Tanabata script

1.

This is a story from ancient China.

Long, long ago the Emperor of the Heavens, Tentei, had a daughter.

Her name was Orihime, which means weaver princess.

2.

Just as her name suggests, Orihime was very good at weaving. She used the

pattern of the clouds as inspiration for the designs of her beautiful cloth.

Tentei was delighted with her work, “These are indeed heavenly garments”, he said.

ʻTon karan, ton karanʼ.

Even today you can hear the sound of Orihimeʼs loom as she weaves cloth.

3.

On the other side of The Milky Way River, a young man heard the sound

of Orihimeʼs loom. He was a hard working boy who was a cattle herder.

He was called Hikoboshi.

“What a beautiful sound, I wonder who is weaving,” thought Hikoboshi.

4.

Tentei became concerned that Orihime was working too hard. He thought that

she might be lonely, with nobody to talk to or help her with her work.

One day Tentei said, “I think that Orihime and Hikoboshi would get on well. If

they get married, they will be able to work together, and will doubtless be even

stronger than before. Orihime will be happy and they will make our life in the

heavens much more prosperous.”

And so…

5.

Orihime crossed the Milky Way River which divided the heavens to marry

Hikoboshi.

Hikoboshi looked at the woman he had heard weaving and thought that

heʼd never seen anyone so beautiful.

Orihime looked at the strong, hard working young man and felt as though

sheʼd been known him all her life.

The two gazed happily into each others eyes. Before they met, both Orihime and

Hikoboshi had been all alone and had filled their days with work. However, now

things were different. Together they laughed, together they sang, together they

talked. It was as if the two of them were in a dream.

6.

They loved spending time together. From morning until evening, in the shade

of the trees, Orihime and Hikoboshi would sit talking to each other. Orihime

would comb her long black hair and nearby Hikoboshi would make music by

blowing through a reed.

After only a short while, Orihimeʼs fingers forgot how to weave and

Hikoboshiʼs skilled hands forgot how to control cattle.

7.

Tentei despaired. He said “If this continues then all our heavenly garments will be

rags and all the cattle will be left to roam freely and become sick.”

He was sad that Orihime and Hikoboshiʼs great skills were lost. But the two young

people continued to sit under the trees and showed no signs of doing any work.

8.

Tentei thought about what he should do and decided to take action.

He decided that Orihime should return to her own side of the Milky Way River

and she had no choice but to follow his orders.

9.

ʻTon karan, ton karanʼ, went Orihimeʼs loom.

Orihime began to weave again and Hikoboshi once again cared for the cattle.

However, they were both overcome by sadness as a result of their separation.

“I long to meet with Hikoboshi, I long to hear his voice,” said Orihime

“I wonder what Orihime is doing. How happy I would be if I could just catch a

glimpse of her,” thought Hikoboshi.

Orihime and Hikoboshiʼs faces grew pale and they both gradually lost weight.

Seeing this, Tentei felt sorry for them.

10.

So he announced, “Orihime and Hikoboshi, I will permit you to meet once a

year.”

He decided that the day would be the 7th July. So on the evening of the 7th July,

Orihime and Hikoboshi came running from the east and from the west until

they reached the banks of the Milky Way River.

11.

Suddenly a flock of magpies appeared from nowhere and spread out their

wings to form a bridge. This happens every year and Orihime crosses the bridge

to join Hikoboshi.

However, if it rains, it is said the Magpies donʼt come and Orihime is unable to

cross the river to meet Hikoboshi. If this happens, the couple have to wait

another year until they can be reunited.

The day on which Orihime and Hikoboshi meet has come to be known as

Tanabata which means ʻ7th eveningʼ.

12.

On the evening of Tanabata if there is a clear night sky, why donʼt you try

looking up.

If you do, you should be able to see the star of the Weaver Girl (Vega) and the

star of the Herd Boy (Altair) shining brightly and happily next to each other.