

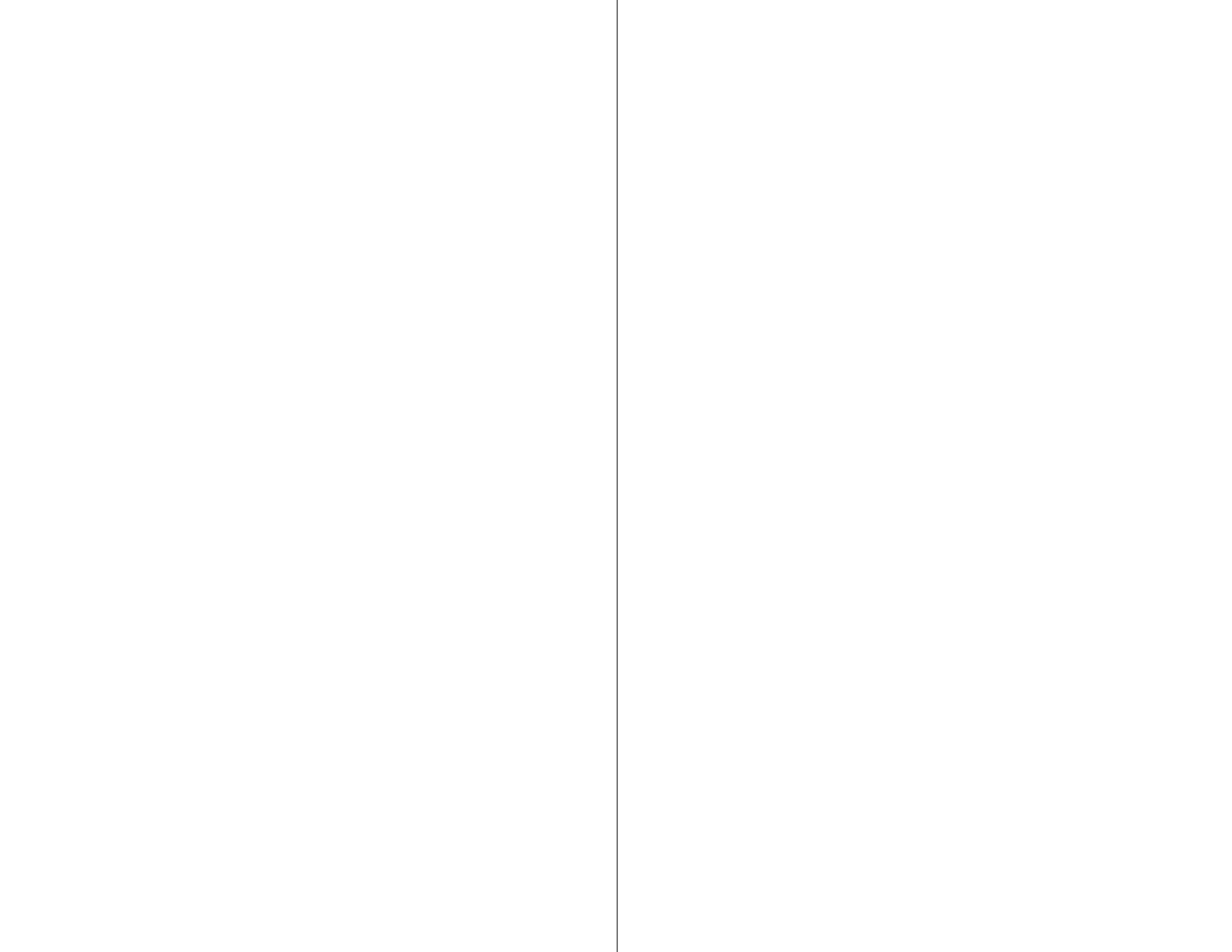
# Aesop's Fables

**In simple English**

The fables of Aesop  
Works from the  
Great Story Reading Project



The Stories First Foundation  
[Storiesfirst.org](http://Storiesfirst.org)





### **The art of Takeo Takei**

Takeo Takei is an illustrator and artist. He was born in 1894 in Japan. He is a famous Japanese artist. He used exaggerated shapes and colors. Takeo created art for children. Some artists thought that children's art was not important. But Takei wanted his art to help children be happy.

It was a difficult time and there were terrible wars in 1914-1918 and 1940-1945. Takei wanted books to help children feel normal.

Takeo Takei died in 1983. All over the world, Takei is celebrated as a great artist.

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Stories of Aesop  
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Edited by Stephen Clarke  
Illustrations by Takeo Takei

While the lion slept, the hunters trapped the lion. The lion woke up in the trap. The lion roared, “Help! Help!.” But the animals did not pay attention. “Anyone? Will anyone help?”

The mouse arrived at the tree to help the lion. “Oh no! You are not big and you cannot help,” said the trapped lion. “Wait and see. I am not big, but I can help,” said the mouse. “I can eat through the trap.” The mouse had sharp teeth. He ate through the trap with his teeth. The lion was free!

“I thought it was impossible, but you helped me! Thank you, Mouse!” said the lion. From that day on, the lion protected the Mouse.

The mouse said. "Oh no, I am sorry, Lion! Please, please, Lion. Do not eat me."

The lion cried, "You walk on me. You wake me up. Then, you say I can not eat you? Ha! I am a lion. I can eat anyone."

"Yes, you are big and you can eat me. But if you let me go, I can help you," said the Mouse.

"Impossible! You are a mouse! You cannot help me," said the big lion. "I can let you go... but do not wake me up again!"

The lion let the mouse go. "Thank you! I will help you someday!" cried the mouse. The mouse walked home. He paid attention and did not walk on the lion!

The days passed, the lion slept under his tree. Hunters arrived. They paid close attention to the great lion because he was so big. But they did not pay attention to the little mouse.



## **The Tortoise and the Hare**

Once there was a hare who thought he was the fastest animal in the forest. He ran around the forest laughing at all the other animals. "Ha ha, you are so slow!" he said. The animals did not like this. They did not like the hare laughing at them.

One day, the hare saw a turtle. The turtle was very, very slow. The hare laughed at the turtle. "Ha ha! You are so slow," said the hare. "You are the slowest animal in the forest!"

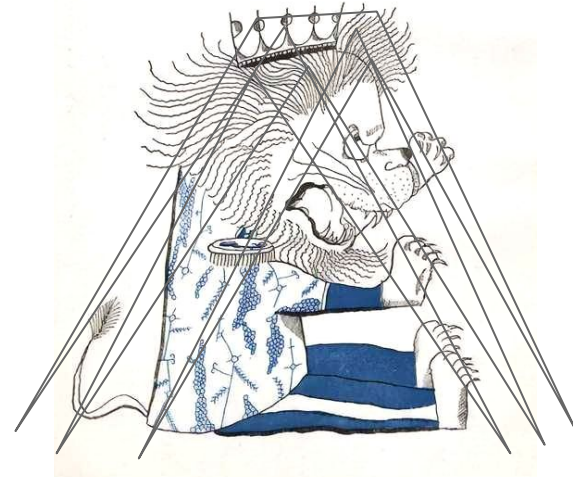
The turtle did not like this. But he had an idea: a race. The turtle said, "I will race you, Hare." But the hare laughed and laughed. "A race? HA! But you are so slow!"

But the turtle was serious. He said, "If I win the race, you will not laugh at me any more."

So, the animals prepared for a race. All the animals of the forest arrived for the race. They said, "3-2-1...Go!"

The hare ran very, very fast! But the turtle was very, very slow. "HA HA, I will win!" said the hare.

Then, the hare arrived at a tree. "I am so fast and the turtle is so slow," said the hare. "I have time for a little sleep." So the hare went to sleep by the tree.



### **The Lion and the Mouse**

Once upon a time, there was a big lion sleeping under a tree. While the lion slept, a little mouse walked up to the lion. The mouse did not pay attention as he walked. By accident, the mouse walked on the lion.

The lion was sleeping, but he woke up with a ROOOAAAR! The big lion was furious! He trapped the mouse. "Why did you walk on me? Why did you wake me? I was so relaxed sleeping under my tree," said the lion.

The days passed. One day, the boy was looking after the sheep. A wolf came into the field. Terrified, the boy panicked. Quickly, he cried, "Wolf! Wolf! A wolf is eating the sheep!"

The boy's parents heard, "Wolf! Wolf!" But this time, the boy's father did nothing. He did not go to the field. Father thought, "My son is a liar. There is no wolf!"

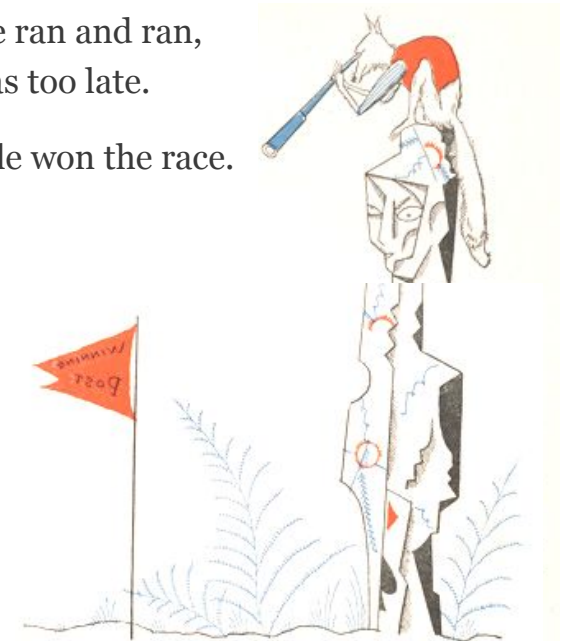
But the wolf was real. Quickly, he ate a delicious sheep. The boy couldn't do anything. He cried and ran away. And the wolf ate all the delicious sheep.

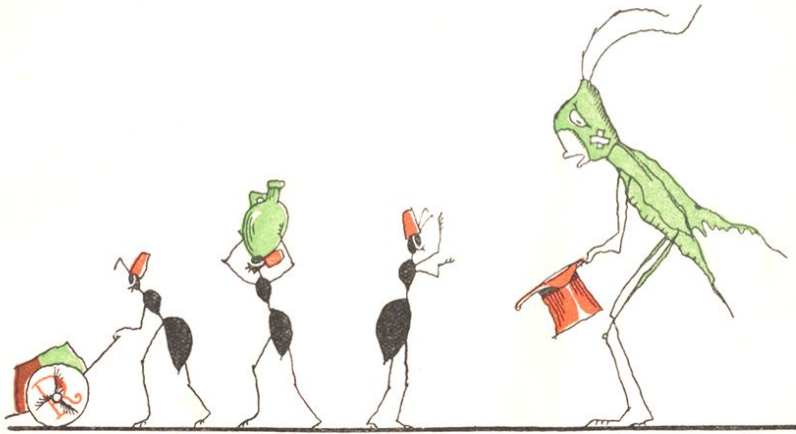
In time, the turtle arrived at the tree. He saw the hare. "Hare is sleeping?" said the turtle. The turtle was surprised, but he went on.

The turtle did not stop. Finally, the turtle saw the finish line. The animals of the forest saw the turtle. "Yeah! The turtle will win!" they cried.

The hare was woken by the cries. "Oh no! The turtle will win!" he said. The hare ran and ran, but it was too late.

The turtle won the race.





### **The Ant and the Grasshopper**

Once there was an ant and a grasshopper. It was Spring. There were many fruits and berries to eat. Every day, the little ant looked for food. He ate only a little. The ant stored food for winter.

Then, the smart little ant made a house. And he stored his food safely in his house.

But the grasshopper did not. He walked in the forest and saw the delicious food. Happily, he ate all the food he saw!

“Save some food,” said the ant. “Winter is coming.” But the grasshopper ignored the ant. He did not store food for winter.

The boy had a mother and father. They were at home. The boy's father heard “Wolf! Wolf!” He panicked and said, “Oh no! A wolf is after my son!”

Quickly, the father ran to the field. He looked and looked for the wolf. But there was no wolf.

The boy laughed, “HA, HA!” His father was not happy. He said, “You are a liar! There is no wolf!”

The father went back home. He was mad at the boy. But soon the days passed. One day, the boy was out in the field. Again, he was bored. Again, he had an idea.

The boy cried, “Wolf! Wolf! A wolf is after the sheep!” But there was no wolf.

The boy's father heard the cries. He panicked. Again, the father ran to the field. He looked and looked, but he did not see the wolf. Then, the boy laughed and laughed. “You're a liar!” said the father. Then he went back home.





### **The Boy Who Cried Wolf**

Once upon a time there was a boy. The boy looked after sheep. All day the sheep ate grass in the field.

The field was quiet. The field was too quiet for the boy. Quickly, the boy got bored. He didn't like looking after the sheep.

The boy was so very bored! But then he had an idea. He cried, "Wolf! Wolf! A wolf is after the sheep!" But there was no wolf.

The grasshopper ate so much food. For some time, the grasshopper was very happy. He did not think about winter.

The little ant saw the grasshopper. "Quick! Make a house," said the ant. "Winter is coming." But again the grasshopper ignored the ant.

Soon winter came. The grasshopper needed a house for the winter, and he needed food. He went to the ant's house and said, "Please let me in your house."

"You did not make a house or store food for winter?" asked the ant. The ant was mad. The grasshopper had ignored him.

"No, you cannot come in. You ignored me," said the ant.

"Please give me some food," said the grasshopper.

"No, you ignored me. You ate all your food," replied the ant. Sadly, the grasshopper went off.



### **The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing**

Once upon a time there was a wolf. The wolf lived near a field. Every day, many sheep ate grass in the field. The wolf saw the sheep. "Oh, they look delicious!" thought the wolf.

The sheep were delicious but a little stupid. They would follow anyone. The sheep followed the farmer. They followed the farmer's little boy. When the sheep were alone, they followed other sheep.

Finally, the crane got the bone. He pulled it out with his beak.

The crane said, "There, I helped you. Now what is the reward?" He imagined treasure of gold, diamonds, or rubies.

"You already got a reward," said the wolf.

The crane was confused. The wolf explained, "The reward is simple: I will not eat you. Many animals go in my mouth. But no animals get out. I did not eat you, and that is reward enough."

So the poor crane went off without a reward.



"Yes, please help! If you help me, I will give you a rich reward," said the wolf.

"What is the problem?" said the crane.

"A bone is stuck in my throat," said the wolf.

"But your beak is long. Put your beak in my throat. Then you can get the bone."

"Put my beak in your throat? I'm nervous. If I do, do you promise not to eat me?" asked the crane.

"Yes, I promise. I will not eat you," said the wolf. The wolf looked terrible. He was turning blue. "You will get a reward. But help me! Please!" said the wolf.

The crane decided to help. So the wolf opened up his mouth. The crane looked in his throat. The wolf was terrifying, and the crane was nervous. But the good crane wanted to help.

Nervously, the crane put his beak in the wolf's throat. He pulled and pulled on the bone, but it was difficult to get out.

The wolf looked from a distance and said, "Ha ha, stupid sheep. You follow anyone, even me."

The wolf went to the field. He wanted to get the delicious sheep to follow him away from the farm. "Follow me, little sheep," he said.

But the sheep were not that stupid. They were naturally afraid of the wolf. The sheep cried "Ba ba!" The farmer heard the cries and ran to the sheep. The wolf ran away.

The next day, the wolf had an idea! The sheep will not follow a wolf, but they will follow an innocent sheep. So the wolf went to the farm. Silently, he attacked one sheep, then he ran away. He ate the sheep's meat, but he protected the sheep's skin. The wolf used its skin as a disguise. The wolf put on the sheep's skin. Now he looked like a sheep.

The next day, the wolf went to the farm. "Follow me, little sheep," he said. This time, the sheep were not afraid. He did not look like a wolf.

The sheep followed the wolf silently. They were not afraid as they left the farm.

The sheep followed the wolf. They were a long distance from the farm. The farmer could not hear them. He could not protect the sheep.

Suddenly, the wolf said, "Ha ha, stupid sheep. You follow anyone. I will eat you all!"

"Ba ha!" cried the sheep sadly. But the farm was a long distance away. The sheep were very afraid of the terrible wolf.

Just by chance, that day was the day of a special celebration. The farmer went to kill one sheep to eat at the celebration.

So the farmer went to the sheep. He looked for the biggest, most delicious sheep to eat. The biggest sheep was actually the wolf.

The farmer raised his axe silently. Whoosh! The axe went down and killed the wolf.

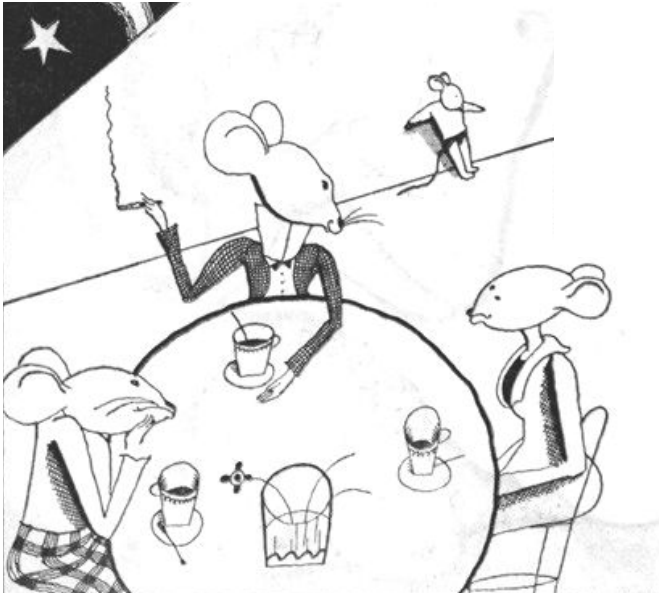


### **The Wolf and the Crane**

There was once a wolf. The wolf was hungry. He ate a large steak. He ate and ate as quickly as possible. He ate the whole steak ... and he ate the bone. The bone was very long. The bone got stuck in his throat.

The wolf panicked and cried "Help! Help!"

The crane saw the wolf. He felt bad for the wolf. He was suffering. Nervously, he went up to the wolf. Then, the crane said, "Want some help, Mr. Wolf?"



Country Mouse said to his friend, “Please come with me to the Country. It is too dangerous in the city.”

But City Mouse loved the city. After a minute, he said, “You like the countryside; I prefer the city. But we are still friends.”

And the two were friends for a long time. They came to see each other; one visited the city and one visited the country.



### **Belling the Cat**

There was once a terrible cat. He attacked a group of mice. The cat wanted to eat all the mice. The mice families -the mothers and babies- were in constant danger.

The mice organized a meeting. A lot of mice, about 100 in all, came to the meeting.

The leader of the mice said, “Thank you for coming. We have a problem: the cat.”



“Oh no! The terrible cat!” cried the mice.

“He ate my baby!” said one sad mother.

“He ate my father!” cried another devastated mouse.

The leader said, “Yes, the cat is terrible. Do we have a solution?”

“Little to eat ?” said Country Mouse. “Do you eat more in the city?”

“Oh yes! We eat a lot!” said City Mouse.

Country Mouse was curious to see the city. So his friend, City Mouse, invited him to visit.

Soon, Country Mouse visited City Mouse. He sat at the table and said, “There is so much to eat, and it is all delicious!” The Country Mouse was very happy. The city was fantastic.

Suddenly, there was a terrible "RRRAAR!"

The door opened violently. A cat stuck its paw in the door. Country Mouse panicked and ran away. He trembled in terror.

But the City Mouse just sat at the table. “It’s nothing,” he said. “The cat is too big. He cannot come in. Come, eat some soup.”



## **The Country Mouse and the City Mouse**

There was once a little Country Mouse. He invited his friend, City Mouse to visit. When City Mouse arrived, he was happy to see his friend.

Country Mouse invited his friend to the table, but City Mouse was sad and surprised. "Oh no, the table is empty!" said City Mouse. "There is not much to eat."

But the mice were silent. "Please help!" said the chief.

"We can attack the cat," said one mouse. But that was a bad idea.

"We can look for a different house," said a second mouse. But that was a bad idea, too.

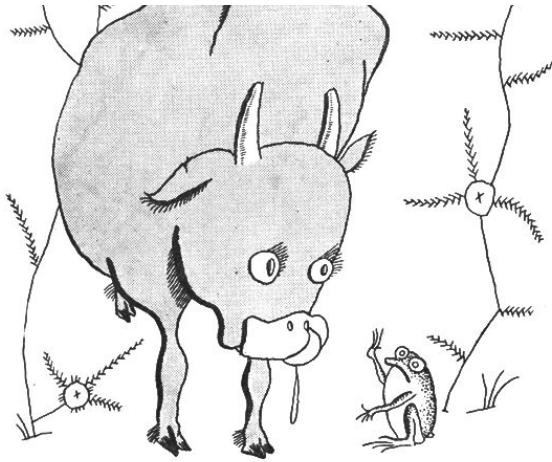
They thought and thought but they had no other solutions. Except for one little mouse.

"We can put a bell on the cat!" said the little mouse. That was an excellent idea. The mice cheered.

"Yes, a bell is a good idea," said the leader. "But who will put it on? Who volunteers?"

"Who will go up to the cat?" said one mouse nervously. "With a loud bell?" said another mouse.

"Yes. Who will volunteer?" said the leader. Then, all were silent. There were no volunteers.



### **The Frog and the Bull**

Once upon a time there was a frog. The frog was small. One day, the small frog was by the river. He saw a bull. It was an enormous animal!

The small frog was jealous. "It's not fair," said the frog. "The bull is so big! I want to be big like that bull."

The frog was jealous. He took a deep breath. The frog said, "HA HA! Now, I'm as big as you."

The bull said, "No, you're small."

The frog was furious. He took a second breath. Then, he said, "Now I am as big as you. I am enormous." The frog was very confident.

But again, the bull was not impressed. She said, "No, you're small."

Finally, the frog took another breath. But the frog's lungs were too small for three big breaths!

Suddenly, the frog exploded. That was the end of the jealous frog.

