



◦ MONKEY TALES ◦

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THE MONKEY KING'S SACRIFICE

A group of monkeys were quite happy, living by themselves in the forest. Part of the happiness stemmed from the fact that they had not yet encountered humans.

In the forest there was a mango grove by the bank of a river, and the monkeys lived off the delicious fruit they plucked from the trees.

Then, one day, humans came and started to live on the edge of the forest. When the king of the monkeys found out he grew worried. While his subjects were gathering the fruit for their midday meal, he called them to him. He stood there looking pensive as the monkeys sat in a circle around their king.

"What is it master?" one of the monkeys asked him.

The voice snapped the king out of his reverie. "My friends," he said to them, "For many years we have lived happily off the fruit of this mango tree. But I see trouble in the very near future."

"Why master?" one of the younger monkeys asked.

The king heaved a sigh. "It was too good to last," he said, almost to himself. Aloud, he said to them, "Humans have come to live at the edge of the forest."





"So?" asked another monkey. "What has that to do with us? They live at the edge of the forest, we live in it."

The king shook his head. "You do not understand. Humans have never tasted the mango fruit. Once they do they will find out how delicious it is and they will strip the trees bare and there will be nothing left for us to eat."

Worried by the king's words, the monkeys were frightened. "What shall we do?" they clamoured. "What will we eat? Without the fruit, we will die."

The king held his hands up for silence and the chatter died down. "My friends," the king said, looking at the worried faces around him. "We must make sure the humans never taste the fruit."

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