

TEN WORD TALES No. 7

The Ninth Ninja

by The Story Spinner

CHAPTER 4



Josh wanted to see this monster. The ninja agreed. “You have shown a ninja heart by defending your own garden. Come with me.”

Josh followed the ninja through the back of the garden and into the forest.

There was the monster, toweringly huge, with staring eyes. The ninjas kept chopping at it with their swift silver blades. When Josh heard the monster howl at each attack he felt a sudden pity. There was something wrong with all this. If the creature had been made of

people's rubbish, surely it was they who were to blame? How could the monster help being waste? He dashed into the middle of the circle where the monster stood alone and cried out, "Stop!"

The monster and the ninjas were so surprised that everyone did stop. Josh said, "Please! Just let me try to talk to him."

The chief ninja lowered her blade and the others followed suit. They watched silently as Josh approached the monster. Could it speak?

Josh asked the monster what was wrong. By grunts and signs and occasionally using words from the packages and newspaper that formed his body, the monster explained that he was made from rubbish put in the wrong bins, from excess packaging, from rubbish that wasn't being recycled in Josh's street. The rubbish from the whole of Southfields would gather into a greater monster before morning.

"You help?" asked the monster. Josh nodded. The chief ninja looked grave. "We are so few. There are only eight of us. If I were a centurion with a hundred soldiers to do my bidding maybe we'd have a chance." "But I have friends who can help," said Josh. "More than a hundred. The 504 families at my school."