

Mice's Paradise *nezumi-joudo*

One day, the old woman asked his husband, "Dear old man, will you go and get some firewood, as it is getting cold. I toasted some rice cakes for you." The old man went out to the mountain for the firewood. When he sit down to have some rice cakes, a small mouse appeared from somewhere and looked hungry. So he tore a bit of his rice cake to the mouse. The mouse looked so pleased and gone away. After a while, another mouse came in front of him and he gave some of his rice cake again. The mice kept on coming in front of him one after another, and took all of his rice cakes. Finally, the master mouse came to the old man, and invited him to his house. The follower mice pounded rice cakes together for the old man, sung "If there is not cat, that is a paradise. We never want to hear the cat's voice. Let us run away if there is a meowing." The mice gave the old man a lot of rice cakes in a sack.

When the old man went back his home and opened the sack, the rice cakes were turned into the gold coins. The old man and his wife were able to buy fish, clothes and necessary furniture.

This happiness caught the attention of the greedy old man and his wife next door. The kind old man and his wife told them how they got the gold coins, and the greedy old man and his wife decided to do so to become wealthy.

The greedy old man went into the mountain and waited for the mice to come in front of him. When a mouse came in front of him, he gave the mouse a large piece of rice cake, and called other mice as well. The master mouse called the greedy old man to his house. The follower mice started to pound the rice cakes singing, "If there is not cat, that is a paradise. We never want to hear the cat's voice. Let us run away if there is a meowing." The greedy old man came up with the idea that if he meows, all the rice cakes became his, so he said, "Meow!" The mice were astonished of the voice and ran away. Suddenly, everywhere got dark and the greedy old man lost his way to go back. The greedy old man turned into a mole at last.