

**Water of Youth** *wakagaeri-no mizu*

Long ago, there were an old man and his wife. The old man was a charcoal burner. He cut down trees, pack charcoal in a straw bag, and went down to the nearest city to sell the charcoal. He thought that he was too old to keep on working as a charcoal burner.

However, there is no way but to carry a heavy load to sell charcoal at the city. It was a hot day, and the old man was so thirsty. He happened to find fresh water spring out from a crack of rocks. The old man drank the cool and nice water. He felt alive again.

When he returned home, the old man's wife was surprised of seeing her husband looking young. The old man explained about the fresh water he had on his way back from the city.

Next day, the old man's wife also went up in the mountain to have some water of youth. The old man looked for seeing his wife grew young again, but she did not turned up even after dark. The old man went out to search for his missing wife. The old man became worried if she was enchanted by a fox. After a while, he head a baby crying in the grass. The old man found a baby wearing his wife's clothes. "Poor, dear wife. She drank too much water of youth." The old man bring the baby back his home.