



A slave named Androcles once escaped from his master and fled to the forest. As he was wandering about there he came upon a lion lying down moaning and groaning. At first he turned to flee, but finding that the lion did not pursue him, he turned back and went up to him. As he came near, the lion put out his paw, which was all swollen and bleeding, and Androcles found that a huge thorn had got into it, and was causing all the pain. He pulled out the thorn and bound up the paw of the lion, who was soon able to rise and lick the hand of Androcles like a dog. Then the lion took Androcles to his cave, and every day used to bring him meat from which to live.

But shortly afterwards both Androcles and the lion were captured, and the slave was sentenced to be thrown to the lion, after the latter had been kept without food for several days. The Emperor and all his Court came to see the spectacle, and Androcles was led out into the middle of the arena. Soon the lion was let loose from his den, and rushed bounding and roaring towards his victim. But as soon as he came near to Androcles he recognised his friend, and fawned upon him, and licked his hands like a friendly dog. The Emperor, surprised at this, summoned Androcles to him, who told him the whole story. Whereupon the slave was pardoned and freed, and the lion let loose to his native forest.

The Moral

Gratitude is the sign of noble souls.

The Ant and the Grasshopper

By Aesop

In a field one summer's day a grasshopper was hopping about, chirping and singing to its heart's content. An ant passed by, bearing along with great toil an ear of corn he was taking to the nest.

"Why not come and chat with me," said the grasshopper, "instead of toiling and moiling in that way?"

"I am helping to lay up food for the winter," said the ant, "and recommend you to do the same."

"Why bother about winter?" said Grasshopper; we have got plenty of food at present." But the ant went on its way and continued its toil. When the winter came the grasshopper had no food and found itself dying of hunger, while every day it saw the ants distributing corn and grain from the stores they had collected in the summer. Then Grasshopper knew:

It is best to prepare for the days of necessity.

The boy who cried wolf

By Aesop

There was once a young shepherd boy who tended his sheep at the foot of a mountain near a dark forest. It was rather lonely for him all day, so he thought upon a plan by which he could get a little company and some excitement.

He rushed down towards the village calling out "Wolf! Wolf!" and the villagers came out to meet him, and some of them stopped with him for a considerable time.

This pleased the boy so much that a few days afterwards he tried the same trick, and again the villagers came to his help. But shortly after this a wolf actually did come out from the forest, and began to worry the sheep, and the boy of course cried out "Wolf! Wolf!" still louder than before. But this time the villagers, who had been fooled twice before, thought the boy was again deceiving them, and nobody stirred to come to his help.

So the wolf made a good meal off the boy's flock, and when the boy complained, the wise man of the village said:-

"A liar will not be believed, even when he speaks the truth."

The Fox and the Crow

A fox once saw a crow fly off with a piece of cheese in its beak and settle on a branch of a tree

BRANCH OF A TREE.

"That's for me, as I am a fox," said Master Reynard, and he walked up to the foot of the tree.

"Good-day, Mistress Crow," he cried. "How well you are looking to-day: how glossy your feathers; how bright your eye. I feel sure your voice must surpass that of other birds, just as your figure does; let me hear but one song from you that I may greet you as the Queen of Birds."

The crow lifted up her head and began to caw her best, but the moment she opened her mouth the piece of cheese fell to the ground, only to be snapped up by Master Fox.

"That will do," said he. "That was all I wanted. In exchange for your cheese I will give you a piece of advice for the future:

"Do not trust flatterers."

The fox and the grapes

One hot summer's day a Fox was strolling through an orchard till he came to a bunch of Grapes just ripening on a vine which had been trained over a lofty branch. "Just the thing to quench my thirst," quoth he. Drawing back a few paces, he took a run and a jump, and just missed the bunch. Turning round again with a One, Two, Three, he jumped up, but with no greater success.

Again and again he tried after the tempting morsel, but at last had to give it up, and walked away with his nose in the air, saying: "I am sure they are sour."

The Moral

It is easy to despise what you cannot get.

The Goose that Laid the Golden Eggs

One day a countryman going to the nest of his goose found there an egg all yellow and glittering. When he picked it up it was as heavy as lead and he was going to throw it away, because he thought a trick had been played upon him.

But, on second thoughts, he took it home, and soon found to his delight that it was an egg of pure gold.

After that, every morning the same thing occurred, and he soon became rich by

selling his eggs. As he grew richer he grew greedier; and thinking to get all the gold the goose could give at once, he killed it and opened it only to find nothing.

The Moral

Greed often over reaches itself.

!Note - Don't kill the goose that lays the golden egg is now an idiom, which means, don't destroy something that is profitable.

The tortoise and the hare

The hare was once boasting of his speed before the other animals. "I have never yet been beaten," he said, "when I put forth my full speed. I challenge any one here to race with me."

The tortoise said quietly, "I accept your challenge."

"That is a good joke," said the hare; "I could dance round you all the way."

"Keep your boasting till you've beaten me," answered the tortoise. "Shall we race?"

So a course was fixed and a start was made. The hare darted almost out of sight at once, but soon stopped and, to show his contempt for the tortoise, lay down to have a nap.

The tortoise plodded on and plodded on, and when the hare awoke from his nap, he saw the tortoise just near the winning-post and could not run up in time to save the race. Then said the tortoise:

"Plodding (walking slowly) wins the race."

The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing

A wolf found great difficulty in getting at the sheep owing to the vigilance of the shepherd and his dogs. But one day it found the skin of a sheep that had been flayed and thrown aside, so he put it on over his own pelt and strolled down among the sheep.

The lamb that belonged to the sheep, whose skin the wolf was wearing, began to follow the wolf in the sheep's clothing; so, leading the lamb a little apart, he soon made a meal off her, and for some time he succeeded in deceiving the sheep, and enjoying hearty meals.

The Moral

Appearances can be deceptive.