

Aesop's Fables

25. THE KID AND THE WOLF

By Sue Reid

Once there was a billy goat kid who lived with his mother on a farm. Each morning he and the other goats were herded into a meadow. And each evening they were driven home again.

At the edge of the field was a wood. The grass grew thick and sweet there because the goats never went near it. The kid looked at it longingly.

'Don't go there,' the other goats warned him. 'A big bad wolf lives in that wood.'

'Yes, mind you stay close by me,' said his mother.

At first the kid did stay close by his mother. But with each day that passed his horns grew bigger.

'I am not a little kid any more,' he thought. 'I can look after myself. Anyway, I don't believe a wolf lives in that wood. The goats are just a bunch of scaredy-cats!'

He trotted over to where the juiciest grass grew. The goats shook their heads when they saw where the kid was.

'Baaa. Silly young thing,' they said. 'Well, we did warn him.'

The little kid was very happy. He tore up the long stalks of sweet grass. He was so busy eating that he didn't hear his mother call him. He didn't even notice the dogs rounding up the goats to drive them home.

'Oh, I do hope my little goat is safe,' his mother said as they were herded out of the field.

At last the kid had had enough. He lifted up his head. The goats had gone. He was all alone.

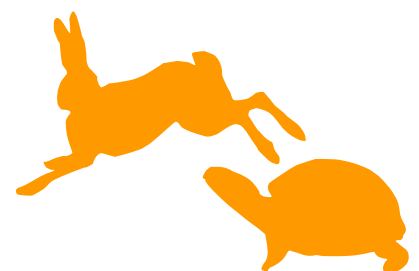
Long shadows crept towards him. It was growing dark. The kid did not feel so big and brave any more.

'Mother,' he bleated, running up and down the field. 'Where are you? I want to go home.'

But his Mother didn't hear him. She was far away, down the lane.

But someone heard him. Big yellow eyes followed the kid, as he ran up and down the field. It was the wolf. He couldn't believe his luck.

'It's time for my dinner and that kid will do nicely,' he smiled.





And with a single bound he was out of the wood. The kid tried to run away, but the wolf put out a paw.

'Whoa!' he growled. 'Not so fast!'

He smacked his lips.

'If only I had listened to Mother,' thought the kid. 'What shall I do? How can I stop the wolf from eating me? Help! Help!'

He bleated, as loudly as he could. But the dogs and goats couldn't hear him.

The wolf growled, showing sharp yellow teeth. Then the kid had an idea. 'If I can get the wolf to sing, maybe Mother will hear him and save me,' he thought.

'Mr Wolf,' he squeaked. 'I'm sure you have a beautiful voice. Will you sing for me? And I will dance for you. I like dancing.'

The wolf considered. 'Why not?' he thought. 'A little music before dinner.'

He opened his mouth to sing.

'Eurgh what is that,' the rabbits said darting back into their burrows.

'What a horrible noise!' said the moles digging themselves hurriedly down into the earth.

But in the pasture the little kid pranced and frolicked, kicking up his little legs as if he was having the most wonderful time.

'Oh wolf, he gasped. 'How beautifully you sing.'

'You really think so?' simpered the wolf and howled even louder. No one had ever told him he sang beautifully before.

Down the lane the dogs and goats also heard the wolf. They stopped and looked at each other.

'It's the wolf!' one of the dogs cried. 'Oh, please - save my little goat!' cried the kid's mother.

The dogs tore back into the field barking loudly.

The wolf turned his head and saw them. He leapt for the trees just as one of the dogs was about to seize his tail.

'Why did I let that kid flatter me?' he growled to himself as soon as he got his breath back. 'Am I daft? I should have eaten him at once!'