

M403
The foolish tiger.

Told by Wang Ming-ji.

They say that a toad wanted to go to Sichuan and happened to meet a tiger. The tiger said, "Toad, where are you going?" Toad replied, "I am going to Sichuan". The tiger said, "Toad, you silly creature, you are never going to Sichuan! Mother! Where will you be going next?" The toad said to the tiger, "If you don't believe me, come let us compete in jumping over the gully". The tiger said, "You jump across first, toad". The toad replied, "You are big, you jump first". The tiger bounded over the gully, but the toad, clinging to the tiger's tail, also jumped clean over. The tiger said, "Jump over, then, toad". The toad replied, you are nearly treading on me!" So the tiger could not jump like the toad, and the tiger said, "I can't jump like you, toad".

The toad said to the tiger, "Since you cannot jump as well as I can, let the two of us go in search of game and compare results by throwing up. The tiger went in search and ran all day until evening. He found nothing to eat but picked up a blade of grass and swallowed it. The toad just crawled down the bank on the lower side of the road where he saw a patch of large yellow mushrooms, which he gulped and gulped down. When the toad and the tiger met, the tiger told the toad to throw up, but the toad said, "You are big, you throw up first. The tiger urged and urged until the tears ran down his face, but brought up only a blade of grass. So the tiger said, "Toad, you throw up then". The toad brought up a lumpy mass of yellow mushrooms. The tiger said, "What is that, toad?" The toad replied, "This is your mother's and your father's eyes!" the tiger was frightened and began wriggling away, but the toad wriggled after him. "I didn't sort it over properly and got the tiger hair mixed in!" The tiger was so frightened that he got up and fled.

As he ran he met a deer. The deer said, "What are you running from, old man tiger?" Old man tiger replied, "Toad and I went in search of game and to compare results by throwing up. Well, I went in search and ran all day until evening, but found nothing what ever to eat. All I had was a blade of grass, Toad and I came back to compare results by throwing up. I brought up a blade of grass, then toad threw up, and what he brought up was as yellow as could be. I asked him what it was, and toad replied that it was my mother's and my father's eyes. That is why I am afraid and am running away". The deer said, "Well, tonight you have reached me here. Tonight the two of us can sleep here together, but you won't go touching my horns will you, for my horns can burn a person's hand". The deer made as though he was sound asleep, and the tiger crept quietly over and touched one of his horns. It was quite cold, so, reassured, the tiger went to sleep. When he was asleep the deer got up and took some ashes from the fire and put them on the tiger's front paw. When morning came the tiger and the deer got up, but the tiger was covering his front paw. The deer said, "Old man tiger, what is the matter with your hand?" The tiger replied, "There is nothing the matter with it". The deer said, "To be sure, last night you went touching my horn and now you have burnt your hand!"