

Water Seed *mizu-no tane*

Long ago, there was a poor village deep in a mountain. The village was poor as there was not enough water to irrigate fields. The village had long hoped to cultivate rice fields.

There was a pious young man lived in the village with his old mother. This pious young man prayed in front of the Kokuzō statue, every time when he crosses in front of the statue.

One day, this pious man left the village for two to three days, for something to do in the city. On the way to the city walking down the mountain, he found the river full of water. When he was taking a rest by the river on his way back home, he heard the voice of some children, and a small stone hit him on the head. The pious man shouted to the children, “Hey! It is dangerous to through a stone like this!” After the children ran away, he checked where they were to see what they were doing. He found a small white snake. It seems the children were cruel to the white snake. He talk to the snake, “Be careful next time you came down to the river.” When he gently pat the snake, it turned into the beautiful woman. It was a princess of the Sea God. She visited on the earth that day to have some fun, turning herself into a snake. She wanted to invite the pious man to her palace to thank him for saving her.

The Sea God at the sea palace also expressed his gratitude to the pious man, and treated the man with all sorts of delicious food. The pious man spent the fantastic days at the sea palace, but one day he was thinking about his home village, and gradually became worried about his old mother. He asked the Sea God whether it would be alright if he go back to his village.

While the Sea God and the princess felt sorrow to hear his hope, they offered him to choose any treasure he like in their palace. A pair of bottles caught his eyes in the mine of treasures. Those were the bottles called the water seed. He thought it would become possible to cultivate rice fields in village, if he use those magic bottles.

He woke up by the river where he departed to the sea palace. Then he thought everything was happened in his dream, and hurried to his home. When he crossed in front of the Kokuzō statue, there were the same pair of bottles that he chose to bring back to his village from the sea palace. He tried to shake the bottles and the water flood from them. That was the story how the villagers were able to make rice fields.