A monkey lived in a forest. Once, as he leapt from tree to tree, a splinter broke in his tail. He was sitting on a branch howling in pain and nursing his tail when he saw a barber walking that way. He called the man closer and begged of him: “Brother Barber, Brother Barber, a thorn or something is hurting my tail. Please take it out with your razor, bless you.”

When the barber was taking out the splinter, which was in a tricky place, the whole tail broke off with a snap. The monkey began to cry in a loud voice, “Give me my tail back! My tail, my tail!”

The barber didn’t know what to do. So he said, “Take my razor instead of your tail.”

—An Indian folktale

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