

The Ogre of Central Park

by David Speranza

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OPEN ON:

The SNEERING VISAGE of one tough-looking customer--shaggy, unshaven, a cig dangling provocatively from his mouth.

NARRATOR

Once upon a time, in the middle of
a large city, there lived an ogre.

This is, in fact, our eponymous OGRE. And he's glaring right at us.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

A secluded stone pathway. A HAPPY COUPLE walk hand-in-hand along the path.

NARRATOR

He was not an especially nice ogre.
In fact, like most ogres, he could
be quite terrifying.

The ogre leaps out from behind a bush and ROARS at the unsuspecting couple.

The poor twosome throw up their hands in fright and flee.

The ogre tosses his head back with a grunt of satisfaction, then shambles back to the mouth of a large tunnel nestled amid the shrubbery and rocks beneath a wide pedestrian bridge.

NARRATOR

But this ogre, whose name was
Donald, was especially
cantankerous, for not only didn't
he like people, he didn't like his
job--

BACK ON OGRE staring at camera with cigarette.

OGRE

These days, who does?

NARRATOR

--which consisted of guarding the
entrance to the enchanted forest,
the last such forest on the island
of Manhattan.

OGRE

(to camera)

It's better than slingin' hash.

NARRATOR

But one day, a sweet young girl
accidentally wandered into Donald's
domain.

A pretty YOUNG GIRL in a bright dress walks along the path
toward the ogre, talking animatedly on a cellphone.

NARRATOR

Donald was quick to act.

The ogre stubs out his cigarette, clears his throat, and lets
out a terrifying ROAR.

The girl pauses in her tracks, regards Donald without even a
semblance of fright. The ogre coughs nervously.

GIRL

(into phone)

Trixie, I have to call you back.
There's some kind of ogre blocking
the path.

Donald stares dumbfounded as the girl slips her cellphone into
her pocket and calmly sizes him up. He attempts a growl.

GIRL

You want to tussle, big boy? All
right, come on--

She takes up a Matrix kick-ass pose, gestures him forward.
The ogre blinks, glances left and right in disbelief. Then he
takes a breath and rears up to his full height in preparation
for another roar.

So quickly it barely registers, the girl punches Donald twice
in the head and kicks him in the stomach, knocking him into a
bush.

GIRL

Let that be a lesson, you big
meanie. Picking on sweet young
girls...

Donald groans up at her, holding his midsection. The girl
looks at him sympathetically.

GIRL

You're not so tough for an ogre,
are you?

OGRE

I'm not really an ogre. It was the
witch turned me into one.

GIRL

Witch?

Donald clambers up out of the bushes, spitting leaves from his
mouth.

OGRE

The wicked witch of the Upper West.
It's she who makes me stand guard
here every day and night. I only
do it for fear of what she'll next
turn me into.

GIRL

You mean like a newt?

OGRE

I don't know about newts. But I
once saw her turn a charging black
bear into a can of tuna.

GIRL

How horrible! Is there no way to
break this evil woman's spell?

OGRE

Alas, all my might is as nothing
against her black arts.

(with a tear)

...I never wanted to be an ogre. I
just want to get my former life
back.

GIRL

(moved)

You poor brute. What can I do to
help?

OGRE

(perking up)

How about giving us a kiss?

GIRL

In order to break the spell and
change you back?

OGRE

(shrugs)

I just thought it might take the
sting out of things.

GIRL

I don't think so.

OGRE

Wait--there is one thing you could
do. The witch's powers vanish when
she leaves the enchanted forest.
If we could somehow lure her
outside...

GIRL

But how?

OGRE

Come--I'll explain along the way.

NARRATOR

And so the ogre led the girl
through the passageway leading into
the city's last enchanted forest...

They stop as the girl's cellphone goes off. The ogre points
to a sign on the tunnel wall:

PLEASE TURN OFF ALL CELLPHONES
BEFORE ENTERING ENCHANTED FOREST

Reluctantly, the girl complies.

EXT. ENCHANTED FOREST - DAY

Donald and the girl emerge from the tunnel into a not-so-
verdant green.

NARRATOR

As they entered the enchanted
forest, the girl couldn't believe
her eyes.

GIRL

This is it? It doesn't look so enchanted.

OGRE

Well, work being what it is, who has time to clean? And of course we're still recovering from that last drought...

They follow a path into the forest that takes them alongside a creek.

GIRL

So, how do you want to bag this witch of yours?

NARRATOR

The ogre explained how the witch was obsessed with looking young, and that one of her most precious face creams was derived from the skin of young girls--a rare commodity in these parts.

GIRL

(pausing)

You want to use me as witch bait?

OGRE

Well, seeing as you're plump with the strength and vitality of youth--

The ogre squeezes her rump for emphasis. The girl spins, delivers two sharp blows to his head. Donald drops like a stone.

GIRL

Who are you calling plump?

OGRE

(from ground)

My apologies. Shall we find the witch?

NARRATOR

And soon they did. But, to the girl's surprise...

EXT. ON A HILL - LATER

From behind a tree, the ogre and the girl watch something below.

GIRL
That's a witch?

POV - THE WITCH

Who is, in fact, a petite, attractive blonde cheerfully applying makeup in a mirror affixed to a large boulder. She talks to herself in the glass, without a care in the world.

WITCH
Oh, you are a beauty! Have you ever seen such a puss? You make this enchanted forest look like a lumber yard. It's amazing what eight glasses of water a day and a good spell will do for a girl. And to think I'm older than this rock.
(squints at forehead)
Is that a wrinkle? Oy, what I wouldn't give for a shot of Botox. Well, perhaps a dollop of moisturizer will do the trick...

The witch reaches for a small jar labeled "Skin of the Maiden."

NARRATOR
But before the witch could retrieve her precious moisturizer...

ON DONALD AND THE GIRL WATCHING

GIRL
Those pointy shoes are just scrumptious. So fashionable.

OGRE
She's got a tree trunk full of 'em. Come on--

As they start to move off, Donald steps on a twig that CRACKS loudly.

THE WITCH looks up, immediately spotting them.

WITCH

Ehh!?

OGRE

Those dry twigs get me every time.

WITCH

Donald, what are you doing up there? You nearly scared the bejabbers out of me! Why aren't you at your post? And who's the tart?

OGRE

Um, well--

GIRL

You've got no right to talk to us like that, you evil, wicked witch!

WITCH

(with a cackle)

Wicked witch? Is that what he called me? Well, that's a fine way to talk about your wife, Donald.

GIRL

Wife?

OGRE

Um...

GIRL

(confused)

So you're not really a witch?

In a blink, the witch disappears from where she is standing and reappears beside the girl.

WITCH

Of course I'm a witch. How do you think I turned him into an ogre?

GIRL

Then you are wicked and evil, just like he said!

WITCH

(defensive)

It's not like I tried to turn him into an ogre. I was hoping for just a nice man to have around the house. It was during my more romantic youth, you see--but I used a little too much bat's wing and not enough elk's hoof. Or was it too much elk's hoof? Anyway, a puff of brimstone and I've got myself an ogre. Not much you can do with an ogre. They're not bad in the sack, of course, but otherwise all they can really do is guard things and move heavy furniture.

The girl looks at Donald, who shrugs.

GIRL

But what were you before she turned you into an ogre?

WITCH

(cackling)

Tell her, Donald.

OGRE

(after a pause)

A...frog.

GIRL

A frog?

OGRE

But a darned happy one!

WITCH

(with a shrug)

The instructions said he'd turn into a prince. That's what I get for trusting the back of a cereal box.

(smiling at girl)

Has anyone told you you have lovely skin, my dear?

GIRL

Back off, Crinkles! I've had about enough of you twisted fairy tale folk! So just color me "outta here."

WITCH

(stepping toward her)

Do you really think I can let you go, plump as you are with the strength and vitality of youth?

WHACK! The girl delivers a solid conk on the witch's noggin, then crouches into a fighting stance.

GIRL

That's the last time someone calls me plump!

The witch rubs her nose painfully and glares at the girl.

WITCH

This nose cost me a fortune, you strollop!

She raises her arms high overhead, preparing to cast a spell.

Donald lights a cigarette, addresses the camera.

OGRE

It's been forever since this place saw a good catfight.

WITCH

(to girl)

I'm going to enjoy grinding you into a fine powder and turning you into cold cream.

GIRL

And I'm gonna enjoy going bullet-time on your ass. Come on, you old bag! Bring it on!

WITCH

Old bag!?!

NARRATOR

But, just as the witch was about to unleash her most powerful spell...

The PRINCE, a dashing young man with gleaming teeth, enters the scene.

PRINCE
Oh Witchie-Poo, your Princie-Wincie
is here to hie you back to our love
nest in the enchanted glade!

The prince pauses in confusion at the scene before him.

PRINCE
...Witchie?

WITCH
Leopold! Oh, drat--I forgot.

OGRE
...Who?

PRINCE
(noting ogre)
What's he doing here? You said
he'd be out guarding the tunnel.
And who's that sweet young thing
plump with vitality and youth?

WHAM! THUD! The prince is on the ground, the girl standing over him with fists raised.

GIRL
What's the matter with you people?

WITCH
You little strumpet! Do you know
how hard it is to conjure up a
prince of such quality? I'll--

But before the witch can do anything, Donald BONKS her over the head with a heavy branch. The witch drops like a log.

GIRL
Nice shot.

OGRE
So that's why she had me out there
guarding the tunnel: She's been in
here whipping up more princes!

NARRATOR

It was true--

POOF! The prince turns into a frog and goes hopping off.

NARRATOR

It had been the witch's modus operandi ever since finding herself married to an ogre instead of a prince. But now the ogre would have the last laugh...

EXT. TUNNEL ENTRANCE - DAY

The witch sits on a rock, bound from head to toe. On one side of her stands the triumphant ogre, on the other a LAWYER.

NARRATOR

The first thing he demanded was a divorce.

The lawyer presents paperwork for the witch to sign. She is at first reluctant, but her sideways glance reveals the girl several steps away--holding an armful of the witch's beauty products above a trash can, threatening to let them drop. The witch sneers, then signs the paper: "Witch (Upper West)."

NARRATOR

Then, as a reward to the girl for helping rescue him, Donald ordered the witch to turn over all her very fashionable pointy shoes. The girl was ecstatic.

EXT. A LARGE ROCK OR FIELD - DAY

The girl, barefoot, dances ecstatically amid a pile of pointy shoes spread on the ground around her.

NARRATOR

It was only later that the girl discovered all the shoes were too small, and she had to have her middle toe removed to make them fit.

The girl makes several hopeless attempts to put on the shoes, but they are clearly too small.

NARRATOR

Unfortunately, by the time her feet healed, pointy shoes were no longer the rage and she had to sell them on eBay at a substantial loss.

BACK AT TUNNEL ENTRANCE

The witch, untied now, walks forlornly away from the tunnel, her arms filled with beauty products. The ogre stands behind her, pointing the way.

NARRATOR

The witch was subsequently banished from the enchanted forest, never to use her powers again. In order to make ends meet, she was forced to open a cosmetics counter.

EXT. CARDBOARD COSMETICS BOOTH - DAY

The witch looks pathetic sitting behind a handmade booth with a sign that reads "Magik COZMETIKS."

WITCH

Moisturizer? Rouge? Enchanted lipstick?

(then, bitterly)

I used to be a witch, you know.

NARRATOR

Donald, meanwhile, decided not to go back to being a frog after all.

EXT. LOWER BROADWAY - DAY

Donald, dressed in a suit and carrying a briefcase--but still very much an ogre--walks past the big Merrill Lynch bull and toward the New York Stock Exchange.

NARRATOR

Instead he took a job in securities, where his aggressive style and fearsome demeanor earned him millions. Before long, he was known as "The Ogre of Wall Street."

INSERT - NEWSPAPER

It SPINS into view, the top headline reading "THE OGRE OF WALL STREET?" Below it we see a photo of Donald in the same pose as when we met him, i.e., sneering with ciggie in mouth, only now he's wearing a suit.

NARRATOR

But that, as they say, is another story.

The image IRISES OUT TO BLACK, followed by happy fairy-tale music and the words: "The End."

Which, in fact, it is.