

Translated by De. Natsagdorj, 1976.

TEARS OF A VENERABLE LAMA

When Father lama Lodon a master of the vinaya, who was wearing a yellow gown and a red robe, and was meditating on the fact that the world was empty, went down the eastern terrace of Gandan, he came across miss Tserenlhama, an experienced girl who was wearing shining white and black and who had just come out of the western street of Chinese Porters.

Miss Tserenlhama was about to sell a gold ring for some tugrigs for she was in need of money, and on meeting Father Lama Lodon by chance, an idea came into her mind like lightning. She already knew from experience that lamas were kind-hearted and easily led, and besides, she was told that Father Lodon was a wealthy monk. So she went straight towards him with anxiety in her face and said:

-Venerable Lama! Have mercy on us. My old mother has fallen ill and expecting to die. Be so kind as to visit her place and bestow your protection upon her.

-I am going to an important rite in the East Monastery. I am sorry, this time I'm unable to come. Go to another lama who lives nearby, he said, but he observed miss Tserenlhama standing there, panic-stricken.

Greatly worried she begged him again and again to pray over her mother. In the end he yielded to her and started walking majestically to her home, following her. He thought that he would receive substantial remuneration, for the girl seemed to be greatly alarmed.

Soon they entered a weather-bitten white gate. Passing through a narrow corridor between mud houses they went into a dark burrow-like house which was on the right facing east, and she, offering a chair to the lama, went out the house saying that she would bring "a cup of tea". In the meantime the lama looked round the room. There was a big bed along the front wall of the house. The bed was neatly made and covered with patterned chints. There was a small square table covered with white cloth at the opposite wall of the house. On the table there was a big clock and several pictures. The ceiling of the house seemed to low that if the Father Lodon stood up, he thought he would knock his head. A small window was sealed with two layers of soft Chinese paper decoration with spiral patterns cut of red paper. Although it was daytime, in the house it was very dim. A tiny hole made at a corner of the window and through it she would probably watch the visitors who came in and out.

Presently the girl came back and after giving him a cup of tea, she pleaded.

"Benevolent Lama, be so kind as to use your holy power and bless to cure mother"
The lama gave a careful look in the girl's direction.

When she was outside she had seemed very pale and colorless in the light of the sun. But when she came inside, her two cheeks seemed to burn pinkly, and she glowed just like the image of the White Tara to which lama prayed every morning. And a haze of sinful worldly thoughts began to rise in the lama's mind.

When the Father asked mildly: "Well, my girl, where is your mother?" The girl had already put her mother into bed pretending to be ill and she could say "she is here". So she led the lama into the next room. An old woman was in bed covered with a blanket. On an altar in the front part of the room there was a small flamed icons of Buddhas covered in dust. In front of it there were two red candles arranged in the Chinese manner.

Hardly had the lama finished chanting and paying homage to protective spirits, when it already became dark. The mother, somewhat revived, was praying, saying her recovery was due to the Venerable Lama's help. The girl who also gave the appearance of believing in the lama's power. Apart from that, the girl's ways of speaking and laughing were charming. Every time she flashed her shining black eyes, a tiny spark almost caught fire in Father Lodon's mind. The girl already understood this state of affairs.

Reverent lama, it is already night. Please have supper with us before you go, she said.

Firstly the lama was a little tired and secondly it is an established tradition that lamas are offered a meal after chanting prayers, so the lama immediately agreed and followed the girl into the next room. The girl summoned her servant to prepare the meal. She served the lama, and at the same time she became more and more provocative and constantly flinging ambiguous worlds in his direction.

They talked about this and that, and the lama increasingly praised the monastic way of life, but in just one evening he had completely forgotten his four-walled ger in Duinkhar district with its framed steamed statues of Buddhas. The girl said: "We have no transport to take you back, and besides it is raining. Would you do us the honor of spending the night here and go back tomorrow?" The lama, though he hesitated for a moment, could see that it was really late and that it was truly raining, and that it would be more amusing here, and therefore he decided that he would stay the night. The girl was delighted and she made up a bed for him.

After they had got into respective beds the girl naturally began to cough softly. The lama could not sleep. However, although the lama wanted to touch the girl, since reaching manhood he had hardly ever mixed with woman and girls, and therefore he was discouraged. Unable to endure this, he got up and went out under pretence of going for a walk in the fresh air with the intention of making love to the girl when he returned. Soon coming back to the house he strained his ears but there was silence. When he pulled at the door the girl uttered a sound and cried out "Reverent lama wait a bit". The lama lost his patience, wetted his index finger and made a small hole in the Chinese paper window. When he looked through the tiny hole, the girl was undressing and taking off her underclothes; it was an enchanting sight. The lama was very excited; his

lama's dogma of emptiness was consigned to the other world and the doctrines of the Vinaya had flown back to the Western Zuu. He was consumed with the fire of lust and hurriedly entering the room he went to sleep with the girl.

It is impossible to describe the welcome of worldly things, which took place in the Father lama's after that time. Although he used to go home as soon as morning broke, by evening he used to return, and so by the time several months had passed, a new path had already been worn between Gandan Monastery hill and the Western Street of Chinese porters. Meanwhile Tserenlhama greatly enjoyed herself on the proceeds of the wealthy lama.

The reverent lama gathered together his house in Gandan and all the things he had prepared for the degree of Gabji, -degree of doctor of Buddhist philosophy, and he used them to build a spacious house with a big yard for Tserenlhama. Not long after this Father Lodon one day came to the girl's place, and when he tried the door, it was holted. When he squinted through the slit at the corner of the window, he saw Tserenlhama sitting enjoying the embrace of a young layman. As soon as a lama found out that Tserenlhama's old devotion had turned to his, he flew into a rage and breaking down the door of the building he entered and threatening to hit the young man, created a great row.

However the girl, without the slightest fear, told the Lama why she did not love him. Cursing and threatening him, she drove him out. The lama wanted to sue her, but as had broken his holy priesthood vows this was impossible and he had no way out. Then lying in distress at the eshold of the house, he pleaded

My own girl, I love you

Now, where shall I go?

It doesn't matter if you have another man

Only don't abandon me.

When he said this, bitter worldly tears ran like rain drops down from his two eyes.