

**How people used to cast their skins.**

***Told by Wang Jian-guo.***

They tell a story that in ancient times people used to cast their skins and so renew their youth many times over. There was a Miao woman who, casting her skin at the third year, suffered a great deal. She said, "Oh! people casting their skins may suffer, but, while casting my skin, I have suffered beyond endurance. Casting one's skin is extremely difficult".

There was a day when the sky-people came, and she said to them, "Casting one's skin so that one's youth may return should be easy, but, in truth, I find casting my skin so hard, the suffering is beyond endurance. I tell you that it makes life so dreadful, I would rather die quickly!"

A man of the sky-people said, "Right, from now on, earth-people shall die. It will no longer be necessary to cast their skins". He spoke and they were gone. Thereafter, unable to cast their skins, people just died. They could not live for long. This is the reason why people have to die.