Japanese Folk Tales — Once upon a Time —

— Kaguya-hime(Tale of the Bamboo Cutter) —

Once upon a time, there lived an old man and his wife. One day, when the old man went to the bamboo forest to cut some bamboo, he came across a shining stalk. When he cut it open, he found inside it a cute baby girl the size of his thumb. He and his wife decided to raise her as their own child, and named her Kaguya-hime.

The little girl grew into such a beautiful young lady, that she was known for her beauty throughout the village. Before long, five princes came to ask for Kaguya-hime's hand in marriage. "I am getting on in my old age. It would give us peace of mind if you would choose a husband from among them," the old man said. Kaguya-hime replied, saying "I shall marry the one who is able to bring me the treasure I ask for," but no one had ever heard of the treasures she requested, and none were able to comply with her wishes.

Eventually, news of the beautiful princess reached the Emperor's ears. Wishing to meet her, the Emperor paid a visit to the old man and his wife. Kaguya-hime, however, refused to see him, and would not come out of her room. Now wishing more desperately to see Kaguya-hime, the Emperor stole a peek inside her room, and laid eyes on her ethereal beauty.

The Emperor wrote many letters to Kaguya-hime asking her to marry him, but all in vain. After three years had passed in this way, Kaguya-hime began to gaze at the moon every night with tears in her eyes. When the old man asked her what was the matter, she revealed to him, "I come from the moon, and must return when messengers from the moon come to take me back on the night of the next full moon. That is why I am crying." This revelation shocked and saddened the old man and his wife. The Emperor, upon hearing about Kaguya-hime's plight, even dispatched his troops on the night of the full moon to drive away the messengers, so determined was he not to let them take Kaguya-hime away. However, alas, the heavenly entourage could not be bested. Kaguya-hime bid a sad farewell to the old man and his wife, gave the Emperor an elixir of immortality as a parting gift, and ascended to the moon.

With Kaguya-hime gone from his life, the Emperor saw no need for an elixir of immortality, so he took it to the highest mountain and burned it. From then on, the mountain came to be called the mountain of immortality, or Mount Fuji (fuji/fushi means immortality in Japanese).



にほん むかしばなし 日本の昔 話~むかし、むかし~

かぐや姫(竹取物語) –

世かしじかし 昔々、ある所にお爺さんとお婆さんが住んでいました。ある日、お爺さんは竹を切りに竹林に入りました。すると 1本の光り輝く竹があり、切ってみると、中から 3寸(約9センチ)程のとても可愛らしい女の子が出てきました。お爺さんはその子を家で育てることにしました。

すがなってきた方と結婚する」と言いますが、どれも聞いたことのない物で、誰1人持ってくることができませんでした。

その内、美しい娘の評判が皇帝の耳にも入りました。皇帝はかぐや姫にどうしても会いたいと、お爺さんとお婆さんの元を訪ねてきました。しかし娘は「皇帝であっても会いたくない」と姿を出しません。皇帝は益々会いたくなって、こっそり部屋を登り入りました。 はばられる はいません。皇帝は立々会いたくなって、こっそり部屋を登り入りましたところ、娘は本当にこの世のものとは思えぬほど美しいのでした。

かぐや姫とどうしても結婚したいと皇帝は何度も手紙を書くなどしました。しかし娘は承知せず、とうとう3年が過ぎた頃、毎晩月を見ながら泣くようになりました。お爺さんがどうして泣くのか尋ねると、娘は「実は私は月からやってきた者です。次の満月に月からやってくる使者と帰らなければいけないので、泣いているのです」と言います。お爺さんもお婆さんも驚き、悲しみました。またそれを知った皇帝は、帰らせるものかと満月の日に使者を追い払う軍を出しました。しかし、天からの使者を集負かすことはできず、かぐや姫はお爺さんとお婆さんとの別れを悲しみながら、また皇帝には別れの品にと「不死の薬」を渡して、月へと昇っていきました。

皇帝は「かぐや姫が去った今、不死の薬など不要」と一番高い *** 山でその薬を焼きました。それからその山は「ふじ (不死) の山 (富士山のこと)」と呼ばれるようになったとさ。

〈日本語できるかなの答え〉 ①B②C③A④D