

The dragon Princess

Long, long ago there lived an old man and his old wife in a mountainous village. One day they found a baby near a lake and raised her like their own daughter as they had no child. She grew up to be a beautiful lady in eighteen years. The brothers who lost their parents,



living near her house, had liked her since they were children. The elder brother was handsome and active while the younger one was kind but a little slow.

One day when the lord visited her village, he saw her dancing in a village festival and liked her. She was ordered to marry him as one of his wives. The villagers were pleased at the marriage because it meant the prosperity of the village, but as she liked the elder brother, she escaped from them into the mountain. At last she jumped into a lake as she was driven at the edge of the cliff.

Then a Dragon appeared on the lake. The villagers believed she became the dragon. But the Dragon was her father, "Ryu-Oo", the king of The Dragon.

One year the village had a long drought. The rice fields were completely dry and even the lake was almost dry. The villagers were ordered to make fields in the dry lake by the lord. But they had strange dreams at the same night, in which the lady appeared and asked them,

"Help the lake. It is not only for people but also for all animals. Keep the lake as they are."

But they never listened to her and continued to make fields there.

At last the Dragon King got angry and caused a big flood to make everything wash away. The brothers were dead in the lake.

The lady asked her father.

"I loved the brothers. Please help them instead of my life. To tell the truth, I have a baby of the elder brother in myself."

"If you give life to them, you'll never return to a human being. You are an ugly dragon forever."

The lady agreed to become a dragon and the elder lived under the lake and the younger returned to his village with the baby between the lady and the elder brother.

Fifteen years had passed since he returned. The baby grew up to be a lady like her mother.

One day the little brother, or her uncle said to her, looking at the lake.

"Fifteen years ago we were saved by your mother. Your mother was beautiful like you. She became a dragon to save our lives; your father and me. I promised that I would return to her when you became fifteen. It is the day when I return to the lake."

He went into the lake never to return.

The lake is called today "Tazawa-Lake." (corrected:2002.8.13)



(:Story and Images by Warabi-za)

むかし、むかし、ある山村に老夫婦が住んでいました。ある日、二人は湖のそばで赤ん坊を見つけ、子供がなかったのがわが娘のように育てました。娘は十八、美しく成長しました。娘の家のとなりに住む、親のいない兄弟は子供の時から娘のことが好きでした。兄の方は男前で活発でした。一方、弟の方は、心が優しいものの少しとろいところがありました。



ある日、村を訪れた領主が、娘が村祭りで踊っているのを目にして、気に行ってしまった。娘は、側妻となるように命ぜられました。村人たちは、村の繁栄の意味もあり、心から喜びました。でもあの兄のことが忘れられず、山の中に逃げ、ついには崖ぎわまで追われて湖に身を投げました。すると龍が湖に出るようになりました。娘が龍になった、と村人たちは信じました。しかし、龍は娘の父、「龍王」だったのです。

ある年のこと、村は長い旱魃（かんばつ）にみまわれました。田んぼはもちろんのこと、湖さえも干上がってしまいそうでした。領主は、乾いた湖に田んぼを作るよう命じました。村人たちは、その晩、不思議な夢を見ました。夢の中に娘が現われ、こう言いました。

「どうか湖を救って下さい。人間だけでなく動物のためです。湖をもとに戻して下さい。」

しかし、村人たちは耳を貸そうとせず、湖に田んぼを作り続けました。

とうとう龍王の怒りをかい、大洪水を起こし、全てを洗い流してしまいました。兄弟も湖の中で亡くなってしまいました。

娘は父にお願いしました。<

「あの兄弟が好きでした。私の命と引き換えに二人に命を与えてください。実は、私は兄の子を宿しているのです。」

「二人にお前の命をあげたら、お前は二度と人間には戻れないぞ。一生醜い龍でいなければならないぞ。」

娘は龍になることに同意し、兄は湖の中で暮らし、弟は娘と兄の子を携えて村に戻りました。

そして十五年が経ち、子供は、母のような娘に成長しました。

ある日、娘のおじが、湖を眺めながら、言いました。

「十五年前、私たちはお前のお母さんに救われた。お母さんはお前のように美しかった。でもお前のお父さんと私の命を救うために龍になった、私は、お前が十五になったら、湖に戻ると約束した。今日がその日なのだ。弟は湖に入り、二度と戻っては来ませんでした。今日、その湖は「田沢湖」と呼ばれている。(Kudos)



(劇団わらび座)