



## The Tale of the Chinese Zodiac (part II)

### 十二生肖的傳說 (二)

» Continued from yesterday / 接續昨日

The cat and the rat jumped on the ox's head and together they crossed the river. Just as they were about to make landfall on the opposite bank, the rat jumped off the ox's head making him the first one across. "Congratulations!" said the emperor. "The first year shall be named after you." The ox was furious about being cheated, but as the second animal across he got the second year.

貓和老鼠跳到牛的頭上後，牠們三個就一起渡河。正當要上岸時，老鼠搶先從牛背上跳下來，成為第一個抵達終點的動物。玉帝說：「恭喜！第一年將命名為鼠年。」牛被騙覺得很火大，但因為牠是第二名，所以玉帝將第二年命名為牛年。

There was a long gap until the tiger arrived, exhausted after a difficult swim. The emperor was pleased with his efforts and named the third year after him. The tiger was followed by the rabbit, which surprised the emperor. "Everyone knows rabbits can't swim. Surely you cheated!" The rabbit explained that it was true, he couldn't swim, but he had managed to cross the river by jumping across the stones and sailing on a log. This impressed the emperor who awarded him the fourth year.

過了許久，費盡九牛二虎之力游泳過河的老虎氣喘吁吁地上岸。牠的努力讓玉帝龍心大悅，於是將第三年命名為虎年。接著抵達的是兔子，玉帝吃驚地說：「大家都知道兔子不會游泳，你一定作弊！」兔子解釋說，牠的確不會游泳，但牠是靠著踩跳石塊和利用圓木漂浮才

順利渡河。玉帝非常賞識牠的才智，因此將第四年命名為兔年。

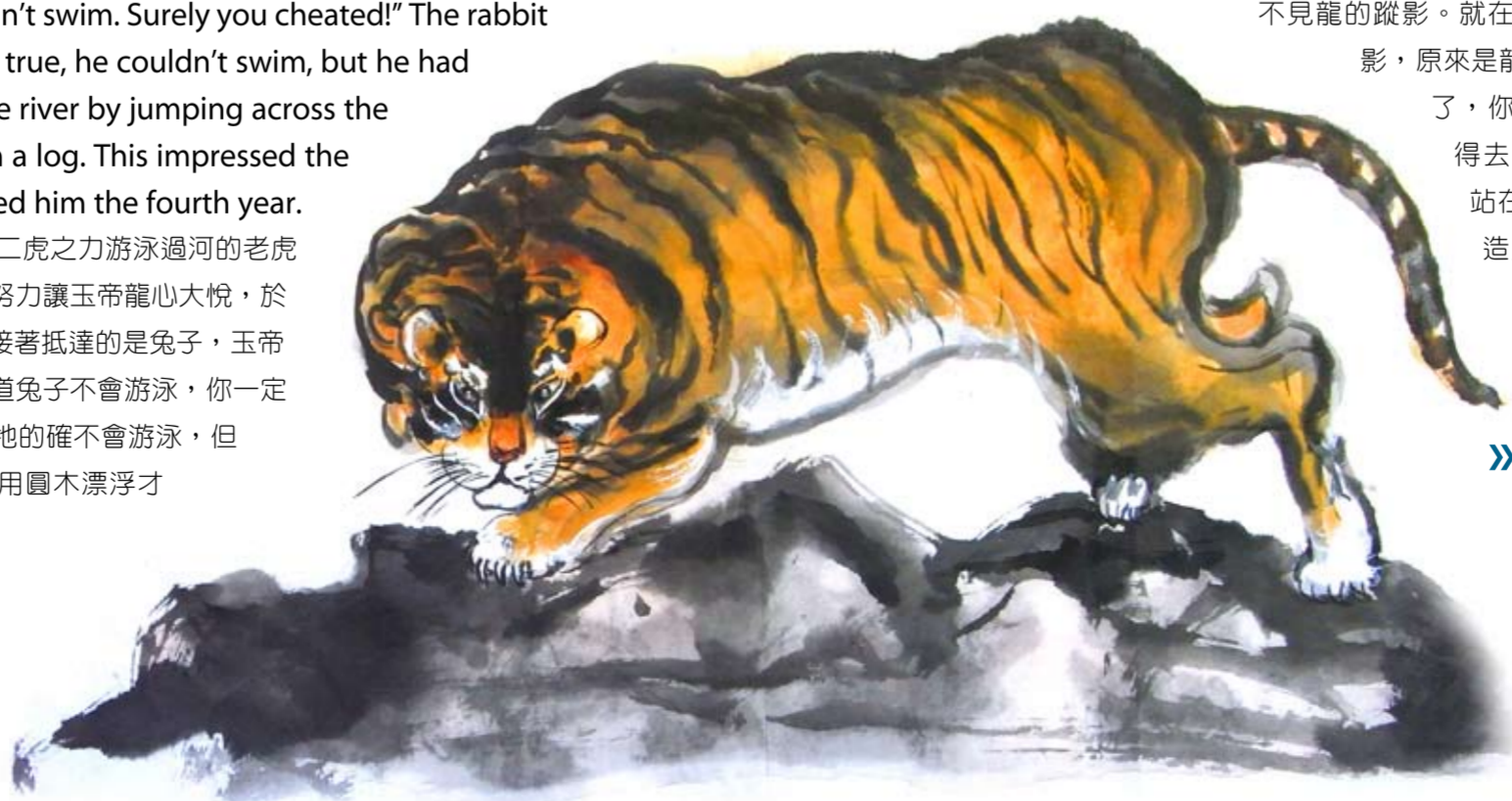
The emperor was delighted with what he had seen so far. All the animals had shown tremendous resourcefulness to cross the river, but he had expected the dragon, who could both swim and fly, to easily win. Yet the dragon was nowhere in sight. Just then a shadow descended over the animals as the dragon swooped in to land. "You finally made it. Where have you been?" asked the emperor. "I had to make it rain and then I saw a rabbit trying to cross the river on a log, so I had to create some wind to help him cross," said the dragon. "Very well. You're the fifth animal so you get the fifth year," said the emperor.

(JOHN PHILLIPS, STAFF WRITER)

到目前為止，玉帝對這些動物的表現都非常滿意。所有動物都各盡所能渡河，牠本以為能游能飛的龍可以在比賽中輕易獲勝，沒想到到現在都還不見龍的蹤影。就在這時，動物們上方出現一團黑影，原來是龍從天而降。玉帝問：「終於到了，你剛剛跑去哪了？」龍說：「我得去造雨啊。之後我看到一隻兔子站在一根圓木上想渡河，所以我又造風助牠一臂之力。」玉帝說：「非常好。你是第五名，所以第五年就是龍年。」

(翻譯：袁星塵)

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明日待續...



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