



# *The Monkey's Heart*

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Animals, Humor, Retold Fairy Tales

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You know how when ladies are gonna have babies, they get cravings for really weird food? Pickles with ice cream, watermelon and chop suey, White Castle, junk like that? Well, it turns out that's true of crocodile-ladies just as much as it is people-ladies. In the case of this story, a lady-croc was going to lay an egg (that's how crocodiles have babies, ya know) and her well-meaning husband made the mistake of asking what she wanted to eat.

“A monkey heart!”

Now, it's not scientifically possible to say no to your wife when she's “with egg” as the saying goes...or “in an egg way” ...or “egg-specting”...okay, I'll stop. Unfortunately for the crocodile, he lived in a jungle and, as you may already be aware, there aren't a lot of supermarkets in jungles. Of course, even if there were, most markets don't carry monkey hearts...or do they? On the plus side, what the jungle lacks in supermarkets, it makes up for with something else:

Monkeys!

So he'd just have to catch a monkey on his own and cut out its heart (ew!). He therefore set about destroying the bridge that spanned the river. You see, on the far side of the river was a grove of fig trees, of which monkeys are very fond, and this crocodile knew that sooner or later a monkey would come by wanting to cross the river to get the figs. But when the monkey in question finally did come to the banks of the river, he was alarmed to find the bridge gone.

"Oh, banana skins!" said the monkey, employing a very common monkey expression. "Now how am I going to get across?"

"I'll help!" said the crocodile who had been waiting for just such an opening line as this. "You can ride on my back and I'll carry you across the river."

"Hey! That'd be a sweet deal I couldn't refuse!"

Hmm...that's a pretty weird thing for a monkey to say, isn't it? Oh well.

The monkey climbed onto the crocodile's back, but when they got about halfway across the river, he stopped swimming.

"What'd you stop for?" asked the monkey.

"Well, it's a little bit awkward," said the crocodile. "But, see, I'm not actually going to give you a ride to the other side of the river. I'm going to attack and kill you right now and take your heart home to feed to my wife, who asked for a monkey heart special."

"I appreciate your honesty...kind of," said the monkey. "So, I shall repay it in kind: Even if you kill me right now, you won't get my heart."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, where do you keep your heart?"

"My chest."

"Exactly. Monkeys don't do that. We hide ours in fig trees. That's why we're always hanging out in those trees,

to check on our hearts. But, if you promise not to hurt me, I'll climb the tree I keep my heart in and throw it down to you.”

The crocodile agreed and continued the journey to the opposite bank. There the monkey hopped off the crocodile's back and climbed the first tree he saw.

“Okay!” said the eager crocodile. “Let me have it!”

Well, let's face it, he should've known better than to give the monkey such an easy set up. And, sure enough, a second later, the monkey was throwing figs at the crocodile for all he was worth. Eventually, the crocodile escaped the bombardment and went back to the water, but not before picking up one of the figs and wondering if his wife would believe the monkey's story just like he had done. History does not relate the specifics, but evidence has been found to suggest that the crocodile slept on the couch for quite a few nights thereafter.

And, of course, the monkey ate figs.

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