A Thai Folk Tale: The Clever Monkey

I’d like to present you a **Thai folk tale** called ‘The Clever Monkey’. I’ve come across this tale in the book ‘Folk Tales of Thailand’ (1976) by P.C. Roy Chaudhury. Thus, I’d like to retell this story with a moral for you.

**A Thai Folk Tale**

Once there was a clever monkey that enjoyed outwitting people and profiting from them. Thus, one day the monkey got a thorn in his tail and went to a barber asking him to remove that thorn. The barber took his razor, brought out the thorn but at the same time cut a bit of the monkey’s tail. Hence, the monkey was furious and asked the barber to give him his razor as compensation. The barber did as demanded and the monkey was happy he had made a score.

Hanuman langur, in the Thai Ramakian and folk tale, Hanuman is known as the clever and witty monkey god (photo credit: XenonX3,
On the monkey’s way home, he met an old woman who was cutting firewood. Thus, the witty monkey offered her to use his razor to cut the wood. The old woman gladly accepted the offer but soon the razor broke. Hence, the monkey was enraged and demanded that the woman should give him all her firewood in consideration of the broken razor.

 Shortly afterwards, the monkey met another old woman who was preparing Thai fish cakes by the fire. Since her firewood was nearly exhausted, the monkey offered her his firewood. The old woman gladly accepted the offer but after a short while she used up all the firewood. Hence, the monkey became
very vexed. Thus, he demanded all her fish cakes as the price for the used up firewood.

Delicious Thai fish cakes (photo credit: wikipedia.net)

Happy and amused, the clever monkey run off with the fish cakes. However, the aromatic smell of the fish cakes attracted some dogs which eventually assaulted the monkey. This was when the scared monkey left all the cakes behind jumping on a tree to find shelter from the dogs.

Thus, in this Thai folk tale, the clever monkey finally got away empty-handed, whereas the dogs feasted on the delicious fish cakes.

Yours, Sirinya

(Reference: P.C. Roy Chaudhury, Folk Tales of Thailand, SterlingPublishers, 1976)