

# A friend in need is a friend indeed

Once upon a time there lived a lion in a forest. One day after a heavy meal. It was sleeping under a tree. After a while, there came a mouse and it started to play on the lion. Suddenly the lion got up with anger and looked for those who disturbed its nice sleep. Then it saw a small mouse standing trembling with fear. The lion jumped on it and started to kill it. The mouse requested the lion to forgive it. The lion felt pity and left it. The mouse ran away.

On another day, the lion was caught in a net by a hunter. The mouse came there and cut the net. Thus it escaped. There after, the mouse and the lion became friends. They lived happily in the forest afterwards.

# A Town Mouse and A Country Mouse

A Town Mouse and a Country Mouse were friends. The Country Mouse one day invited his friend to come and see him at his home in the fields. The Town Mouse came and they sat down to a dinner of barleycorns and roots the latter of which had a distinctly earthy flavour.

The flavour was not much to the taste of the guest and presently he broke out with "My poor dear friend, you live here no better than the ants. Now, you should just see how I fare! My larder is a regular horn of plenty. You must come and stay with me and I promise you shall live on the fat of the land."

So when he returned to town he took the Country Mouse with him and showed him into a larder containing flour and oatmeal and figs and honey and dates.

The Country Mouse had never seen anything like it and sat down to enjoy the luxuries his friend provided. But before they had well begun, the door of the larder opened and some one came in. The two Mice scampered off and hid themselves in a narrow and exceedingly uncomfortable hole. Presently, when all was quiet, they ventured out again. But some one else came in, and off they scuttled again. This was too much for the visitor. "Good bye," said he, "I'm off. You live in the lap of luxury, I can see, but you are surrounded by dangers whereas at home I can enjoy my simple dinner of roots and corn in peace."

# Elephant and Friends

One day an elephant wandered into a forest in search of friends.

He saw a monkey on a tree.

"Will you be my friend?" asked the elephant.

Replied the monkey, "You are too big. You can not swing from trees like me."

Next, the elephant met a rabbit. He asked him to be his friends.

But the rabbit said, "You are too big to play in my burrow!"

Then the elephant met a frog.

"Will you be my friend? He asked.

"How can I?" asked the frog.

"You are too big to leap about like me."

The elephant was upset. He met a fox next.

"Will you be my friend?" he asked the fox.

The fox said, "Sorry, sir, you are too big."

The next day, the elephant saw all the animals in the forest running for their lives.

The elephant asked them what the matter was.

The bear replied, "There is a tiger in the forest. He's trying to gobble us all up!"

The animals all ran away to hide.

The elephant wondered what he could do to solve everyone in the forest.

Meanwhile, the tiger kept eating up whoever he could find.

The elephant walked up to the tiger and said, "Please, Mr. Tiger, do not eat up these poor animals."

"Mind your own business!" growled the tiger.

The elephant has a no choice but to give the tiger a hefty kick.

The frightened tiger ran for his life.

The elephant ambled back into the forest to announce the good news to everyone.

All the animals thanked the elephant.

They said, "You are just the right size to be our friend."

# Hungry Wolf

This is a short story about Hungry Wolf.

Once, a wolf was very hungry. It looked for food here and there. But it couldn't get any. At last it found a loaf of bread and piece of meat in the hole of a tree.

The hungry wolf squeezed into the hole. It ate all the food. It was a woodcutter's lunch. He was on his way back to the tree to have lunch. But he saw there was no food in the hole, instead, a wolf.

On seeing the woodcutter, the wolf tried to get out of the hole. But it couldn't. Its tummy was swollen.

The woodcutter caught the wolf and gave it nice beatings.

# The Clever Crab

There lived a heron by a big lake. He used to catch fish and eat them. But he had become old and could not catch fish like before. He went without food for many days together.

"I have to think of a plan. Otherwise I won't live for long," thought the heron. Soon he came out with a clever plan. The heron sat at the water's edge looking depressed and thoughtful. In the same lake lived a crab who was friendly and thoughtful. As he went past, he noticed how the heron looked and asked him, "Why are you looking depressed my friend?"

"What can I say," said the heron in a sad voice. "Something terrible is going to happen."

"What is that?" asked the crab anxiously.

"When I was on my way here this morning, I heard an astrologer say that there will be no rains in these parts for the next twelve years. The lake will dry up and we will all die. I am quite old. It does not matter if I die. But you all are so young. There is so much for you to see and enjoy," said the heron.

The crab went to the fishes in the lake and told them what the heron had told him. They were all filled with fear. "O no! What do we do? We will all die." they cried.

"There is a very big lake some distance from here. I can take you all there one by one." offered the heron. All the fishes were comforted and they agreed to be carried to the bigger lake one by one.

Every day, the heron would fly the fishes one by one. He would hold one gingerly between his long beak and fly away. But instead of taking them to any lake, he would land on a rock some distance away and eat them. Then he would rest till evening and return to the lake.

After some days, the crab went up to the heron. "You have been taking the fishes to the other lake. When will you take me?" he asked.

The heron thought to himself, "I am tired of eating fish. Crab meat should be a pleasant change."

The heron agreed to take the crab to the other lake.

But the crab was too large for the heron to carry in his beak. So the crab climbed on to the heron's back and they started the journey. After a while, the crab grew impatient.

"How far is the lake?" he asked the heron.

"You fool," laughed the heron. "I am not taking you to any lake. I am going to dash you against those rocks and eat you like I ate all those fishes."

"I am not a fool to allow you to kill me," said the crab.

He held the heron's neck in his powerful claws and strangled the wicked heron to death.

# The Clever Frog

The Deep inside a forest, there was a pond. Many fishes, crabs and frogs lived in the pond. Theirs was a happy and peaceful life.

Among them lived two beautiful fishes named Sahasrabuddhi and Shatabuddhi. They were bigger than the other fishes in the pond. They were very proud of their good looks and intelligence.

In the same pond lived a frog with his wife. His name was Ekkabuddhi. The fishes and frogs were good friends. They all led an undisturbed life.

But one day two fishermen, returning from the river in the forest after fishing, came across the pond. It was late in the evening and as usual all the fishes and frogs were at play. Sahasrabuddhi, Shatabuddhi, Ekkabuddhi and many others joined the game. They leaped high into the air and chased each other. Seeing the beautiful scene the fishermen were amazed and stopped in their tracks.

"How beautiful they look?" said one fisherman.

"Yes. And so many of them too," replied the other.

"The pond does not look very deep," said the first fisherman. "Let us catch some of them."

"It is already very late and we have a heavy load to carry a long way. Let's come back tomorrow," suggested the other fisherman.

Ekkabuddhi turned to the others in the pond and said, "Did you not hear what the fishermen said? We must leave this pond for a safer place."

"Just because two fishermen said they would come back to catch us tomorrow, you want us to leave our home and flee. For all we know, they might not come back," said Sahasrabuddhi.

"Even if they come back to catch us I know a thousand tricks to get away."

"And even if your thousand ways fail, I know another hundred ways to escape," said Shatabuddhi. "We will not let two fishermen scare us away from our me." All the others in the pond agreed with them.

"Well! I know only one trick," said Ekkabuddhi. "To leave the place before danger strikes." Ekkabuddhi and his wife left the pond in search of a safer place. All the fishes, crabs and frogs laughed at them as they left.

The next day the fishermen returned to the pond and cast their net.

"Ouch! This net is too thick for me to bite through," cried Sahasrabuddhi.

"For me too," cried Shatabuddhi. "Only if I could get out, I could do something."

"We should have listened to Ekkabuddhi," cried a fish. "Now we are all doomed."

The fishermen caught them all and put all the fishes, frogs and crabs into a big basket and took them away.

Ekkabuddhi, hiding behind a boulder with his wife turned to her and said,

"If I had not acted in time, we would also be in that basket with the others."

# The crane and the snake

In a forest close to the river bank there lived a crane with his wife. They were very unhappy. Every time the wife laid eggs in their nest, a big black cobra who lived in a hollow in the tree, would eat them up. The crane had a friend the crab. He went to his friend the crab and shared his misery. "I feel so hopeless....That sneaking thief has eaten our eggs again," complained the crane angrily.

"Don't worry," said the crab comfortingly. "You need not be hopeless when you have a friend like me. We will come up with a solution."

The crab sat to think of a plan. Suddenly he jumped up and rushed to the crane.

"Friend, I have a wonderful plan," said the crab and whispered something into the crane's ear.

The crane flew back to his nest and told his wife all about the crab's plan. He was very excited.

"Are you sure this will work?" asked the wife.

"I hope we are not making a mistake. Think twice before going ahead with the plan."

But the crane was eager to try out the plan. The crane flew down to the river bank and began to fish. He caught several little fishes and went down to the hole in which a mongoose lived. He dropped a fish at the mouth of the hole. Then he took another fish and dropped it a little further away from the first one. Repeating this, he made a trail of fishes leading to the tree where his nest was.

The mongoose smelt the fish and came out of the hole. "Ah, a fish!" exclaimed the mongoose joyfully and quickly ate it up. He then followed the trail of fishes. As he neared the tree where the cranes and the snake lived, the trail ended. Finding no more fishes, he looked around.

Suddenly he came across the black cobra at the foot of the tree. Seeing the mongoose, the cobra fought for his life. Both fought for a long time and in the end the mongoose killed the snake. The cranes who were watching the fight from their nest sighed with relief.

The next day the mongoose began to follow the same trail hoping to find more food. When he came to the tree where the trail ended, he decided to climb the tree in search of food.

The cranes who were away at the river bank returned to find the mongoose climbing down the tree. On looking in their nest, they discovered that this time, the mongoose had eaten up all their eggs.

"Alas! We got rid of one enemy only to find another," said the crane to his wife.

# The crow and the necklace

Once a crow and his wife built their nest atop a huge banyan tree beside a river. They were very happy there. But when the female crow laid her eggs, they were in for an unpleasant shock. A huge snake who lived in a hole at the bottom of the tree came up and ate all their beautiful eggs.

The crows were helpless with anger and pain. "You can't let this wicked snake eat our children anymore," cried the female crow bitterly. "You have to find a way to save them from him," she said.

"Let us go to our friend the jackal. He is very clever. He will surely be able to help us with a solution," said the male crow.

They both flew to the cave in the forest where their friend the jackal lived. The jackal saw them coming. "Hello my friends. Why do you look so sad and worried? Can I help you in any way?" he asked.

"Every time my wife lays eggs in our nest, a wicked snake living at the foot of the tree eats them up," explained the crow.

"We want to get rid of him and save our children. Please tell us what we can do."

The jackal thought for some time. "I know what you should do," said the jackal and he told the plan to the crows.

It was a habit of the queen to come with her maids for a bath to the river. When they did so, they removed all their clothes and jewels and placed them on the river bank. On the following day the queen and her maids as usual entered the river.

"You know what to do right?" asked the crow to his wife. "Yes," she answered.

Both of them flew over the pile of clothes and jewels. The female crow swiftly picked up a precious pearl necklace in her beak. At the same time the male crow began to caw loudly to gain the attention of the queen and her maids.

"Oh, those crows have taken my pearl necklace," cried the queen. "Guards!" she cried. "Get that necklace back from those pesky crows." Her guards chased the crows shouting loudly.

The crows flew straight to the banyan tree with the guards close behind. Hearing all the noise, the snake came out of his hole at the foot of the tree. Immediately, the female crow dropped the necklace right where the snake was.

"Look out! There is a huge snake near the necklace," alerted one guard. Before the snake could realise what was happening, the guards attacked him with sharp spears and killed him. The guards then picked up the necklace and took it back to their queen.

The crows thanked their friend the jackal for helping them get rid of their enemy. They lived happily with their children.



# The donkey who would sing

A wild donkey once lived in the woods. He had no friends and lived all alone. One day a jackal passing by saw the donkey. He went up to the donkey and said, "What is the matter? Why do you look so sad my dear fellow?"

The donkey turned to the jackal and said, "I have no friends and am very lonely."

"Well, don't worry. I will be your friend from today," the jackal comforted him.

From that day, the donkey and jackal became very good friends. They were always seen together.

One moonlit evening, the jackal and the donkey were strolling through the woods. It was a cool and pleasant evening. As they walked on, they came to the outskirts of a village bordering the woods. There in front of them was a grove of fruit trees.

"Ah. Look! How wonderful and delicious the fruits look," said the donkey. "Let's eat some of them."

"Okay," said the jackal. "But let's do it very quietly."

They entered the grove and silently started to eat the fruits. After eating enough, they lay under a tree happy and content. "That was delicious, but there is something missing tonight," said the donkey.

"What is that?" asked the jackal. "Why, music of course," answered the donkey, looking a little surprised.

The jackal asked, "Where are we going to get music from?" The donkey said. "Don't you know that I am an accomplished singer?"

The jackal was alarmed. "Remember, we are in an orchard. If the farmer hears us, we will be in trouble. If you want to sing let us go away from here," he advised the donkey.

"You think I can't sing, don't you?" asked the donkey in a hurt voice.

"Wait till you hear me."

The jackal realised that the donkey was not willing to take his good advice. He moved away and hid himself behind a clump of trees. The donkey threw back his head and started his song. "He ...haw, hee-haw," he brayed aloud. The farmers hearing the loud braying came rushing with sticks and gave the foolish donkey a severe beating that left the donkey feeling sore all over.

After the farmers had left, the jackal went over to his friend. He said. "Is this the prize you won for your singing?"

"They don't appreciate good music," replied a hurt and ashamed donkey.

The jackal replied. "This is what happens when you don't listen to the advice given by a good friend. I hope you have learnt a lesson."

# The faithful mongoose

Once there lived a kind Brahmin in a small village with his wife. They had a little son. One day, as he was returning home from a nearby village, he came across a baby mongoose crying next to its mother's dead body.

"Oh! poor creature," thought the Brahmin. "If I leave it here it will surely die." He picked it up and took it home with him.

"Gowri, I found this little creature on my way home. Let us take care of him," he said to his wife. "Very well along with our son, I will take care of the mongoose also," replied his wife. The mongoose grew up with a lot of love and care in the Brahmin's house. He slept next to the Brahmin's son in the cradle, drank milk and played with the boy everyday. The baby mongoose's days were full of joy in the Brahmin's house. As both the boy and the mongoose grew up, their friendship changed to a relationship between two brothers. The mongoose grew up fast and as days went by, the Brahmin's wife began to get doubts in her mind. "After all, this is a wild animal. Sooner or later it will show its true colours," she thought to herself. She put the mongoose's bed separately and would watch him carefully when ever he played with her son.

One day when the Brahmin was away. Gowri decided to go to the river to fetch a pot of water. She looked around and saw her son sound asleep in his cradle. The mongoose was also asleep on the floor at the foot of the cradle. This should take only a few moments I hope I can trust that mongoose not to harm my little son," she said to herself and after a final look at them both she hurried down to the river.

Suddenly, the mongoose woke up with a start. He had heard a very faint noise. Looking up, the mongoose saw a large black snake crawling in through a hole in the wall.

"The snake will harm my brother. Mother and father are away. I will have to protect my little brother," thought the mongoose, as the snake came slithering towards the cradle. The brave little mongoose pounced on the huge black snake. After a long, ferocious fight, the little mongoose finally managed to kill the snake. Just then, he heard the Brahmin's wife returning. Joyfully, he ran out to meet his mother and tried telling her through his little animal signs that he had protected his little brother from a dreadful snake. But as soon as Gowri saw blood on the mongoose's mouth and paws, she thought, "This wretched animal has killed my little son." In a fit of anger the Brahmin's wife threw the pot full of water on the mongoose killing him instantly. Entering the house with a heavy heart, she was amazed to see her little son lying in his cradle still deep in sleep. On the floor was a huge black snake with its ugly head bitten off.

"Oh what have I done," cried the Brahmin's wife. "I killed that faithful little mongoose who saved the life of my precious son."

# The jackal and the war drum

Once in a forest there lived a jackal named Gomaya. He was too lazy to hunt for his food. He often chased away younger jackals who would catch a prey and eat it himself.

All the other jackals were upset with him. They all got together and decided to get rid of Gomaya. None of them was as big as he, and could not challenge him individually. "This is getting beyond control," said one jackal.

"We make all the effort and kill a prey and Gomaya comes and claims it."

"I have an idea," said another jackal.

"We will take turns catching prey. And while one of us has his food, the others together will keep Gomaya away. He is no match for all of us."

Things became very difficult for Gomaya after that. He could no longer snatch food from the other jackals. They all attacked him together and chased him away. They would not even allow him to hunt in that part of the forest any more.

Gomaya wandered far away into another part of the forest. At last he came to the farthest part of the forest. By now, he had not eaten for many days. He was feeling very weak and tired. "I have to find some food soon or else I will die," he thought. As he wandered around, he came to an abandoned battle field.

Suddenly, there was a loud and frightening noise. "Bang! Bang! Bang!"

Gomaya was filled with fear and turned and ran away as fast as he could. After running a short distance, Gomaya stopped. He could still hear the sound. But it was not coming closer. "I must be brave and find out what is causing that terrible sound," he decided. Gomaya slowly went back to the battle field. His heart was full of dread, but he decided to be brave.

When he got there, Gomaya sighed with relief. The sound was being made by a harmless old war drum lying beside a tree in the abandoned battle field. Every time the wind blew, the lower branches of the tree would brush against the drum making a loud noise.

Gomaya was thrilled to find a lot of food lying near the war drum. He ate heartily till his stomach was full.

"What a fool I would have been if I had run away in fear and missed all this delicious food," thought the jackal.

# The lion and the hare

Once in a forest there lived a lion who was very proud of his strength. He would kill any animal which came in his way just for fun. All the animals in the forest were worried about their survival.

"If the lion keeps this up, none of us will be left in the forest," said the bear.

"He kills much more than he really needs to," squeaked the little hare.

"We have to come up with something to stop this massacre," said the monkey. So they all joined together and went to meet the lion.

"O king of the forest, we have come to make a small request," they all said to the lion.

"Now what would that be?" asked the amused lion.

"You are the king of the forest, but soon there will be no animals to rule over. So we beg you to stop this unreasonable killing and we promise that one of us will come to you everyday for your food," pleaded all the animals with the lion.

So from that day, the animals drew lots to decide on who was to go to the lion as his prey.

One day, the lots fell on the hare to visit the lion. All the animals consoled him and sent him on his way to meet his doom. But the hare was a clever animal. He did not want to die at the hands of the cruel lion. He saw an old well on the way. It was very deep and was a danger for all the animals. He thought of a plan.

The little hare went to sleep near the well all day. In the evening, he made his way to the lion's den. The lion was terribly hungry by then and when he saw a tiny hare coming towards him, he became furious.

"You little thing, how dare you come so late? How dare they send such a small animal? I will kill them all," the angry lion roared.

"It is not my fault, O mighty lion. There were three other hares with me. But on the way here, another lion attacked us. I just managed to escape. The other three hares were eaten by that lion," said the hare.

"What? Another lion in my jungle? Take me to him immediately," said the lion in a fit of rage.

The hare took the lion to the well and pointed it out to him from a distance. The other lion jumped out at us from inside the well when we tried to drink some water from the well. The lion rushed angrily to the well and peeped in.

There inside the well he could see another lion glaring at him. What the foolish lion did not realise in his anger was that he was looking at his reflection. He roared angrily at the other lion. He heard an answering roar. It was only the echo of his own roar. But the lion thought that the other lion was challenging him. He jumped in and landed inside with a loud splash. And that was the end of the wicked lion.

# The lazy dreamer

Once, in a small village, there lived a poor Brahmin. He was very learned, but did nothing all day. He lived on the alms the villagers gave him every day.

One day, as usual, the Brahmin got up in the morning, performed his morning rituals and set out to beg for alms. As he went from door to door, people gave him several things. Some gave dal. Others gave him rice and yet others gave him vegetables. But one generous lady gave the Brahmin a large measure of flour.

"Ah! What good luck. I will not have to beg for alms for a long time," thought the Brahmin to himself.

He went home and cooked his lunch. After he had eaten, the Brahmin put the flour into a large mud pot and hung it near his bed. "Now, it will be safe from rats," he said to himself as he lay down in his cot for an afternoon nap.

He began to think, "I will save this flour until there is a famine. Then I will sell it at a very good price. With that, I will buy a pair of goats. Very soon, I will have a large flock of goats. With their milk, I will make more money. Then I will buy a cow and a bull. Very soon I will also have a large herd of cows. Their milk will fetch me a lot of money. I will become very wealthy. I will build for myself, a huge palace and get married to a beautiful woman... Then we will have a little son. I will be a proud father. In a few months my son will start crawling. He will be mischievous and I will be very worried that he may come to some harm. I will call out to my wife to take care of him. But she will be busy with house work and will ignore my call. I will get so angry. I will kick her to teach her a lesson like this..."

The Brahmin threw out his leg up. His foot hit the pot of flour hanging overhead and it came down with a resounding crash, spilling the flour all over the dirty floor. The lazy Brahmin realised that his foolishness and vanity had cost him a precious measure of flour. The laziness and foolishness taught him a lesson. Thereafter he lived an active life which took to heights.

The other animals were astonished to hear their heaven sent king howl like a common jackal. And soon they realised their mistake.

"This is no extraordinary animal sent by Brahma. He howls like a jackal," said the bear. "Yes. He is calling out to the other jackals." "He has fooled us." "He has to be punished," said several other animals. "Come let's teach him a lesson." The animals joined together and gave the indigo jackal a severe beating.

# The foolish lion

In a forest there lived a lion. He had grown old and could not run fast anymore. As days went by it became more and more difficult for him to hunt. One day while he was wandering through the forest in search of food, he came across a cave. He peeped in and smelt the air inside the cave. "Some animal must be staying here," he said to himself. He crept inside the cave only to find it empty. "I will hide inside and wait for the animal to return," he thought.

The cave was the home of a jackal. Everyday, the jackal would go out in search of food and return to the cave in the evening to rest. That evening, the jackal after having his meal started towards home. But as he came closer, he felt something wrong. Everything around him very quiet. "Something is wrong," the jackal said to himself. "Why are all the birds and insects so silent?"

Very slowly and cautiously, he walked towards his cave. He looked around him, watching for any signs of danger. As he got closer to the mouth of the cave, all his instincts alerted him of danger. "I have to make sure that everything is alright," thought the jackal. Suddenly, he thought of a plan. The clever jackal called out to the cave. "Hello my good cave, what happened to you today? Why are you so quiet?"

The jackal's voice echoed deep inside the cave. The lion, who by now could control his hunger no longer, thought to himself, "I think it is because I am here that the cave is silent. Before the jackal realises that something is wrong, I should do something."

The jackal continued to call out, "Have you forgotten our agreement cave? You are supposed to greet me when I return home." The lion tried to make his voice sound hollow and called out from within the cave, "Welcome home my friend."

The birds chirped loudly and flew away on hearing the lion's roar. As for the jackal, he shook with fear. Before the hungry lion could pounce on him and eat him up, the jackal ran for his dear life as fast as his legs could carry him.

The lion waited for a long while for the jackal to enter the cave. But when the jackal did not come in, the lion realised that he had been fooled. He cursed himself for his foolishness that made him lose a prey.

# The snake and the foolish frogs

Once a snake who had grown weak with old age came across a pond where many frogs lived with their king, queen and little prince. The snake had not eaten for many days. He tried to catch some of the frogs, but was too weak to catch any of them. "I will have to think of some solution or I will soon die," the snake thought.

Just then he saw the frog prince and his friends. They were busy in their game and did not notice the snake. When they came very close, one of them saw the snake and jumped up, "Oh, a snake," he shouted in fear. All of them ran for their lives. But when the snake did not move, the frog prince went up to it. The snake still did not move. "Let me see if he is dead?" said the frog prince and knocked on the snake's head and jumped away quickly. The snake slowly opened its eyes and said, "Do not worry. I will not get angry no matter what you do."

The frogs were very surprised. "I once bit a sage's son," explained the snake. "The sage got angry and cursed me that I would carry frogs on my back for the rest of my life."

Hearing this, the frog prince jumped up with joy. "Then I will ride on your back," he said. So the frog prince jumped on top of the snake and commanded, "Take me to my parents."

The king and the queen were amazed at the sight. "Father, look, I am riding a snake," shouted the prince. "Let us also ride the snake," the queen urged the frog king. So they all sat on the snake.

"You are moving very slowly," complained the prince. "What can I do," answered the snake sadly. "I have not eaten for several days."

"Why have you not eaten? The royal mount should be fast and strong," said the king.

"I can eat only with your permission," answered the snake.

"Your subjects are my food." "How can I permit you to eat us?" asked the king. "Not the royal frogs," explained the snake. "I cannot permit you to eat my subjects," said the frog king.

The prince was upset and cried. "Father, please permit him. I don't want to lose him."

Even the queen spoke up. "Do permit the snake. How many frogs can he eat anyway? We have many subjects."

At last the king had to grant permission. The snake began to eat many frogs every day. Soon he was very strong and healthy. Now, he moved very quickly. The prince was thrilled to ride a snake that moved so fast. One day the snake went to the frog king. "I am hungry O king. There are no more frogs left in the pond. So now I am going to eat you all."

And the wicked snake pounced on all the three royal frogs and ate them up.

# The swans and the turtle

There was a lake at the outskirts of a small village. Two swans and a turtle who were good friends lived in the lake. They would play with each other and pass time telling stories.

One year, there were no rains and the lake started drying up.

"The lake is almost dry. We have to find some other place to live," said the turtle to the swans. "We will fly around and look for a suitable place," said the swans. Both the swans flew in different directions in search of a better place to live. A little distance away, one of the swans spotted a large lake. It had plenty of water and there were many fishes in it. He flew back to tell the others.

The three of them were very excited with the find. "Wow! Now we won't have any problem," said the turtle.

"There is only one problem," replied one swan. "The two of us can fly there in no time. But you crawl very slowly. And it is some distance away. You will never reach there."

The turtle thought for some time. Suddenly his face lit up. "I have an idea," he said. "You bring me a stick. I will hold the center of the stick in my mouth. Both of you can hold the stick on either side. That way you can fly me with you to our new home."

"It is a very good idea, but you have to make sure you do not open your mouth for any reason. If you do, you will fall to your death," warned one of the swans.

The turtle agreed.

"Remember what we told you," reminded the swans as they got ready to fly. Soon they were flying high in the sky. They had to fly over the village to get to the lake. As they flew over the village, people ran out into the streets to look at this amazing sight.

"What clever birds. They are carrying a turtle on a stick!" exclaimed one man. Every one was excited to see such an amazing sight.

"It was my idea. I am the clever one. I need to let them know," thought the turtle. He opened his mouth to explain, but before the foolish turtle could say anything, he fell with a thud and died.

The swans looked down at their dead friend and shook their heads bitterly at his foolishness. "If he had kept his mouth shut, he would be alive and happy with us," said one swan to the other as they landed at the big lake which would be their home from then on.



# Two goats

There were two goats.

Over a river there was a very narrow bridge.

One day a goat was crossing this bridge.

Just at the middle of the bridge he met another goat.

There was no room for them to pass.

"Go back," said one goat to the other, "There is no room for both of us".

"Why should I go back?" said the other goat. "Better you must go back."

"You must go back", said the first goat, "because I am stronger than you."

"You are not stronger than I", said the second goat.

"We will see about that", said the first goat and he put down his horns to fight.

"Stop!" said the second goat.

"If we fight, we shall both fall into the river and be drowned and instead I have a plan. I shall lie down and you may walk over me."

Then the wise one laid down on the bridge and the other goat walked highly over him.

So they crossed the bridge comfortably and went on their ways.

# Who bell the cat?

A rat and its big family were living in a baker's shop. They scraped the buns and cakes in the bakery.

The baker tried his best to put an end to the nuisance of the rats. But all were in vain. At last he brought their real enemy-the cat to solve the problem.

In the very next day the cat got some tiny rats for its breakfast. The rat family got worried of the loss of their dear ones.

They arranged a meeting soon. They looked for an idea to escape from the cat. In the end, they decided to bell the cat.

Then one of the elder rats asked them, who is ready to bell the cat? Nobody said yes.

Instead they kept quiet.