

## The Monkey's Heart

There was once upon a time a crocodile. We'll call him Mr. Crocodile. And he had a wife. We'll call her Mrs. Crocodile. Now, everyday Mr. Crocodile would swim out into the river and catch fish. And every day Mr. and Mrs. Crocodile would have fish for breakfast, fish for lunch, fish for dinner and fish for supper. And that is how it had always been.

Then one day when Mr. Crocodile came home with a mouth full of fish for their dinner Mrs. Crocodile said, 'I don't like fish!'

'What do you mean, you don't like fish?' said Mr. Crocodile. 'You're a crocodile. Of course you like fish.'

'Not anymore,' said Mrs. Crocodile.

'Well what do you like now if you don't like fish?' asked Mr. Crocodile.

'In the tree across the river there is a monkey,' said Mrs. Crocodile. 'And every day I see him eating juicy mango fruit. I bet his heart would taste delicious. For my dinner I want monkey's heart.'

'How am I supposed to catch a monkey?' said Mr. Crocodile. 'I'm a crocodile. I catch fish. That's what I do!'

'If you really loved me you would bring me the monkey's heart,' said Mrs. Crocodile and she cried crocodile tears.

And so Mr. Crocodile set off across the river thinking and thinking and thinking of a way to catch the monkey. He swam backwards and forwards and backwards and forwards and eventually he came up with a plan.

He swam over to the side of the river where the monkey lived and he waited for the monkey to return home to his tree.

As the monkey skipped home along the river bank Mr. Crocodile called out, 'Good day Mr. Monkey.'

Now, the crocodile had never said 'good day' to the monkey before and Mr. Monkey wasn't quite sure what to do so he replied politely, 'Good day, Mr. Crocodile.'

'My wife and I,' continued Mr. Crocodile. 'My wife and I would like to have you for dinner. I mean, we would like to have you over for dinner. We would like to have you over to our side of the river for dinner.'

'Well, that's very kind of you,' replied Mr. Monkey. 'But you see I can't swim. How will I get over to your side of the river?'

To which Mr. Crocodile replied, 'Climb onto my back and I will carry you safely across.'

And so Mr. Monkey climbed onto Mr. Crocodile's back and Mr. Crocodile began to swim back across the river. But when they reached the middle of the river Mr. Crocodile began to twist his body from side to side and poor Mr. Monkey began to slip and slide about on Mr. Crocodile's back.

'Please stop,' called Mr. Monkey. 'Or I will surely fall into the river and drown!'

'Good!' called back Mr. Crocodile. 'Did you really think that we wanted to be your friends? All we want to do is to eat your juicy heart for our dinner.'

'My heart?' called back Mr. Monkey quick as a flash. 'Well why didn't you say? I haven't got my heart with me!'

'What do you mean?' replied Mr. Crocodile.

'We monkeys don't keep our hearts in our bodies,' replied Mr. Monkey. 'We hang them up in the trees for safekeeping. Look.' And he pointed up at the juicy mango fruit growing in the trees on his side of the river. 'If you take me back I will fetch my heart for you.'

And so Mr. Crocodile turned around and swam back to Mr. Monkey's side of the river. As soon as they reached the bank Mr. Monkey jumped off Mr. Crocodile's back and scurried up the tree. He grabbed a mango fruit from a twig and hurled it down at Mr. Crocodile where it went splat all over his face. Soon all the other monkeys were joining in the fun and pelting Mr. Crocodile with mango fruit and laughing away at how foolish he was.

Poor Mr. Crocodile had to go back to his wife with no monkey's heart for dinner and mango juice all over his face.

And from that day to this crocodiles have only ever eaten fish for breakfast, fish for lunch, fish for dinner and fish for supper. And monkeys have always sat in the trees laughing away to themselves. And now you know why.

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