**Story text** — ***The tiger, the rabbit and Chung-Ho***

A retold traditional tale from Korea

1. Long ago, a weary traveller named Chung-Ho was cutting through a deep ravine when he heard a strange voice. “Help me! Help me! Please somebody take pity on me.” The traveller, being a kind and gentle man, hurried to the sound.
2. Pausing at a clearing, Chung-Ho looked down. A tiger peered up at him from the depths of a deep pit. “Wise friend, would you please, please help me get out of this trap,” begged the tiger.
3. “Oh, no, my friend, I won’t help you. For if I did, you would eat me alive.” stated the cautious traveller.
4. “With my hand on my heart, I swear one thousand oaths that I will not hurt you. In fact, forever shall I serve as your slave if you free me from this death trap.” With that the tiger sobbed and wept and sobbed and wept some more.
5. Chung-Ho, not liking to see any of God’s creatures suffer, felt sorry for the tiger. Just to make sure, he made the tiger promise once again not to eat him if he helped him out.
6. With that done, the kind man crouched down, and with great difficulty pulled the tiger up out of the pit with a long stick.
7. But no sooner had the tiger surfaced, he began pacing hungrily around poor Chung-Ho. “I don’t have to honour my promise to you as the trap was made by Man,” the tiger muttered. “I have a right to eat you. Besides, I’m terribly hungry. I’ll eat you this minute!” he snarled, licking his lips.
8. Chung-Ho pleaded for his life, reminding the tiger of his promise. After much negotiation, the two struck a deal. They would ask the first three things they encountered to decide what should happen.
9. They first asked the persimmon tree what they should do.
10. “After all that Man has done to me, ripping off my branches and twigs for wood for his fires when all along I give him shade and fruit. You deserve to be eaten!” replied the persimmon tree angrily.
11. “One down,” murmured the tiger.
12. Next they met a buffalo ploughing the field and asked for his opinion.
13. The buffalo pondered the case for a moment. “I work long years tilling the soil for Man and how does he repay me? He slaughters me when I’m too old to work. I see nothing wrong with the tiger eating you,” he snorted, swishing his tail in disgust.
14. “Two down,” said the tiger gleefully.
15. Now really shaking with fear, Chung-Ho caught sight of a rabbit bounding across the field. “Rabbit, come here and settle this for us. You are my last hope.” Chung-Ho explained his problem. Meanwhile, the pacing tiger was watching closely.
16. The rabbit, however, looked confused and asked Chung-Ho to explain what had happened again. The traveller explained the whole story again.
17. “I am sorry,” said the rabbit. “I just don’t get what you are telling me, nor do I believe what happened. Now if we could just go to where this story took place, maybe then I will understand and be a good judge,” responded the rabbit.
18. So all three, the tiger, the rabbit and Chung-Ho, returned to the pit where the tiger had been trapped.
19. “Now, let’s get this straight so my poor brain can understand,” said the rabbit standing over the pit. “Who was in this pit?”
20. “I was, you foolish rabbit!” exclaimed the impatient tiger. “Now, I’m extremely hungry. I’m going to sharpen my teeth and claws and after that I’ll eat you both!”
21. “Oh, dear sir … just one more moment while my slow wits come good,” responded the rabbit politely. “You, dear tiger, were in the pit … and … er … would you be so kind to show me how you were in there?”
22. “Like this!” yelled the frustrated tiger leaping into the pit. “Now do you understand, you stupid rabbit? I was in here like this and this man came along.”
23. The rabbit and Chung-Ho peered down at him in the pit.
24. “Quite,” said the rabbit.
25. With that, Chung-Ho and the rabbit wandered off very, very happily.