

## The Paper Rain Doll

Every rice field had dried up because of the drought.

Taro's father, who was a farmer, was worried about his rice fields in which his rice was almost dying. He went out every day and worriedly looked up at the sky.

Taro, back from school, soon threw his schoolbag away, and said to his mother,

"Where is Father?"

While washing, she answered worriedly,

"He went out to see the rice fields, as the rice was dying."

Taro rushed out to the fields and found his father anxiously standing there, looking up at the sky.

"Hi, Dad! Are you eagerly waiting for the rain?" he asked as he ran to his father from behind.

"Well, there's no cloud at all in the sky. It's hopeless."

His father turned around to the boy and blew smoke from his pipe.

"I'll make it rain,"

Taro looked up at his father, and said with a serious look on his face.

"Ha-ha-ha! No joking! It won't rain only by your will," his father held his side with laughter.

"But Dad," Taro kept talking desperately, "the other day, it had been raining before the sports day, hadn't it? But I made a paper doll for fine weather, then it cleared up."

"Indeed!"

"At that time, everyone looked happy. I said to the people that the paper doll I had made brought that fine weather. Then they said, 'Good work!'"

"Aha-ha-ha, I see. Do you think your paper doll listens to your wish?"

"Yes, of course. So this time I'll make a doll for rain, and ask it to make it rain."

"Aha-ha-ha, everyone will be pleased. Try it! If it rains, I'll give you a reward."

"I don't want a reward. You should give it to the doll instead."

Taro immediately fetched a sheet of Japanese paper and wrote sentences on it in hiragana like this:

*Paper doll, Paper doll! You're good at making the weather fine. So you must be good at making it rain,*

*The rice fields are all dried up, and the rice in the fields is dying.*

*We desperately needed some rain,*

*If you'll give us enough rain, my mother, father and other farmers will be so pleased.*

*If you won't, I'll write 'Liar' on you. And give you to a cat as its toy.*

*If you don't want me to do so, give us much rain tomorrow. I'll pour some sake on you as a reward.*

*You, paper doll for rain, Give enough rain on the fields and ponds.*

Taro crumpled the letter up into a ball, and made a doll's head with it, then dressed it in a paper kimono and tied the paper doll on a bush clover branch near the back door.

That night, while Taro and his parents were sleeping, the lightning flashed and the thunder rumbled. Then it started raining like cats and dogs



"Great! My paper rain doll really brought us rain!" Taro jumped up, "I'll go and give my thanks to it."

His parents said to him,

"Dangerous! Son! It is still thundering. Stay in bed now. You'd better say 'thank you' to it tomorrow morning."

Taro went to bed unwillingly.

Early the next morning, he woke up and found it was clear, nice weather. Everyone was pleased as ponds and fields were filled with water. His father, coming home smilingly from his fields, patted him on his head and praised,

"You've done it well! I'll give you a reward."

"I don't need any reward. Instead, please pour some sake on the doll."

"All right. Where is your paper doll?"

Taro happily took his father to the back gate. The bush clover was in full bloom, getting wet with rain, but the paper doll had gone.

"I promised the doll I would pour some sake on it."

Taro started weeping.

His father cheered him up,

"It must be flowing in the river. The paper doll made it rain and then flowed by itself, so it won't think you are a liar. I'll pour some sake into the river. The doll will drink it somewhere and be pleased. So don't cry! I'll buy you some other reward..."(2015/08/01 With Itaya)



## 雨ふり坊主

どこの田んぼも日照りで干上がっています。太郎のお父さんはお百姓さんでしたから、自分の田んぼの稲を気にして、毎日外に出かけては、心配そうに空を見上げるのでした。

太郎は、学校から帰って来ると鞆を放り出し、お母さんに聞きました。

「お父さんは？」

お母さんは洗濯をしながら心配そうに答えました。

「田んぼの稲が枯れそうで見に行ったわよ。」

田んぼの方に駆けて行くと、お父さんは心配そうに空を見上げて立っていました。

「ねえ、お父さん！雨が降るのを待ってるの？」太郎は、お父さんの後ろに走り寄って聞きました。

「うーん。空には雲一つないな。だめだな。」

お父さんは太郎に振り向くと、煙管（キセル）をふかしました。

「僕が雨を降らしてやるよ。」

太郎はお父さんを見上げて、真剣なまなざしで言いました。

「ハハハ！冗談はよせ！お前の願いだけじゃ雨は降らないよ。」お父さんは腹をかかえて笑いました。

「でもお父さん、」太郎は必死に話を続けました。「この間、運動会の前の日、雨が降っていたでしょう。でも僕が照る照る坊主を作ったら、いい天気になったよ。」

「なるほど！」

「あの時、みんな嬉しそうだった。僕が作った照る照る坊主で晴れた、って言ったらみんな『よくやった！』って言ってくれたよ。」

「アハハハ。そうか。照る照る坊主がお前の願いを聴いてくれると思うか？」

「もちろんさ。だから今度は雨ふり坊主を作って、雨が降るようにお願いするよ。」

「アハハハ、みんな喜ぶだろうな。やってみろ。雨が降ったら、褒美（ほうび）をやるぞ。」

「僕はいらないよ。雨ふり坊主にやって。」

太郎は、すぐに半紙を一枚取り出すと平仮名でこう書きました。

てるてるぼうず、てるぼうず！天気にするのがうまいなら、雨をふらすのもうまいだろ。

田んぼがみんなひあがって、田んぼの稲が枯れそうだ。

ぜひ雨を降らせてくれ。

雨がいっぱい降ったなら、お母さんも、お父さんも、お百姓さんだって喜ぶよ。

雨が降らないその時は、『うそつき坊主』と書いた上、猫のおもちゃにしてやるぞ。

そうして欲しくないならば、明日の雨を頼んだぞ。ほうびにおさげをかけてやる。

雨ふりぼうず、ふりぼうず、田んぼと池にいっぱい雨をふらせてくれ。

太郎はその手紙をクシャクシャに丸めると、雨ふり坊主の頭にしました。そして紙の着物を着せて、裏木戸の萩の枝にぶら下げました。

その晩、太郎がお父さん、お母さんと寝ていると、雷がピカッと光って、ゴロゴロと鳴り、バケツをひっくり返したような雨が降って来ました。

「いいぞ！雨ふり坊主が本当に雨を降らしてくれた。」太郎は飛び上がりました。「お礼を言いに行ってくる。」

「危ないよ！太郎！まだ雷が鳴っているから、寝床に入っていないさい。お礼は、明日の朝にしなさい。」



と止められました。

太郎は、しぶしぶ床につきました。

明るく朝早く、目が覚めると雲一つない晴天でした。池や田んぼが水でいっぱいになって、みんな喜んでいました。お父さんも笑顔で田んぼから戻って来ると、太郎の頭を撫でて褒めてくれました。

「でかしたな！褒美をやるぞ。」

「僕は褒美なんかいらないよ。雨ふり坊主にお酒をかけてやって。」

「わかった。雨ふり坊主はどこだ。」

太郎は嬉しそうにお父さんを裏木戸に連れて行きました。萩の花が雨に濡れて満開です。でも雨ふり坊主はどこにも見当たりません。

「お酒をかけてやると約束したのに。」

太郎は泣きべそをかきました。

お父さんは慰めました。

「川に流れて行ったんだろう。雨ふり坊主は雨を降らし、自分で流れて行ったんだ。だから、お前のことを嘘つきとっていないよ。お父さんが川に酒をかけてやるから、どこかで雨ふり坊主が飲んで喜ぶよ。だから、もう泣くな！お前には別に褒美を買ってやるから・・・」



原作：雨ふり坊主（夢野久作）