

## THE TURTLE AND THE DEER

*An Aesop Fable in a New Setting*

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*"How slow you are! I have been waiting for you at least ten minutes."*

THERE once lived a deer who believed that no one could beat him in running a footrace. He wanted to run a race just to show his skill. So he went from one place to another looking for an animal who would dare to race with him. But he could find none that was willing to run.

At last, when he was about to give up, he came upon a turtle. He jokingly asked the turtle to race with him. Without hesitation, the turtle at once agreed.

"And I will beat you, Mr. Deer," said the turtle, who had already thought of a plan by which he hoped to defeat the nimble footed deer.

"That remains to be seen," replied the deer, who never for an instant thought that the old slow-foot turtle could beat him in a foot-race.

The news quickly spread among the

animals far and wide that the deer and the turtle were going to run a race.

Everybody laughed about it. Of course, no one thought the turtle would win. They all thought that the deer would outrun the turtle without half trying.

All thought this except the wise old crow. He sat up and cawed to all around him. "Caw! caw! Maybe the turtle will win! Caw! Caw! Maybe the turtle will win!" The wise old crow thought that probably the turtle had some trick or other up his sleeve, but he didn't know just what it was.

On the day set for the race fowls and four-footed animals of all kinds came to see the contest. Old Judge Billy Goat was to be the starter.

"Hurrah for our champion, the fleet footed deer!" shouted all the animals.

"Caw! Caw! Maybe the turtle will win! Caw! Caw! Maybe the turtle will win!" croaked the wise old crow.

The race was to be run over a level stretch of country about a mile in length. The starting place was a great, green tree which stood on the edge of the forest, and the stopping place was a large rock at the edge of the brook. The two contestants were to run from the great tree to the large rock and back.

Now, as everybody knows, the turtle's wife looks exactly like her husband—the two can hardly be told apart. Well, early that morning the turtle took his wife to the large rock which marked the spot where the two contestants were to turn around and run back to the starting point.

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## TURTLE AND DEER

*(Continued from page 297)*

"You must sit here in the grass, wife, and when the deer comes up, you must say, 'How slow you are! I have been waiting for you at least ten minutes!'"

Then the turtle trudged to the starting point of the race where all the animals were assembled to witness the unusual event.

"Caw! Caw! Maybe the turtle will win! Caw! Caw! Maybe the turtle will win!" croaked the wise old crow.

Old Judge Billy Goat was there to start them off. The two contestants lined up.

"One! Get ready. Two! Get set. Three! Go." Like a flash the deer sped away at a terrific speed. The turtle waddled along a short distance until the tall grass hid him from view, and then he squatted down to await the return of the deer.

The deer ran with all his might until presently he neared the large rock which was the turning point of the contestants.

To his amazement the turtle's wife stood up as he approached, and said, "How slow you are! I have been waiting for you at least ten minutes." (The deer thought this was his op-

ponent in the race.)

"About face, and return," said the surprised deer. And he started back, running faster than ever.

When the turtle saw the deer coming a long distance away, he started to waddle back to the starting point. He arrived there just a few feet ahead of the deer. He sank down under the great tree, and pretended to be all out of breath from hard running.

When the deer saw the turtle fanning himself all out of breath, he felt so ashamed that he did not wait to hear the decision of old Judge Billy Goat. He turned and ran toward the forest, not daring to show his face any more.

"Caw! Caw! I told you the turtle would win! Caw! Caw! I told you the turtle would win!" croaked the wise old crow.

And all the animals shouted, "Hurrah for old Slow Foot! He is not so slow after all!"

Thousands of years ago Aesop, the wise Greek, told this same story, only in his version the hedgehog and the hare were the contestants.

At the end of the story Aesop said, "It is not always the swiftest who wins the race; sometimes the quickest witted wins."

## A MOUSE ADVENTURE

*(Continued from page 296)*

"There's a mouse in it!" said the big white cat.

"But the man didn't understand what the cat said. He picked up the two pieces of the blue vase, pulled the door open, and threw the pieces of vase right toward the water."

"And you were in one of them, Mousie!" Madame Mouse cried.

"The minute the man picked up the pieces," Mousie said, "my head began to work. It worked hard and quickly, Mother. I knew that if I reached the water in that piece of blue glass I'd sink to the bottom and probably drown. So just as the man threw the pieces toward the water, I jumped.

"I landed on the branch of a tree that was hanging over the water. The wind whirled the branch this way and that way, but I hung on. Pretty soon I was safe on the ground. I ran up to the window sill of the little house, and I said to the cat, 'Whoever heard of a mouse getting away from a cat!' Then I laughed, jumped down, and ran as hard as I could for home. And here I am."

Wasn't that a mouse adventure!