



THE MONSTER AND NEW YEAR'S EVE

- **IN ANCIENT TIMES, THERE WAS A MONSTER NAMED NIÁN (年). IT USUALLY LIVES AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA AND COMES UP ONCE A YEAR TO FEAST ON ANIMALS AND HUMANS. ON THIS DAY, THE VILLAGERS WOULD ALL ESCAPE INTO THE MOUNTAINS.**
- **ONE YEAR, A BEGGAR CAME TO SEEK SHELTER, BUT EVERYONE WAS HURRYING AWAY. ONLY AN OLD WOMAN TOOK HIM IN AND HE PROMISED TO CHASE NIAN AWAY. HE BUSIED HIMSELF WITH DECORATING THE HOMES.**

- **AT MIDNIGHT, NIAN LUMBERED IN BUT STOPPED SHORT WHEN IT SAW THE RED PAPER ON THE DOORS. AS IT ROARED IN ANGER, FIRECRACKERS SUDDENLY SOUNDED AND IT TREMBLED IN FEAR. WHEN IT SAW THE BEGGAR, DRESSED IN RED, LAUGHING AT IT, IT COULD ONLY RUN AWAY.**
- **THE VILLAGERS CAME BACK THE NEXT DAY AND WERE PLEASANTLY SURPRISED THAT THE HOMES WERE ALL STILL STANDING. THEY REALIZED THAT LOUD NOISES AND THE COLOR RED WERE NIAN'S WEAKNESSES.**
- **THIS IS WHY, ON NEW YEAR'S EVE, FAMILIES EAT DINNER IN THEIR HOMES FORTIFIED BY RED DECORATIONS. AT MIDNIGHT, FIRECRACKERS ARE SOUNDED. IN ADDITION, PEOPLE WILL WEAR NEW AND FESTIVE RED CLOTHING TO CELEBRATE.**





Decorating the House

Another popular custom is to hang up signs and posters on doors and (3) windows with the Chinese word *fu* written on them, which means luck and happiness. Buying flowers for the home is also commonplace since they symbolize the coming of spring and a new beginning.

DECORATING THE HOUSE

- **CUSTOM-TRADITION**
- **COMMONPLACE-SOMETHING
THAT HAPPENS MOST OFTEN**



