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Java Talk
(for March 20 to March 26, 2008)

Every Age Is The Best Age

A Spring Story

Once upon a time, there was a Persian merchant who dearly loved his sweet singing nightingale, which he kept in a beautiful gilded cage near a window so the bird could look out towards the hills and trees where it had come from some seasons ago. Eventually, the merchant could not ignore the sad tones in his beloved bird's song. The distressed merchant tried everything he could think of to cheer the songbird, but every day the bird became sadder and weaker. Around this time, the merchant needed to travel on business. He was reluctant to leave his poor bird, but hoped to find help on this journey which would take him through the place where the nightingale used to live. When the merchant noticed a nightingale in a tree, along the way, he lamented about his caged bird at home, and asked the one in the tree if it had any advice he could take back that might help. But when he asked, suddenly, the bird toppled over dead. Each time the merchant came to another nightingale, he asked again, but just as suddenly, it toppled over dead, too.

When the merchant returned home, he told his forlorn feathered friend how he had tried to get help, but, much to his dismay, when he asked them for their advice, every nightingale he came to toppled over dead. As he said this, suddenly, his own bird toppled over dead, too. With tears in his eyes, the grief-stricken merchant opened the cage door and gently picked up the nightingale. Just then, his cherished bird fluttered to life and flew out the window and over to the trees and hills! The merchant was very happy that his bird was alive! And the bird was very happy to be free at last!

Happy Spring, to one and all! March 20th is also World Storytelling Day!

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