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My Lord Bag of Rice

Unknown writer

A long, long time ago, in Japan, there was a brave warrior named Fujiwara Hidesato. Nowadays, he is known as My Lord Bag of Rice. How that happened, I will tell you now.

One day Hidesato went looking for adventure. He took his bow and arrow and hit the road. Soon he arrived at a big lake and wanted to cross the bridge, when he saw a gigantic, sleeping dragon. When the animal breathed, you saw fire and smoke coming from its nostrils and it occupied the width of the whole bridge. Hidesato had to make a choice: turn back or climb over the dragon.

Hidesato was scared, but he was also brave and decided to go for it. He climbed over the dragon and walked further without looking back. After a few steps, he suddenly heard a voice behind him and turned around. The gigantic dragon had disappeared and in its place stood a remarkable man who bowed to him. Hidesato realized immediately that this was a special man and asked himself what was going on.



‘Did you call me?’, asked the warrior. ‘Yes, that was me’, answers the man. ‘I have an important request for you. Do you think you can help me?’ ‘If it’s within my abilities, I shall do it’, said Hidesato, ‘but can you tell me first who you are?’ ‘I am the Dragon King of the Lake and my castle is in the water under this bridge.’ ‘And what can I do for you?’, asked the warrior. ‘I want you to kill my arch enemy, the centipede, that lives up in the mountains’, said the Dragon King.

‘I have been living in the lake with my family for many many years, but lately we are living in fear. A monstrous centipede has discovered our house and takes one of my family members every night. I am not able to save them. If this continues any longer, we will cease to exist. That’s why I wanted to ask a human for help. I’ve been waiting on the bridge for days, in the form of that terrible dragon you saw, in the hopes that a strong, brave man would pass by. But everyone who saw me, turned around immediately and ran away. You are the first man who conquered his fear, so I am sure you have a lot of bravery. I am begging you for help.’

Hidesato pitied the Dragon King and decided to help him. Together they forged a plan to kill the centipede when it would come to the castle at night. So Hidesato went to the underwater palace of the Dragon King. Never in his life had the warrior seen something so beautiful. The castle was made of white marmer, was gorgeously decorated and an impressive feast was served.

Just as the Dragon King wanted to pour his guest another glass of wine, the castle started shaking and everybody heard a thousand feet stomp. Hidesato quickly went to the balcony and saw the terrifying centipede with eyes of fire approaching. 'Don't be scared. Bring me my bow and arrow and I will handle it', said the warrior to the Dragon King. When the Dragon King returned, Hidesato saw he only had three arrows.

He grabbed his bow, shot and saw his first arrow bounce off the forehead of the centipede. Not yet discouraged, Hidesato fired his second arrow. Again he hit the centipede in the middle of its forehead, but also that arrow didn't hurt the centipede. When the Dragon King saw this he lost all courage and started shaking from fear. The warrior saw this and knew he had to use his last arrow with care. He looked at the water and saw that the body of the centipede was wrapped around the mountain seven times.

Then the warrior realized that the centipede can't handle human saliva and put some on the last arrow. This was his last chance. He drew his bow, aimed and hit the centipede perfectly on its head. This time the arrow didn't bounce off, but hit the brains of the beast and the centipede came crashing down.

It turned pitch dark, thunder clouds formed, thunder erupted and the wind blew hard. It seemed as if the world would disappear. Terrified, the Dragon King and his family endured the night. When it finally became light again, everything was beautiful and bright. The centipede was defeated and there was nothing more to fear.

Everybody went outside joyfully and again a feast was served in honour of Hidesato. The castle was even prettier in the sunlight and although the warrior didn't want a reward, the king demanded he would take four small gifts home.

First, a big, bronze bell.

Second, a bag of rice.

Third, a roll silk.

Fourth, a pan

When he arrived home Hidesato was welcomed by his family and he told the story. The gifts he got from the Dragon King turned out to be magical. Only the bell was normal and was given to the temple in the village. The bag of rice refilled itself. The roll of silk never shortened. The pan was also amazing. It didn't matter what you threw into it, a delicious meal would always come out.

Because of these gifts, Hidesato lived a wealthy life and was now known as My Lord Bag of Rice.

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