A long time ago in Japan a samurai was riding his horse through the mountains. Have you ever ridden a horse? What is a samurai? There was a terrific snowstorm and the samurai was caught in the storm. How old were you when you first saw snow?

The samurai came to a grove of trees. They were willow trees. There were three of them. Are willow trees common in your country? How do you say "willow" in your language? Behind the trees there was a small farmhouse and a stable. What is a stable? The samurai entered the house. An old man came to the door. Was it a sliding door? Was the old man's hair white? The samurai asked for shelter. He said he could pay. The old man did not want money. He invited the samurai in. Then he took the horse to the stable. Was the stable warm and dry?

The old man sat and talked to the samurai while the old man's wife made some food. What did the old man and the samurai talk about? Did the old woman make miso soup? Did she cook rice? The old couple's daughter served the food on a tray. There were five bowls on the tray. What was in each bowl?

The daughter was extremely beautiful. She was wearing a green kimono with a pattern from a tree on it. Was it a pattern from a willow tree? What was the old man wearing? What was the old woman wearing?

When the samurai saw the beautiful young daughter, he was impressed by her beauty. He spoke to her in poetry. She answered in poetry. Have you ever written a poem? The woman sat and talked to the samurai while he ate. The old man went to talk to his wife.

The samurai talked to the young woman for a long time. She was charming. Was she able to play the flute? Was she able to play the lute? Are you able to play any musical instruments? The samurai fell in love with the young woman. It was love at first sight. Do you believe in love at first sight?

The old man came back. He brought some hot sake. What is sake? Have you ever had hot sake? The daughter went to help her mother. The old man and the samurai talked about her. The samurai said he loved her. the old man said: "You should marry her."

The samurai said: "You will miss her."

The old man said: "We will die soon. She will be alone. You live in the city. Take her with you. She will make you happy. We will pay you."

The samurai was happy to take the woman with him. He did not want any
money.

That night they talked for a long time. Did they talk about religion? Did they talk about food? Did they talk about love?

The next day the young woman said goodbye to her parents. Then she climbed on the back of the samurai's horse. They rode down to the plain together and entered Kyoto. The samurai took the woman to his house in Kyoto. Was it a big house?

The woman was very beautiful. Everybody in Kyoto talked about her. The daimyo heard about her. He came to see her at a party. He fell in love with her too. He took her.

The woman loved the samurai very much and she missed him. He loved her too and he missed her very much. The two of them met secretly. Did they meet in a garden? Did they watch the moon together? Did they write poems to each other? Did they share food together?

The daimyo found out that the woman was meeting the samurai. He was not angry. He was impressed by their love. He respected true love. He sent the woman back to the samurai's house. The two lovers were very happy. They stayed together for a long time. They did many things together.

One day the woman fell down suddenly. She said: "Aaargh!"

"What is wrong?" said the samurai. "What is the matter?"

"There is something that I must tell you" said the woman. "I am not a human. I am a tree spirit. Somebody is cutting down my tree." Then she died.

The samurai was overcome with grief. He loved the woman very much but now she was dead. He wept and wept. Do you cry easily?

The samurai tried to continue with his life but he could not forget the woman. He could not stop thinking about her. He decided to go on a journey to refresh himself. He travelled to the place where he met her.

On the top of the mountain there were three huge tree stumps. Two of them were big. They were from the old man and the old woman. The third one was smaller. It was from the old couple's daughter. The farmhouse was a ruin.

The samurai realized that the woman's story was true. She was a tree spirit. He shaved his head and became a wandering monk.