

Dream of the Monkey*1

from diary, entry dated July 20, 2010

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A beer party was held for the first time on the roof of the IPMU building. I was talking with Takada-san*2 and Kato-san.*3 Takada-san said, "In the eyes of Kato-san, IPMU researchers are something like monkeys or aliens. Though," he continued while glancing at Murayama-san, "it may well be that some of them are human beings." "Whee! I'm a monkey! If I remember my past life correctly, I should have fallen into the realm of hungry ghosts this time — have I come up to the animal realm?*4 I don't really feel that I have risen to a higher realm, but I am glad I could become a monkey." While I was thinking things like that, I awoke from my dream.

In the innermost depth of mountains — this is where I was born and bred. Now I see that I have been a monkey from the beginning. But I fought against the boss monkey of my home mountain. Eventually I left that mountain and acquired a mountain of my own, my own territory. Now I have a large family and a lot of fellow monkeys. But I am somehow lost in thought these days. I am the boss of this mountain! I can do whatever I want here. But something is missing.

What are the stars twinkling in the sky, up where I cannot reach? Why am I here? I wonder what I

am. I don't understand at all! Nevertheless, I desperately try to understand.

I heard that human beings are trying to understand what is beyond the stars using something called Subaru. I heard that, using something called LHC, they are trying to understand what is happening in an extremely tiny world. Imagine this whole mountain squeezed into a grain of sand, and then further squeezed by the same amount... what could be going on in such a tiny place? I also heard that in the world of humans, they have something called mathematics, which enables them to see the truth across the entire history of the universe — from its beginning to its very end.

Aaah! I wanna be a human being! As a human being, I wanna understand what I am. I wanna understand the universe. I heard that a priest travelling in quest for the truth will pass through here in five million years from now. I've got it! I'm gonna follow him and see what the truth is...

This was why I called my family and fellow monkeys to the mountain. "You have always taken care of me. I'm grateful for it. But today I'll go down the mountain to start a journey. I'll follow a priest who shall



pass near here in five million years. You must not concern yourselves about me. I'm counting on you to take care of

everything regarding our mountain from now on. You guys, get along with each other!" I was cool but irresponsible in saying these things. Then I came down the mountain.

After an unspeakable five million years of wandering — there were countless things that happened during the journey; it is impossible to give a short summary — I was thinking, "At last, tomorrow I'll be able to meet the priest whose name is Hitoshi Sanzang.*5" Then, I awoke from a dream, again!

What in the world is this? It may be that I'm also in a dream, from which I should awake. So, I've written down my dream before I forget it.

*1 Inspired by Zhuangzi's *Dream of the Butterfly* (see, for example, <https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Zhuangzi>).

*2 Masahiro Takada, who was an IPMU Associate Professor at that time. (Now he is a Kavli IPMU Professor.)

*3 Yasuhiro Kato, who was head of the Accounting and Finance Section of the IPMU Administration Office at that time.

*4 For more information regarding the Karmic wheel of life, see, for example, <http://www.onmarkproductions.com/html/six-states.shtml>.

*5 See, for example, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xuanzang_\(Journey_to_the_West\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xuanzang_(Journey_to_the_West)).

