

もののけ姫



宮崎 駿 監督作品

Princess Mononoke

Written and directed by Hayao Miyazaki

Based on the 1997 film "Mononoke Hime" by Studio Ghibli

English translation by Fiona M Smith (nigels@nigels.com)

Version 1.0, 20th February 2003

In keeping with the style of the original text, I have sought to minimise the amount of cultural interpretation and translation. Therefore some phrasings may seem unusual to a native English reader. The story is set in the 1500's, with some of the older characters using old-style Japanese language.

The purpose of this translation is to make this story available in written form for non-Japanese speakers, and as a possible study tool in combination with the original Japanese text, published by Shogakukan ISBN 4-09-101542-5

I would like to thank Chieko Motegi, Nigel Stewart and Akiko Saito for their encouragement, support and assistance.

Introduction to Characters

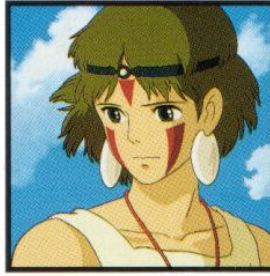


EBOSHI GOZEN

Leader of the ironworks. In order for the people residing at the ironworks to make a living, the forest is cleared.

エボシ御前

いぜん



SAN

A girl who is cared for by mountain dogs. She is known as Princess Mononoke and hates humans.

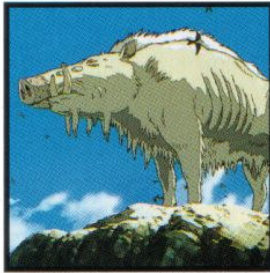
サン



ASHITAKA

While protecting his village, he receives the curse of death from a cursed God. To discover his destiny, he goes on a journey.

アシタカ



OKKOTONUSHI

An elder of the wild boar Gods from Kyushu. Leading his comrades, he challenges the humans to a battle.

乙事主

おつことぬし



MORO NO KIMI

San's foster parent. A two tailed mountain dog, she has lived for more than 300 years.

モロの君

きみ



JIKOBOU

A mysterious character. He has ageless strength and has his eye on the head of the Sun God.

ジコ坊

ぼう



GONZA

Eboshi Gozen's right hand man. He is the leader in charge of the battle at the ironworks.

ゴンザ



TOKI

Kouroku's wife. With her unyielding personality, she has status as the leader of the women who work the bellows.

トキ



KOUROKU

A cow herder at the ironworks. During Moro's raid, he falls in the river but is rescued by Ashitaka.

甲六

こうろく



NAGO NO KAMI

A huge wild boar who became a cursed God. When he was overthrown by Ashitaka, the curse spread.

ナゴの守(タタリ神)

かみ

がみ



KAYA

A daughter of the village, she knows Ashitaka and gave him a small jewelled knife for good luck.

カヤ



HII SAMA

An old woman in the service of a Shinto shrine. She tells the fortune of the curse Ashitaka suffers and advises him to head west.

ヒイさま



Long ago, the country was covered with a deep forest and there were gods who had lived there since ancient times.



A herd of sticky black things writhing like snakes appeared and broke through the stone wall.



The mountain slope was cleared and a stone wall surrounded a cultivated field. On a path nearby, Ashitaka came across Kaya and her companions.

The Cursed God

The mountain was filled with a strange sense. Ashitaka made Yakul run. His sisters came running towards him from the paddock where they had been picking grass. "Brother" his sister Kaya yelled.

"The mountain is strange. There aren't any birds or animals," his sisters told him uneasily.

"All of you please hurry back," Ashitaka said, trying to reassure his sisters. He hurried to the lookout tower. "What's going on?" he asked the old man, after climbing the tower. "I don't know. There's no one around," the old man replied. A stranger was approaching. "He's here!" cried the old man as he leant out over the side of the tower. Ashitaka aimed his arrow in the direction he sensed. From the direction of the stone wall a herd of black snake-like things formed a horrible figure. "It's a cursed God!" Ashitaka yelled.

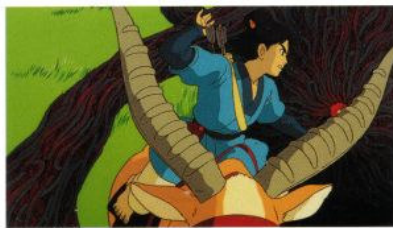


From the centre of the black sticky snakes, the form of a huge wild boar appeared.



"Don't touch the cursed God, you'll get it's curse," the old man shouted to Ashitaka.

"GRRRRRR," the cursed God growled. The black snake-like herd climbed towards the sky. The true form of the cursed God was revealed to be that of a deeply wounded wild boar. "ZAZAZA," growled the God once again as the black sticky snakes emerged from its body, and with a fearful vigour it began to attack the lookout tower. The tower started to collapse. With the old man in his arms, Ashitaka jumped.



One of the girls being chased by the cursed God sprained her ankle. Kaya stood her ground and confronted the beast with her sword.

The cursed God dashed wildly towards the forest. "Calm down, calm down now!" Ashitaka shouted, while galloping on Yakul's back. "I suppose he must be the Lord of a famous mountain, so why is he being so wild and violent?" Ashitaka wondered. But the cursed God couldn't understand Ashitaka's words. The God caught sight of the girls hurrying towards the forest and changed direction and rushed towards them. There was nothing they could do, so Ashitaka shot an arrow which hit the target. He fired off another. The black sticky snakes wrapped around the arm holding the arrow. He shook his arm to tear them off and released the arrow. It pierced the God between the eyes.

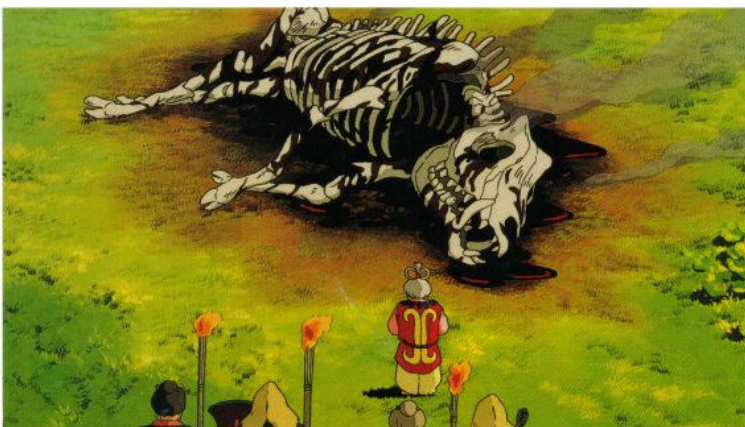
Ashitaka's arm was wounded with a burn. Kaya was worried and came running. Ashitaka stopped her.

"Don't touch it, it's not an ordinary wound," he said. Hii Sama came running and with the water she gave her, Kaya washed the wound.

Just then- "Filthy humans, you will know my pain and hatred!" The cursed God spewed out a curse with his last dying breath.



Ignoring the sticky snakes,
Ashitaka released his arrow.



"Forget this curse and go quietly".
As Hii Sama chanted, the wild boar's flesh left it's bones.





"This small jewelled knife is a token of my feelings forever," Kaya said. "Me too. I will always remember you Kaya," Ashitaka replied and smiled at Kaya's words.

Ashitaka decided to leave his village, and with a look that showed the strain he was under, cut off his topknot. He bowed towards the religious symbol.

"Everybody, look at his right arm". Urged by Hii Sama, Ashitaka untied the cloth on his arm. On the arm he held out was a bruise coiled around like a snake. "Before long this bruise will get down to the bone and will probably kill you," Hii Sama said. She rolled a chunk of lead and it tumbled over on the mat. She explained that the lead chunk tore apart the intestine of the wild boar, made it's body rot, brought a curse that gave it merciless suffering and transformed it into a cursed God. In the west of the land some ominous thing must be arising. "Leave this land. If you ascertain things with eyes unclouded, you might find a way to stop this curse," Hii Sama said. Ashitaka started out alone. Shortly, Kaya came running up. "It is forbidden to see me off," Ashitaka said to her. "I will take the punishment. Please, instead of me, take this to accompany you," Kaya said as she held out a small, precious jewelled knife. Ashitaka went into the forest.





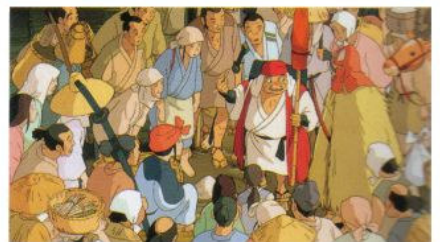
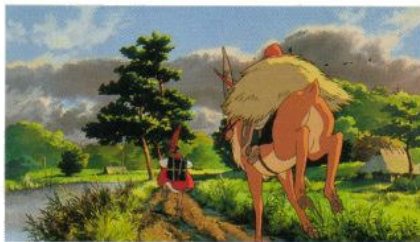
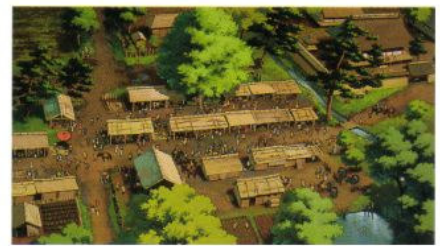
Beneath the dense, overgrown cedar trees, Ashitaka cooled his right arm in the springwater trickling down from the rocks. He looked at the bruise he had received. "This bruise is getting darker," he said to himself.

Troubled Times

Ashitaka continued westward on his journey and arrived at a village. "A battle," he said to himself. There was a skirmish going on, soldiers were attacking village people. "Stop!" Ashitaka yelled. As he drew his arrow, the bruise on his arm writhed painfully like a snake. When his arrow struck it took off the arm of one soldier and the head of another. "What's wrong with my arm?" he wondered at its astonishing strength. The bruise had gotten darker.

At the market he asked for rice. "That's not money, it's not money," the stall seller said angrily when she saw the thing Ashitaka held out instead of money. "That's a big piece of gold," said a priest, who entered the circle and came to Ashitaka's assistance. The priest announced his name as 'Jikobou' and became Ashitaka's travelling companion.

That night Ashitaka showed Jikobo the lead ball and asked "Have you ever seen anything like this? It's the thing that fatally wounded a huge wild boar".

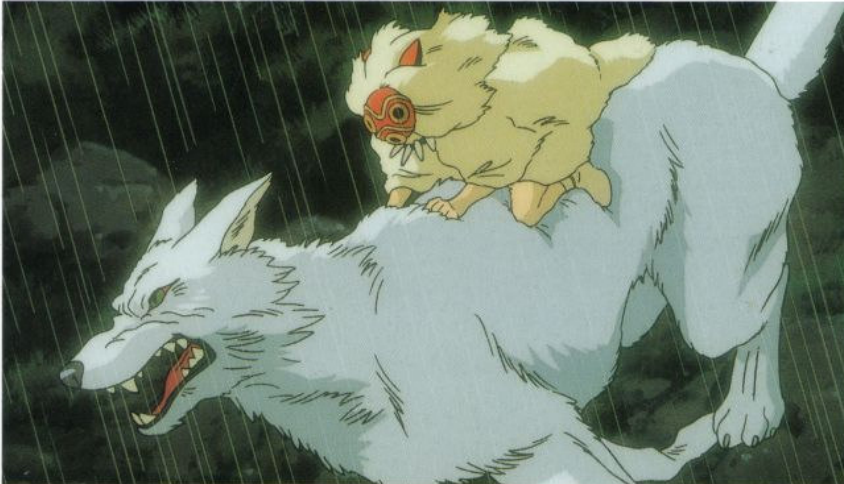


With their eyes on the gold dust,
dubious men and women drew close.
Jikobou hurriedly started running.
Ashitaka went after him.



"Ah, you're going somewhere," Jikobou, who
appeared to be asleep, looked closely at
Ashitaka's departing figure.

A little while after slurping his gruel, Jikobou began to talk. "If you continue even further west that this, into the interior of the mountains, there is a deep forest where people don't go. That place is the Sun God's forest." It is said that in that forest all the beasts are huge and have lived there in the same way since ancient times. The next morning Ashitaka went further west.



At the front of the gunfire, the attackers who had been fighting their way forward, quickly turned towards the direction they had come from and withdrew.

The guards thrust the Chinese umbrellas they were carrying into the ground. Paying careful attention not to get the gunpowder wet, they prepared the guns which were wrapped in oiled paper.

The Attack

In the steadily pouring rain a group of cowherds transported a load along a steep mountain path. Guards watched and protected them. An elegantly dressed woman named Eboshi Gozen commanded the party. "The mountain dogs are here!" someone shouted. On the face of the burnt-out mountain, two huge dogs came running in a line towards them. On the back of the first dog a young girl wearing a mask sat astride. "Fire!" On Eboshi's command the guns were immediately fired.



Eyes burning with anger, the huge mountain dog came running. The cowherds were scattered.



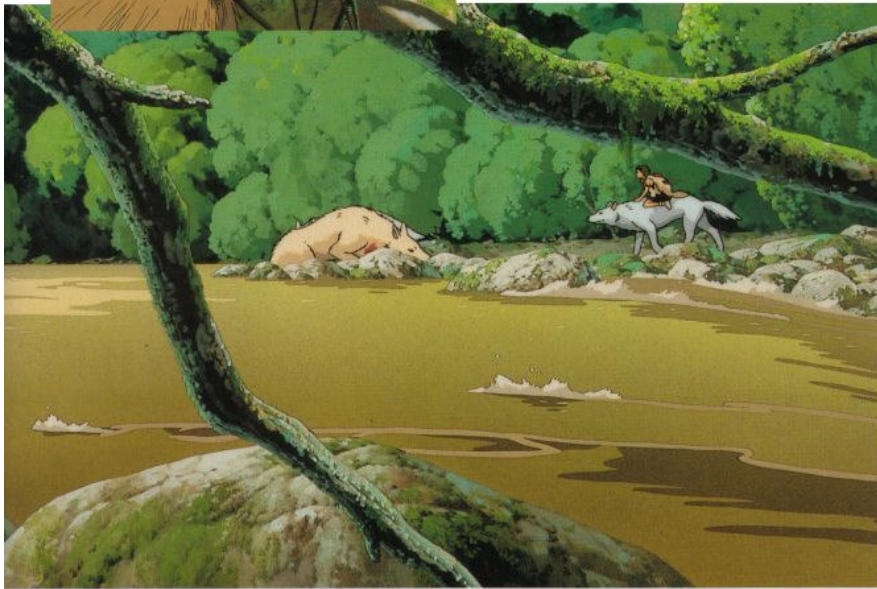
In the midst of the confusion, Eboshi Gozen calmly took a stance with her gun.

'Dokan, dokan,' rose the noise of the projectiles as one after another they exploded near the feet of the running dogs. The invading party was subjected to immense gunfire and withdrew.

"They can't do what they said they could," Eboshi's man Gonza said.

"They were children. Why hasn't the mother come?" Eboshi asked as she looked around at the mountainside. As soon as she said that, an even bigger silver-coloured mountain dog with two tails approached at full speed.

"It's Moro!" yelled a cowhand, as the men ran about frantically in the sudden unexpected attack. But, as the mountain road was narrow, there was no way out. People, cows and baggage scattered and tumbled down the cliff. "Come," Eboshi commanded, standing in position with her gun. 'Dah,' came the noise of Moro pouncing. 'Gan,' went Eboshi's gun. Blood sprayed out of Moro's neck and she fell head over heels into the bottom of a ravine.



In the rain-swelled, rapid, muddy river, the corpses of people and cows were being washed along. Ashitaka brought Yakul to a halt. There were survivors.



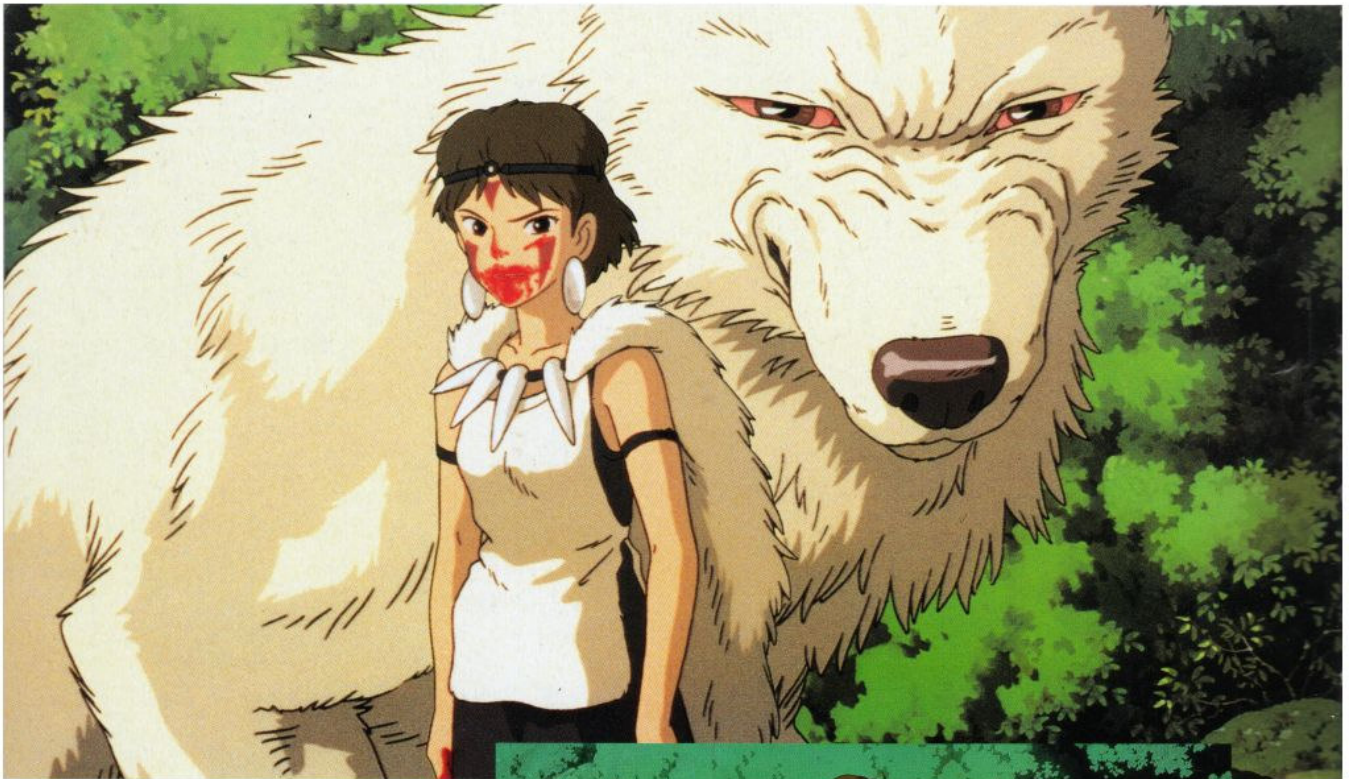
Near the mountain dog's neck, blood still hadn't dried and there was a fresh wound. Without hesitation, the girl buried her face in the mouth of the wound.

The Encounter

Ashitaka came alongside the river and saw a man being carried along in its flow. "He's still breathing," Ashitaka observed. "Hold on, don't give up!" Ashitaka pulled the man from where he was submerged in the middle of the river and up onto the riverbank. He was carrying a second man out on his shoulders when Yakul noticed something and pricked up his ears. Ashitaka nimbly jumped behind a stone and surveyed the situation. On the other side of the stone there was a huge wounded dog. Two mountain dogs and a girl approached it. The girl ran up to the dog and sucked blood from the mouth of the wound. 'Piyew,' she spat the blood. The huge dog emitted a deep growl and the girl turned. Ashitaka stood on top of the stone and announced himself. "My name is Ashitaka. I've come to this world from the East. Are you the ancient gods who I've heard live in the forest of the Sun God?" The girl stared at him in silence with intense hostility, then jumped onto one of the dogs and without a word to him shouted "leave".



The girl turned her head and her mouth was dyed red with the mountain dog's blood. Ashitaka felt a stab in his heart looking at their terrible plight.





"Going through this forest is stupid," said a scared Kouroku. "But if we don't hurry, it will be too late to save the other man," Ashitaka replied as he continued deeper into the forest.



The kodama dissolved into the trunks of the huge towering trees. "Is this your mother? She is a wonderful tree," Ashitaka said as he turned and looked up at the big tree.



'Hieeee!' Kouroku, one of the men Ashitaka rescued, opened his eyes and let out a shriek. On the rock right next to him a small creature was sitting quietly.

"Kodama? There are kodama even here?" The kodama were a sign of a healthy rich forest.

"They will have called the Sun God," Kouroku said, becoming frightened.

"The Sun God? Is that the big mountain dog?" asked Ashitaka.

"No it's not. It's a much more scary boss of all monsters," replied Kouroku.

'Kata kata' came the sound of the kodama shaking their heads, and then they disappeared without another sound.

"Excuse me, please let us pass through your forest," Ashitaka asked permission from the kodama, who were appearing and disappearing here and there. Ashitaka entered the forest.

Deep in the forest huge trees were standing in a row and very clear water was flowing.

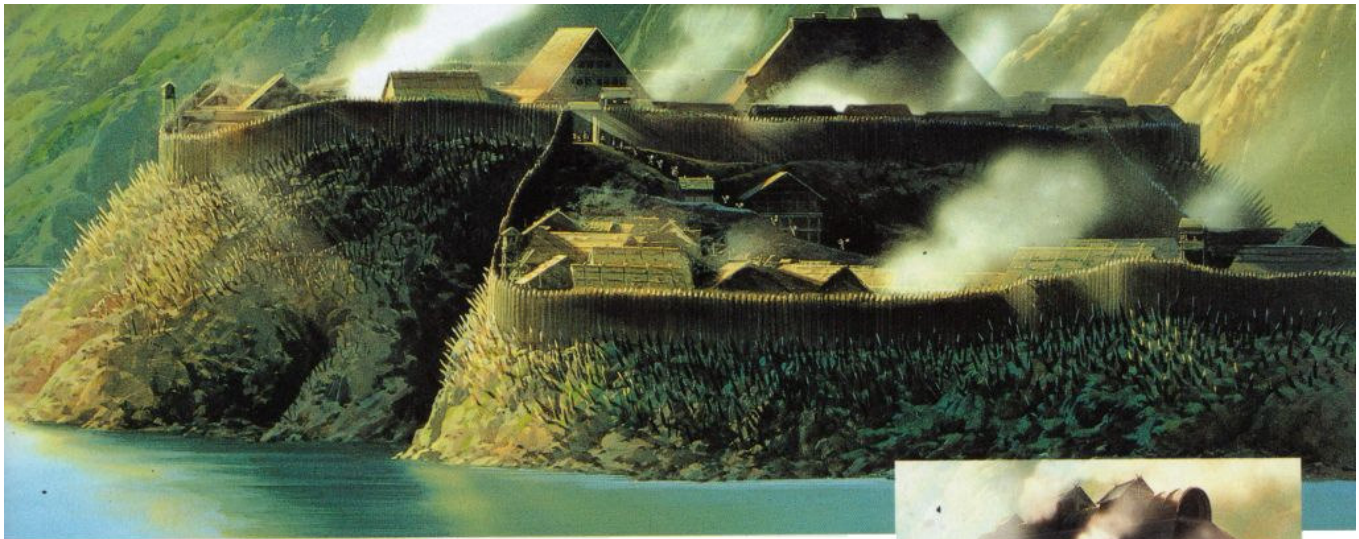
"This is the entrance to the other world," Kouroku said with much fear. Ashitaka let the other man down from his back and scooped water. "There is a three toed print," he said. On top of the moss were tracks.



Ashitaka plunged his arm into the water and the terrible pain was bearable.



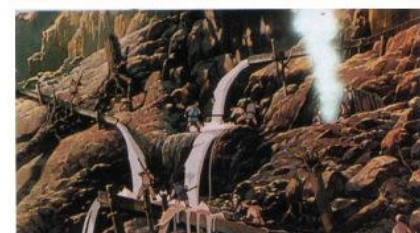
On the other side of the huge trees a herd of stags passed but one stopped and stood. In the middle of the light a strange and mysterious silhouette appeared. Just then, without warning an intense and violent pain ran up Ashitaka's arm. The owner of the mysterious silhouette stood, then after a little while left. For unknown reasons the body of the man Ashitaka was carrying suddenly became light and Ashitaka's walking pace became easy. They didn't lose their way and were able to emerge from the forest.



As Kouroku's party had come back alive, there was a small commotion.



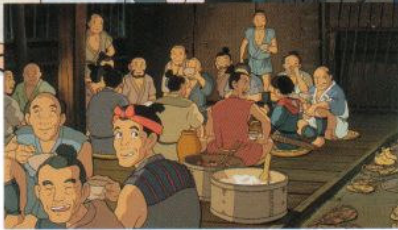
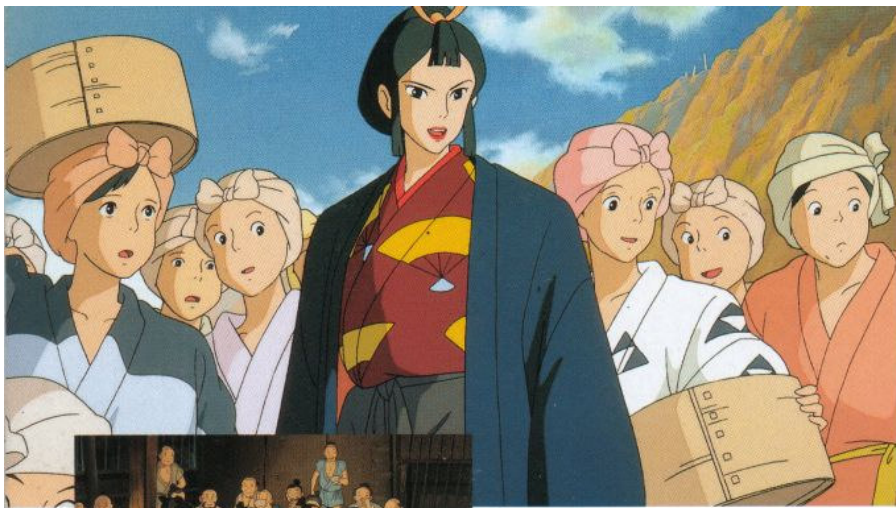
"This is a figure I haven't seen," Gonza said, standing in Ashitaka's way on the slope near where the boat had arrived.



At the rear, a mountain, whose slopes had become bare and desolate, stood out glaringly. From Eboshi Gozen's ironworks, white smoke rose here and there.

The Ironworks

On the other side of the lake was their destination - the ironworks. "It looks like a castle," Ashitaka said. "It's Eboshi's great ironworks. They heat sand and make iron". Kouroku's voice was animated as he explained this to Ashitaka, who was gazing at the scene. When they arrived at the wharf Gonza questioned Ashitaka. He was suspicious about them coming out of the Sun God's forest. Just then a young woman came sprinting towards them. "What a slow coach! The cowherd sprained his ankle so now how are we going to make a living and eat?" Toki, Kouroku's wife yelled. She had been so worried about Kouroku and now was especially angry.



The evening. When the bell to signal the end of work sounded inside the ironworks, all the people working outside returned. With care, the gate was closed.



"Take your domestic argument somewhere else!" Gonza told them. This time Toki lashed out at Gonza- "Who do you think you are?" She screamed. "You dumped a wounded man and left him. What kind of guard are you?"

Eboshi Gozen appeared. "I would like to thank our visitor later. Guide him to the ironworks," she told Gonza.

That night the young women crowded at the front of the cowherd's shack to try and catch a glimpse of Ashitaka.

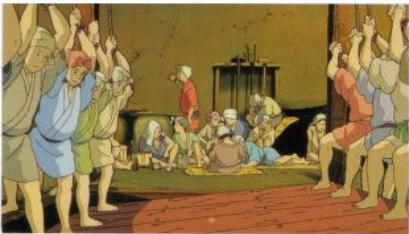
"Please don't be offended," the head of the cowherds said, ashamed of the girls' behaviour.

"I heard a happy village has lively women," Ashitaka replied.

"If Eboshi sees girls who have been sold she can't help taking them in," someone said.

"She's really a kind person," an old man added, and rice grains fell out of his mouth as he spoke. Another cowherd leant forward and took over the story; "Nevertheless, she is a scary woman who is not afraid of rules or curses". "Yes that's true. Anyway, I want to tell you about the time when she killed that wild boar Nago," another said.

The cowherds started to tell Ashitaka tales of Eboshi's heroic deeds.



As Ashitaka accompanied Eboshi, he saw a big building. He peeped inside and there was a huge furnace blazing upwards. Women were working, treading on the bellows.



Nagonokami is the lord of the mountains around here. In order to overthrow him, Eboshi Gozen took lots of guns with her. The mountain burned.

"Our job is to get rid of the trees on the mountains," the head cowherd explained. The people in the ironworks then took the sand, made fires and heated it to make iron. Although this was devastating to the mountain, it was necessary to maintain their livelihood, so there was nothing that could be done. Nago became angry at the devastation and killed a lot of people from the ironworks, so Eboshi went with her group of armed men and fought with him. Nago was shot with a lead ball and ran away somewhere to die.

Ashitaka went to Eboshi's room and held out his right arm to show her the cursed bruise. He then held out the lead ball that came out of Nago's body. "You probably remember this," he said.

"Why are you trying to find the secret of this lead ball?" Eboshi asked.

"Because I will see with eyes unclouded and ascertain things," Ashitaka replied.

When Eboshi heard Ashitaka's answer she laughed loudly and told him to come with her. "I will show you my secret," she said. He accompanied her to a small room where very sick people were assembling guns.



"Living is truly unbearably painful. The world is cursed, people are cursed, yet, in spite of this we want to live," the man said, his face covered in cloth, stained with tears.



"So you will take the mountain God's forest by force which will make the God unhappy. Are you saying you will use these guns to start a new grudge and bring another curse?" Ashitaka asked. His cursed arm grasped at the hilt of his sword and moved by itself to attack Eboshi. With his left arm he tried desperately to hold the arm down. "Please don't kill her," the head of the cowherds appealed to Ashitaka. "She has treated us as human beings. She is the only one who has".

"If the Sun God ceased to exist, Mononoke and her friends would also cease to be gods and become just animals. And as the light entered the forest this would become a rich country," Eboshi said. "Princess Mononoke would become human again," she added.

"Princess Mononoke?" Ashitaka asked.

"The pitiful girl who had her heart stolen by the mountain dogs. She wants to kill me, she continues to aim at me," explained Eboshi. If Eboshi Gozen were to obtain the Sun God's blood, she could heal the sick workers and might also be able to get rid of the curse. Ashitaka fell silent and left the room. He went to join the women treading the bellows.



With the two-tailed mountain dog, San goes to the horribly desolate mountain. Her target is Eboshi Gozen from the ironworks.



With her spear raised above her head, San approached under the cover of darkness.



From their position in a dead tree, the orang-utans watched San go into battle.

Princess Mononoke

Under the moon light, San, or Princess Mononoke, stood on a rock and looked down at the ironworks. From here she would attack. She put on her mask and vigorously flicked her fur-made mane. She was ready for battle. In one jump she leapt down the mountainside.



Over the flames of the furnace, San's rising figure, standing on the big building was brightly illuminated. Ashitaka also climbed the roof and tried to stop San.

Ashitaka had a strange premonition and turned to look up at the mountain. "She's here!" he yelled. At that instant 'gan gan' the ironworks' warning gong sounded. "It's Princess Mononoke!" At the sound of the guard's yell the guns were fired. The dog San was riding skilfully dodged the blasts and jumped into the grounds of the ironworks. San jumped from the dog's back. She went over the defensive railing, jumped down and ran along the path near the inner wall. Avoiding the gun blasts she jumped into the inner compound where Ashitaka was standing. She was trapped! "You don't want to get into a fight with them!" Ashitaka said to her. San jumped back and again ran along the edge of the fence and aimed for the big shed where iron was made. Under the shed Eboshi's men were waiting eagerly with guns ready. "Princess of the mountain dogs, go back to the forest! Don't die unnecessarily! Drawing back is courageous!" Ashitaka tried to make San stop.



From under the broken mask appeared the face of a young innocent girl. Ashitaka shook San awake. San opened her eyes, which looked like the eyes of a devil, and ferociously attacked Ashitaka.

San jumped on the roof of the building, her dagger ready in her hand. 'Grrrr' Ashitaka clenched his teeth.

The defending party gathered around San. She was hit and rolled down the roof. "Aim where she falls," Eboshi commanded the women holding guns. They were women who had had their husbands killed and eaten by mountain dogs. 'Bang bang', the guns were aimed at the place where San fell. One shot hit San's mask and it shattered. Ashitaka rushed over to her and lifted her in his arms. She had lost consciousness. "Huh, huh?" San quickly came around and using her knife, shook Ashitaka away. Nimble she sprang to her feet and dashed wildly about. Gonza blocked her way and brandished his sword. Without a care she jumped and using Gonza as a step-up she ran at Eboshi. 'Kin', with her long thin sword Eboshi stopped San's dagger. Ashitaka jumped in to break up the fight.



Gonza's sword attacked San. Narrowly avoiding it, she jumped high.



The people of the ironworks crowded around Eboshi and San, who were fighting. They were like caged mice. Ashitaka elbowed his way through the wave of people and continued forward.



Black sticky snakes appeared from the bitten arm. San was surprised, then terrified.



"Wait! Don't let them go!" A woman pointed her gun at Ashitaka, who was carrying San on his shoulders. Ashitaka continued walking. Just then, the gun accidentally went off. With blood dripping, Ashitaka continued walking as though nothing had happened.

"I will look after her," Ashitaka said, just as San bit his arm.

"Do you want that mountain dog for a wife?" Eboshi teased with a fearful laugh.

"There is a demon inside you and inside the girl too," Ashitaka said. While he was talking, the cursed God's black snakes appeared from his right arm. "Look, these snakes live in my body and take the form of a hateful grudge. Don't continue what you've been doing - you shouldn't yield to hatred," he warned.

"Don't parade your insignificant misfortune. I'll cut your right arm off for you!" Eboshi pointed her sword at Ashitaka and he stunned her with a blow to her body, hitting San at the same time. They both collapsed but Ashitaka propped them up as they fell. He picked San up and put her over his shoulder and tried to leave the ironworks. 'Bang,' a bullet from an accidentally discharged gun passed through Ashitaka's body. He kept walking anyway and finally arrived at the big gate. With only his right arm he wrenched open the gate, which normally took ten men to do. Still carrying San, he left the ironworks.



One race of monkeys, who had previously been respected as a wise group in the forest, had lost their power after the forest was stolen by the humans. The monkeys hated the humans and hoped to kill them. After the monkeys ran away, San called Yakul.



The Sun God's forest

Ashitaka finally ran out of strength. As he lay on the ground, San pointed her knife at him. "Why did you interfere?" she growled.

"Because I didn't want to let you die," he replied.

"I'm not afraid of dying! If the humans are driven away I don't care about my life!" she yelled.

"Live," Ashitaka feebly said as he gasped for breath.

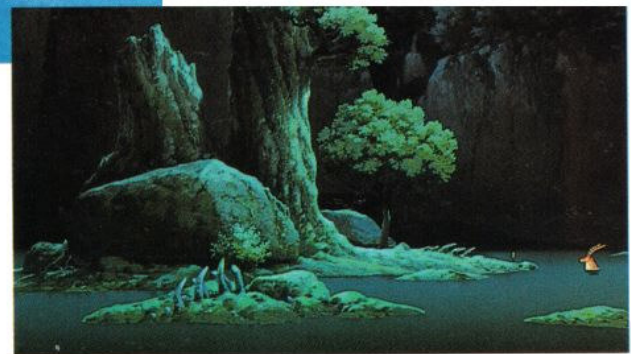
"You're still talking? I don't take orders from humans!" She retorted.

"You are.....beautiful," Ashitaka gasped. At these unexpected words San jumped back as though she'd been struck.

Nearby orang-utans appeared and with the intention of eating Ashitaka, approached. The mountain dogs drove them away and San called Yakul.



Jikobou leant forward and watched the Night Walker return to it's home. Jikobou was aiming for a chance to take the Sun God's life.



San put Ashitaka on Yakul's back and they entered the Sun God's forest. The kodama watched them intently as they went deeper and deeper into the forest. The dense growth suddenly finished and a clear quiet water surface stretched in front of them. San took Ashitaka to an island in the middle of the water and put him down at the water's edge. Above his head she stuck a twig from a camellia tree (these are used in offerings to Gods).

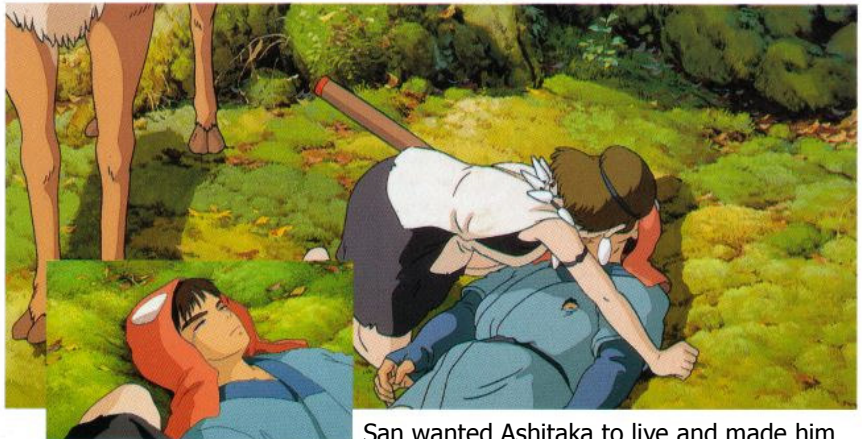
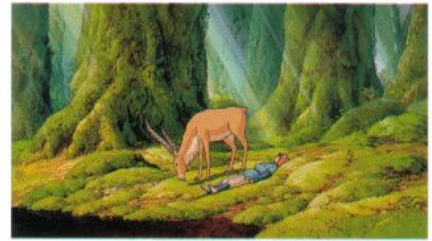
A group of kodama made a line one after another and climbed up a giant tree. At the top they started to shake their heads and made a 'kata kata' noise as though they were all singing together. The 'kata kata' of the chorus spread throughout the forest. The Night Walker emerged. Jikobou watched it appear from his hiding place behind the shadow of a tree. "Now it will change from it's night form to it's day form. This will be the form of the Sun God," he said.

The Night Walker started to fall down and return to its house, to re-emerge as the Sun God and move toward Ashitaka. The Sun God touched its face to the camellia twig which very quickly withered and died.



The leaves withered by the Sun God began to flutter down above Ashitaka.

The wild boar gathered to protect the forest and kill the humans.



San wanted Ashitaka to live and made him eat dried meat.

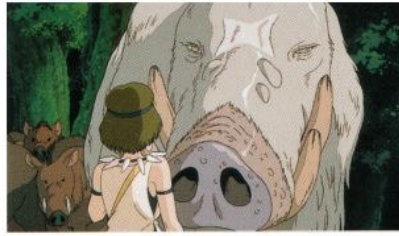
In the light of day Ashitaka woke up. The wound on his chest had vanished. "The Sun God has spared you so I will help you," San said. She tried to feed Ashitaka some dried meat but he didn't have any strength to chew. San chewed the meat for him and gave it to him. A tear ran down Ashitaka's cheek. When San saw it she was surprised and didn't know what to do.

A herd of wild boar came out from behind the trees and in a big group, edged closer to San and Ashitaka.

"Isn't the Sun God the guardian of the forest? Why did it spare that human and leave Nago to fend for himself?" they whispered among themselves.

"The human's poisonous stone is also in my body. Nago ran away, I did not. I am facing my own death," Ashitaka said.

"Nago was afraid of death so he became a cursed God" Moro said. The wild boar all raised their voices at once. "I am the one who finished Nago off," Ashitaka said, as he lay stretched out. He showed them the cursed wound on his right arm. "I came to this land in the hope that it was possible for the Sun God to lift this curse"



Okkotonushi came all the way across the sea from Kyushu. He is the leader of the wild boar. As he has been alive for more than 500 years, he has gone blind.



A war is being started over the forest and the Sun God.

"But even though he healed me, the bruise hasn't disappeared. I have to live with the pain until the curse consumes me," Ashitaka said.

At last, Okkotonushi, the elder of the wild boar arrived. Ashitaka told him about Nago's end. Drawing in his group, Okkotonushi challenged the humans to a battle.

Meanwhile, the samurai who had been closing in on the ironworks were being driven back. Jikobou was accompanying his devious men to the ironworks.



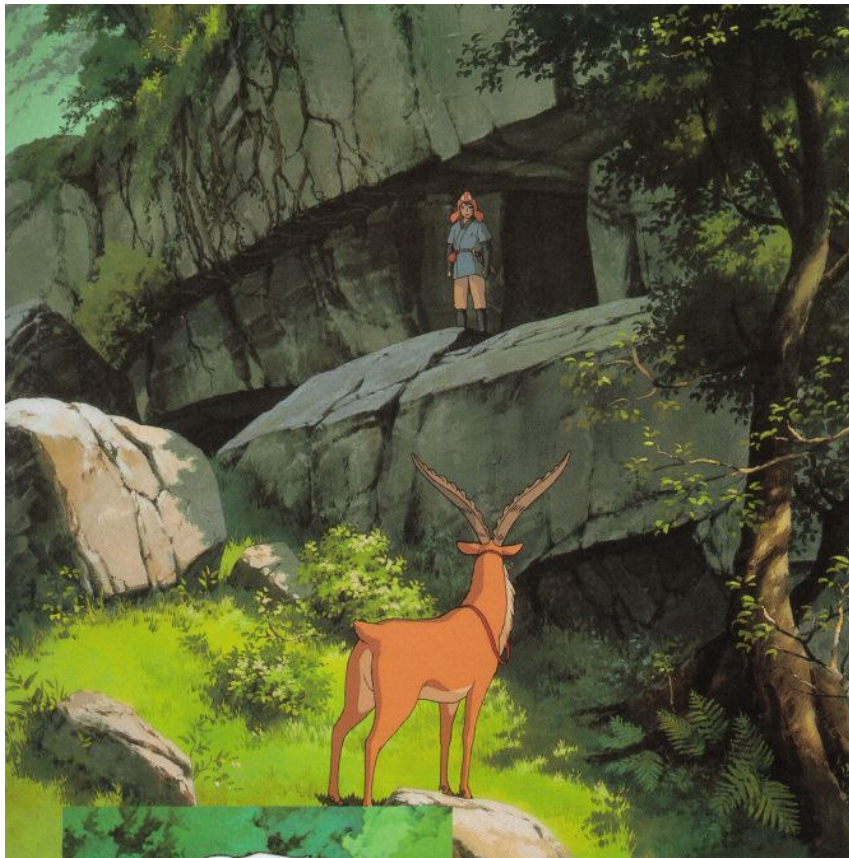
Ashitaka learnt the secret of San's upbringing. "Boy, can you save San?" Moro's severe words challenged Ashitaka, to which he replied that they could both live together.



The Wolf God's Daughter

When Ashitaka opened his eyes he was in a cave. He could hear the sound of San sleeping beside him. His right arm was hurting. He went outside the cave and looked down on the beautiful forest. Somewhere out there the leader of the wild boars, Okkotonushi, was probably preparing for war with the humans.

"Can't the forest and the humans reach a settlement without a fight? Really, can't it be stopped?" Ashitaka asked Moro, who was sitting on a rock. Moro sneered at such optimistic thinking. "What are you going to do about San?" she asked. "Do you intend to involve her too? She is my family's daughter. The forest and life are interdependent. When the forest dies, both will perish".



"Please take this to San," Ashitaka entrusted his small jewelled knife to the mountain dog.



"Thanks to you and the Sun God I am better". San showed a kind smile towards Ashitaka's words of thanks.



"Let the girl go! She is human!" Ashitaka answered.

"Be quiet boy!" Moro said back. "Are you going to solve my daughter's problems? In order to avoid my fangs and escape, the people who invaded this forest threw San away as a sacrifice!" Moro displayed her open hostility and hatred. "She can't be human. She can't be a mountain dog. It is difficult to look at her without pity-my beautiful daughter". Moro's words asking Ashitaka to rescue San stabbed into him.

"I don't know, but we can live together," he replied. Moro raised her voice in a laugh at Ashitaka's answer. "Boy, there's already nothing you can do," she said and leapt up, cutting off the conversation.

When Ashitaka returned to the cave San was awake. "You can walk?" she asked, surprised.

In the morning San was gone. Ashitaka's belongings were arranged neatly beside him. Ashitaka left the cave and went into the forest. The Kodama had vanished.



San bit through the cord and hung the small jewelled knife around her neck and tied it firmly.



Eboshi Gozen looked in San's direction. "Take care here," she commanded. San caught Eboshi's gaze.

The Burning Forest

Eboshi and Jikobou were climbing up the mountain, leading their men. Smoke rose up and made the wild boar angry, luring them out of the forest. In order to disrupt the beasts' sense of smell, the humans had created smoke. "Mother, I will say goodbye now. I will go and be Okkotonushi's eyes," San said to Moro. As Okkotonushi couldn't see or smell he would probably be in trouble. San buried her face in Moro's neck. "Yes, ok. You have another path to live with the young people," Moro said.

"I hate humans!" San replied. While San and Moro stood there unwilling to part, another wolf came running up. On its fang a small jewelled knife hung, and was held out to San. "Ashitaka must have sent it," San said. She hung the knife around her neck and met up with the herd of wild boar heading towards the battle. 'Bang bang' came the sound of the guns. The ironworks were being invaded by Samurai. "Stop!" Ashitaka shouted.



The wild boar were prepared for war, having decorated their bodies in white mud. They were heading towards the humans. From within the group San appeared, sitting astride a mountain dog.



Ashitaka asked whether they could defend the ironworks until he brought Eboshi Gozen back. Toki replied in a lively voice that when the time came for battle, they would throw molten iron if they had to.



"Help me Yakul!" Ashitaka encouraged Yakul. Mounted warriors came from behind.

The Samurai were in his way. "I'm coming through," he yelled. Ashitaka made Yakul leap high and they jumped over the samurais' heads. The only people defending the ironworks were the women, the injured and sick. While Eboshi was away leading the men, the ironworks were being attacked. "I will go and call Eboshi," Ashitaka said, and headed towards the Sun God's forest.



At the battle front, Eboshi Gozen stood ready to take on the wild boar who were coming to challenge her. The men accompanying Jikobou blew up both the herd of wild boar and humans.

The Retreat

An arrow flew towards Yakul and stuck into him. While Ashitaka was pulling it out, mounted warriors came to fight. He desperately fought against them and managed to overthrow them. The whole battleground was an awful scene. All over the ground dead wild boar were lying piled on top of each other. "This is worse than terrible," Ashitaka said. He told the cowherds, who were discussing the battle, about the ironworks being attacked. "Isn't Eboshi here?" he asked. "No, she went into the forest to kill the Sun God," the leader of the cowherds answered. Ashitaka noticed one of the wolves was being crushed under a fallen wild boar. He lifted up the boar's body and as he was rescuing the wolf he heard "Boy, what are you doing?" Jikobou and his men had arrived. One of the men pointed a blowpipe at Ashitaka. "Stop it!" the cowherds yelled as one knocked out the man. The cowherds then helped Ashitaka rescue the wolf.



Okkotonushi was disheartened and had collapsed. San took her stance with her spear, guarding him.

Jikobou's gang had intended to desert the ironworks and leave them in the lurch. The men from the ironworks noticed Ashitaka and went to give him a hand.



Ashitaka and the wolf ran into the forest together. San walked along with the deeply wounded Okkotonushi, encouraging him. "Thanks to you the forest is finished," the orang-utans shouted at him from the treetops. "Living things and non humans will go with it!" Before San knew it, she was surrounded by Jikobou's men who were wearing pigskins to block out their human smell.



Ashitaka saw San in trouble and jumped.



With San caught on his tusk, Okkotonushi went into the forest. He began to change into a cursed God.

Life and death. Perish

"Sun God, come! If you are the God of the forest, revive my family and destroy the humans!" Okkotonushi's heart was filled with a grudge towards the humans whom he had lost the battle to and who had killed his friends. From his body dark sticky threads sprang up. "No! Okkotonushi, don't become a cursed God!" San shouted as she desperately fought the sticky threads. The sticky threads continued to coil around their target. They took San in and made her part of the body. "No No! Don't become a cursed God!" Ashitaka yelled as he came running. He ran up Okkotonushi's immense body and forced the sticky threads aside. His body got burnt everywhere he touched the sticky threads. "SAN!" he stretched out his hand. "Ashitaka!" He saw San. As Ashitaka at last got closer to San, Okkotonushi violently shook his head. Ashitaka was shaken off.



San heard Ashitaka's voice searching for her. She opened her eyes and called his name, struggling and yelling. Ashitaka saw San among Okkotonushi's black sticky snakes.



"Give me back my daughter!" Moro said as she leant on Okkotonushi. She thrust her head into the sticky threads and took San in her mouth to save her. Although the wound Moro had received from the blowpipe was weakening her body, she gathered the last of her strength. The Sun God appeared. It walked towards them on top of the water.



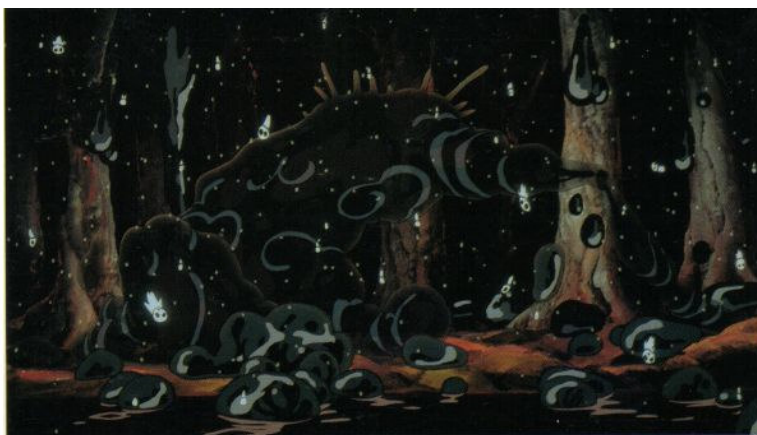
Soft blobby goo burst out from the Sun God's body and everything it touched died.



The Sun God stood before Okkotonushi, who stepped back. Ashitaka took San from Moro's mouth and into his arms, then plunged into the water. The Sun God brought his face up to Okkotonushi's snout and sucked up his life. Moro had also run out of energy and fell over.

Bathed in the moonlight, the Sun God's neck extended and he started to change form and become the Night Walker. Just then, 'Bang,' Eboshi fired her gun. The Sun God's head was blown off. Jikobou snatched the head and ran away. From the Night Walker's body, jelly-like lumps flew out and the trees quickly withered as it fell on them. The Kodama came falling down from the trees. The headless Night Walker started to stand up. "Everything's already over... the forest is dead," San said in despair.

"It's not over yet. We are still alive," Ashitaka said, trying to give her hope. Their intention was to recover the Sun God's head and return it.



The forest was dying... the soft blobby mass gathered and the Night Walker started to appear.



"I really hate humans," San said, with much sorrow and anger. Ashitaka approached her and said "I am human and so are you".



Moro's head leapt forward and bit Eboshi Gozen's arm off. Meanwhile, Jikobou and his gang were putting the Sun God's head in a bucket and looked like they were going to carry it away.



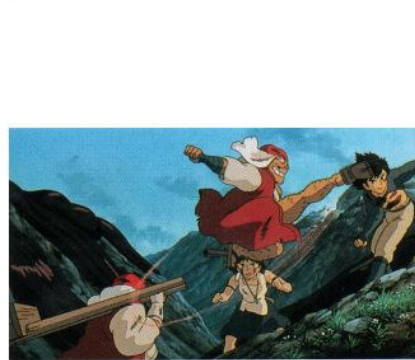
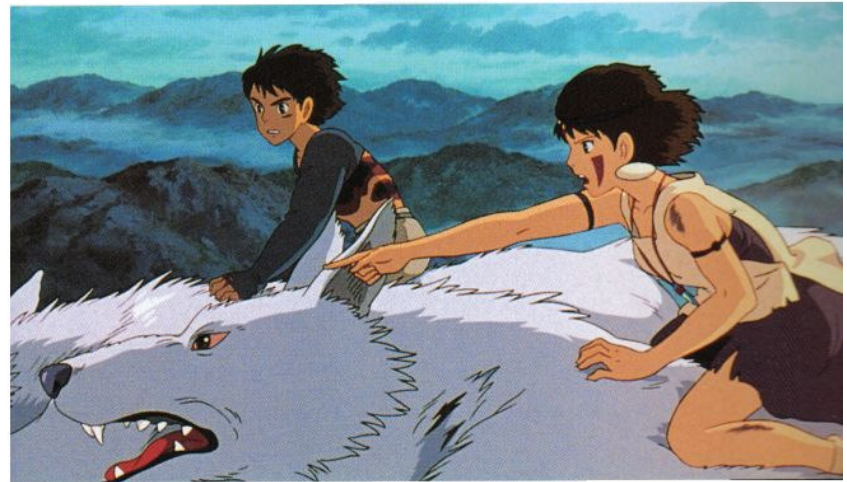


From the direction of the mountain was a strange light. Toki and her friends stared in that direction and felt strange. The Night Walker appeared without its head.

The Great Collapse

The Night Walker stood up and spread across the sky, seeking the whereabouts of its head. Thick sloppy streams of goo flowed and spread out covering the earth. Wherever it touched things, life was extinguished. On the back of a mountain dog, Ashitaka raced towards the ironworks. He instructed the people there to run into the water and then he and San pursued Jikobou's tracks. "There he is! Over there!" In the direction San was pointing, Jikobou was running away carrying the Sun God's head on his shoulder. "We will return the Sun God's head," said Ashitaka to Jikobou as he caught up and overtook him. "It's a human sin to want everything between Heaven and earth," Jikobou said arrogantly. Suddenly, he kicked Ashitaka. Ashitaka stepped aside and dodged the blow. While they were off guard, Jikobou's friend snatched the head and ran away. The Night Walker's huge hand came down and blocked his way. The bucket containing the head fell over and rolled away.

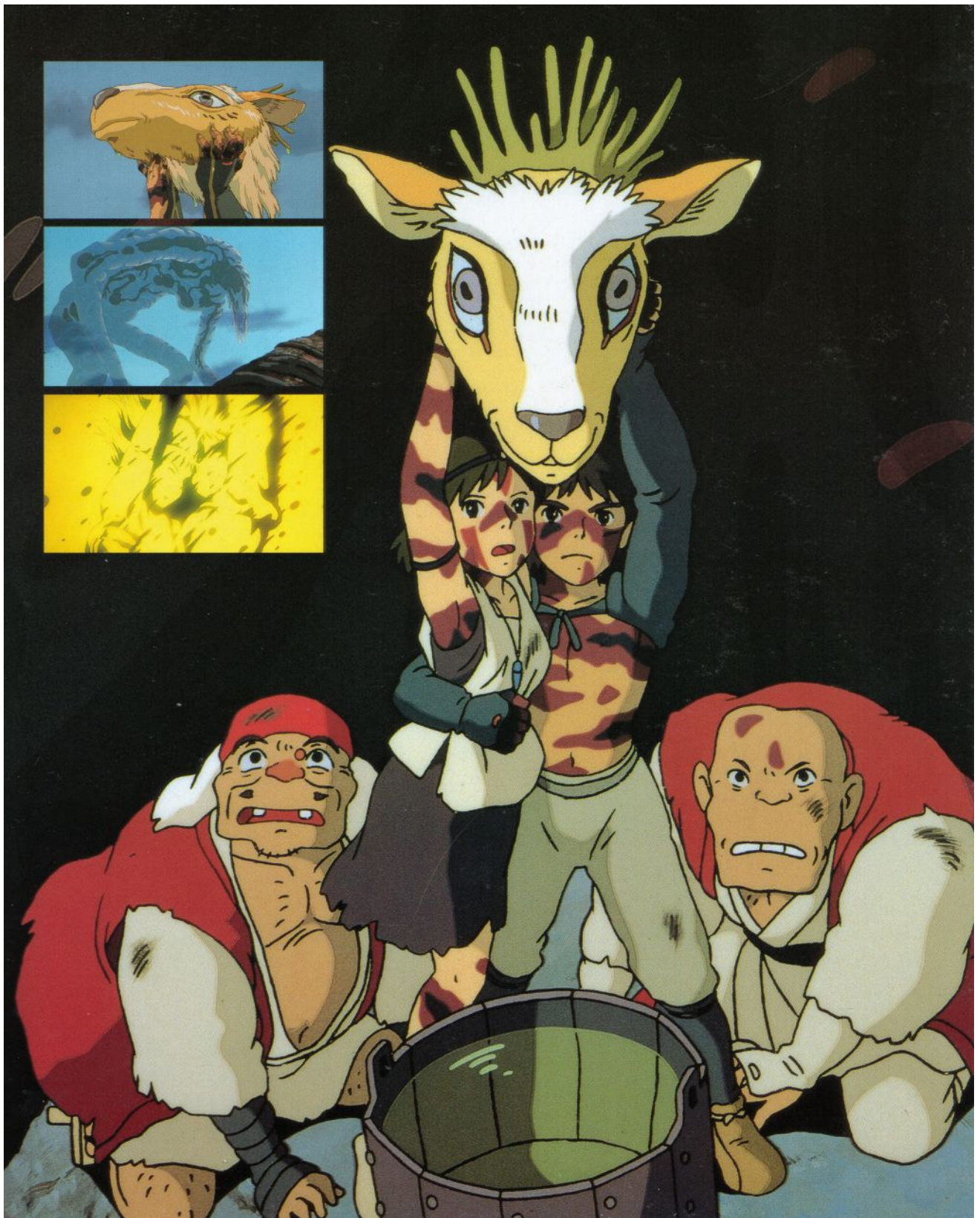
The flames of the fire rose from the top of the mountain range. "We are alive- do something!" Toki said to Kouroku, who was losing his strength.

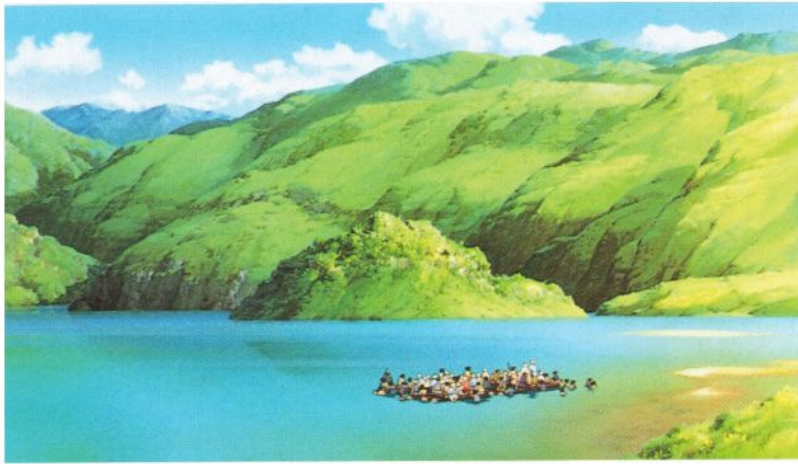


"When it's touched by the sun, it will dissapear," Jikobou said. He was planning to run away. Ashitaka was smiling and not paying attention when Jikobou suddenly leapt up and kicked him.



By the time they caught up with the bucket, Ashitaka and San were surrounded by the sloppy goo. "It's too late," Ashitaka said as he crept closer to Jikobo. "It has to be returned by human hands," Ashitaka said as he and San held the head up high. "Sun God, we are returning your head. Please calm down!"





When he saw the landscape come back to life Kouroku muttered: "The Sun God is like the old man who made flowers". (Reference to a famous Japanese childrens' story)



The Night Walker stood up in the burning morning sky. When the sun's rays touched him, he was warmed by the light and fell over.



Bruises spread across Ashitaka and San's bodies where they were exposed to the liquid dripping down from the Sun God's head. They were bathed in golden light. When the Night Walker got his head back, he slowly stood up, and then fell over. The ironworks and the samurai camp were blown away. After this, greenery covered everything.



Living Together

"The Sun God is dead," San said, looking sad. Even though the greenery had been brought back to life, it was no longer the Sun God's forest. "The Sun God's not dead. He is life itself. He owns both life and death," Ashitaka said and looked at his right arm. The imprint of the bruises had diminished and looked like an old wound. "He told me to live," Ashitaka said.

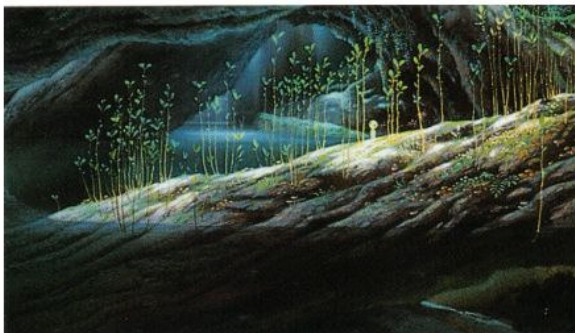
"I like you Ashitaka, but I can't forgive the humans," San said with feeling.

"That's ok, you live in the forest and I will live at the ironworks," Ashitaka said as he looked up at San with a kind and happy expression. "Let's live together."

Ashitaka got onto Yakul's back and came over to San, who smiled and nodded at his words. San headed off in the direction she was facing with the mountain dog walking along side her. Ashitaka silently watched them go.



"Lets make this a good village together," Eboshi Gozen said to the survivors.



Meanwhile, Jikobou scratched his head and said "Oh well, I give up. Can't beat stupid people".

The End