

Bunbuku Chagama

Once upon a time, there was a poor man who was kind to animals.

1. Once upon a time a man lived deep in the mountains behind the Shorinji temple. He was a very poor man, but he loved animals.

One year, winter was terribly bitter. The cold continued relentlessly until finally there was no food at all for the animals that lived in the mountains.

The man felt very sorry for the animals, and saved them by giving them all his food.

The tanuki thought of a plan to repay him for his kindness.

2. Thanks to the kindness of the man, the animals were able to survive that harsh winter. One night they gathered to discuss how they could thank him. From amongst them, one Tanuki came up with an idea.

'How about if I were to change into a teakettle and the kind man could sell me to someone. That way I think that he would have enough money to live on for quite a while.' All the other animals were not sure what to do as they thought that was dangerous, and although they did not want to agree with the proposal, they thought that there really was no choice as the man had no money or food.

The tanuki turned himself into a teakettle.

3. So the tanuki placed a leaf on his head and immediately changed into a kettle. He sat at the entrance to the man's house, to wait for him to come out.

The man took the teakettle to the local temple.

4. That morning when he woke, the man found a splendid kettle at his front door. This is most certainly a gift from God to help me in my difficulties.

With this in mind, the man immediately went to sell the kettle to the Shorinji Temple priest who loved drinking tea.

ください。 10円です。

5. The temple priest really liked the splendid kettle. It was a nice colour and had a good shape. He decided to buy it for 10 yen.

The man bought food with the money he was paid for the teakettle.
ただいま。

6. Thanks to the tanuki, the man bought a lot of food on the way home with the 10 yen.

At the temple. おちゃをのみましょう。

7. The next day, the temple priest placed the kettle on the fire to boil water for a cup of tea.....

あつい！！

8. Immediately the kettle screamed ' It's HOT!!!', grew legs and a tail and completely changed into a tanuki.

Surprised and flustered the priest called the young priests, but the tanuki reverted to being a kettle again and gave no hint of his true identity.

The disappointed priest sold the teakettle to a tinker.
ありがとう。 1 えん です。

9. 'I'm fed up with this strange kettle', thought the disappointed priest who sold it for one yen to a passing second hand dealer.

The tinker placed the teakettle in his shop.

10. The second hand dealer was very happy to have acquired such a good kettle. He immediately returned home, and decided to display it in his shop.

That night the tinker was awakened by the sound of crying.
あ、たぬきだ！ こわい！

11. That night, the second had dealer was woken by the sobbing of the kettle, which had changed into a tanuki.

The tanuki begged the tinker not to sell him, offering to dance in the market place.

ダンスをします。 おねがいします。

12. The tanuki told the second hand dealer everything that had happened to him and begged the dealer not to sell him to another person, but instead he would earn money for the dealer.

The dealer listened to the tanuki's request and it was decided that from the morrow the tanuki would perform tricks in front of the dealer's shop.

きゃー！！ おもしろい！！

13. 'Hello Everyone!! Welcome to the Show!!' Everyday the area in front of the dealer's shop was full of people wanting to see the tanuki's performance.

The tanuki gave the money he earned to the tinker.
ありがとうございます。 どういたしまして。

14. In this way, the second hand dealer became rich in no time at all.

The tanuki wanted to be taken to the temple to live.
おてら に いきたいです。 わかりました。

15. The second hand dealer said to the tanuki, 'Thank you very much. As a token of my gratitude, I would like to give you anything that you want.'

The tanuki replied, 'I regret deceiving the temple priest. I would like to go to the temple to apologize, and if possible live at the temple doing whatever I can to make amends.'

The tinker took the tanuki to the temple.
いっしょに いきましょう。

16. The second hand dealer decided to escort the tanuki to Shorinji Temple.

At the temple.

げんきですか。 こんにしは。

17. When the second hand dealer arrived at the temple, he told the temple priest everything that had happened and how the tanuki felt about deceiving the priest. He asked if the priest would be kind enough to allow the tanuki to live at the temple.

The priest agreed to look after the tanuki.

はい。どうぞよろしく。

18. Having been told everything, the temple priest happily agreed to look after the kind hearted tanuki. However, one thing troubled the priest. Why was it that the tanuki could no longer change back into his real body shape?

ありがとう。ここにいて。

19. The temple priest placed the kettle on a splendid cushion and looked after it very well.

The teakettle brought happiness to many worshippers.

20. Before long word was spread, that one could gain happiness by praying to the kettle. It came to be called 'The Kettle of abundant Good Luck'. Even now, you will find the kettle being very carefully cared for at the Shorinji Temple.

めでたし！！