



# The Two Frogs who Hop Between Osaka and Kyoto

A Story from Japan

Mukashimukashi (once upon a time) in the country of Japan there were two frogs. One frog lived in a ditch near the town of Osaka, on the sea coast. The other frog lived in a clear little stream that ran through the city of Kyoto.

The two frogs lived very far from one another and had never met, but one day, they both had the same exact idea at the same exact moment!

Both frogs decided that they wanted to see the world! The frog who lived at Kyoto wanted to visit Osaka, and the frog who lived at Osaka decided to go to Kyoto.

So, one morning, they both set out along the road that connected Kyoto and Osaka, one from one end and the other from the other.



It was a long journey — especially for a frog — and they were both very tired.

Halfway between the two towns, there was a mountain, which had to be climbed. It took each frog many, many hops to reach the top. When they finally arrived at the top of the mountain, they were each surprised to see another frog standing there!

The frogs looked at each other for a moment without speaking, and then started talking excitedly, talking about their adventures. It was delightful to find that they both had the same wish — to see more of Japan!

Since neither frog was in a hurry, they decided to stretch themselves out in a cool, damp place, and have a good rest before they continued with their journeys.

“It’s a shame that we are not bigger,” said the Osaka frog when they woke up. “If we were taller, we could see both towns from the top of this mountain, and decide if it is worth our time to continue on our journeys.”

“I have an idea,” replied the Kyoto frog. “If we each stand on our hind legs and hold on to each other for balance, then we will be tall enough to see towns where we are heading.”

The frogs stood and stretched themselves as high as they could and held each other tightly, so that they wouldn't fall. The Kyoto frog turned his nose toward Osaka, and the Osaka frog turned his nose toward Kyoto, but the silly frogs forgot that when they stood up their big eyes were on the back of their heads. With their noses pointing to the towns that they wanted, their eyes pointed back to the towns where they came from.

"That’s funny!" cried the Osaka frog, "Kyoto is exactly like Osaka. It is certainly not worth such a long journey. I will go home!"

The Kyoto frog said, “If I had had any idea that Osaka was a copy of Kyoto, I would never have traveled all this way!”

As the frogs spoke, they both fell down onto the grass, said their goodbyes, and set off for their homes. To the end of their lives, they believed that Osaka and Kyoto, which look as different as two towns can be, were as alike as two peas in a pod!

