

The Kintsugi Story

Far away in the East, in a Kingdom filled with beautiful things lived a great Emperor. As winter passed gradually to spring everyone began to look forward to the crowning of the Emperor's son. It would be a great day of celebrating and feasting. Visiting kings and queens would be shown beautiful treasures made in the kingdom. In pride of place, next to the Prince's crown stood an exquisite bowl made of the finest materials.

Just before the big day, the Emperor awoke to the sound of commotion. To his horror he discovered the bowl had been broken and lay in pieces. The Emperor was desolate, and his son spent many hours trying to console him, but there was not enough time to make another bowl.

The following day the Emperor awoke again to commotion. This time the news was even worse. The pieces of bowl and the royal crown had been stolen. The robber had been seen running away, he had been dressed in rags and was probably one of the homeless men whom the Emperor insisted were always fed. Someone thought the robber had run towards the princes' rooms but all the rooms were locked and there was no sign of the prince.

A long day passed with no news. The coronation day dawned and the dispirited Emperor awoke to commotion yet again. As he pushed through the crowd where the crown and bowl had once been kept, he couldn't believe his eyes. There was the crown but it was a simple, slim band of gold, less than half the size it had once been. Next to it the bowl had been repaired, every crack had been filled with a strand of gold, making it even more beautiful. The Emperor stared in amazement and then looked at his son, the prince. In the corner of his eye he noticed his son's hands, they were covered in small scars, possibly burn marks.

His son was going to be a wonderful Emperor the old man realised.