

Partners

EDMONTON MENNONITE

centre *for*
newcomers



Changing Lives • Growing Community

World of Story Collection

Enormous Turnip (2005)

Uwungelema (2006)

Bundle of Sticks (2007)

Stranger Who Snored (2008)

Toad is the Uncle of Heaven (2009)

Books, activities, and audio versions of stories in over
32 languages are available on-line at: www.emcn.ab.ca

*Toad is the Uncle of
Heaven!*



World of Story 2007

Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers

A Vietnamese Folk Tale





Thank you to the children and teachers of Grade 2
at Balwin School, Edmonton.



Once upon a time, in the land of lakes and prairies, there was a terrible drought. All of the trees and plants were withered and dried up. Toad looked around at his pond. It was drying up. Toad dug a hole in the mud so that he could stay cool and wet, but soon that began to dry up.



Toad did not want to die. He decided that he would go to the emperor of the heavens to ask for help for the creatures on Earth. Toad knew that he had no business in the heavens. He knew that a mere animal was not allowed to talk to the emperor of heaven, but Toad was brave and Toad was desperate.



And that's how it's been ever since. When things get dry, "Uncle" Toad croaks loudly, and rain is sure to follow.



"Uncle

"Very well, I will listen to what you have to say, "Uncle" Toad!" Toad recognized that he was being honoured with that name. He explained the situation of the plants and animals. The emperor of the heavens realized his error and ordered the rain to fall. He looked at Toad and his friends. "If you ever need rain again, you do not need to come all the way here. Just croak, "Uncle" Toad, and I will know to send you rain."



As Toad began his journey, he saw plants withering and animals dying of thirst. When Toad passed a dry swamp, he saw a crab. "Where are you going?" asked the crab. "We all need rain or we will die", said Toad. "I'm going to the emperor of the heavens to ask for rain for Earth." The crab admired Toad's courage. "May I join you on your journey?" Together, Toad and crab journeyed on.



Buzzing round some withered flowers were some bees.
 "Where are you going?" asked the bees. "We all need rain or we will die", said Toad. "I'm going to the emperor of the heavens to ask for rain for Earth."
 The bees admired Toad's courage. "May we join you on your journey?" Together, Toad and the crab and the bees journeyed on.



"Guards, throw him out!" But when the other animals heard this, they spoke out. The crab scurried, the bees buzzed, the rooster crowed, the tiger meowed, the bear growled, the fox yipped....

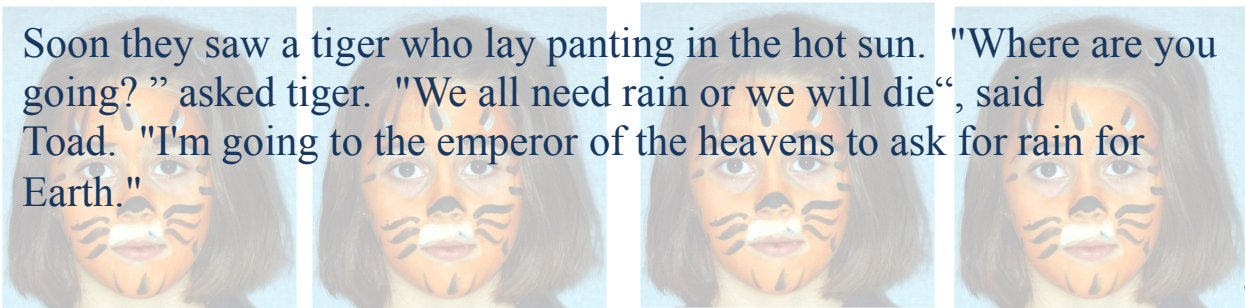
The emperor of the heavens realized that Toad was not alone. He had the support of many creatures, and as a choir, they had a big voice! He had no choice.



Toad went ahead of the other animals and approached the emperor of the heavens. "Excuse me", said Toad. "What's this?" yelled the emperor of the heavens. "An animal dares to come to my heavens? Get out!!" Toad tried to explain about the drought and how the plants and animals were dying without rain, but the emperor of the heavens would not listen.



In a dusty farmyard they saw a rooster. "The wheat will not grow, so the farmer is not feeding us anymore. We are starving. Where are you going?" asked the rooster. "We all need rain or we will die", said Toad. "I'm going to the emperor of the heavens to ask for rain for Earth." The rooster admired Toad's courage. "May I join you on your journey?" Together, Toad and the crab and the bees and the rooster journeyed on.



Soon they saw a tiger who lay panting in the hot sun. "Where are you going?" asked tiger. "We all need rain or we will die", said Toad. "I'm going to the emperor of the heavens to ask for rain for Earth."

Toad led the animals to the palace. It was a beautiful palace with gold and silver streets.



At last they came to the very top of the mountain.
They saw the entrance to the emperor's palace.



Soon they saw a bear. "Where are you going?" asked bear. "We all need rain or we will die", said Toad. "I'm going to the emperor of the heavens to ask for rain for Earth." Bear admired Toad's courage. "May I join you on your journey?" Together Toad and the crab and the bees and rooster and the tiger and the bear journeyed on.



Soon they saw a fox. "Where are you going?" asked the fox.
 "We all need rain or we will die", said Toad. "I'm going to the
 emperor of the heavens to ask for rain for Earth."
 Fox admired Toad's courage.



Together, Toad and the crab and the bees and the rooster and the
 tiger and the bear and the fox journeyed on.