

Story 11: New Years Monster



Story shared by: *Jerry*

Representing: *Chinese in Groningen*

The Story: Long ago, in the mountains, there lived a huge, terrifying beast called Nian. Every year, without fail, Nian would descend from its mountain home and wreak havoc on the villages below. It destroyed everything in its path—people, homes, crops—nothing was safe. The villagers were terrified, powerless to stop the destruction. No matter what they did, they couldn't fight back against the monster.

But Nian, for all its ferocity, had weaknesses. It feared loud noises, and even more strangely, it was terrified of the color red. So, when the New Year approached and Nian's return was near, the villagers would prepare. They covered their homes and doors with red banners, wore red clothes, and surrounded themselves with the color, hoping to ward off the beast. When the time came, they'd make as much noise as possible. People banged on pots and pans, lit firecrackers, and shouted into the night—anything to scare Nian away.

Each time the villagers survived another year, they'd celebrate with joy. And from that, the tradition of Chinese New Year was born. The custom of wearing red and setting off firecrackers all started because of Nian. Even the tradition of wearing red underwear is said to trace back to those times, a way to keep the monster's fear alive.

Story Moral: *Resourcefulness and Ingenuity*



