monkey circled the tree three times. He picked the biggest and reddest one, held it in his paws, smelled it again and again, his mouth watering. But he did not bite it. He thought: last year when the tree flowered, Little Rabbit passed by and said the blossoms were beautiful; Little Squirrel helped him pick the fallen fruit back into his basket; old Grandpa Goat brought him a handful of fresh roasted pine nuts every time he climbed the hill. Now the tree had borne fruit, and it was time to pay those kindnesses back.

The little monkey got busy. He picked a basket of the biggest, sweetest peaches and carried two to Little Rabbit first, saying come up the hill Saturday for the peach banquet. Little Rabbit jumped up and said yes. He took two to Little Squirrel and two to old Goat, and the peach fragrance trailed him the whole way. He lined the stone table with big leaves, set out the fruit plates, and counted: seven friends invited, plus himself, eight.

Saturday came and everyone arrived. The banquet began, and the little monkey cut the biggest peaches open, one slice for each, the juice so sweet that everyone squinted with delight. Little Rabbit said it was the sweetest peach she had ever eaten. Little Squirrel said of course it was sweet, the tree had been watered by the little monkey for three whole years. Old Goat said slowly, sweetness is half of a banquet, company is the other half, and only together they make a peach banquet.

They ate until the moon rose. The basket was empty and the pits piled into a little hill. The little monkey gathered the pits and buried them one by one under the tree, saying next year they would grow into little trees and bear more peaches for more friends. Everyone chimed in with yes, and added that next year each family would bring one thing: Little Rabbit would bring carrot cake, Little Squirrel would bring pine nuts, and old Goat would bring a pot of hot tea.

Next summer the peach tree carried even more fruit, and the stone table grew into two. The banquet lasted from sunset until the sky was full of stars, and when they counted, fifteen had come. The little monkey stood under the tree and thought: the sweetest moment of a tree is not the day its peaches ripen, but the day its shade is full of friends.

桃树的心里话

我是一棵长在山顶的桃树。三年前，小猴子把我从一颗桃核种成了树。他每天给我浇水，冬天怕我冻着，还在树干上围了一圈草绳。我暗暗使劲，一定要结出最甜的桃子给他。

今年夏天，我挂了一树桃子，个个又大又红。我得意极了，心想小猴子一定天天守着我吃，一个接一个，把肚子吃得圆滚滚。结果你猜怎么着？他挑了最大最红的十几个，一个都没咬，装进筐，下山了。

我有点着急，又有点心疼。那些桃子是我攒了一夏天的甜啊。我踮着枝条望，看见小猴子敲开小兔子的门，递过去两个桃子，说周六请她上山吃桃宴。小兔子的耳朵一下子竖得笔直。他又去敲小松鼠的门，去陪老山羊喝茶，桃子一个一个送出去，筐越来越轻，他的步子却越来越轻快。

周六那天，山顶热闹起来。朋友们来了七个，小猴子把桃子切开，一人一瓣。小兔子咬了一

口，喊好甜。小松鼠喊更甜。老山羊慢，嚼了半天说，甜得心里发软。小猴子坐在中间，自己只吃了一瓣，笑得比谁都甜。我站在旁边看着，忽然有点明白：我攒了一夏天的甜，原来不是让他一个人吃的。

吃完桃，小猴子把桃核一颗颗埋回我脚下。他拍拍土说，你们明年好好长，结更多桃子，请更多朋友。我的根在土里听见了，心里热热的。原来这就是他天天给我浇水的原因，也是他冬天给我围草绳的原因。

第二年夏天，我拼了命地开花，结的桃子比上年多一倍。朋友们真的来了十五个，石桌坐不下，大家就坐在我的树荫里。风穿过我的叶子，我沙沙地笑。有个小朋友靠着我的树干睡着了，手里还攥着半瓣桃。我垂下一根枝条，轻轻替他挡了挡太阳。

现在我知道我的心愿是什么了。不是结最多的桃，也不是当山顶最甜的树。是每年夏天，看着小猴子把桃子送下山，再看着朋友们跟着桃香上山。果子熟了要分，快乐多了要传，这是我这个当树的，想明白的最大一个道理。

What the Peach Tree Wanted to Say

I am a peach tree on top of the hill. Three years ago the little monkey grew me from a single pit into a tree. He watered me every day, and in winter, afraid I would catch cold, he wrapped a ring of straw rope around my trunk. I quietly made up my mind: I must bear the sweetest peaches for him.

This summer I hung with peaches, every one big and red. I was so proud. I thought the little monkey would surely sit under me every day, eating one after another until his belly was round as a ball. And guess what? He picked the biggest, reddest dozen or so, bit into none of them, put them in a basket, and went down the hill.

I felt a little worried and a little heart-ached. Those peaches were all the sweetness I had saved up the whole summer. I stretched my branches to look. I saw the little monkey knock on the door of Little Rabbit, hand her two peaches, and invite her up the hill Saturday for the peach banquet. Her ears shot straight up. Then he knocked on the door of Little Squirrel, then sat drinking tea with old Goat. The peaches went out one by one, the basket grew lighter, and his steps grew lighter still.

On Saturday the hilltop came alive. Seven friends arrived, and the little monkey cut the peaches open, one slice for each. Little Rabbit took a bite and cried out, so sweet. Little Squirrel cried out, even sweeter. Old Goat, slow as always, chewed a long while and said, sweet enough to make the heart soft. The little monkey sat in the middle with only one slice himself, smiling sweeter than anyone. I watched from the side, and suddenly I understood a little: the sweetness I had saved all summer

was never meant for him to eat alone.

After the banquet the little monkey buried the peach pits one by one at my feet. He patted the soil and said, grow well next year, bear more peaches, invite more friends. My roots heard him down in the earth, and my heart went warm. So this was why he watered me every day, and why he wrapped straw around me in winter.

Next summer I flowered with all my might and bore twice as many peaches as before. Fifteen friends really came; the stone table could not hold them all, so they sat in my shade instead. The wind combed through my leaves and I laughed in rustles. A small child fell asleep leaning against my trunk, half a peach still in his hand. I let down a branch and gently shaded him from the sun.

Now I know what my wish is. It is not to bear the most peaches, nor to be the sweetest tree on the hill. It is to watch, every summer, the little monkey carrying peaches down the hill, and his friends following the fragrance back up. When fruit ripens, share it; when joy grows, pass it on. That is the biggest truth I, a tree, have ever figured out.

小松鼠的桃宴日记

我是一只小松鼠，住在山顶桃树旁边的树洞里。桃树是小猴子种的，我替他干过不少活：风把桃子吹落，我替他从草窝里捡回来；虫子爬上树干，我替一只一只捉掉。不是白干，小猴子年年给我留最软的桃。可这年夏天发生的事，让我觉得，光收桃，怪不好意思的。

桃熟那天，小猴子摘了满满一筐，见谁送谁。他给我送两个的时候，我正把去年藏的松子往新树洞里搬。我数了数，一共三十七颗，颗颗饱满，我打算谁也不给。小猴子放下桃子说，周六上山吃桃宴，记得来。我嘴上说好，心里想，桃宴就是吃桃，我带松子去干什么。

周六我还是去了。桃宴摆在桃树下，石桌铺了大树叶，桃子切成一瓣一瓣，一人一份。小兔子带了一小篮萝卜条，老山羊带了一壶热茶。就我两手空空。小猴子把最大的一瓣递给我，说去年要不是你捡桃子、捉虫，这树还不知什么样呢。我捧着那瓣桃，脸比桃还红。我吃的哪里是桃，分明是白拿。

那瓣桃特别甜，甜得我回家翻出三十七颗松子，数出二十颗，装进小竹篮。第二天我送给小猴子十颗，给小兔子五颗，剩下的给老山羊和路上遇见的刺猬。奇怪，松子分出去，我一点也不心疼，反而想明天再分点什么。

再下个周六，我在桃树下办了自己的会，叫松子宴。我请了六个朋友，小猴子带桃子来，小兔子带萝卜糕来，老山羊的茶壶又坐上了石头。大家吃得满嘴香，说树洞里开宴头一回。我站在树洞口招呼大家，尾巴翘得高高的。

后来山顶有了规矩：谁有好东西，就分一分；分了东西，下个周末接着办。桃树还是那棵桃树，小猴子还是那个小猴子，可山上的周末再没冷清过。我如今有松子就分，帮桃树捉虫也更起劲。捉虫的时候我想，分享这事，跟藏松子正相反，越往外拿，洞里越满。

The Peach Banquet Diary of Little Squirrel

I am a little squirrel, and my drey is in the tree next to the peach tree on the hilltop. The little monkey planted the peach tree, and I did my share of work for him: when the wind blew peaches down, I picked them out of the grass for him; when worms climbed the trunk, I plucked them off one by one. It was not for nothing, for the little monkey saved the softest peaches for me every year. But something happened that summer which made me feel that just taking peaches was rather embarrassing.

The day the peaches ripened, the little monkey picked a full basket and gave them to everyone he met. When he brought me two, I was moving my cached pine nuts from last year into a new drey. I counted them: thirty-seven, every one plump, and I had decided to give none away. The little monkey set down the peaches and said, peach banquet on the hill Saturday, do come. I said yes with my mouth, while thinking inside that a peach banquet means eating peaches, so what would I bring pine nuts for.

I went on Saturday after all. The banquet was set under the peach tree, the stone table lined with big leaves, peaches cut into slices, one portion each. Little Rabbit brought a small basket of carrot sticks, and old Goat brought a pot of hot tea. Only I came empty-handed. The little monkey handed me the biggest slice and said, if you had not picked up the fallen peaches and caught the worms last year, who knows how this tree would look. I held that slice and my face went redder than the peach. What I was eating was not peach at all; it was plainly taking something for nothing.

That slice was especially sweet, so sweet that when I got home I dug out my thirty-seven pine nuts, counted twenty into a small bamboo basket. The next day I gave ten to the little monkey, five to Little Rabbit, and the rest to old Goat and the hedgehog I met on the road. Strange: giving the nuts away did not hurt one bit. Instead I found myself wanting to share something again tomorrow.

The Saturday after, I held my own gathering under the peach tree, called the pine nut banquet. I invited six friends. The little monkey brought peaches, Little Rabbit brought carrot cake, and the teapot of old Goat sat on the stone again. Everyone ate with mouths full of flavor, saying it was the first banquet ever held at a drey. I stood at the entrance of my drey greeting everyone, my tail held high.

After that the hilltop had a rule: whoever has something good shares it, and

whoever has shared hosts the next gathering. The peach tree is still the same tree, the little monkey still the same monkey, but the weekends on the hill have never been quiet since. Now whenever I have pine nuts I share them, and I catch worms for the peach tree with even more energy. While catching them I think: sharing is the opposite of hiding pine nuts. The more you take out, the fuller the hole becomes.