

THREE JAPANESE BOYS

Kintaro/Urashimataro/Momotaro

A full-length children's play

By

Dean Lundquist

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dean@deanlundquist.com

Note: Three Japanese Boys is based on traditional Japanese folktales. It consists of three 20-minute vignettes, when performed in order, creating a complete 60-minute show. The plotlines loosely intertwine with the Demon (Oni) King character from Kintaro returning in Momotaro. The Urashimataro story serves to illustrate the passage of time between the first and third tale. It is designed for five actors who double in different roles. The style of the play is not unlike that of traditional Kabuki theatre. Actors may be masked for ease of character changes. When the Storyteller speaks, the other actors should act out the narration or give him focus as suggested by the text.

Part I

KINTARO

The golden boy

CHARACTERS

STORYTELLER

KINTARO

BEAR/DEMON KING

MOTHER/HARE/DEMON GUARD

RAIKO/MONKEY

STORYTELLER

Some years ago in old Japan,
Is where this story first began.
It is the story of a boy
Who brought his mother special joy.
In the mountains they made their home
Where Kintaro was free to roam.
On his chest written so bold
Was a symbol that named him "gold."
To fend off any wild attacks
He wielded a mighty axe.
He travelled far from west to east,
And had the power to speak with beasts!
(KINTARO prepares to chop down a tree)

BEAR

Hey little boy! Don't chop down that tree! These forests here belong to me!

KINTARO

Listen to me, bear. I'll wrestle you for the tree. If I win, I can cut it down. If I lose, you can keep the tree and I will go away.

BEAR

You want to wrestle me? Very well!

(They wrestle sumo-style. The MONKEY and the HARE come to watch. KINTARO is the victor.)

BEAR

I can't believe it. How is it that a boy your size could beat me?

KINTARO

Easy, I am Kintaro, the Golden Boy!

HARE & MONKEY

Kintaro! Kintaro! *(he scares them)*

HARE

Please don't hurt us!

MONKEY

Let us go in peace.

KINTARO

I have no need to harm you. In fact, why don't we all be friends? Come, let's leave this tree. It's time to eat and I can smell my mother's cooking. Come with me. Maybe she's made enough for us all.

(KINTARO climbs upon the BEAR's back and they all leave together. They continue on as the storyteller proceeds.)

STORYTELLER

Kintaro's father fell from grace
And dared not ever show his face.
And that is why he left his life
And moved away with his dear wife.
He passed before his child was born
And his young bride was left forlorn.
But when the day her child came
She could not think of an apt name.
It was a Friday, this she knew,
The golden day. She thought it through
And named him for that special day
And raised him in his father's way.

HARE

Kintaro! How can we cross this ravine?

MONKEY

There is no bridge. We must find another way.

BEAR

What are you thinking, Kintaro?

KINTARO

This mighty tree would make a fine bridge, I think. I'll push it over and then we can cross. *(He grunts and strains and pushes over a tree. KINTARO and the animals cross. As the storyteller relates the tale, the action happens in pantomime)*).

STORYTELLER

Kintaro to his home returned
But not alone, as he soon learned.
For lurking very closely by
Was a most famous samurai.
He witnessed the boy's weighty deed
And knew the boy was bound to lead.
Lord Raiko was the strange knight's name
He knew of the boy's father's shame,
But loved his father as a brother,
So he met both son and mother.
He was met with certain awe
When his mother's face he saw.

RAIKO

Could it be?

MOTHER

Lord Raiko?

RAIKO

Yayoi?

MOTHER

It is I.

RAIKO

I thought you were lost. Where is Kintoki, your husband?

MOTHER

I'm afraid he has passed. There is only Kintaro and I now.

RAIKO

I have witnessed this boy's strength and find it marvellous.

MOTHER

He's the strongest in the forest.

RAIKO

Kintaro, I have a favour to ask of you.

KINTARO

Yes?

RAIKO

I knew your father well. He was a good man, put to shame by a horrible demon.

KINTARO

A demon?

RAIKO

Yes, and if your mother permits me, I'd like to train you as a samurai so that you can avenge your father's shame.

KINTARO

Okaasan? Can I go?

MOTHER

What will I do without you, Kintaro? My golden boy?

KINTARO

Don't cry mother. I will be back soon, I promise.

MOTHER

Lord Raiko, he is such a young boy. I know what must be done. But he is simple and innocent in the ways of the world. So please take care of him.

RAIKO

Yayoi, know that your husband was like a brother to me. And I will do my best to ensure young Kintaro is safe and to bring honour upon himself and his family.

MOTHER

Well, then. Goodbye, my golden boy.

KINTARO

Goodbye, Mama. I'll be back soon, I promise!

STORYTELLER

Having gained Lord Raiko's praise,
The boy learned the warrior's ways.
He trained and studied night and day
To slay foes the samurai way.
Raiko tutored him at length
To harness all his inner strength.
So that his father's shame were through
He taught him lessons old and true.
He said that life is as a dream
Things are not always as they seem.
The Golden Boy he would remind,
His greatest weapon was his mind.

KINTARO

Lord Raiko, when will I wield a golden sword like yours?

RAIKO

Kintaro, you have weapons more powerful than this sword.

KINTARO

You mean my axe? I can cut down a tree in one swoop!

RAIKO

That may be true. But a warrior knows that his greatest strength lies within.

KINTARO

I don't understand.

RAIKO

Many years ago, your father went to kill an evil demon that plagued us all. Your father was strong, but he was no match for the Demon King. They battled and the Demon King had beaten him. But rather than kill him, the Demon King let him live in disgrace. Ashamed to show his face in the city, he and your mother went to live in the mountains. But you, Kintaro, as strong as you are, may still not be strong enough to beat him.

KINTARO

I am the strongest boy in all the land!

RAIKO

The Demon King is strong of body. So you must have a greater weapon than your strength. You must beat him with your body, your heart and your mind.

KINTARO

Yes, Lord Raiko.

RAIKO

When you have defeated him, you will gain a reward
greater than any golden sword.

STORYTELLER

With carefulness they did prepare
To journey forth into the lair.
As if guided by divine will
They travelled through both swamp and hill.
Over the mountains, through the trees
Propelled by an auspicious breeze
They journeyed to the fabled place
To confront that demon face.
With steady pace and will divine
They soon arrived at an old mine.
There stood a guardsman: red, irate,
A demon sentry at the gate.

RAIKO

Kintaro, look there.

KINTARO

I see them.

RAIKO

A demon guard blocks the entrance. How shall we get
passed him?

KINTARO

I know. I will take some of this red mud and smear it on
my face. Then he will think I am a demon like him!

RAIKO

It just might work. Go ahead. (*KINTARO smears his face
with red mud*)

KINTARO

There. How do I look?

RAIKO

I hope this works. (*KINTARO approaches the DEMON GUARD*)

DEMON GUARD

Who is that?

KINTARO

It's me. A demon child who loves to dance and sing!

DEMON GUARD

What do you want?

KINTARO
To perform before the Demon King!

DEMON GUARD
Show me!

KINTARO
(he dances and sings a silly song)
There was once a golden boy
The strongest of his day!
He would dance with silly joy
And often would he say,
"Some day the demons I'll destroy
And send them all away!
I will meet the Demon King
And show him he's no match!
I will laugh and dance and sing;
His crown I will then snatch!"

DEMON GUARD
Ha! Ha! You are the funniest demon child I have ever
seen. I am sure the King will be entertained! Come,
follow me.

STORYTELLER
Fooled by his false red demon skin
The foolish guard then let him in.
He led him through the darkened cave—
Kintaro thought "I must be brave!"
He would soon face the Demon King
But this time he'd not dance and sing.
He'd bring the demon to disgrace
By wiping the mud from his face
And then reveal his true self
That he was no little red elf!
And everyone would sing his song
For setting right his father's wrong.

DEMON KING
Who is it that disturbs me?

DEMON GUARD
Your majesty, this demon boy has a hilarious tale to tell
you. He sings and dances about a Golden Boy who will
come and destroy all the demons! Ha! Ha! You must see
it to believe it!

DEMON KING
Such a delightful bit of entertainment is not suited for
guards. Leave us!

DEMON GUARD

Yes, your Majesty. *(he exits)*

DEMON KING

Now, demon boy. Show us this silly tale of how a boy can come and destroy the demons.

KINTARO

Your Majesty. Performing for the royal guard has made me tired and thirsty. Could I have some water to quench my thirst?

DEMON KING

Of course. Here. *(KINTARO washes his face with the water)* You are a funny boy indeed. That water is for drinking, not washing your face!

KINTARO

I am no demon, you silly fool! I am Kintaro! The Golden Boy come to defeat you! *(they fight without weapons. KINTARO defeats him)* You are not fit to wear a crown!

DEMON KING

Mercy, mighty warrior!

KINTARO

You shamed my father, Demon King. And for this you must pay. But to end your life would pay no debts. When you defeated my father, you doomed him to a life of shame. I shall subject you to the same fate as him. *(KINTARO puts the DEMON KING's crown upon his head and ties the DEMON KING up)*

STORYTELLER

The demon king was thus beguiled;
Made captive of the Golden Child.
Lord Raiko and the Golden boy
Paraded him to cheers of joy.
All up and down the city square
The people stopped to have a stare.
Kintaro freed them of their fear:
They called him "hero," far and near.
The Demon King, with great disgrace,
Apologized to save his face.
And in a show of pride and grace
He told the demon, "flee this place".

RAIKO

Citizens! Listen here. Before you stands the great Kintaro—the golden boy. Son of Kintoki, the great

samurai warrior. This day, he has captured the Demon King and avenged his father's shame.

KINTARO

People! Look at this demon who has plagued you for so long. No longer will he steal your children, eat your pets or frighten you in the middle of the night. He is a king no longer. Demon, do you have anything to say for yourself?

DEMON KING

I am sorry for the things I have done. Please forgive me.

KINTARO

Do you know that if you trouble these people again, I will hunt you down as I have now?

DEMON KING

Yes, great Kintaro.

KINTARO

I will let you go if you promise to go away and never be seen by human eyes again.

DEMON KING

Then so it must be.

KINTARO

Very well. Run away, Demon, never to return. (*he runs away*)

MOTHER

Kintaro, why have you let him go?

KINTARO

Mother? The demon knows that I will find him if he troubles us again. As Lord Raiko has taught me, mercy is a gift that only can be bestowed by champions.

LORD RAIKO

Agreed. Now, Kintaro, I promised you a reward for defeating the Demon King.

KINTARO

But I thought redeeming my father was its own reward.

LORD RAIKO

It is, indeed. And can only pale in comparison to this golden sword. (*he gives KINTARO a sword*) A golden sword for a golden boy.

MOTHER

I am filled with pride. If only your father had seen
this glorious day before he died.

STORYTELLER

So Kintaro had saved the day
His friends returned to hear him say
All was well and would ever be
Because he had set them all free
From the fear of demon's ways
Not just for now, but future days.
He brandished his bright golden sword
And cherished his special reward.
His father's name had been restored
For he had smote the demon lord.
But some did fear he would return
To make Japan's villages burn.

DEMON KING

Oh, when Kintaro's gone I may
Return unto this land some day!
(he laughs maniacally)

[END]

Part II
URASHIMA TARO
The fisher boy

CHARACTERS

(written for 5 actors with doubling)

STORYTELLER

URASHIMA TARO

FIRST CHILD/TURTLE/PRINCESS OTO

FIRST CHILD/DANCING MAID/OLD MAN

SECOND CHILD/DANCING MAID

STORYTELLER

Some years ago in old Japan,
There lived youthful fisherman.
From early dawn till setting sun
His nets would fill up, one by one.
And though the young man loved to fish
He had a dream, a secret wish!
What was this special fantasy?
He wished to travel undersea.
Once in a story he'd been told
Of a huge palace made of gold.
While walking through the fresh sea foam
He saw something while going home.
(URASHIMA sees some children teasing a small turtle)

URASHIMA

Hey you there! What are you doing to that turtle?

FIRST CHILD

Who are you?

URASHIMA

My name's Urashima. Urashima Taro.

FIRST CHILD

Well, Urashima Taro. Why don't you leave us alone?

URASHIMA

If you go on treating it like that, it will die!

SECOND CHILD

Who cares if it dies?

URASHIMA

Well, I do.

THIRD CHILD

But it's ours, we caught it!

URASHIMA

I wish I could have a nice turtle like that. What if I give you some money for it?

FIRST CHILD

What good will that be?

SECOND CHILD

A turtle's more fun than money.

URASHIMA

But with this money you could buy anything you wanted.

THIRD CHILD

Like a red bean cake? Here. Give it to me. (he takes the money and runs off)

SECOND CHILD

Wait for me. *(takes the money and runs)*

FIRST CHILD

Here. It's just a stupid old turtle anyway. *(gives URASHIMA the turtle, takes the money and leaves)*

URASHIMA

Ah! You poor thing. Everything will be okay now. I'll return you to the sea. They say a stork lives for 1,000 years and that turtles like you live for 10,000. It's a good thing I came along little one, or you wouldn't have lasted very long. I wish I could live as long as you and swim to the bottom of the sea.

STORYTELLER

Urashima had a kind heart
And gave the turtle a new start.
Homeward he did travel straight--
The turtle's tale he did relate.
His parents, proud of what he'd done,
Then told him he was a good son.
Urashima then told them he
Would like to live ten centuries.
They said that would bring him sorrow
So he slept until the morrow.
When he arose and went to sea
Who knew he'd find his fantasy?

(URASHIMA throws out his net and begins to fish)

TURTLE
Urashima!

URASHIMA
Who's there?

TURTLE
Urashima! Urashima Taro!

URASHIMA
Who said that?

TURTLE
It is I. The turtle!

URASHIMA
A talking turtle? I must be dreaming!

TURTLE
I heard that you saved a small turtle yesterday and I
have come to reward you.

URASHIMA
Reward me?

TURTLE
Yes, that little turtle was the Sea Emperor's daughter.

URASHIMA
I had no idea.

TURTLE
The emperor would like to thank you himself for saving
her life. Come, climb upon my back and I will take you
there.

URASHIMA
I'd like that very much but am afraid I'd drown beneath
the sea.

TURTLE
You needn't worry about that. Here. (*casts a magic spell*)
Now you can breathe. Come, we've a long journey ahead of
us.

STORYTELLER
And so he rode upon his shell
Under the waves and foamy swells
Cascading deep beneath the sea
To live his lifelong fantasy.
Beneath the waves, like flying birds,

The fish swam by and spoke kind words.
Forests of coral far and near
Seemed to wave to allay his fear.
And then, as in the tales of old
They swam toward the palace gold.
It's roof was topped with brilliant jade
And greeting him were dancing maids.
(*URASHIMA dismounts the turtle and the maids dance*)

FIRST MAID
Greetings honourable Urashima Taro.

SECOND MAID
You are welcome here in the palace of gold.

URASHIMA
That is most gracious of you. (fanfare)

MAIDS
Let us present, her royal highness, Princess Oto.
(*URASHIMA and the MAIDS bow*)

PRINCESS OTO
Arise, Urashima Taro. It is I who should bow to you for
your generosity and kindness, for it is you who saved my
life.

URASHIMA
It was the least I could do. I couldn't bear to see the
children treat you that way.

PRINCESS OTO
You wished that you could come to visit us at the bottom
of the sea—and here you are.

URASHIMA
It's more wonderful than I imagined.

PRINCESS OTO
And you also wished you could live for 10,000 years.

URASHIMA
Yes I did.

PRINCESS OTO
Urashima Taro, you may stay here at the palace for all
eternity, for we are eternally grateful.

STORYTELLER
They took him to a special feast
The finest fit for man or beast

And treated him like royalty
For setting Princess Oto free.
She danced for him for days and days
And he loved her in many ways.
But days and weeks turned in to years
And his love gave way to fears.
Because he had not said goodbye
Thoughts of his parents made him cry.
So one day he said he would leave
And cause the princess there to grieve.

URASHIMA

Your Highness. You've been so kind to me. Over the last three years, I have grown to love you. That is what makes this so difficult.

PRINCESS OTO

What is it Urashima? You can tell me anything.

URASHIMA

I fear something has happened to my mother and father. I never said goodbye to them. Surely they must be worried.

PRINCESS OTO

Then go if you must, Urashima. But before you do, allow me to give you a gift.

URASHIMA

Your highness, you owe me no gift.

PRINCESS OTO

Remember when you wished to live 10,000 years as we do?

URASHIMA

Yes, I remember.

PRINCESS OTO

Then here. Take this box. As long as you have it, you will never grow old. But please, never open it for fear of what's inside.

URASHIMA

What is inside, your highness?

PRINCESS OTO

I dare not say. If you love me, ensure that it stays closed. I cannot bear the thought of a world without you in it, Urashima.

STORYTELLER

Urashima called forth his friend

To travel home he did intend.
And all turned out to wave goodbyes
And see him off towards blue skies.
So on the turtle's shell he rode
To go back to his old abode.
And quick he washed up on the sand
Soon back home in his native land.
He ran back to his old front door
But things weren't the same as before.
His home, his friends and all had gone
Just like the stars die at the dawn.
He stopped an old man by the shore
And asked what had transpired afore.

URASHIMA

Pardon me, sir. I am looking for my home.

OLD MAN

Your home?

URASHIMA

Yes. It was right here, by the beach. I've been gone
for a while and it's no longer here.

OLD MAN

I've been fishing here for years, and I've never seen a
home here.

URASHIMA

How can this be? I am Urashima Taro, perhaps you've seen
my parents?

OLD MAN

Urashima Taro? You must be joking.

URASHIMA

No, sir that is my name.

OLD MAN

Urashima Taro is an old legend. Some say that a giant
turtle took him away to the bottom of the sea some 300
years ago.

URASHIMA

300 years? How can this be? I've been gone for only
three!

STORYTELLER

Urashima then ran away
Towards the swirling blue sea spray.
He called out to his princess fair

But found that nobody was there.
He then remembered her strange gift
And unwrapped it ever so swift.
"This box must be the cause," he said
As saddened thoughts filled up his head.
He opened up the box of gold
And then he started to grow old.
The sea mixed with his bitter tears
As he lamented his lost years.

[END]

Part III
MOMOTARO
The Peach Boy

CHARACTERS

STORYTELLER

OLD WOMAN/PHEASANT/DEMON GUARD

OLD MAN/MONKEY/DEMON GUARD

DOG/DEMON KING

MOMOTARO

STORYTELLER

Some years ago in old Japan,
There lived a woman and a man.
For years they prayed to have son
But the gods would give them none
Until one day, out of her reach,
While washing clothes, she saw a peach:
Much larger than she'd ever seen
As if it were born of a dream.
She sang to it and hence it came
Towards its destiny of fame.
She brought it home to show her mate
And journey forward into fate.

(OLD WOMAN sings and the peach comes to her. She is then inside her humble home as the OLD MAN comes home from work.)

OLD MAN

What's for lunch?

OLD WOMAN

Take a look!

OLD MAN

What is this?

OLD WOMAN

What does it look like?

OLD MAN

That's the biggest peach I've ever seen!

OLD WOMAN

Here, take this and cut it open. *(OLD MAN takes a knife and cuts it open. As he does a boy, MOMOTARO springs forth.)*

OLD MAN
Heavens! A boy!

OLD WOMAN
A boy from a peach!

OLD MAN
We shall call him Peach Boy! Momotaro!

OLD WOMAN
Momotaro!

MOMOTARO
Momotaro!

STORYTELLER
So Momotaro was his name
Destined was he for certain fame.
He was the boy they'd dreamt about:
The answer to their prayers devout.
He grew up quickly and so strong
And then he would leave them ere long.
For gifted was he with a sword:
He headed out to slay a horde
Of foreign demons from an isle
Who wracked the land with deeds so vile.
With millet cakes packed in his sack
He told his parents he'd be back.

(MOMOTARO walks along the road and encounters a DOG.)

DOG
Bow! Wow! Woof! Woof! Stop! No one shall pass!

MOMOTARO
Oh, dog! You startled me!

DOG
No one shall pass! Go back the way you came!

MOMOTARO
I can't do that, I'm afraid. I must go to slay the red-
faced demons who are troubling Japan.

DOG
Huh? Red-faced demons? You're just a boy! How can you
face them alone?

MOMOTARO
I'm not just any boy. I'm Momotaro!

DOG

Momotaro? The famous peach boy?

MOMOTARO

The very same.

DOG

Ah. Well. I can't just let you pass. I guard this road and no one shall get by. If I let you go, you'll ruin my reputation as the best guard dog in all Japan.

MOMOTARO

You look hungry. Here, try one of these cakes. My mother made them special. *(He throws DOG one of the millet cakes. The DOG eagerly snaps it up)*

DOG

Oishi! Delicious!

MOMOTARO

I have an idea, dog. Since you are so clever and the best guard dog in the land, why don't you come with me to slay the demons? That way you won't lose your reputation and you can become part of history!

DOG

Hmm. Part of history. Will you share more of those cakes with me?

MOMOTARO

Certainly!

DOG

Okay then. It's a deal!

STORYTELLER

So Momotaro made a friend
Who'd follow him to journey's end.
Together over hill and dale
They'd soon traverse all without fail.
Towards the sea they headed East
To ruin the red demon's feast.
Until they spotted in a tree
A demon so they thought, you see.
They called for it to come right down
And face them both there on the ground.
And so they learned, within this dream,
That things aren't always as they seem.

DOG

Bow! Wow! Woof! Woof!

MOMOTARO (*drawing his sword*)

What is it dog?

DOG

Look! There in the tree! It's a demon!

MOMOTARO

Demon! Come down and show yourself! You can't hide from us in that tree!

MONKEY

(*coming down from the tree*)

Demon! Where? Where is it?

MOMOTARO

Ah! A monkey!

DOG

I'll tear him limb from limb just the same!

MONKEY

Ha! A stupid dog? You can't catch me! You're not clever enough. (*DOG chases the MONKEY round. The MONKEY is much smarter than the DOG so the DOG can't catch him.*)

MOMOTARO

Dog! Stop chasing him. Here! (*he throws him a millet cake.*) Whoa! Monkey you are very clever, indeed. Here's a cake for you too.

MONKEY

Thank you! But I never accept gifts from strangers.

MOMOTARO

That's very wise, monkey. My name is Momotaro.

MONKEY

Ah! The famous peach boy! Now you are no stranger. (*he eats the millet cake*)

MOMOTARO

It's a shame you two can't get along. You looked so much like a demon, you could prove useful to us in our quest.

MONKEY

What quest is that?

MOMOTARO

We are going to slay the red-faced demons.

MONKEY

Sounds like fun!

MOMOTARO

Then why don't you join us, if my friend here doesn't mind.

DOG

I can tolerate him...if you give me another cake!

MOMOTARO

Ha! Ha! Very well. *(he tosses another cake to both the DOG and MONKEY and they continue on together)*

STORYTELLER

The three new friends went towards the sea
To slay the demons and be free.

But soon they stopped to take a rest
Where they espied a small bird's nest.

The dog gave monkey a wee boost
So then they all could raid the roost.

And so the monkey climbed the tree
To gather a delicacy.

But then from miles up in the sky
Dove a pheasant from on high.

Swooping down with stealthy dread
And landed on the monkey's head!

(PHEASANT swoops in and lands on MONKEY's shoulders and pecks at his head. MONKEY flails around trying to shake the bird. MOMOTARO and DOG chase him round.)

MONKEY

Help! Help! Get it off me!

PHEASANT

Stay away from my eggs! Didn't anyone ever tell you not to take things that don't belong to you?

MOMOTARO

We are sorry, bird.

PHEASANT

Thank you for the apology, boy.

DOG

Why don't you let me at him? I'll tear him apart! Woof!

MOMOTARO

Easy dog. My name is Momotaro.

PHEASANT

The peach boy! Ah, I have heard tales of you flying all over this land. I hear you are going to slay the demons to the east.

MOMOTARO

That's true! Please have one of these cakes my mother made. We're sorry to have disturbed your nest. (*throws him a cake*)

PHEASANT

Yum! Delicious!

MOMOTARO

I do wish I could fly like you, bird. Maybe if you three could get along, you could help us on our quest.

MONKEY

We'd be foolish not to use his special talent.

DOG

I'd do anything for another cake.

MOMOTARO

Very well then. What do you say bird?

PHEASANT

All right. I'll join you. It's not every day that one gets to become part of a legend!

STORYTELLER

With the boy born from a peach
The three new friends came to a beach
Where they hopped into a boat
But struggled they to keep afloat.
The waves would toss them to and fro
While the wicked winds would blow.
But soon they came upon an isle
Plagued by demons red and vile.
In a fortress strong and tall
Made ready did they for a brawl.
Our hero led them with out fear
With the belief they'd persevere.

MOMOTARO

Look! There's the demon's fortress.

DOG

They guard the gate! I will charge them! Woof!

MONKEY

Shh! Quiet dog, or you'll attract them all.

MOMOTARO

Monkey's right. We need a better plan. I've got an idea. Bird, can you fly up over the wall to the other side and open the gate?

PHEASANT

Of course.

MOMOTARO

Very good. Monkey, since you look a little like one of them, climb up to the gate and persuade the guards to follow you. Tell them that someone has invaded the island and is down at the beach. Then you can evade them by swinging from vine to vine in the trees.

MONKEY

Very well.

DOG

Then I will run inside and bite them all! Let me at 'em!

MOMOTARO

You'll be eaten for sure! No, Dog, with your loud voice, I want you to run in the fortress and bark, bark, bark! This will alarm all the demons. Then they will all come after you.

DOG

Then I will fight them all!

MOMOTARO

Very brave, Dog, but better to be clever than brave some times. I want you to let them chase you outside through the gate, outside the castle.

DOG

If you insist.

PHEASANT

What will you do then, Momotaro?

MOMOTARO

As they rush out, I shall sneak in. You close the gates behind me and I shall face the demon king alone.

MONKEY

An excellent plan, general.

STORYTELLER

And so they went on with their plan
To defeat the demon clan.
The pheasant soared up in the sky
And opened the gate from on high.
Then monkey went and played his part
And duped the guards by being smart.
Then Dog, with courage, darted in
Creating a tumultuous din.
With lightning speed, he lured them out,
Emboldened by a heart so stout.
STORYTELLER (cot'd)
So Momotaro, now alone
Could face the demon on his throne.

*(MOMOTARO searches the throne room in darkness and finds
the DEMON KING)*

DEMON KING

What were you thinking foolish boy?
That you would face me all alone?
Come guards, and play you with this toy!
His brain I think is made of stone!
(the DEMON GUARDS fight MOMOTARO and he defeats them)
You show some prowess with that sword.
But surely now you must have known
For you this day there's no reward
I'll eat your meat and lick the bone.
I'll turn your liver to a paste
Your eyes will be a tasty treat
No part of you will go to waste
Oh little boys! I love to eat!

MOMOTARO

Oh hear me now you demon fool!
You needs learn from another school.
I am the peach boy, can't you see?
Defeating you's my destiny.
You've robbed and pillaged long enough.
I'll leave you dead and take the stuff
You've stolen from all of Japan
And prove to you that I'm a man!

*(MOMOTARO and the DEMON KING fight. The duel rages back
and forth, but MOMOTARO trips the DEMON KING and puts his
sword to the DEMON KING's throat.)*

DEMON KING

O mercy! Mercy! Mercy! Please!
I beg of you on bended knees.
Peach boy, you've the upper hand
We'll not again invade your land.
The treasure's in that room, you see.
Let me live—I'll give the key!
Take all our riches and our gold
If you'll release this death man's hold.

STORYTELLER

And seeing he could slay his foe
Good Momotaro let him go.
He took all of Japan's wealth back
And friends told of his great attack.
In every village and every town
STORYTELLER (cot'd)
His friends and he, with great renown,
Were greeted and rewarded straight
For changing all their desperate fate.
All who asked him heard him say
That it was friendship saved the day.
All Japan hailed their new hero:
The peach boy named Momotaro.

[END]