

**NENJU**

There were two nenju lying side by side on the counter in the store. One was red and the other was white.

The red nenju said to the white nenju, "Staying in this store is nice, but I would like to be purchased by a nice little girl and go to the temple."

The white nenju replied, "I, too, would like to be purchased. I think I would like to be owned by a little nice boy."

One day, a lady came into the store with her two children, a boy named Bob and a girl named Nanda.

The lady said, "Next Sunday is the beginning of Dharma School and you will need a nenju. There are some nenju in this store. Which one would you like?"

Nanda said, "Mom, I like to have a red one." And Bob said, "I like to have a white one."

So the red and white nenju were purchased and the new owners carried them proudly home. They were put away in the family altar until Dharma School. The two nenju were really enjoying this new life.

About a half year later, Bob had to move away. So Bob and Nanda did not see each other until the following year. When the two children attended Dharma School together, they brought their nenju with them. Nanda's red nenju looked very nice just like the time it was purchased. But Bob's white nenju was in a very poor condition.

The red nenju said to the white one, "What happened to you? When we parted last year, you were a beautiful white nenju. But now you look so old. Your tassels - one side is gone, what=s happened?"

The white nenju replied, my owner, Bob has been quite careless with me. When I am not being used properly, he has been twirling me around and around. He sometimes puts me in his mouth. And at other times, he has been pulling my tassels so hard that finally one side came out.

I have been dropped so many times that I can't even count how many times I have fallen.

When I am taken home, I am not put away in a proper place. Sometimes Bob forgets where he puts me and I miss Dharma School.

The red nenju felt so sorry as it listened quietly. Finally, the white nenju cheered up a little as it said, "But I am so glad Bob remembered where he put me today. Otherwise, I would have missed you, red nenju. I think Bob will take better care of me after he sees how you took such good care of you."

- \* Review the meaning and significance of having Nenju.
- \* Review the difference between the Nenju and Juzu.
- \* Review the proper care of Nenju.