

Tiger in Paper Screen

Long, long ago there was a wise Buddhist priest called 'Ickyu Zenji' in Kyoto.

This is one of his episodes in his childhood.

Hearing of his wisdom, a feudal lord called him to his castle and put him to a test.



"I have one problem I'd like you to solve." said he, taking him in front of 'Tsuitate'(Japanese paper screen used for hiding a room) on which a big tiger was painted.

"We are now in trouble, for this big tiger gets away from the screen and surprises us every night. I do hope you'll catch and tie the tiger with a rope when it gets away out of it."

"Do I catch this painted tiger?" Thinking a little, he said to the lord.

"Well, OK. I'll do it." He tied a Japanese towel around his head.

"Your Honor Lord. Would you give me a strong rope to catch the tiger with?"

Having a rope, he stood ready in front of the screen to catch the tiger.

"Your Honor. It is very dangerous to stand in front of it. Why don't you go behind the screen and drive the tiger out of it?"

"What, What? Do you say I drive the tiger out of the screen?"

"Yes, sir. I ask you so. If you can't drive the tiger out, I can't catch it with a rope."

"Well... I can't do it."

The lord couldn't help approving his quick-witted wisdom.

○「一休」さんは、どうやってお殿様を感心させたのでしょうか。

一休さん

むかし、むかし京都に一休さんという頭のいいお坊さんがいました。

彼のうわさを聞いて、お殿さまは試してやろうとお城に呼び寄せました。

「一つ相談があるんじゃ。」とお殿様は言うと、一休さんを大きな虎が書いてあるつい立の前に連れて行きました。

「実は、毎晩夜になると、この大きな虎がつい立から出てくるのじゃ。一休さんよ、虎を捕まえてもらいたいじゃ。」

一休さんはちょっと考えてから、頭に手ぬぐいを巻いて言いました。

「お殿様、私に虎を捕まえる縄を下さい。」

そして、一休さんは縄を持って、つい立の前で待ち構えました。

「お殿様、そこには危険です。つい立の後ろに回って虎を追い出してください。」

「何！ 何と申す。つい立から虎を追い出せと。」

「そのとおりです。是非お願いいたします。追い出してもらわなくては、虎を捕まえられません。」

「ウーむ。参った。」

