

# Princess Mononoke

主人公のアシタカは、村を襲ったタタリ神を退治した時、右腕に呪いをかけられてしまいます。彼はその呪いを解くために村を捨て、西へ西へと旅に出ます。その旅の途中、アシタカは川辺で瀕死の男性を助けます。この男性が暮らす村は製鉄の村で、自然を破壊しながら鉄や武器で村を守っていました。アシタカは、その村を憎む山犬に育てられた人間、サンに出会います。

In ancient times, the land lay covered in forests, where, from ages long past, lived the spirits of the gods. Back then, mankind and beast lived in harmony, but as time went by, most of the great forests were destroyed. The forests that remained were guarded by huge beasts that served the Great Forest Spirit. Those were the days of gods and demons.

Ashitaka, a boy who lived in a forest, came alongside the river and saw a man being carried along in its flow. “He’s still breathing,” Ashitaka observed. “Hold on, don’t give up!”

Ashitaka went into the water. He pulled the man from the river and up onto the riverbank. Soon after that his horse heard something and its ears went up. Ashitaka quickly and quietly jumped behind a stone to see what was going on. On the other side of the stone there was a huge wounded dog. A girl and two other dogs approached it. She touched it and healed the dog’s wound. The huge dog noticed Ashitaka and growled. The girl turned.

Ashitaka stood on top of the stone and announced himself. “My name is Ashitaka. I’ve come to this world from the East. Are you the ancient gods who I’ve heard live in the forest of the Sun God?”

The girl stared at him in silence with intense hostility, then jumped onto one of the dogs and without a word to him shouted “leave!” (239)

# Pinocchio

時計職人のゼペットは、自分で作った操り人形にピノキオと名付けました。ある星の輝く夜にピノキオが本当の男の子になりますようにとお願いすると、青い妖精ブルーフェアリーがやって来て、ピノキオに命を与えます。

Long ago, there lived a man named Geppetto who carved music boxes and clocks. One day, he made a special puppet and named it Pinocchio. That night, Geppetto saw a star in the sky and made a wish. Then he turned to his cat, Figaro, and told him, “I wish that my little Pinocchio might be a real boy!”

After Geppetto had gone to sleep, the Blue Fairy came to his workshop. “Good Geppetto,” she said, “you give so much happiness to others --- you deserve to have your wish come true.”

The Blue Fairy touched the puppet gently with her wand. “Little puppet made of pine, wake! The gift of life will be yours!” And in the blink of an eye, Pinocchio came to life.

“I can walk!” he cried. “Am I a real boy?”

“No, Pinocchio,” the Blue Fairy replied. “To make Geppetto’s wish come true will be entirely up to you. Prove yourself brave, truthful, and unselfish, and someday you will be a real boy.”

The Blue Fairy decided to ask Jiminy Cricket to help Pinocchio. Jiminy Cricket was a small cricket who traveled from house to house looking for a warm place to stay and sing. He wore a suit and carried an umbrella. That night, he happened to be staying in Geppetto’s workshop.

The Blue Fairy touched Jiminy Cricket with her magic wand. With that, he became Pinocchio’s conscience, a voice of reason that would help the puppet know right from wrong.

# Martin Luther King Jr.

アメリカ公民権運動の代表的な存在だったマーティン・ルーサー・キング・ジュニア牧師は、1968年4月にメンフィスのホテルで暗殺されました。今年は没後50年にあたり、全米各地で追悼のセレモニーが行われました。50年前のアメリカで実際にあった人種差別とはどのようなものだったのでしょうか。

Martin Luther King Jr. was born in 1929 into a loving family. The Kings were black and lived in the southern United States. In the south, black people did not have the same rights as white people.

Blacks and whites lived in different worlds. For example, blacks had to sit in the back of the bus and couldn't sit by white people. There were separate, poorer schools for black students, and many restaurants wouldn't serve black customers. This way of keeping blacks and whites separate was called "segregation".

Martin did not like segregation so he fought for respect. He began to speak in public and encouraged black people to stop using buses. Many people listened and didn't ride. It was difficult because they had to walk very far to work and school. Thankfully, after more than a year, a judge finally decided that segregation on buses was illegal.

Even though they were successful, there were bigger challenges. King fought for equal schools, and led protests around America. His biggest protest was with 200,000 people in Washington D.C. It was there that he gave his famous "I have a dream" speech.

He continued his work for equality, but on one day in 1968 everything changed. King was in Tennessee for a march. He was standing on a balcony and was shot and killed. His death shocked America, but it united many people. His selfless sacrifices helped make America a better place to live for all black people.