

The Ashes That Made Trees Bloom

William Elliot Griffis

About the author:

- William Elliot Griffis was an American orientalist, minister, lecturer and prolific author.
- Griffis was born in Philadelphia in 1843 and was the son of a sea captain.
- He passed away in 1928.
- His works include *Welsh Fairy Tales*, *The Religions of Japan etc.*

About the story:

- The story is set in 19th century Japan where an old couple lived with its pet dog named Muko. They loved it like their own child. The old man was a hard working farmer and treated Muko with boiled rice and fish. It also accompanied his master to the field.
- One fine day, this old farmer found a lot of gold in the ground because of Muko and became extremely rich.
- The greedy couple who lived nearby also offered fish to Muko but it refused to eat and showed them a spot where they found a dead cat. It infuriated the greedy man and he beat Muko to its death.

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- The spirit of Muko visited the owner in his dream and suggested to make pastries out of the rice with the help of the mill by cutting the tree over its grave, the farmer did the same and it turned into gold, they became rich again.
- The greedy farmer did the same but his pastry and bean sauce turned into worms. They burned the mill.
- The good old farmer used the ash for blossoming the cherry tree for the arrival of lordship and received a lot of gifts whereas the greedy farmer again was in trouble because of ash and his greed and was beaten brutally for disrespecting the lordship.