

## 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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