

The Story of Twelve Animals *jyūnisi-no hanasi*

One day, the God wrote a letter to the entire animals that he will appoint different leader animal each year from the first twelve animals that reached to his place on the 1st of January.

Most of the animals left their home early in the morning on the New Year's Eve to greet the God as early as possible. Only a cat, however, still stayed at home on that day, as he was told by a mouse that it is the 2nd of January, that the God arranged to meet the animals. A dog and a monkey friendly hurried up together at first, but they gradually became serious and ended up with a big fight on the bridge.

On the first sun rise of the year, a cow turned up first in front of the God, but the mouse jumped off from the cow's back, and greeted the God before the cow, "Happy New Year, my squeak God." The cow was bitterly disappointed, "Moo vexing!"

A tiger reached next, followed by a rabbit and a dragon. The other animals appeared one after another: a snake, a horse, a sheep, a monkey, a bird, a dog, a boar, and a frog. But the frog was in the 13th place, he was so disappointed, "I will croak back home."

The God and the twelve animals started to have a party, but the dog and the monkey were still in a bad mood. Suddenly, the cat storm furiously to the party, and chased around the mouse. This is why the dog-and-monkey or the cat-and-mouse quarrel all the time.