# Japanese Folk Tales — Once upon a Time —

### — The Tongue-cut Sparrow —

Once upon a time, there lived an old man and his wife. The old man had a pet sparrow, which he cared for with great affection.

One day, when the old man went to the mountain to plow the field and his wife was at home, the old man's sparrow ate up a bowl of starch that the old woman had prepared to starch the clothes she washed.

The old woman, in a fit of rage, cut off the sparrow's tongue in punishment. The sparrow, with its tongue cut off, flew as fast as it could into the woods, crying all the way.

When the old man returned from the mountain, his sparrow was nowhere to be found.

"Where did my sparrow go?" he asked his wife.

"It ate my starch, so I cut off its tongue, and it flew away."

Hearing this, the old man felt very sorry for the sparrow, and went into the woods in search of it.

After struggling through the dense woods for some time, the old man somehow finally reached a sparrows' inn, where many sparrows take shelter. There, he found his pet sparrow.

Many sparrows lived in the sparrows' inn. To thank the kind old man for taking the trouble to come to them so deep in the woods, they prepared a lavish feast for the old man and presented him with a take-home gift before he headed back home.

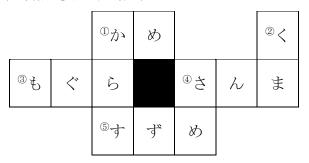
There were two gifts. The sparrows asked the old man which he would like to take home, the large or small box.

"The smaller one would be fine," the old man said, and made his way home carrying the small box.

When he got home, the old man opened the small box, to find it filled with gold coins. Seeing the coins, the old woman berated the old man, saying, "Why didn't you choose the larger box? It must have been filled with even more gold coins. I shall go to visit the sparrows' inn and receive the larger box." With that, she scurried into the woods.

When the old woman reached the sparrows' inn, she seized the large box from the sparrows and left in a hurry. However, when she opened the large box back at home, a swarm of insects, snakes and monsters poured out from the box.

#### 〈日本語できるかなの答え〉



## に ほん むかしばなし **日本の 昔 話 ~むかし、むかし~**

# - 舌切り雀 -

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ある日お爺さんは山へ芝刈りに行き、お婆さんは家にいました。するとその間に、お婆さんが洗濯に使う糊を、なんとお爺さんが飼っている雀が全部食べてしまいました。

お婆さんは怒り狂って、糊を食べた雀の舌をはさみで切り落としてしまいました。舌を切られた雀は泣きながら藪の中へ一 自散に逃げ帰りました。

お爺さんが山から帰ると、飼っていた雀がいません。「お婆さんや、雀はどこかい?」「糊を食べた罰に雀の舌をちょん切ってやったら逃げていった」。それを聞いたお爺さんは、雀を大変可哀想に思い、雀を訪ねて藪の中へ入っていきました。

家に帰ってお爺さんが小さいつづらを開けてみると、中には小判がざくざく詰まっていました。それを見たお婆さんは「どうして大きいつづらをもらってこなかったんだ。大きい方にはもっとたくさんの小判が詰まっていただろうに。私も雀の宿に出掛けて、大きい方をもらってやろう」と薮に入っていきました。

お婆さんも雀の宿に辿り着きました。そして雀から大きいつづらを無理やり奪って帰りました。家に帰ってお婆さんが大きいつづらを開けてみると、中からは虫や蛇やお化けがわんさと出てきましたとさ。

