In a quaint village, there lived a wise old man who had a cherished garden, which he tended to with great care and affection. He spent most of his days among the flowers and plants, nurturing them as if they were his own children. One day, he had to leave his beloved garden for a few days to attend a distant gathering of scholars. Before departing, he visited the market and purchased a small, ornate lantern. This lantern was no ordinary one; it had the peculiar ability to reveal the truth of any matter when lit.

He placed the lantern in the center of his garden, instructing his apprentice to watch over it and the garden in his absence. Upon his return, he asked the lantern what had transpired while he was away. The lantern glowed softly and revealed some unsettling truths about the apprentice's neglect of the garden. The old man, disappointed, reprimanded his apprentice.

The apprentice, feeling wronged, believed that someone must have tampered with the lantern to speak ill of him. Determined to get revenge, he devised a plan. The next time the old man had to leave for a day, the apprentice gathered his fellow villagers. He instructed one to wave a fan vigorously around the lantern, another to scatter petals from above, and a third to hold a bowl of water and reflect its shimmering surface in front of the lantern by the light of a candle. They carried out this scheme for part of the night, creating an illusion of chaos.

When the old man returned, he asked the lantern what it had witnessed. The lantern flickered and replied, "My wise master, the whirlwind, the falling petals, and the shimmering waves of light confused me so much that I cannot discern the truth." The old man, knowing that the garden had been calm that night, concluded that the lantern was no longer reliable. In a moment of frustration, he threw the lantern against a stone wall, shattering it into pieces. Only later did he realize that the lantern had been truthful, and he mourned the loss of his precious, truth-revealing lantern.