



SHORT STORIES

for kids



The Fox and the Grapes



One afternoon, a fox was walking through the forest and spotted a bunch of grapes hanging from a lofty branch. "Just the thing to quench my thirst," said the fox.

Taking a few steps back, the fox jumped and just missed the hanging grapes. Again, the fox took a few paces back and tried to reach them, but still failed.

Finally, giving up, the fox turned up his nose and said, "They're probably sour anyway." Then he walked away.

MORAL: IT'S EASY TO DESPISE WHAT YOU CANNOT HAVE.

The Boy who cried 'Wolf'



Once there was a shepherd boy, who had to look after a flock of sheep. One day, he felt bored and decided to play a trick on the villagers. He shouted, "Help! Wolf! Wolf!"

The villagers heard his cries and rushed out of the village to help the shepherd boy. When they reached him, they asked, "Where is the wolf?"

The shepherd boy laughed loudly, "Ha, Ha, Ha! I fooled you all. I was only playing a trick on you."

A few days later, the shepherd boy played the trick again.

He cried, "Help! Help! Wolf! Wolf!" Again, the villagers rushed up the hill to help him and again they found that the boy had tricked them. They were very angry with him for being so naughty.

Then, sometime later, a wolf really went into the field. The wolf attacked one sheep, and then another and another. The shepherd boy ran towards the village shouting, "Help! Help! Wolf! Help! Somebody!"

The villagers heard his cries but they laughed because they thought it was just another trick.

The boy ran to the nearest villager and said, "A wolf is attacking the sheep. I lied before, but this time it is true!"

Finally, the villagers went to look. It was true. They could see the wolf running away and many dead sheep lying on the grass.

Moral: We may not believe someone who often tells lies, even when he tells the truth.

The Lion and the Mouse



Once when a lion, the king of the jungle, was asleep, a little mouse began running up and down on him. This soon awakened the lion, who placed his huge paw on the mouse, and opened his big jaws to swallow him.

"Pardon, O King!" cried the little mouse. "Forgive me this time. I shall never repeat it and I shall never forget your kindness. And who knows, I may be able to do you a good turn one of these days!"

The lion was so tickled by the idea of the mouse being able to help him that he lifted his paw and let him go.

Sometime later, a few hunters captured the lion, and tied him to a tree. After that they went in search of a wagon, to take him to the zoo.

Just then the little mouse happened to pass by. On seeing the lion's plight, he ran up to him and gnawed away the ropes that bound him, the king of the jungle.

"Was I not right?" said the little mouse, very happy to help the lion.

MORAL: Small acts of kindness will be rewarded greatly.

The Monkey and the Dolphin



One day long ago, some sailors set out to sea in their sailing ship. One of them brought his pet monkey along for the long journey.

When they were far out at sea, a terrible storm overturned their ship. Everyone fell into the sea, and the monkey was sure that he would drown. Suddenly a dolphin appeared and picked him up.

They soon reached the island and the monkey came down from the dolphin's back. The dolphin asked the monkey, "Do you know this place?"

The monkey replied, "Yes, I do. In fact, the king of the island is my best friend. Do you know that I am actually a prince?"

Knowing that no one lived on the island, the dolphin said, "Well, well, so you are a prince! Now you can be a king!" The monkey asked, "How can I be a king?"

As the dolphin started swimming away, he answered, "That is easy. As you are the only creature on this island, you will naturally be the king!"

Moral: Those who lie and boast may end up in trouble



A Glass of Milk



There once was a poor boy who spent his days going door-to-door selling newspapers to pay for school. One day, as he was walking his route, he started feeling low and weak. The poor boy was starving, so he decided to ask for food when he came to the next door.

The poor boy asked for food but was denied every time, until he reached the door of a girl. He asked for a glass of water, but seeing his poor state, the girl came back with a glass of milk. The boy asked how much he owed her for the milk, but she refused payment.

Years later, the girl, who was now a grown woman, fell sick. She went from doctor to doctor, but no one was able to cure her. Finally, she went to the best doctor in town.

The doctor spent months treating her until she was finally cured. Despite her happiness, she was afraid she couldn't afford to pay the bill. But, when the hospital handed her the bill, it read, 'Paid in full, with a glass of milk.'

The Moral
No good deed goes unrewarded.

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The Farmer & the Well



One day, a farmer was looking for a water source for his farm, when he bought a well from his neighbor. The neighbor, however, was cunning. The next day, as the farmer came to draw water from his well, the neighbor refused to let him take any water.

When the farmer asked why, the neighbor replied, “I sold you the well, not the water,” and walked away. Distraught, the farmer went to the emperor to ask for justice. He explained what had happened.

The emperor called on Birbal, one of his nine, and wisest, courtiers. Birbal proceeded to question the neighbor, “Why don’t you let the farmer take water from the well? You did sell the well to the farmer?”

The neighbor replied, “Birbal, I did sell the well to the farmer but not the water within it. He has no right to draw water from the well.”

Birbal said, “Look, since you sold the well, you have no right to keep the water in the farmer’s well. Either you pay rent to the farmer, or take it out immediately.” Realizing that his scheme had failed, the neighbor apologized and went home.

The Moral

*Cheating will not get you anything.
If you cheat, you’ll pay soon enough.*

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A Wise Old Owl



There was an old owl who lived in an oak tree. Every day, he observed incidents that occurred around him.

Yesterday, he watched as a young boy helped an old man carry a heavy basket. Today, he saw a young girl shouting at her mother. The more he saw, the less he spoke.

As the days went on, he spoke less but heard more. The old owl heard people talking and telling stories.

He heard a woman saying an elephant jumped over a fence. He heard a man saying that he had never made a mistake.

The old owl had seen and heard what happened to people. There were some who became better, some who became worse. But the old owl in the tree had become wiser, each and every day.

The Moral

*Be more observant. Talk less and listen more.
This will make us wise.*

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The Proud Rose



Once upon a time, in a desert far away, there was a rose who was so proud of her beautiful looks. Her only complaint was growing next to an ugly cactus.

Every day, the beautiful rose would insult and mock the cactus on his looks, all while the cactus remained quiet. All the other plants nearby tried to make the rose see sense, but she was too swayed by her own looks.

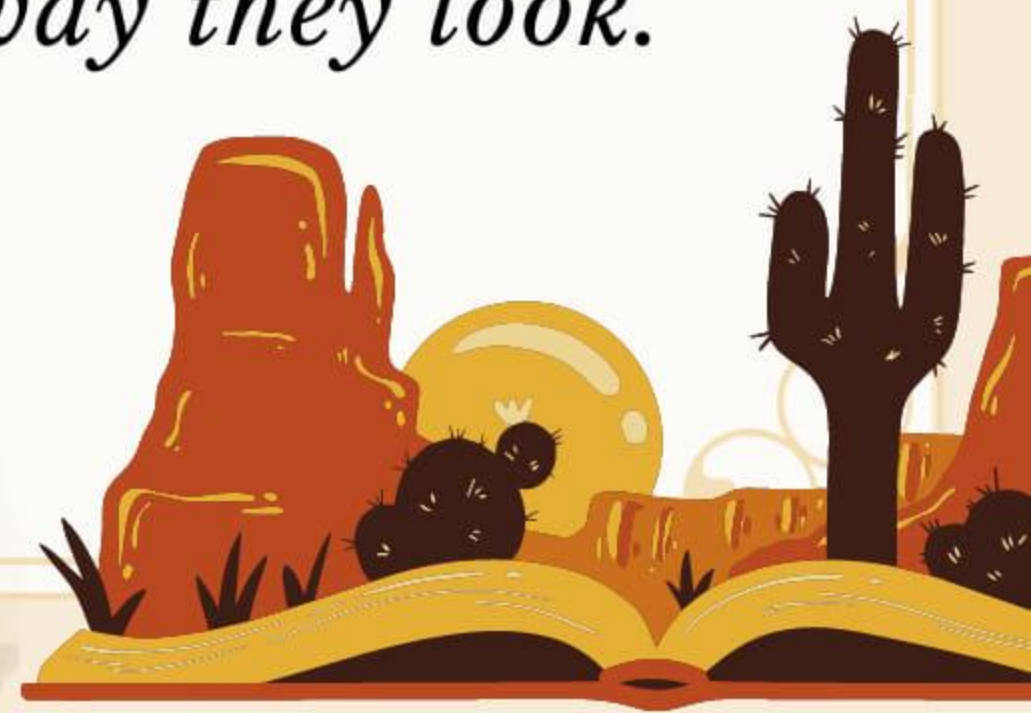
One scorching summer, the desert became dry, and there was no water left for the plants. The rose quickly began to wilt. Her beautiful petals dried up, losing their lush color.

Looking to the cactus, she saw a sparrow dip his beak into the cactus to drink some water. Though ashamed, the rose asked the cactus if she could have some water. The kind cactus readily agreed, helping them both through the tough summer, as friends.

The Moral
Never judge anyone by the way they look.

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The Empty Pot



An emperor in China decides to choose his successor by organizing a contest.

He asks contestants to grow a flower and the most appealing flower will win the contest.

Ping works hard with persistence, however, he fails to grow a flower. But he honestly presents his empty pot in front of the emperor and gets the reward for his honest approach.

The Moral

Honesty is the best policy in life, even if you have to disappoint some people.

