

Sparrow and Woodpecker

Long, long ago, there lived two sisters. The name, elder one was Kitsutsuki, or woodpecker and younger one was Suzume, or sparrow. The elder sister was selfish and avarice while the younger one was so kind and a hard worker.



One day, they went to a big shop of clothes to buy them. The master of the shop recommended them to make kimonos by themselves and they bought white cloths. They sewed kimonos very hard from morning through night. When they were about to dye the cloth, they received a letter saying that their father in their native home was very ill, so they should return soon.

The younger sister wanted to return at once. But the elder sister said she would never return until she finished a beautiful kimono and she was absorbed in her kimono.

So the younger sister was going to come back home alone. When she crossed the mountains, rivers and valleys, her white clothes turned dirty. But she at last returned home while her father was still alive.

Several days after her father died, the elder sister in a beautiful kimono came back home. The younger sister, who watched the elder sister who was proud of her kimono, felt very sad. Then a voice came out from somewhere:

"Kitsutusuki, you preferred kimono to your father, so you can always wear a beautiful kimono, but you must eat worms, pecking the trees.

Suzume, you were very kind to your father. Your clothes became very dirty but you can eat everything including the grains in the rice fields."

As soon as the voice finished, they became a woodpecker and a sparrow.

Now beautiful woodpeckers eat worms pecking the trees in the forests while dirty sparrows eat everything in the fields.

○「雀」と「キツツキ」はどうして羽の色が違うのでしょうか。

A Mountain Pigeon

Long, long ago there lived a boy who was always against what he was told to do.

If he was told to go to the mountain, he went to the river. If he was told to go to the rice-paddy, he went to the wheat-field. He was indeed a cranky boy.



Worrying about his cranky son, his father became ill in bed to

the death.

When his father was dying in bed, thinking that his son would never change his mind, he said to his son on purpose,

"When I died, I would like to be buried near the river."

It was not until he lost his father that he noticed he was wrong.

"I was wrong. My father, forgive me. please forgive....."

He made the grave of his father near a river as he was told. But when it rained, the river overflowed the banks. He was much anxious about the grave.

One day it began to rain too much.

He rushed to the river. When he reached the grave, the rain stopped. When he returned his house, it began to rain again.

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He was very tired from going and coming between the river and the mountain where he lived. "My father, I wish I were a bird"

When he wished he were a bird, he found himself going up to the sky and changing into a bird.

Now a mountain pigeon coos, "Te-te Poppo, Te-te Poppo(Father)" when it looks like a rain, anxious about his father.

○「山鳩」はどうしてテテポッポと鳴くのでしょうか。

雀とキツツキ

むかし、むかし、姉と妹がおりました。姉はキツツキ、妹はスズメと言う名前でした。

姉は、わがままで欲張りでした。妹は、親切で働き者でした。

ある日のことです。二人は、大きな呉服屋に着物の布を買いに行きました。ご主人は自分で着物を作るように薦め、二人は白い布を買いました。そして朝から晩まで、着物を縫いました。そして着物を染めようという時、『田舎の父が急病にて、すぐ帰れ。』という手紙が届きました。



妹はすぐに戻りたいと思いましたが、姉は着物が出来あがるまでは戻らない、と言って、着物に没頭しました。

妹は、一人で帰ることにしました。川を越え、山を越え、谷を越え、白い着物はすっかり汚れてしまいました。でもやっとのことで、お父さんの死に目に会うことができました。

お父さんが亡くなってから数日後、姉がきれいな着物を着て戻ってきました。妹は、着物を自慢する姉を見て、とても悲しく思いました。すると、どこからとなく声が聞こえて来ました。

「キツツキよ、お前は父親より着物の方を選んだ。お前はきれいな着物をいつも着ててよいが、お前は、木をつついて虫を食べなければならない。

スズメよ、お前は、とても心やさしい。お前の着物は汚れてしまったが、お前は畑の作物はもちろん何でも食べてよかろう。」

声が終わるやいなや、二人は、啄木鳥と雀に変わっていました。

美しい啄木鳥は森の木をつついては虫を食べています。汚い雀は畑でいろいろなものを食べています。

山鳩

むかし、むかし、いつも言われたことと反対のことをする男の子がいました。

山に行けと言われれば、川に行き、畑に行けと言われれば、たんぼに行きます。とても臍曲がりの男の子でした。



父親は、息子のことを心配するあまり、病にかかり、とうとう亡くなってしまいました。

今際（いまわ）の際に、父親は、息子は決して言うことを聞かないと思い、わざと、こう言いました。

「わしが死んだら、川の近くに埋めてくれ。」と。

男の子は父親が亡くなって初めて、自分が間違っていたことに気がつきました。

「おらが悪かった。おとう、許してけれ。許してけれ。」

男の子は、父親に言われたとおり川の近くに墓を造りました。でも雨が降ると、川が土手まであふれてきます。男の子は心配でたまりません。

ある日のことです。雨がとても多く降り始めました。

男の子は川に走りました。お墓につくと雨が止みました。でも家に戻ると、また雨が降ってきました。男の子はまた川に走りました。お墓につくと雨が止みます。でも家に戻ると、また雨が降ってきます。また男の子は川に走りました。でもお墓につくと雨が止みます。でも家に戻ると、また雨が降ってきます。

男は、川と家の間を行ったり来たり、もうヘトヘトです。

「おとう。鳥になりてえだ。」

男の子が、そう願うと、空へ上がり、鳥に変わっているではありませんか。

山鳩は雨が降りそうになると、父親（てて親）のことを思って、「テテポッポ、テテポッポ」とさえずります。