

## THE LAZY HUNTER

Once in a country there was a lazy man. He always made a living hunting game. One day he went to the mountain top to hunt game, and for the whole day he went hither and thither but did not get as much as a piece of meat. He was very tired and took a rest by a large rock to eat his provisions, and after a while he fell asleep. He dreamt that he came to a forest where the land and water were in very fine harmony. Herds of animals went around leisurely living on the grass and water and that made them very happy. The hunter too was much gladdened, and he thought, "From now on I'll have as much hunted meat as I like. It's certain I can easily attain a livelihood for all my food."

In this satisfying way, he thought whether he could capture a musk deer alive. When he easily leapt upon a musk deer, he felt a sensation of pain in his body and he woke up. But actually he was hugging the rock, and, other than having rolled over, he had bumped the musket, which was standing near his elbow. It had fallen over with a crack, and a hare that had been sleeping at the foot of the rock, took fright and ran off in leaps and bounds. The musket's strap had hung up on the hare's head. The hare was really scared and fled to the forest dragging the strap. The hunter immediately got up, and, shaking off his sleep, he chased after it, but the hare had fled and disappeared. The hunter had no choice but to go home with empty hands and an empty stomach.

As soon as the hunter's wife saw what had happened, she looked at him angrily and said, her hand on her forehead and her curses falling like hail, "I've been waiting the whole day with an empty stomach. Not only have you not gotten a single thing, but how come you're not carrying your musket?" The hunter was somewhat unhappy and angrily said, "What do you know? A musk deer turned to stone and a hare ran away to the woods. The musket got broken and I can't find where I put it, so how could that help?" So the couple's way of speaking got even nastier.

—'Bum skyabs, *Qinghai Folk Literature* 2, 1991