

Story Card THA-TS 004

Story title	Khun Tung Khun Taeung			
Name of story-teller	Phomma Jantase	Sex	Male	Age
Recording time/date	19 October 2014			
Recording place	Thai So Cultural Center, Ban Kok Muang, Na Pho Sub-district, Kusumal District, Sakon Nakhon Province			
Length	50 minutes			
Language(s)	Isaan			
Data available	video, audio, picture, notes, other ()			
Topic/key words				
Category				
Summary				
<p>Khun Tung Khun Taeung is a Chadok story¹ from Ubon Ratchathanee. It is one of the five hundred lives of Buddha written in Pali language. It was written by some intellectual in Ubon Ratchathanee.</p> <p>Khun Taeung was an emperor in a city of the north. It might have been Chaing Mai. He had many servants. He had a wife. One day, Khun Taeung told his wife and servants that he wanted to visit a forest by himself. He traveled to the forest, which was very far. He walked until he arrived at a flower garden in Naga City. Khun Taeung met Naga's daughter. Her name was Nang Eak Kai. She was swimming with her servants.</p> <p>In fact, Nang Eak Kai had been Khun Taeung's wife in her previous life. She became Naga because she had offered water to help a monk wash his cloth. While she was washing the cloth in the river, the cloth was washed away. She was reborn to be Naga.</p> <p>When Kun Taeung met with Nang Eak Kai, he fell in love with her. She was very beautiful. He walked to her and talked to her. Nang Eak Kai invited Kun Taeung to visit Naga City under the river. Khun Taeung agreed to go. He closed his eyes. He then immediately arrived at Naga City. At Naga City, he saw a palace, where gold and silver were stacked high. He also met King Naga. Khun Taueng decided to marry Nang Eak Kai. In eight months, she became pregnant.</p> <p>Since Khun Taeung had long left his home and had not come back, Khun Taeung's wife in Chiang Mai became worried. She ordered Pra Mano, a fortune teller, to find out about Khun Taeung. Pra Mano said that Khun Taeung was fine and that he was at Naga City.</p> <p>Khun Taeung's wife asked a water spirit to go to Naga City and find her husband. She offered sweets and food to the spirit. The water spirit called his friends. They were the tallest ghost, a big-headed ghost, a one-and-three mouthed ghost, and eighteen-handed ghost. They visited Khun Taeung at Naga City. When Khun Taeung saw the ghosts, he was shocked and became sick. During the third month, the ghosts created a storm and lightning, which caused less rain. Khun Taeung became sick again.</p> <p>Nang Eak Kai was swimming in the river. She was actually not swimming, but when she saw her servants swimming, she also started to play with them. When Khun Taeung saw this, he started thinking, "I was a king in Chiang Mai. But now I have to stay with this animal." He became bored and did not talk with Nang Eak Kai. She asked Khun Taeung, "Why are you bored?" He said, "I want to go back to my city. My wife told ghosts to</p>				

¹ A Chadok story is about Buddha's life.

haunt me. I am now nearly dead." Nang Eak Kai could not stop Khun Taeung. Just as Khun Taeung was leaving Naga City, Nang Eak Kai asked him to wait. She took out a baby from her body. She covered the baby with a leaf and gave him to Khun Taeung. She then asked him to take care of the baby. And she told him to close his eyes and brought him back to the riverbank where they had met each other for the first time.

Khun Taeung had traveled nearly two months before he arrived back at Chiang Mai. When he came back home and sat on a chair, the baby came out of a leaf. Khun Taeung's wife saw it. She wondered and asked him what had happened. He told her about his trip to Naga City.

Khun Taeung named the baby Khun Tung. Khun Taeung's wife was very upset about her husband having another wife who was an animal. She told Khun Taeung to abandon the baby in a forest. Khun Taeung did not know what to do, but at the end decided to leave his son in a forest. He put his son in a hammock and hanged it from a tree in a forest. Many wild animals in the forest took care of Khun Tung. They found food and fed Khun Tung until he grew up. He then married Nang Chanee, or a gibbon.

Khun Taeung missed his son. He ordered his servants to look for Khun Tung in the forest. They found that Khun Tung was fine. When learning this, Khun Taeung wanted to bring his son back to Chiang Mai. Khun Taeung planted trees along a road and took horses and elephants to meet Khun Tung. When Khun Taeung met his son, however, Khun Tung did not want to go back with his father. Khun Tung said to Khun Taeung, "I have many friends here. How could I leave them? They have treated me well."

Khun Taeung had to ask one hundred times. Khun Tung finally agreed to go home with his father. When Khun Tung arrived at Chiang Mai, they held a ceremony to greet him. Khun Tung stayed in Chiang Mai for some time, but started to think about his mother, Nang Eak Kai. He asked Khun Taeung to allow him to visit his mother. His father told him to use a hammock and beat it at the river. The sound would reach Naga City. Khun Tung followed his father's advice.

King Naga was very strong. He told his female servants to guard along the riverbank. He thought that an enemy would come. When the female servants met Khun Tung, however, they fell in love with him because he was so good-looking and smart.

Khun Tung asked the female servants to take him to meet his mother at Naga City. The female servants told him to close his eyes and took him to Naga City. When he opened his eyes, he saw his mother and grandfather. They cried with joy. Nang Eak Kai asked Khun Tung about Khun Taeung. Khun Tung told her that he was very well.

Khun Tung stayed with his mother for two months. He then wanted to go back home. He went to talk with Nang Eak Kai. She said to him, "Do not accept gold and silver that your grandpa will offer. You should instead ask for one gold pot, a wooden hook, and a sword." King Naga gave Khun Tung everything he had wanted. When Khun Tung obtained everything, Nang Eak Kai said to him, "When you settle down anywhere and if you want to have a wife, you can knock on the golden pot. Then, the pot will release Nang Tung Nang Thong. You must also carry the hook with you. Hang it on your neck all the time. Do not take off and use the sword. Use it only when you face an enemy. You must swing it three times. Then, the wildlife will help you."

Nang Eak Kai told her servant to take Khun Tung to the riverbank. When he arrived on the ground, he put the wooden hook on the ground and carried it along the way. He walked long until he got to a lotus pond. He decided to stay overnight there. When he

woke up next morning, he saw a big city. A beautiful palace and many servants were there. Many beautiful women teased him, saying, "You are very handsome but do not have a wife." Khun Tung knocked on the golden pot. Nang Tung Nang Thong appeared from the pot. He married her and she became the queen of the city. The new city did not have a name. So, elders named it Sisatta Naga City, as it was related to Naga City. It probably became Vientiane these days.

As for Nang Chanee, a gibbon who became Khun Tung's first wife, she was a human in her previous life, but was born to be a gibbon. It was because she did not clean fruit before offering it to a monk. This way she was reborn to be a gibbon. Nang Chanee felt ashamed about this, ran away from her friends, and stayed away from them.

Khun Tung still thought about Nang Chanee. So, he went to visit her. When Nang Chanee saw her husband, she cried out, saying, "Pua pua." This became the sound gibbons make these days. She then transformed herself to be a beautiful woman. Nang Chanee and Khun Tung stayed in a cave for a long time.

Nang Chanee brought a magic fruit to Khun Tung. It was *maka yongkam* or *mak maneekot*. Nang Chanee knew that if a human eats a branch of the fruit, they will become a monkey or a pig. So, she brought the top of the tree to her husband. When Khun Tung ate the fruit, he became younger and stronger. Khun Tung took these trees to give to people in his city. They also got stronger. When Khun Tung saw this, he wanted to bring his gibbon wife with him to live in the city together. He planted sugarcanes and banana trees along the road to the city. Nang Chanee rode on an elephant to go to the city.

When Nang Tung Nang Thong heard about this, she thought of causing a trouble to Khun Tung and Nang Chanee. Khun Tung announced to people in the city that they must tie dogs inside the house because they might bite the gibbon wife even though she had been transformed to a human. When Nang Chanee came to the city on an elephant, Nang Tung Nang Thong released a dog outside. Nang Chanee saw the dog. She was so frightened that she changed herself back to a gibbon and left for the forest. She never came back to the city again.

Nang Chanee cried out for her husband every day. Khun Tung missed his wife very much. So, he went to the forest and stayed with his gibbon wife until they had a baby. The baby was named Tao Aumka, which meant the moon in the daytime. Khun Tung took Tao Aumka to live in the city. When Tao Aumka grew up, he thought about his mother. He then went back to the forest to stay with his mother again.

The story goes on and on. It is *buppagum*, or results of what you did in your previous life.