

# A Taste of Immortality

1. Outline the relationship between the man and the Daoist priest.

The old man was "extremely devoted" to Daoism, and by extension, extremely devoted to the occasional Daoist monks passing by his home. However, when he went inside the home and saw that the monk (presumably) ate what dead babies and dogs, he was disgusted and fearful of the monk's intentions towards him. However, at the end when he realizes that those two things were actually immortal foods, he reverts into being respectful towards the monk and realizing his error.

2. Summarize the rare elixirs and the tuckahoe -- what did they look like and what did they do?

The dead baby was actually a ginseng root that would add thousands of years to your life. The dog was a medlar root that could give you a thousand years of life. The tuckahoe was a large fungus that allowed the man to never be sick again and live over a hundred.

3. Explain the importance of destiny in this story.

Destiny is what prevents the old man from becoming immortal, from realizing that the ugly vegetables would give him immortality.

4. Identify a couple examples of balance within the story.

- The old man neither becomes immortal or dies normally, but is somewhere in between.
- The priest's "clothing was tattered, but the expression on his face was healthy and pleasant."