

The Real Monster

-Siena Kim

Once upon a time, there was a small peaceful village in the middle of the mountain. People in the village were kind and they worked hard in harmony. However, this happy village had just one problem; it was a monster that lived in the mountain, near the village. The monster was huge and strong. His two horns were pointy and his face was scary. People were so scared of him, so they couldn't even go through the mountain alone. The governor of the village always tried to cast the monster out of the mountain, but he was too strong. Everyone hated the monster, but not Songhwa, the governor's daughter.

"He is not a monster. His name is Bau, and he is a good guy!"

She claimed. They've been friends since Bau saved her life when she was a little kid, but no-one believed Songhwa. They said she is too young, and too naïve.

One day an unusual visitor appeared in the village. He was a handsome young boy whose name was Hoya. "I'm from Hanyang. May I stay for a few days?" He asked. His amazing stories and wonderful things from Hanyang made him famous among all the villagers. Songhwa also heard about him, and she ran to Bau's house to tell him about their new visitor. But when she arrived to his home, Bau looked unhappy.

"I don't feel good about him."

He said. It made Songhwa surprised.

"But you didn't even see him." she said.

"He knows many things; he's handsome, he's from Hanyang, and I think he is a really fun person."

"Well, I don't know. But you got to be careful, Songhwa."

Songhwa thought he was wrong, but because he looked so serious she didn't say anything. Bau took out something in his pocket and gave it to her.

"Take it. It will protect you when you are in danger."

It was a beautiful norigae (Korean traditional ornament). She put it on her clothes, and came back to the village.

When Songhwa returned, her father told her he invite Hoya to dinner. During the dinner, he became friends with Songhwa quickly. She almost forgot Bau's warning, but still she kept his present with her even thought Hoya gave her new norigae from Hanyang.

"I heard you have problem with a monster." Hoya asked the governor. He sighed.

"Yes. And I'm sure it's him who steals animals always. Yesterday, even my favourite horse was missing."

Songhwa couldn't stand their conversation anymore, and she stood up.

"Father, please!" she cried. "He's my friend. And he didn't steal anything! I told you, it must be someone else!"

"Don't talk nonsense." the governor said angrily. "I don't understand, Songhwa. I won't stand for your rude behavior next time!"

"But father..!"

"I must apologize, Hoya. Please forgive my daughter."

Hoya smiled. Songhwa was sad, and angry. She went to her room and shut the door.

The next morning, Songhwa was awaked by the servants' voices. "Did the governor and that man already leave?" A woman's voice asked. "I heard that he said the monster scared of red colour. Did you see they were all wearing red uniform?" "Now finally they will handle that scary monster. That's a relief." Songhwa was shocked and got up immediately. However, her father and soldiers were already gone. She ran to Bau's house right away.

She met the crowd when she almost reached the house. "Stop!" she cried. The governor looked at her surprisingly. "Songhwa! Why are you here? It's dangerous!" he said. Songhwa ignored him and blocked the way. "Nothing is more dangerous than you now! What are you trying to do?" Hoya, who was standing beside the governor, came up to her.

"You should go back to the village, young lady." His voice was cold. Songhwa shook her head. "Never. I'm not going anywhere."

"He is a dangerous." He said in an irritated tone of voice. "Okay, I will bring you to home if you don't want to go by yourself." He tried to grab her shoulder. But when his hand reached her, he screamed shortly, and stepped back. "What the..." He saw his hand turning into weird shape. It looked like an animal's paw. He held his hand and scowled at her.

"It's him again!" Songhwa was surprised because Hoya looked so scary. Also at that time, Bau got out of the house, hearing the noise.

"What's going on? Is that you Songhwa? What... Oh, God. So much red."

He turned back. Only Hoya kept yelling. "You! Why you always disturb me!" He screamed in rage.

"What are you doing? Attack him! He can do nothing now!"

"Father, you can't do that!" Songhwa said. "What's wrong with you, Hoya?"

Hoya was almost flushed red with anger. "All right, I don't need you, you coward humans." He glowed. Suddenly he was turning into a white fox with nine tails. "Okay, what is going on?" Bau asked, still standing backward, and no one could answer.

Hoya, the fox was trying to come up to Songhwa and Bau, but he couldn't because of Songhwa's norigae. "You are annoying!" He shouted in a voice cracking with rage. And he suddenly turned around and attacked the governor. "Father!" Songhwa screamed.

The next thing happened was Bau interrupted the fox, and smashed him, with his eyes closed. The fox stepped back and tried to attack him again. However, all the soldiers and the governor already got out of panic, and drew the sword. The fox snarled at them and ran away. Soldiers chased after him.

"I guess it was because of him that all those animals missing."

The governor said awkwardly. "What is that thing?"

"You don't know that?" Bau answered. "It's a nine tailed fox. They eat human's liver, you know." The governor and Songhwa turned pale. "And you were protecting us?"

"I'm protecting Songhwa." He said. "Can you please just get out of my sight? Your clothes are annoying."

"I'm so sorry. I don't know how to apologize." the governor said, bowing to Bau. "May I invite you the village. I think we are going to have a party today."

Bau looked little surprised. "Only after change the clothes into the other colour." He said.

At the party, people got surprised at first, but after Songhwa introduced Bau to each of them, they soon so thanked him. The soldiers returned late, and they said couldn't catch the fox, but no one worried about that, because Bau decided to live in the village. Indeed, since then, the fox never showed up. Songhwa and Bau lived in the small peaceful village happily ever after.