

1 The Hare with many friends

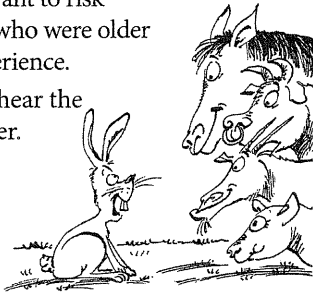
The hare was very popular with the other animals, and they all claimed to be her friends. One day, she heard the sound of some hunting dogs approaching and she needed to get away before they could catch her. She ran to her friends to ask them for help. First, she went to the horse, and asked him to carry her away on his back. But he said that he couldn't because he had some important work to do for his master.

She then went to ask her friend the bull for help as she hoped that he would fight off the dogs with his horns. Unfortunately, the bull couldn't help as he was meeting a cow, who was a friend of his. He suggested that perhaps the goat might be able to help her.

But the goat said he was suffering from a bad back and wouldn't be able to help. As a last resort, she went to speak to her young friend the calf to seek his assistance. However, the calf was also unwilling to help her.

He claimed that he did not want to risk offending her other friends, who were older than him and had more experience.

By this time the hare could hear the dogs getting closer and closer. Desperately, she started running and luckily managed to escape.

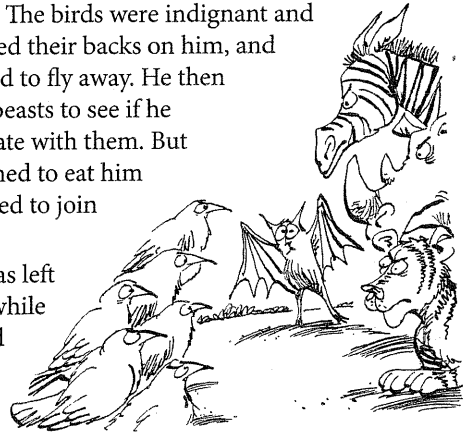


2 The war between the Beasts and the Birds

A great battle was about to take place between the birds and the beasts. When the two armies had come together in order to fight, the bat had a serious dilemma – he didn't know which side to fight on. The birds that passed him said 'Come and fight with us,' but the bat said, 'No, I am a beast,' and stayed where he was. Later on, some beasts who were passing underneath him looked up and said 'Come and fight with us,' but he said, 'No, I am a bird,' and stayed where he was.

Luckily, at the last moment the battle didn't take place and peace was made. So, the bat went to the birds and said that he wanted to join their peace celebrations. The birds were indignant and they all turned their backs on him, and so the bat had to fly away. He then went to the beasts to see if he could celebrate with them. But they threatened to eat him alive if he tried to join the party.

So the bat was left on his own while the birds and the beasts celebrated.



3 The Fox and the Stork

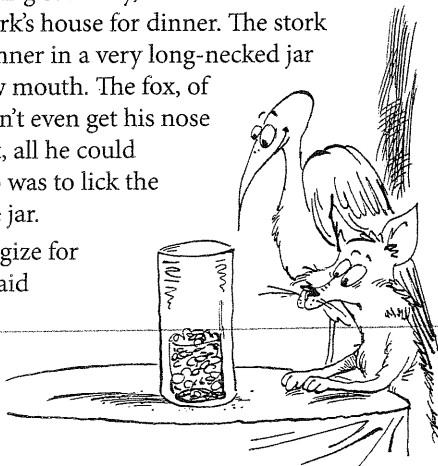
At one time the fox and the stork seemed to be really good friends. So, it was not surprising when, one day, the fox invited the stork to dinner. As a joke, the fox decided to serve up some soup in a very shallow dish. The fox had absolutely no problem eating the soup as he could easily lap it up and drink it, but the stork could only wet the end of her long beak in it. At the end of the meal she was as hungry as she had been at the beginning!

'I am sorry,' said the fox, 'that you don't like the soup.'

'Please don't apologize,' said the stork. 'Come round to my place and have dinner with me next Saturday.'

So, the following Saturday, the fox went to his friend the stork's house for dinner. The stork served the dinner in a very long-necked jar with a narrow mouth. The fox, of course, couldn't even get his nose into it. In fact, all he could manage to do was to lick the outside of the jar.

'I won't apologize for the dinner,' said the stork.



4 The Lion and the Mouse

Once when a lion was asleep, a little mouse began running up and down his body. The lion woke up and was absolutely furious to have had his nap disturbed. His immediate reaction was to put a huge paw on the mouse and to open his big jaws to swallow him. The little mouse was terrified and cried 'I'm sorry, O King. Forgive me this time and I'll never forget your kind pardon. Who knows, maybe one day I'll be able to do something for you!'

The lion laughed at the idea of the mouse being able to do something for him, but as he admired the mouse's bravery, he decided to let him go.

Some time later, the lion was caught in a trap. The hunters tied him to a tree with a piece of rope while they went to fetch their cart. Just then, the little mouse happened to pass by, saw the lion's terrible situation, and bit through the rope to which the lion was tied. The lion was free once again.

