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宋朝的时候，福建的一个山村里出现了一件怪事：上山打柴的小孩儿经常失踪。人们吓得不敢进山了。

原来，山里出现了一条大蛇，经常出洞伤人。



About one thousand years ago, in a village in Fujian Province in Southeast China, it often happened that children who went to collect firewood in the mountain never came back.

Although the people didn't know it at the time, it was a big snake that caused the harm.

巫婆乘机散布
谣言，说什么大蛇
已经成了精，每年
要娶一个十二三岁
的童女做老婆，不
然，就要把全村
的小孩儿都吃掉。



A witch in the village saw an opportunity and spread a rumor that the big snake was actually a demon that threatened to eat up all the children in the village and could only be pacified if he was given a twelve- or thirteen-year-old girl every year as his wife.



官府听了巫婆的话，命令村里的百姓每年八月送一个童女到蛇洞去。

The village head believed in the witch and ordered the villagers to send a young girl to the snake demon every August.

有钱人家不愿把自己的女儿送走，就买通官府，让穷人家的孩子顶替；穷人家没有钱，只好眼看着亲生骨肉去送死。



Rich families still had the option to bribe the village head and buy young girls from poor families in exchange for their own, while the poor had no choice but to watch their own die.



巫婆和官府串通好，到了“蛇妖娶亲”的日子，巫婆装神弄鬼，主持“送亲”仪式，骗取百姓钱财。仪式结束后，就把“新娘”放在洞口，让大蛇吃掉。

The witch and the village head had a secret deal. On the “wedding day” of the demon, the witch would be the master of ceremonies. She would make all kinds of scary gestures and defraud the villagers of their money. When the ceremony was over, she would split the money with the village head and leave the girl at the snake pit to be eaten.

时间一年年过去，前后已有九个女孩儿被这样活活地害死了。老百姓凄凄惨惨，没心思干活儿，很多人只得逃离这个地方。巫婆和官府却发了财。



Over the years nine girls had already lost their lives because of this. The villagers were so scared that they couldn't put their heart into their farm work. Some of them couldn't bear it and moved out of the village. Only the witch and the village head made their fortune.

又一年八月到了，该轮到一个叫李诞的农民送女儿了。他有六个女儿，最小的女儿叫李寄，正好十二岁。



Soon came another August. This time it was Li Dan's turn to turn in his daughter. He was a father of six daughters, the youngest named Li Ji and just turning twelve that year.

李寄聪明伶俐，
父母都很疼爱她，哪
里舍得她去送死！但
是又没有钱去抵人，
全家哭成一团。



How could the loving parents have the heart to send the lovely Li Ji to the demon! But the poor family didn't have any money to save her life. They were weeping in despair.



李寄说：“父亲、母亲，各位好姐姐，你们不要太伤心，我愿意到蛇妖那里去。”

她向父母提出一个要求：送她走的那天，要给她做一篮子涂上蜜的面饼，准备三条强壮的狗和一把宝剑，作为“嫁妆”。李诞一一照办了。

Suddenly Li Ji said to them, "Dad, Mom, dear sisters, don't be so sad. I'm willing to face the snake demon."



She asked her parents to prepare a special dowry for her: a basket of pancakes coated with honey, three strong dogs, and a sword. Her parents had everything ready on the day.



On the day of her departure, Li Ji waved goodbye to her family and neighbors. They were all in tears. But Li Ji was calm and fearless, as if she had planned and hoped for a different outcome.

临走的那天，李寄全家和街坊邻居都一把鼻涕一把泪地来送行。可是，李寄并不伤心，也不害怕，似乎另有打算。





“送亲”仪式结束后，蛇洞洞口只剩下李寄和三条狗。太阳快落山了，李寄把一篮子面饼全倒在洞口，把三条狗叫到自己身边。

After the ceremony, only Li Ji and the three dogs were left at the snake pit. Just before sunset, Li Ji took out all the pancakes from the basket and put them at the entrance of the snake pit as bait for the snake. She also called together the three dogs.

不一会儿，大蛇出洞了，发现香喷喷的面饼，全都吞了下去。李寄趁机放出三条狗。



Soon the big snake came out of its pit and wasted no time in wolfing down all the pancakes when Li Ji suddenly commanded the three dogs to attack the snake.

三条狗和大蛇搏斗起来。李寄也拿出宝剑，勇敢地迎了上去，绕到大蛇背后，挥剑砍下了蛇头，为当地除了一害。





While the snake was busy fighting off the three dogs, Li Ji took out her sword, approached the snake from behind and cut off its head.