

A

The Slit Mouthed Woman

Children walking alone at night may encounter a woman wearing a surgical mask, this is not an unusual sight in Japan as people wear them to protect others from their colds or sickness. The woman will stop the child and ask, 'Am I beautiful?'. If the child answers no, they are killed with a pair of scissors which the woman carries. If they answer yes, the woman pulls away the mask, revealing her mouth is slit from ear to ear and asks 'How about now?'. If the child answers no, he will be cut in half. If he answers yes, then she will slit his mouth like hers.

Ways to escape the Kuchisake-onna

When the legend reappeared in the 1970s rumours of ways to escape also emerged. If, once the mask is removed, the victim answers neutrally, such as saying "You're average" or "So-so", she will become confused and her victim can escape while she is lost in thought. Another escape route is to tell her you have a previous engagement; she will pardon her manners and excuse herself from your presence. In some variations of the tale, she can be distracted by throwing fruit or sweets at her which she will pick up, thus giving the victim a chance to run. One other way is to ask her if you are pretty, she will get confused and leave.

Hanako in the Toilet

If you go to the last stall in the girls bathroom and knock three times before asking 'Are you there, Hanako-san', a voice will answer "I'm here". If you enter the stall you'll find a small girl in a red skirt, waiting for you.

Hanako-san is a popular and widespread urban legend, often played by school children to test courage.

Variations

Hanako-san has been noted to have various origins and behaviors, depending on the area or school, and is a widespread legend across Japan. Her appearance can also be different, but is usually that of a young girl with bobbed hair and a red skirt. She can be either mischievous, malevolent or benign.

Yamagata prefecture: After Hanako-san has answered and you enter the stall, you'll find a three headed lizard who had mimicked a girl's voice; it will then eat you.

Iwate prefecture: After you have called Hanako-san, a large white hand emerges from the door.

Kanagawa: After you have called her, a blood stained hand will appear.

'Hanako' was a common and typical girl's name in the Japanese 1950s when the legend supposedly began.

B

The Slit Mouthed Woman

Children walking alone at night may encounter a woman wearing a surgical mask, this is not an unusual sight in Japan as people wear them to protect others from their colds or sickness. The woman will stop the child and ask, 'Am I beautiful?'. If the child answers no, they are killed with a knife which the woman carries. If they answer yes, the woman pulls away the mask, revealing her mouth is slit from ear to ear and asks 'How about now?'. If the child answers no, he will be cut in half. If he answers yes, then she will slit his mouth like hers.

Ways to escape the Kuchisake-onna

When the legend reappeared in the 1980s rumours of ways to escape also emerged. If, once the mask is removed, the victim answers neutrally, such as saying "You're average" or "So-so", she will become confused and her victim can escape while she is lost in thought. Another escape route is to tell her you have a previous engagement; she will pardon her manners and excuse herself from your presence. In some variations of the tale, she can be distracted by throwing vegetables or sweets at her which she will pick up, thus giving the victim a chance to run. She is also afraid of hair pomade, so if she smells it she won't come near you.

Hanako in the Toilet

If you go to the last stall in the girls bathroom and knock twice before asking 'Are you there, Hanako-san', a voice will answer "I'm here". If you enter the stall you'll find a small girl in a red skirt, waiting for you.

Hanako-san is a popular and widespread urban legend, often played by school children as a test of courage.

Variations

Hanako-san has been noted to have various origins and behaviors, depending on the area or school, and is a widespread legend across Japan. Her appearance can also be different, but is usually that of a young girl with short hair and a red skirt. She can be either mischievous, malevolent or benign.

Yamagata prefecture: After Hanako-san has answered and you enter the stall, you'll find a three headed monkey who had mimicked a girl's voice; it will then eat you.

Iwate prefecture: After you have called Hanako-san, a small white hand emerges from the door.

Kanagawa: After you have called her, a blood stained hand will appear.

'Hanako' was a common and typical girl's name in the Japanese 1960s when the legend supposedly began.