

The Adventure of a Raindrop



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On my school summer holiday I visited my grandma.
'Grandma,' I said, 'I'm getting thirsty. Please may I have a drink?'
'Of course. Here you are.'
She passed me a glass of water and I took a big gulp.

'Wow, Grandma! Your tap water tastes much better than the water in my house. I wonder why?'

'Well, dear, you know the forest nearby?'



I nodded.

'That's what makes the water taste good.'

'The forest? What do you mean? How?'



'You see, our tasty water was originally rainwater that fell on the forest.'

'What? This is rainwater?'

'Yes. The rain falls on the forest, makes its way underground over a long period of time and turns into clean and tasty water.

Our tap water comes from groundwater. That's why it tastes good.'

Underground
Waterway

I didn't get it at all.

'Why should that make it any tastier, Grandma?'

'All right, let's play an adventure game,' she said.

'You become a raindrop and travel through the forest all the way back to this house. Then you'll know the secret. Just imagine!'

'I'm going to be a raindrop?
Sounds interesting! Like this?'



'No, no!' she said and shook her head.
'A raindrop gets dirty from the dust when it falls
from the sky, so your clothes should be muddy.'
'No way!'
I shouted, not wanting to get in a mess.
'Don't be so angry,' she said.
'It's all part of the magic.'



YAHIMASHI

It was now time to start my adventure as a raindrop.
It had begun to rain so first of all I fell from the clouds into the forest.



YAHANASHI

Once I got down to the forest

I bounced cheerfully off the leaves and sank into the soil.



The next step was to seep deep underneath the ground. I looked around.

'I thought the soil was one solid thing but actually there are lots of gaps, aren't there, Grandma?'

'Yes, there are,' she said.

'The forest soil is full of holes thanks to the roots and creatures living in it.'

I trickled deeper through the gaps in the soil.



A little further down the path I decided to take a rest.
Grandma said,
'Thanks to the gaps in the forest soil it doesn't flood easily,
not even after heavy rain.
The gaps store water so the forest acts as a natural reservoir.'
She smiled and looked me up and down.
'By the way, Yuu, look at your clothes.'
'What about them?' I said.



Before


YAHANASHI

After

'Wow! I'm clean again! Where's all that dirt gone?'

'It was removed as you went through the gaps in the soil and, just as it cleaned you, the forest also cleans the groundwater.'



A child with blue hair, wearing a blue hooded cloak and blue boots, stands in a dark cave. The cave is filled with large, dark rocks and glowing blue mineral crystals. The child has a surprised expression, with a wide-open mouth. The scene is illuminated by the glow of the minerals and some faint light from the cave entrance. The overall atmosphere is magical and mysterious.

Now lovely and clean, I went even deeper underground
and there I found something glittering.
'Wow! They look like stars. What are they, Grandma?'

'They're minerals, dear. The water tastes better when it has just the right
amount of them dissolved in it. Bring some back with you if you like.'
'Thanks!' I said and stuffed my pockets with pieces of minerals.

YANANSHI

I descended even deeper underground until I arrived at a place where water sources merged.

'Look Grandma - it's a water slide!'



'It looks like you have reached an underground waterway,' she said.

'Swim for a while and it will bring you back to my house. Just go with the flow.'

'Okay!' I shouted.




I flowed down the dark underground waterway.
'Yuu, do you understand now that the forest stores water,
cleans it and makes it taste even better?'

'Yes, Grandma! The forest is awesome!'
A light came into view and I reached out my hand toward it.



Splash!
I spurted out of the tap and into a glass.

A bright light was shining through the window
so I knew I had made it back to Grandma's house.



'Grandma, it was fun to be a raindrop and have this adventure but now I'm thirsty again. May I have some more water, please?'

'Certainly. Here you are!'

I drank it with one big gulp. It was refreshing and tasty and knowing why it was so good made me smile.

Thank you for reading!

This picture book is intended for forest environment education.

We hope that you enjoy learning about how forests store and nurture clean water.

If you would like to use the book as a teaching material for schools or forest environment education, please let us know the details of the intended use by email.

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