

The Crane's Hot Spring

A long time ago, on the mountainside at Makado, there lived a poor family. With his mother so sick, the dutiful woodcutter son stayed and took care of her as best as he could.



One day, with his ax in hand, the dutiful son set off into the forest. He walked on and on, unable to find the type of tree he needed. Deciding to take a break, he rested against a tree in the afternoon. He settled down and began to eat the rice ball he had packed for lunch. After finishing his lunch, he fell asleep.

Suddenly, he heard a loud noise and woke with a start. In front of him stood a large stag and the woodcutter went to pick up his ax. However, his strength quickly left him and he let the ax fall to the ground, never taking his eyes off the stag. The stag



slowly started to move away from the woodcutter. Quickly, before the stag could leave his sight, the woodcutter stood up and moved closer. The stag looked back at the woodcutter, and suddenly took off. The woodcutter ran after the stag. The stag was always in sight, but the woodcutter could

never quite reach him. When the stag finally disappeared, the woodcutter realized that he had left the mountain. He heard a strange sound off in the distance. Following the sound,

the woodcutter started to see steam coming from something in the distance. Soon he came across a hot spring.

In the very middle of the hot spring, he saw an injured crane sitting. Suddenly the crane stood up and began to flap his wings. Up the crane flew, leaving the hot spring, soaring into the sky. The crane had gone into the hot spring injured, but it had left healed from the water in the hot spring.



After the crane left, the woodcutter noticed that there was a rock that looked just like the crane, still sitting in the hot spring.

The woodcutter stood up and began his journey home. Before leaving the hot spring, he tore up his towel and left markers along the way back.

By the time that he arrived home, it was already dark. He talked with his mother about what he saw. The next day, the woodcutter decided to take his mother to the hot spring. He woke up early in the morning, and carried his mother on his back. They followed the markers to the hot spring. Soon they noticed the steam rising from the ground and arrived at the hot spring.

The mother wanted to enter the hot spring quickly. She looked up and saw the statue of the crane in the water. “Oh my, it really is the crane’s hot spring.” she said as she happily dipped into the water. The woodcutter agreed and joined his mother in the hot spring.

With their bodies resting in the hot spring, they slowly began to relax. Bruises began to fade, cuts healed, and bug bites stopped itching. Day after day, the woodcutter and his mother went to the Crane's Hot Spring. After the fifth day, his mother was almost a new woman, healthy and vibrant. The woodcutter, also feeling much better, went about his job.

The woodcutter was such a kind person that he did not keep the Crane's Hot Spring a secret. "It's the Crane's Hot Spring," he would happily tell people, "you'll feel so much better after bathing in it." Someone said that the god had taken on the shape of a stag and led the woodcutter to the hot spring as a reward for being such a dutiful son.

The Crane's Hot Spring is now called Makado Onsen and everyone still loves to go there.