



The Jungle Witch

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Kids

Once upon a time, there was a beautiful house far away from the maddening noise of the city, somewhere beyond the woods, in a lush green atmosphere, where the birds chirped and the butterflies roamed among the beautiful flowers. In that house lived a little boy who had a pair of lovely blue bright eyes and rosy lips. The boy's name was Nash. He loved to slip down the railings of the house steps at the entrance, and so he would do it again, and again. As he walked ahead he would swing open the gate of his compound and hop towards the little grassy area before his house. He had a swing tied to the trees in that area and he would climb over it and sit tight as he swung and he would sing 'Sweep away my fears and take away my tears'. And he would continue 'zoon zoon...sweep away my fears and take away my tears..zoon zoon..'

On the other side of the lake which was just a mile far from the boy's house, was a densely populated jungle with huge trees and fierce animals, infested with insects and creepy creatures. There was a hill adjacent to this jungle. The hill was steep and tall and looked horrible as there were only burnt grasses on it. On this hill lived a wicked and selfish woman who had a long nose with pointy ears. She is the witch of the jungle and she hated the chirping and singing of the birds or the sight of wild and beautiful flowers. For this reason, the entire hill had been burnt by the witch to destroy all kinds of flowers and trees. However, there was a huge hollow leafless whitish tree on which the witch would perform her rituals and chants of disgust. The witch was 500 years old and now was her time to either renew her life or face death and so she said to herself 'I am the ruler of this jungle and in order to become a mortal being I would need to sacrifice a child on this tree so that I could live for another 500 years.'

Far in the city was a beautiful girl who lived an independent life. She was a brave and strong girl who was

known to stand for the people's rights and had a great self-confidence. She lived with her old grandma whom she cared for and nursed well. The girl's name was Tamara and she was loved and respected by all the people of the town. One fine day it so happened that a great epidemic struck that town and people began to fall sick and die one after another. The elders of the town found out that the water which came into the town was being poisoned by some new substance. This was the first time such a thing had happened and there was a need to trace the source of this contamination as this was the only source of supply of water for that town.

No one was ready to set out in search of a solution fearing that the source led to the jungle. When Tamara learnt all this and realized that no one is willing to take the risk of hunting for the source of contamination and stop it, she took courage to do it and spoke to her grandma about it. Her grandma was a brave woman and she encouraged Tamara to go ahead as she was confident Tamara would manage and even succeed in resolving the issue. Tamara made arrangements with her neighbors to look after her grandma when she would be out on her mission. The whole town gathered to wish Tamara success in her journey and the purpose she was going for. As Tamara moved out she sailed through the lonely water beds while she could hear freaky noises of creatures from the nearby jungle. Her boat touched the other side of the lake and she tied the boat to a nearby tree. Taking her bag pack she trekked through the rough muddy roads between hilly and rocky grounds. On her way she found some fruits and clean streams of water to satisfy herself with. As evening came she could see at a distance a beautiful house where the little boy lived. As she was approached this house the little boy peeped from behind the window. She immediately noticed him at the window pane and waved her hand to him. With his charming smile he waved her back. Tamara approached the door and rang the bell. The door was opened by the boy's mother who had worn a kitchen apron. Tamara greeted her and said 'I come here from a town on the other-side of the lake and I'm on a mission. Meanwhile, I am looking for some shelter if you could help me with.' The lady said 'Oh why not please come in. we have plenty of space for a guest. You may just relax for a while as I get some tea for you as you must be tired by the journey.' Tamara replied 'Thank you! that's so nice of you.'

The lady went in while Tamara admired the house and then noticed Nash standing beside a huge flower vase. She greets him and call him to her. He slowly moves towards her. She pets him and asks his name. He tells his name and in turn asks her 'who are you, I have never seen you before here?'

She tells him that she has come from a faraway place and now she is his friend. He gives a broad smile and they both continue to talk. The boy's mom comes in with tea and snacks and says 'Wow! so you both have become

friends quickly. That's Good.' She sits to talk with Tamara.

The next morning Tamara sets out. Nash's mother insists that she take Nash to a distance till where he can guide her to the brook. Nash walks with Tamara and as they reach the brook they hear the animals and all kinds of birds fluttering away. Tamara holds Nash's hands so that he does not panic but Nash seems cool about it. Suddenly there is a rustle of the trees as though someone is coming towards them speedily. Tamara takes her aim with her spear but the rustle stops. She then asks Nash to move back home safely thanking him for guiding her till the brook. As Nash moves out and Tamara begins to cross the brook she notices that the water color isn't pure but a thin stream in the middle of it is green in color. She traces the flow of this stream and climbs a high rock. She notices that the same stream leads to the town she came from which was contaminated. She then turns around to look at the source of the contamination and finds that the stream is flowing in a zigzag manner from between the jungle. She begins tracing the stream, going through the jungle in her mission which she feels is so close to her. There she finds the hill where the witch lives. She finds that the water is falling from the hill and then forms into a stream. So she begins to climb the hill but with difficulty as the hill is steep. She comes across the burnt trees and grasses with a hut in the middle of it. As she walks, the dry leaves under her feet are distinctly heard as the hill is very silent with no birds or animals around due to the witch's fury. Tamara, distracted by the dry leaves sound under her feet, suddenly hears the witch talking from inside the hut 'Who has entered my place without my permission. Who can dare to do that?' She comes out of her hut and looking at her fierce face Tamara tells her that she did not intend to intrude in her area but happened to reach there in search of something. The witch looks at her intently as says 'I think I saw you with the little boy across the brook. I want that boy and you need to get him to me.' Tamara replies 'Oh, so it was you behind the trees who later vanished. Why do you want him and what makes you think I will bring him here to this horrible place? Your intentions don't seem to be good, do they?'

The witch said 'You are right my intentions are never good for others but for myself. I want that boy as my sorcery tells me that through his sacrifice I will be able to gain nirvana and live for another 500 years. You do not dare to think you can stand against me. It's better that you do this job for me and bring him to me.'

Tamara cries out 'You wicked lady how on earth can you think of sacrificing an innocent child. You will not be able to do so as long as I stand against you. If you are a witch, then I too am no ordinary girl but with truth I shall win the battle against you.' Saying this Tamara takes hold of her weapon bamboo which had a spear-like head and she aims at the witch. The witch becomes very angry and shouts chants top of her voice and the wind

moves all the leaves and dust over the hill. Tamara is not able to see in that dust storm but when the dust settles Tamara finds that the witch had disappeared. She quickly understands that the witch must have gone to capture the boy so she pulls out a rope from her bag pack, ties it to a tree and lets the rope down the steep hill. She glides her way down the hill faster. While doing this Tamara notices that there is a boiling pot which spilled out green liquid and the liquid fell straight into the passing by streams of water on the hill. Tamara knew by now that this was the source of contamination by the witch. So she immediately shoots an arrow at the pot on the other side of it so that the pot gets cracked with a hole and the liquid falls on the other side over the ground rather than in the stream of fresh water.

On getting down Tamara runs towards Nash's house. On the way she catches up with the witch walking hastily with a crooked stick in her hand in the form of a wand which has a red stone at the top. As Tamara gets near she calls out the witch in challenge to turn towards her. As the witch turns, she aims her magic wand towards Tamara and cries out a spell by which fire pours out from the stick while Tamara jumps at a side and a tree gets burnt down by the fire. Tamara aims her arrow and shoots at the witch injuring her right leg. Meanwhile, as the house is near, Nash comes out with his mother to see from where was the noise and smoke coming from. The witch notices this and turns towards the house hastily. Tamara sees that the witch is speeding towards Nash so she yells at the top of her voice telling Nash and his mother to get inside the house and lock the door as the witch is coming to take Nash away. Hearing this and seeing the ugly witch advancing towards them, Nash's mother hurries inside the house with Nash and turns and asks Tamara 'But what about you?' Tamara replies 'Don't be worried about me I will handle this, please lock the door.' The door is slammed and locked from inside. The witch reaches before the house and spells fire on the door to break it open. Meanwhile, Tamara comes running from behind and with a loud shout throws the witch on the ground. The witch loses the grip of her wand and it falls far off. Tamara gets up and runs towards the wand and picks it up. With a loud shout she smashes the red stone of the wand on the ground and breaks the wand on her thigh. As soon as the wand is destroyed the witch burns up into ashes. Nash and his mother witnesses all this from their terrace gallery. The next morning Tamara is ready with her bag pack to return back home now that her mission is completed. Nash comes and hugs her while she bends and gives him a kiss. Nash's mother thanks Tamara for saving them and in turn Tamara thanks her for the shelter and for helping her meet her goal. Tamara returns back in her town and as soon as she is noticed walking down the lane, people gather around her and one of the elders tell her that the water contamination is now gone and by this they knew that Tamara had succeeded in her

mission. Everybody thanks Tamara and shout cheers to her name. Tamara sees her grandma at a distance with tears of joy in her eyes. She runs towards her and give her a tight hug. Grandma tells her that she had full confidence that Tamara would do it and she had lived up to her expectations.

And so as the wicked witch was no more after having tormented mankind, animals and plants alike for 500 years, all of these finally lived in peace hereafter.

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