

A PARROT'S EXPERIENCE

Lee Evans

A weary dancer stayed one night
With Buddhist nuns to rest;
When morning came, she left behind
Her parrot as their guest.

Buddha-Rakkhita was the name
Conferred upon this bird,
Who memorized the Buddhist Law,
And spoke it word for word.

The Abbess of the nunnery
Considered it worthwhile
That he be made to meditate
As was his keepers' style.

She took him to the charnel ground
Where scattered bones were left,
And taught him to say "Skeleton,"
And contemplate on Death.

One morning as the parrot thought
Upon this mental sign,
An eagle swooped and snatched him up
And bore him through the sky.

The nuns cried out and screamed so hard
The eagle took affright,
And dropped the parrot down below—
Much to the nuns' delight.

They took him to the Abbess then,
Who asked him what he thought
When o'er the distant earth he soared,
In ruthless talons caught.

The bird replied, "A Skeleton
Was all that I beheld;
I wondered where its bones would lie
When down to earth they fell."

"Well done!" the Abbess then replied,

“These musings will bear fruit
When human birth you gain at last,
And realize the Truth.”

This story shows that even birds
Can meditate like you,
And free themselves from hope and fear—
So what is your excuse?

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