

Shirou

The Ogre of Gemosai

The morning is new as the cherry tree flowers blossom and the grass is quite green, more vibrant than ever before in the village of Odessi. The soothing fireball, high in the sky, shines upon a new world, a beacon light being the first indication of the birth season. Though the air is stale and there is no wind blowing through branches like fingers through hair, the morning is calm and soothing, yet so warm. As the sun rises slowly the elder of the village notices something disturbing about the neighboring forest, the animals are silent and surreptitiously. No birds singing beautiful songs of life appreciation, no deer families searching for a cool stream, nor any youthful bunnies running around in play. There is nothing. The elder ponders for reasons for such an occurrence but no suggestions surprisingly come to mind. Thump, crash the sound of a falling tree. All of a sudden worries about the date strike the elder, he rushes to the village's forest side gate. With sweat pouring down his face it is obvious he waits for something or someone. He waits for the reason for his new found dread.

Heavy feet leave their mark upon the soft forest floor and a blunt object swings to and fro aside a large silhouette. A massive, towering creature approaches the village. The elder tries to speak, but only mumbles and murmurs succeed through his lips. He must warn that it is the annual encounter with the village's oppressor. He must tell his people that the evil that steals their young females every year is soon to be upon them. The beast that crashes through the forest is the Ogre of Gemosai.

The elder remembers that the ogre use to protect the village of Odessi. The ogre now only comes every year when the seasons change and the world is born anew. The change that occurred, it was so sudden. The ogre had once been kind, but it was when he was so young; it was when the villagers pitied him. The villagers showed kindness and compassion to the ogre only when they could not truly see him;

only when he was covered in the sheep's skin and dark cloak. No face could be seen through the thick dark that engulfed it inside the cloak. The only feature that was ever seen were the eyes, but only at night when the sky was black; the eyes glow a bright green, dull toned, but vibrant. The ogre was found, abandoned by a Gemoisian bounty huntress, at the doorstep of the gathering hall. The ogre was quiet and pleasant. Well kept too, at least well enough for an ogre. The villagers knew change would come when a witch hunter entered the village, looking for monster trophies for his castle. No one protected the ogre when was attacked, not even the elder. The ogre fought back, utilizing only his youthful strength, his Herculean strength. The witch hunter was his first blood, his first taste of absolute victory. His conquests over the retreating Cyclops and baby dragon when protecting Odessi, was nothing in comparison to the new flavor, the pleasing taste of power. Now the ogre is the oppressor, no longer the vanquisher.

Rushing back into the village square stumbling and frightened, the elder shouts, "he's coming...the ogre is coming." With the elder getting the villagers riled and hastened, the villagers begin to round up the females into a rickety wagon. Females from the age of fourteen to thirty-five all packed into an old rickety wagon drawn by a gimpy busted horse. "Take the females to Fangora." the elder orders as he turns around, hand twitching by his bow staff secure within his sheath. "That ogre is quite close."

Three young warriors rush inside their homes returning to the village square moments later in full battle armor and with their specialized weapons in hand prepared for an upcoming battle. "What?" the elder cries out, "You all must be fools. You are not able to take that beast down. You are too young and your training is futile. I will defend our village with my lasts breath."

With slick black hair flowing over his eyes the elder's son, Myayasha, insists on speaking, "Father, no disrespect intended, but you are too old to protect us. You stay aside, let us handle this." He pulls forth his mighty bow and places a poisoned tip arrow on the bow-slit, tip facing the end of the dirt path; where the ogre will soon stand. Hands so steady and firm, breathing regular, and sweat non-apparent, Myayasha stands already victorious; his colleagues, Jakura the swordsmen and Rashimi the Slasher, also stand ready for battle at his side.

As the females are still being loaded into the wagon, the ogre gets closer and the elder thinks to himself, what fools they are. These boys believing themselves to be so brave yet they're so foolish, ready to

give their lives. The three young men stiffen their fighting stances prepared for the ogre's strike. As the elder gazes on at the young men he is pulled away by a shop keeper and placed behind a barrel of Glimmy Fish, down on knee and elbow, with only the fishes' stench for company. The smell of these fish could wake the dead, a smell that brought tears to the elder's eyes.

Now with the wagon finally full, the driver snaps the whips and the depleted horse mopes its way along the dirt path towards Fangora, leaving behind a mist of dust covering a frightening scene as the rest of the villagers go inside their homes locking doors and windows crawling into corners awaiting for the arrival of the terror that is the Ogre of Gemosai

People tremble and quiver as they feel the presence of the ogre looming. Louder and louder the thumping of the ogre's feet upon the forest floor resonates; soon he will reach the gate of Odessi. The ogre slowly waddles up to the entrance with a spiked club in his right hand gently slapping his left palm, ready for confrontation. His feet slowly lift from the ground leaving death in its wake; death to insects, plants, and to all who oppose his presence. His blue skin – not the blue of a calm sky or of the turbulent sea, but a deep serene blue, frightening and weary at long gaze – is blotched with lizard scales and covered with sheep skin. The natural covering of another creature now only filthy shredded garments for the ogre. The only sense of a warrior, that any spectator can see, is the dull, leather armor that scarcely covers his chest and protruding abdomen; he continues his dominant entrance still slapping his left hand, ever so gently.

Left and right his eyes wander across the village scene. Step after step, the ogre enters the village, confidently making his way towards the village square; the center of all transactions. A ghastly grin creeps upon the ogre's face as he peers horizontally into the crevice of slightly drawn curtains of villager homes; he sees fear drenched eyes, tears soaking cheeks as families worry about the possible devastating catastrophe that await their people. Feeding off the evident fear the ogre grows more confident with each terrorizing step deeper into the village square. He turns the corner that will put him on the main path of the village; the path that will take him to the awaiting young men pretending to be warriors. He sees them, all weapons in hand; so much imprudent valor.

The ogre stands at one end of the village, the warriors on the opposing end. Each of the warriors' gaze so deep and powerful, the villagers seem to sink into them as if bemused by quicksand. So silent and

gentle the world but the scene is so tense it breaks the norm; condensed tension in the midst of feathery tranquility. The ogre's body odor lingers down the path pass the water well, over the Glimmy Fish barrels, throughout the village homes, and directly into the noses of the three young men. The stench, the horrendous smell; the fragrance of decomposing death seems rejuvenating in comparison. The ogre's vapors sneak inside the warriors, the nostrils and mouth its entry; creeping around the body, causing such pain, the agony.

The warriors sweat profusely but not from the heat or weariness, the odor is the catalyst. Tears stream down their cheeks soaking and nourishing the world beneath their feet; a world that now twists and spins in the warriors' dazed mind. Tears not formed from fear or pain but sheer strength of the stench.

The warriors seem to regain themselves; their focus returning slowly. Their eyes begin to dry and mind gets back on track; they are overcoming the vapors. The ogre notices that his first attack, though subtle and naturally evoked, is failing. It no longer holds the warriors, no longer are they lost in the darkness of smell. The ogre smiles and drool forms in the corner of his crusty lips. It is time. This is the moment to utilize his second attack: his booming tyrannical song. It is time to speak.

"What is this?" the ogre asks with his left hand stroking his scaly chin. "Why do you three stand there with weapons? You know the routine, turn over three of your beauties." The young men, playing warrior, stand firm not shaken. The ogre tilts his head slightly, "Did you not hear me?" Still the young men stood. Furious now, the ogre demands, "I said turn over the women." Still the young men playing warriors stood defiant and focused. The ogre stomps his right massive leg into the world, leaving behind an indent of grand sight. "Give me the women, now!" he roars.

"Never," Myayasha responds, "never again will we turn over the females of this village as if they were property. Today is a new day ogre, today you will fall." Myayasha faces the tip directly at the left eye of the ogre, who stands over one hundred feet away, but now Myayasha shakes; no longer quite so confident.

With a chilling laugh the ogre takes another step forward towards the village square, "Very funny boys. Well if this is what you want. Then your maker you soon will meet." The ogre tightly grips his spiked club and charges.

Thundering towards the warriors with saliva streaming behind, the ogre attacks; the three warriors separate, each going in three different directions, hoping for some sort of advantage against the tyrant beast that soon will come upon them like a storm. The arrow is fired. Myayasha let loose the poisoned tip directly towards the ogre eye. With a quick swift of his arm, the arrow changes direction, leaving Myayasha stunned. Plummeting towards the world the ogre's spiked club comes for Myayasha's body in retaliation. Myayasha narrowly escapes the first advance. As the ogre begins to remove the spike from the pierced ground, Rashimi sends forward one of his spinning saw blades; the ogre's spine being the target. But once again, the target is not touched, not even flirted with; the ogre moves again hastily, dodging the attack. How could such a huge creature move with such speed and ease? Leaping backwards toward Rashimi, the ogre spins and lay rest his spiked club within the young man's shocked face.

Myayasha is frozen in disbelief. So is his fellow warrior Jakura. Both are unable to move a muscle as they see their comrade lay in his own life fuel; thick, claret, and seeping from a broken vessel. Jakura's lips quiver in anger and frustration, the ogre only watches in sweet accomplishment as he removes the life-taker from Rashimi's once energetic body. Jakura can not hold it in any longer. He focuses all his energy into his grip on his sword, and attacks. His feet barely connect with the world; it is so surreal what Myayasha sees: Jakura is advancing so quickly he almost seems to be gliding. His mouth opens and a growl of hatred comes forth, "For Rashimi..."

Those are the last words that would break Jakura's silent lips. In sheer horror of disbelief the ogre once again dodges a warrior's attack and in retaliation holds back nothing, not even remorse as he takes a member from a loving home and family. Jakura took to the sky just before the ogre's body and came down with all his might, the dull sided blade skyward. The ogre only slid to his left, a few feet, leaving behind a slight fog of his body odor; enough to distract Jakura's focus, even for the immortal moment. And that was it. Jakura is dead now and only one warrior remains on the battle field. Myayasha stands alone now, stands alone in the thick blanket of fear and evil.

Myayasha's chin trembles and his heart quakes, he barely breathes as the ogre creeps closer. Each step near the enemy, the ogre grows more confident. All the sweet fear, the sweet and nourishing smells of warriors falling in battle; the ogre feeds from it all. Intense thoughts flood Myayasha's mind and a storm of

anger, revenge, and pure hatred takes hold. His body stirs with these emotions and he barely can keep control of his racing ideas. He should strike, he should run, he should pretend to surrender and then surprise the ogre with the tip of another poisoned arrow: the entire village burn with the same thoughts.

The ogre breaks Myayasha's thoughts, "Would you like to give up or join your fallen comrades?" Myayasha does not respond; neither option seems to be appealing. Myayasha only continues to think about his opportunities, his choices. He continues racing through ideas, but is interrupted by a massive fist burying itself into his face. Crushing through the air and straight into the side of a village building's wall, closely followed by the ogre's spiked club, Myayasha falls. The battle is over: the ogre three and the warriors none. The ogre retrieves his weapon, his only companion, from the crushed building wall - where nightmarish, remnants of Myayasha has survived - and prepares for his departure. He collects three teen females, links them together with rope by the wrists, places a leash around their necks and returns to the darkened forest; the silent forest which he had come. The ogre of Gemosai once again leaves his legacy behind in Odessi, until his return the following renewal season. Only this time death lingers throughout the land, not lost of loved ones. The ogre leaves with horrendous threats trailing behind, "I will return soon and I will raise the toll. I will have as many females as I please."