



Forest Legends

Ogres

By Tea Orsi



Ogres

Who's afraid of ogres? Maybe everyone. But perhaps we should get to know them better instead of being so quick to judge. After all, these mountain-sized creatures may make the earth shake when they walk, but they are actually pretty nice deep down.



Ogres usually live in the woods, in big, smelly hidden caves.
Only a few of them build their own houses in places that
are very hard to find (they're very secretive and don't like
crowds).



They love to take mud baths and are always hungry. Their favourite dish is a strange kind of soup that no one knows the recipe to (maybe it's better that way).



Come one, now that you know more about these creatures, you're at least a little less scared, right? Great! Now you can read Grandma's notes about them!



They don't like to wash with water. along with their footsteps, you know they're coming by their smell: a blend of moss and really rotten mushrooms.



Ogres' teeth aren't small and pretty at all: they're more like long, sharp fangs. A lot of times they have cavities, too (they certainly don't ever brush their teeth!)



The Legend of Momotaro

Here's a story from far, far away. The ogres in it are a bit naughty, but they'll soon learn their lesson. Will it help make them kinder? To find out, you just have to keep reading!



Once upon a time, there was an old couple that lived alone because they had no children. We'll call them "grandparent". One day, Grandpa went up the mountain to cut the grass, which had grown too tall.



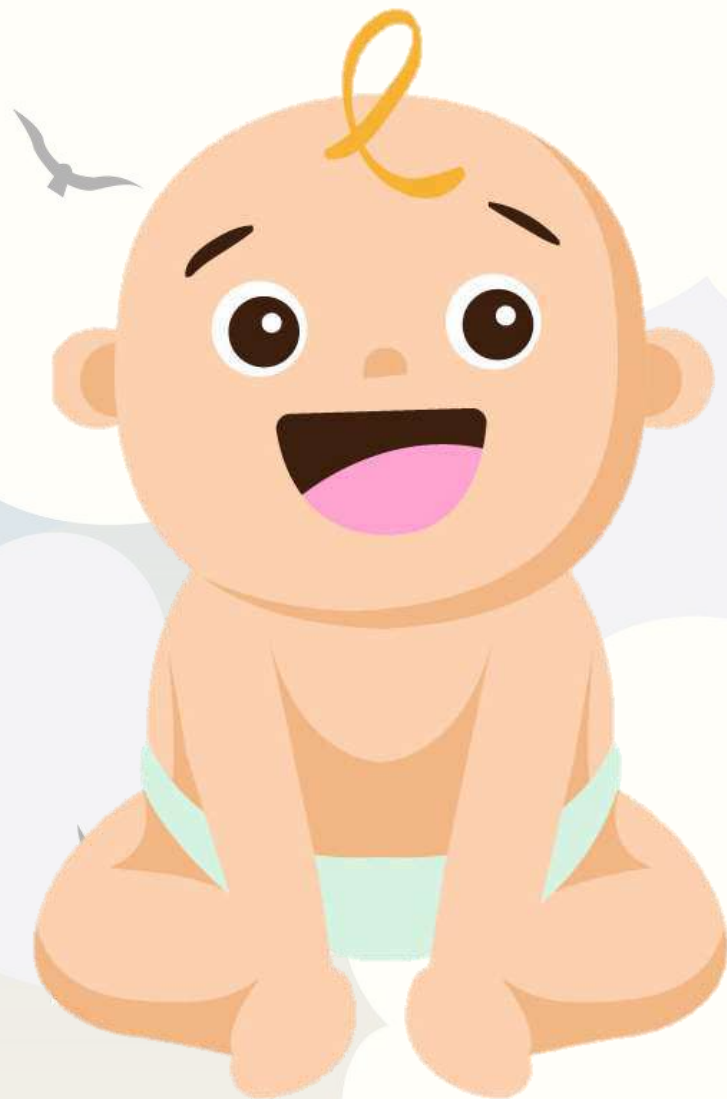
Left alone, Grandma went to the river to wash the dirty laundry. When she got there, she saw a huge peach floating on the water, so she reached out to grab it. Despite her age, she was quite agile and managed to get the fruit. She wanted to bring it home to share with her husband.



Once he had finished trimming the grass, Grandpa headed home. What a surprise! The peach hat awaited was really huge. Intrigued, he opened it.



The two peered in, then jumped at what they saw, amazed and maybe a bit frightened. Inside was a child, who immediately began to cry with hunger! Grandma and Grandpa decided to raise him as if he were their own son and, precisely because he was born from a giant peach, they named him “Momotaro” (which means “peach boy”).



The years passed quickly and Momotaro grew more and more, becoming a strong, robust and very generous young man. boy”).



One day, Momotaro learned that the ogres who lived in the forest of his island would often come and rob the poor peasants. It was time for them to learn a lesson, and he was going to teach it to them. His grandparents were terrified. It sounded so dangerous.



But Momotaro didn't listen to their pleas, which were quite logical. Then Grandma made him some Kibi dango (delicious millet cakes! Mmm!) and told him to be very careful.



Momotaro set out, and along the way, he ran into three friends – a dog, a monkey and a bird – who offered to help him in exchange for his Kibi dango. Momotaro happily accepted. It was a good thing, too, because when they reached the ogres, things got crazy! The pheasant attacked the ogres from the ground, the monkey scratched them and the dog bit them. The fighting lasted a long time.



Eventually, the ogres surrendered (thank goodness) and promised they would never steal from anyone again. Actually, they did more than that: they even gave the peasants all their most precious jewels and treasures back. From that day on, thanks to Momotaro, everyone lived in in peace and harmony.





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