

# The Grateful Crane

## A Japanese Folktale



A poor man lived in a little house all alone. One day, he found a wounded crane. It had an arrow stuck in its wing. The man pulled out the arrow. He saved the crane.

That night someone knocked on his door. Outside stood a pretty young woman. She said she was lost.

They fell in love and got married. They were very happy, but very poor.

The wife decided to weave some cloth. She set up her loom in a small room. She told the husband never to look in the room.

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She wove for three long days. Her cloth was beautiful. They sold it for a lot of money.

Soon they needed money again. The wife decided to weave more cloth. The husband promised not to peek in the room. She worked for four days. They sold it for even more than the first cloth.

They were no longer poor. But the husband still wanted more money.

The wife agreed to weave another cloth. She made the husband promise not to peek. But after four long days, he forgot. He opened the door... And saw something amazing!

A white crane stood at the loom. She was tearing out her feathers to weave the cloth. When she saw him, the crane changed back into a woman—his wife!

The wife explained that she was the crane he saved from the hunter's arrow. She was grateful for his help. So she turned into a human and came to help him. But now that he saw her true form, she must leave.

The wife turned back into a crane and flew away.

