



Fables

Retold after the original fables
of Aesop

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Aesop's fables

Introduction:

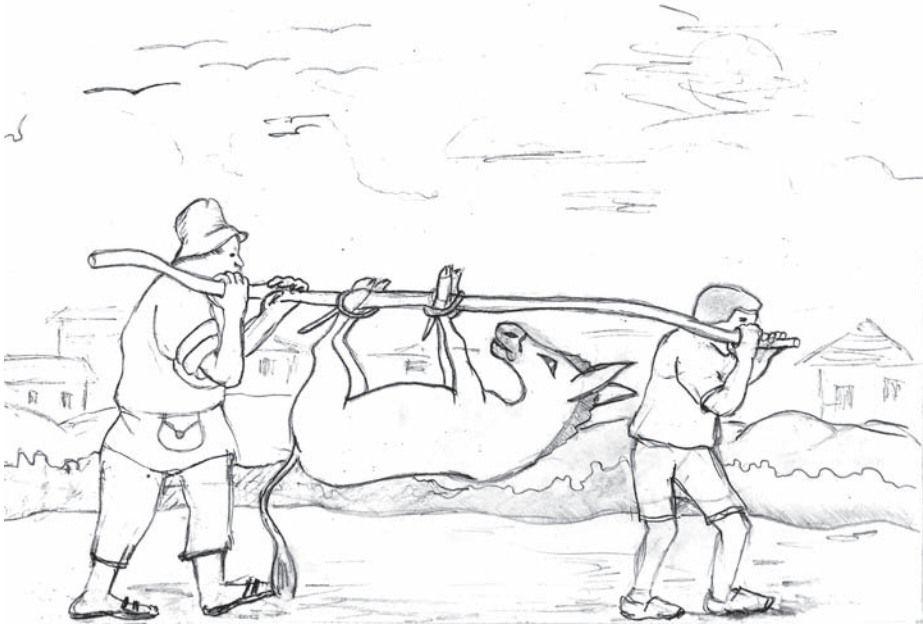
Aesop lived in Greece about 2600 years ago. Many stories exist about his life but the truth is that there are no confirmed facts about him. He has collected many stories in his time and wrote them down. These stories are called fables because they always contain a certain wisdom or moral. In most of them animals play the role of human characters.

The fables are well known all over the world and have entertained and educated innumerable generations. I have tried to adapt the following fables to the Gambian environment.

We can learn something from fables. Fables teach us morals.

Which moral belongs to which fable?

1. Little friends can prove great friends.
2. Nobody believes a liar.
3. Don't give your meat to a flatterer.
4. If you want to do harm, harm will come to you.
5. If you want to please everyone you will please no one.
6. Slow and steady wins the race.
7. It is easy to despise what you cannot get.
8. Pride comes before the fall.



The farmer, his son and the donkey

A farmer decided to sell one of his donkeys. He went to Abuko and took his son along. On the way they met a group of girls who made fun of them.

They said: "You are stupid. You have a donkey and yet you are going on foot."

The farmer climbed on the donkey and they continued until they met a woman with a small child who said: "Why not let the boy ride and you walk, because he is too young and not strong."

The farmer got down and let the boy ride.

Then they met some old men sitting by the roadside. They shouted: "Why are you letting the boy ride and you walk? The young should learn to respect the elders!"

The farmer decided that they should both ride the donkey. Now some boys drinking attaya saw them both on the donkey and said to each other:

"Look at this stupid man. They are too heavy for the donkey. By the time they reach the market the animal will be tired and worthless. They should carry it."

The farmer and his son tied the legs of the donkey to a pole and put the pole on their shoulders. Now all the people laughed so loud that the donkey became afraid and kicked his legs. He broke loose on the bridge, fell into the Lamin Bolong and died.



Sour mangos

Drimmo (bush rat) was passing under a mango tree. He was really hungry and saw that there were some very nice ripe mangos hanging down from the lower branches. It tried to jump up to reach the fruits but as much as he tried he could not jump high enough.

A small bird saw this and said to the bush rat: "Your legs are very short, that is why you should give up. You will never reach those mangos."

The bush rat walked away shouting angrily: "Those mangos looked ripe but now I see that they are very sour. I didn't want them anyway!"



The wolf in the sheepskin

A wolf once thought of a very clever plan. He took the skin of a dead sheep and dressed in it. He said to himself: "Sheep are stupid animals and the shepherd is not so clever either. I will go with them to their compound and in the night I will kill a nice fat ram!"

So he fooled the sheep and even the shepherd and went with them to the compound. In the evening the shepherd closed all the sheep and the wolf in the sheepskin in a hut.

At night the shepherd had some friends visiting and they became hungry. "Why you don't you kill a sheep so we can have a nice meal", said the friends.

The shepherd agreed. He went to the hut and in the dark he thought the wolf was a big sheep.

He took out his knife and killed him.



The fox and the crow

A fox was sitting under a cashew tree. When he looked up he saw a crow in the tree. He had just killed a small chicken and had it in its beak. Now the fox was very hungry and really wanted to eat that chicken. But he could not climb the tree.

"How can I get that chicken?" He said to himself.

He said to the crow: "Good morning, Mr Crow. I am very happy to see you. And how is the family?"

The crow did not answer, because if he opened the beak, the chicken would fall out.

Now the fox said: "I heard you are a very famous singer. People say you are better than Youssou Ndour. Can you sing me a song? Please, I am a big fan of your voice!"

The crow was so proud to hear that. He opened his beak and sang: "Caw, caw, caw...!"

And the chicken fell down. The fox caught it and ate it.



The shepherd boy and the wolf

A shepherd boy used to make fun and cry “Wolf! Wolf!” at night just to see the villagers come running because they wanted to chase the wolf away. Whenever the boy saw them all in a haste, he laughed and told them, that it was just a joke.

One night a real wolf was approaching trying to kill a sheep. The boy saw him and started to yell “Wolf! Wolf!”

But nobody came because all the people in the village thought he was joking again.

So the wolf entered the herd of sheep and killed many.



The two cocks

There were two cocks in the compound. The bigger cock said to the smaller one: “There can only be one if us here. Obviously I am the bigger one and you are smaller. So get out of here before I beat you!”

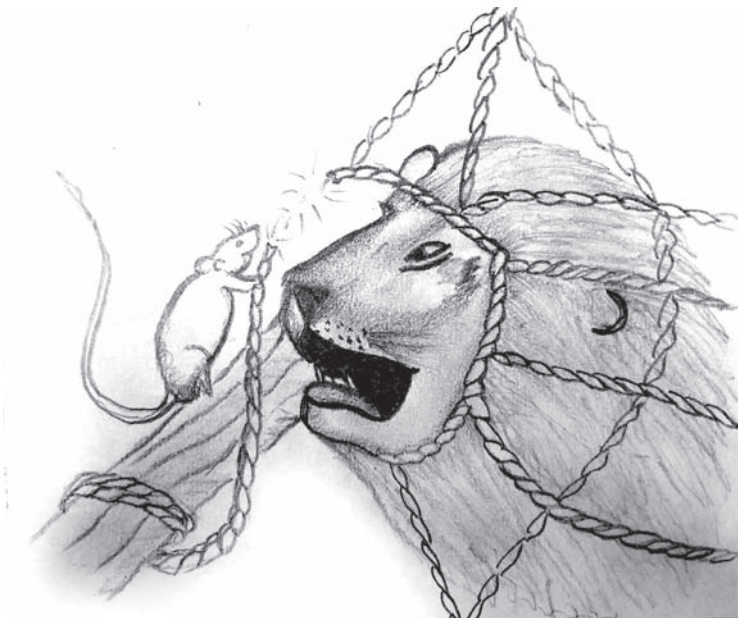
But the smaller one did not mind him and continued to chase the hens. So the bigger one attacked him and they fought violently.

In the end the bigger one won and the smaller one left the compound. Then the winner flew to the roof of the house and started to make a big noise about his success:

“Cockadoodledooo! It’s me! I am the greatest! I am the strongest! I am the king of the compound!”

A mighty eagle heard this. He came down from the sky, killed the cock and took him away.

Then the smaller cock came back.



The lion and the mouse

The big lion was sleeping in the bush. A small mouse came along and started to play with the lion's tail. The lion woke up and caught the mouse with his mighty paw.

"Who are you, little animal, to wake up the king?" He roared.

The mouse said: "I am very sorry, Mr King, I did not know that it was your tail."

"I am going to kill you for that!" replied the lion.

"No, please, please, big boss, don't kill me," begged the mouse.

"One day I will help you, too."

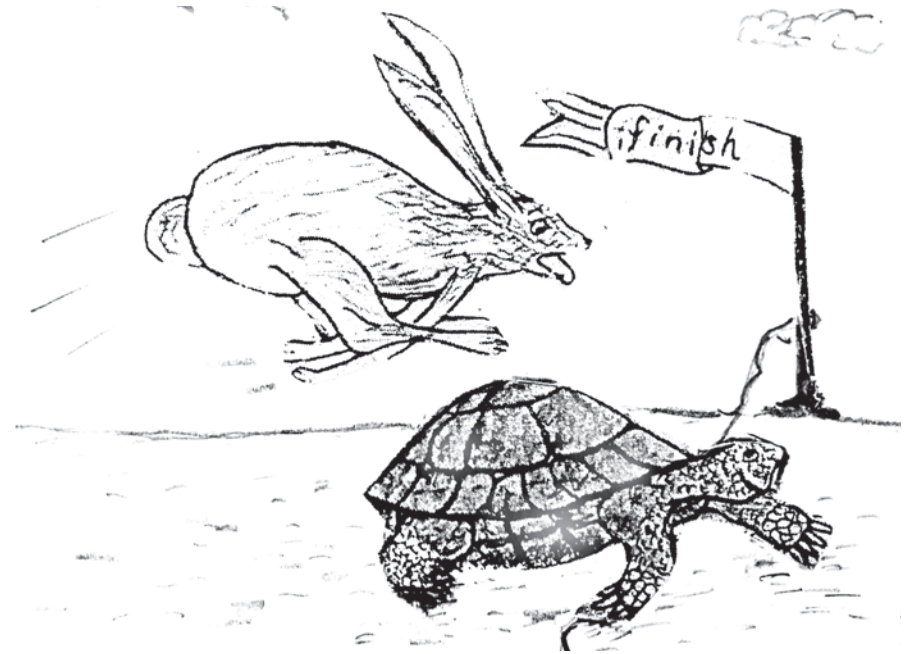
"Ha,ha,ha," laughed the king. "You little nothing! How can you help me?"

But he let the mouse go because it was too small to eat.

A few days later the lion got caught in a net which the hunter had put over a bush. As much as he tried he could not free himself. The mouse came along.

"My little friend", said the lion. "Look at me now! I am caught here and I cannot free myself. I wish you could help me."

"Just wait", said the mouse. With its sharp teeth it gnawed a little hole into the net and made it bigger and bigger until the lion could free himself.



The hare and the tortoise

A hare said to the tortoise: "You are a funny animal. You are so slow that I have to yawn any time I see you walking."

"So this what you think?" answered the tortoise. "If you like we can have a race."

"Hohoho", laughed the hare, "a race! Ok, let's have a race from Westfield to the Arch in Banjul! Any time!"

So they decided to start the race on the next Saturday at ten o'clock. The crow would be the referee.

Saturday came and the crow gave the signal to start the race. He crowed: "One, two, three, go!" And off they went.

At the junction of Old Cape Road the hare was so far ahead that he decided to take a break. He said down under a Baobab tree and fell asleep. When he woke up the sun had gone down already. He jumped up and started to run.

When he reached the Arch the tortoise was already there because he had continued slowly but steadily. The crow declared the tortoise the winner and all the other animals cheered him.