



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

### 十二生肖的傳說 (三)

» Continued from yesterday / 接續昨日

**T**he successful animals gathered on the bank and watched as the rest of the contestants swam across. Before long, the horse came into view. The horse was swimming furiously and was just about to make land when a snake slithered out from under his hooves. The horse was so surprised that he reared up in shock, allowing the snake to slither across the line for sixth place. The horse got seventh, and was happy enough with that.

成功抵達終點的動物們聚在岸邊，等著其他參賽動物游泳渡河。沒多久，牠們就看見馬的身影。馬奮力划水，就在要上岸時，一條蛇從馬蹄下竄出。牠大吃一驚高舉前蹄，讓蛇逮到機會滑過終點成為第六名。得到第七名的馬對自己拿到這個名次感到很滿意。

Then came the most amazing sight of an amazing day — a rooster, a monkey and a goat traveling together on a raft. The rooster had found the raft and the other two had helped to navigate and clear away reeds. When they finally touched down on the bank, the emperor was delighted. "I have never seen such a remarkable display of teamwork!" and with that he granted the goat the eighth year, the monkey the ninth and the rooster the tenth.

接下來是這了不起的一天最令人嘆為觀止的一幕——一隻公雞、一隻猴子和一頭山羊一起划著一艘木筏前來。公雞發現了這艘木筏，另外兩隻動物則幫忙划船和清開水面的蘆葦。等木筏終於靠岸時，玉帝非常高興，祂說：「我從未見過這麼合作無間的團隊！」隨後祂宣佈第八年為羊年，第九年為猴年，第十年為雞年。

There was long gap until the next animal arrived. The emperor was

beginning to wonder if any other animals would make it across and if he had made his challenge too difficult. But he needn't have worried because just then the dog appeared, nearing the shore. The dog explained that the water had been so clean that he couldn't resist bathing in it. The emperor laughed and duly awarded him the eleventh year.

接下來很久很久都不見下一個動物出現。玉帝開始納悶是否還有動物能成功渡河？祂的挑戰是否太過嚴苛？但祂無須操心，因為此時離岸不遠處出現了狗的身影。狗解釋說，因為河水實在太乾淨了，所以牠忍不住洗了個澡。玉帝大笑並名正言順宣佈第十一年為狗年。

So it just remained to be seen which animal would get the final place. The animals were discussing the subject when the pig appeared on the bank, earning him the twelfth year. The emperor's trumpet players issued a fanfare and the emperor began to speak. "Congratulations to all the animals that made it across the river today. Your names will be remembered forever because of your amazing efforts today," he said.

現在大家就等著看哪個動物會贏得最後一名。就在動物們議論紛紛時，豬上岸了，贏得第十二名。玉帝的傳令手吹鳴喇叭後，玉帝開始說話，祂說：「恭喜今天所有成功渡河的動物們。你們今天令人驚嘆的表現，將讓你們名垂千古。」

But whatever happened to the cat who had sat on the ox's head? The rat pushed him back into the river and he was swept back to the other bank, and since that day rats and cats have been enemies. (JOHN PHILLIPS, STAFF WRITER)

但原本坐在牛頭上的貓到哪兒去了呢？原來老鼠把牠推下河後，牠就被河水沖回對岸；自那天起，老鼠和貓便一直水火不容。 (翻譯：袁星塵)

