

A Huge Tree and a Young Lady

Long, long ago there lived a poor young lady and her old grandmother in a village. She lost her parents in her childhood. The young lady worked in the daytime from early in the morning till late in the evening at a Choja's (Millionaire) house in a town. She had every supper here, a little of which she took back at home to her grandmother.

On a rainy day on her way home she had a shelter under a huge tree, which whispered to her,

"Young lady. I know you are a very hard worker. Listen to me, I'll be cut down in three days by wood-cutters sent by the lord and made into a huge ship in three months and carried to the sea."

"Oh, I feel great sorry for you." said the young lady.

"But when they set me into the sea, however many men push me into it, I'll never move. Then the lord will give a message to people, 'If anybody should push the ship into the sea, I'll give much reward to him.' You have only to apply for it and stand on the bow of me, saying 'Move the ship. One, Two, Three.' I'll move slowly into the sea. You'll be happier by the reward given by the lord." continued the tree.

The tree was cut down three days later and a huge ship was completed three months later.

The day came when they set the ship into the sea. Many people went to the sea to see the huge ship float on the sea. However hard workers pushed it, however, it never moved. At last the lord gave a message to people as the tree told her.

When she applied for it, everyone laughed at her, saying

"Who can move the ship? Many strong men couldn't move it, much less a woman."

"Anyone who moves the ship will do." said the lord.

While many spectators were watching her, she stood on the bow of the ship and said in a loud voice, "Move the ship. One, Two, Three."

To their surprise, the ship began to move into the sea little by little until it floated in the sea.

"What a mysterious lady she is!" said everyone including the lord.

"I am never mysterious. I only did as the tree....." said she quietly.

"I'll give you reward as I promised. What do you want? Tell me anything you want without reserve."

"I have a sixty-year-old grandmother at home. We are so poor that we don't have enough money to buy rice, clothes."

"Don't be anxious." said the lord.

On the next day he ordered his men to carry much rice and clothes to her house.

She had a happy life with her grandmother for the rest of life. (2002.8.16)



大きな木と娘

むかし、むかし、ある所に、貧しい娘さんとおばあさんが住んでいました。娘さんは幼いときに両親を亡くし、朝早くから、夜遅くまで長者さんの家で働いていました。夕飯を毎晩そこでいただき、残りを少しおばあさんに持って行きました。

ある雨の日のことです。娘さんは家に帰る途中、大きな木の下で雨宿りをしました。すると、その木が娘さんにささやきました。

「娘さん、とても働き者ですね。よく聞きなさい。私は三日後に、領主の命（めい）で木こりに伐られて、三ヶ月後大きな船になり海に運ばれます。」

「まあ、かわいそう。」

「しかし、海に入れて、何人で押しても、私は決して動きません。すると、領主がお触れを出します。『船を海に押し出したものに、褒美を取らせる。』申し出て、私のへさきに立って、『船よ、動け。いっち、にい、さん。』と言いなさい。私は、ゆっくりと海に出て行きます。領主から褒美が沢山もらえるでしょう。」と木が言いました。

大きな木は、三日後伐られ、三ヶ月後大きな船になりました。

船を海に入れる日が来ました。大勢の人が船を海に出そうとしました。でも、どんなに一生懸命、何人がかりで押しても、船はびくともしません。お触れが出されました。

娘さんが申し出ると、みんなが笑って、こう言いました。

「船を動かせるって。大勢の男でも動かないものを、一人の女で。」

「船が動くなら誰でもよい。」と領主が言いました。

大勢の人が見ている中、娘さんは船のへさきに立つと、大声で「船よ、動け。いっち、にい、さん。」と言いました。

何と、船が少しずつ動き出し、海の上に浮かんだではありませんか。

「何と不思議な娘だ。」みんなが、領主も含めて、声を上げました。

「私は、決して不思議ではありません。ただ木が言った・・・」娘は静かに言いました。

「約束どおり、褒美を取らせよう。何が望みだ。遠慮なく言いなさい。」

「私には、六十歳のおばあさんが家におります。貧しくて、米や着物を買うお金がありません。」

「そうですか。」と領主。

次の日、領主は、家来に米と着物を、娘さんの家に運ばせました。

娘さんは、それから、おばあさんと幸せに暮らしたとさ。めでたし、めでたし。(2004.7.30)

