

SHORT STORIES FOR KIDS

Translated by:

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Reviewed, with a preface

by:

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Preface

As I sat down to pen this preface for the collection of folk tales you are about to embark on, I couldn't help but be struck by the richness and timelessness of these narratives. Folk tales are the jewels of our cultural heritage, passed down through generations, weaving themselves into the fabric of our collective consciousness. They are the whispered echoes of ancestors, the wisdom of the ages, and the magic that dances in the corners of our imagination.

Gehad Muhammad, a young Egyptian girl, took it upon herself to breathe new life into these ancient stories through her translation. In her tender yet determined hands, these tales have found a new voice, one that echoes across cultures and languages, bridging divides and fostering understanding.

In this volume, Gehad invites you to journey with her through the winding paths of these folklore. Through her translations, she offers us a glimpse into a world where magic is as real as the desert sands and where the wisdom of sages is whispered on the breeze.

As you turn the pages of this book, I encourage you to listen closely to the echoes of the past that resonate within these tales. For in them, you will find not only entertainment but also profound truths about the human condition. You will meet heroes and heroines who triumph over adversity, wise elders who dispense pearls of wisdom, and mischievous spirits who delight in upending the ordinary.

It is my hope that this collection will serve as a bridge between generations, cultures, and languages. That through the timeless art of storytelling, we may find common ground and

celebrate the rich tapestry of human experience. And to Gehad Muhammad, whose passion for preserving and sharing these tales knows no bounds, I offer my deepest gratitude. May her efforts inspire future generations to continue the tradition of storytelling, ensuring that these precious gems endure for centuries to come.

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1. THE LAZY WOLF

All the members of the pack worked and obeyed their leader, Akoo, except for the gray wolf who slept in the sun and waited for the rest of the pack to bring him food, and they got used to that. One day, Akoo gathered the pack and said: "I don't want lazy ones among the pack. Whoever is not ready to work should leave the pack. Starting today, everyone will look for their own prey and rely on themselves." Among the elders of the pack was

the gray wolf, who was young and strong, but he played the role of being ignored. Nevertheless, none of his peers gave him a single bite to eat. The gray wolf felt hungry because snow had fallen, so shepherds locked up their sheep in pens and farmers closed their homes with chains. It was not easy to find food. He felt weak and sick and asked his fellow pack members to take care of him, but they did not listen to his pleas so he had to

leave. He faced difficult circumstances during his long journey and became diligent in his work. He returned to the pack and worked like his peers, and Akoo no longer scolded him for his laziness.

2. THE REWARD OF TRUSTWORTHINESS

There was a poor man living on the price of the firewood he collected from the forest, along with his wife and son. Despite their difficult life, they were happy. One day, his wife fell ill and sent their son to the neighboring village to buy medicine. The clever son lost the purse containing the money and sat sadly under a tree. A hunter hunting in that area heard him

crying and asked him about the reason. The son replied, "I have lost the purse of money that I was going to use to buy medicine for my sick mother." The hunter delayed with this conversation, then took out a purse with gold coins from his pocket and asked the boy, "Is this the purse you lost? I found it just now." The boy said, "No sir, it wasn't a silk purse, it had very little money in it." The hunter took out an old purse and asked him if it was his

purse. The boy said, "Yes, this is my purse. Thank you sir!" The honesty of the boy amazed the hunter, so he gave him the purse of gold coins which made the poor man's family live comfortably for many years.

3. THE DOG AND THE CAT

The dog and the cat used to live in the same house, but they were never on good terms. The dog, who was big and tolerant, was always teased by the mischievous cat. The cat would jump everywhere and annoy his owner a lot. Every time the dog wanted to eat, the cat would beat him to it and spill the bowl of food meant for the dog. And

whenever he went to sleep, the cat would make his bed disappear. Eventually, the dog had enough and decided to teach the cunning cat a lesson.

He waited for the moment when the lady of the house was preparing buttermilk soup that the cat loved so much. He put a little of white powder in a jar that looked harmless but was actually harmful. After realizing the trick he wanted to play on the

cat, he hid behind curtains and waited. Soon enough, the cat appeared licking his lips in anticipation of the delicious meal.

The greedy cat devoured all of it without leaving a single drop. Shortly after, he started feeling pain in his stomach and complained all night long. The next morning, the dog asked him: "Do you want to sign a peace treaty?" The cat understood that

what goes around comes around
and since he couldn't sign
anything, he made a verbal
agreement that remained valid
until his stomach pains
disappeared.

4. A RESCUE IN THE DESERT

There was a traveler with his dog in the desert, riding on his camel carrying many containers of water and suitable food. He arrived at an abandoned place and was attacked by some thieves who stole the camel, water, and food. The poor man was left with only the dog, who remained faithful like his owner. Therefore, he was unable to do

anything. The two thought that if a miracle did not happen, they would die in the middle of that desert. The man felt extreme heat and thirst, unable to take a single step. The loyal dog also felt hungry and thirsty and saw that his owner could not move. So, he took a piece of rope between his teeth and started running further and further away.

The man said to the dog: "Don't

leave me, I will die here alone." The faithful dog did not think about running away but risked his life and ran through the scorching sands to seek help. He had been sniffing the caravan tracks all day without stopping.

In the evening, the caravan men heard his barking and said: "This dog wants to show us something; he is bringing a shoe... it must be his owner's shoe." Some decided to continue their journey while others

followed the dog carrying water and food.

The dog guided them through the sand dunes to where his owner was left without hope of being rescued. They followed the dog and found the man on the brink of death. They treated him carefully and saved his life because of how well he treated his dog.

5. TWO INSEPARABLE FRIENDS

When they reached a clearing in the forest, the musician began to play beautiful melodies on his violin that captivated one of the hunters. He approached the musician and said admiringly, "What wonderful music! I wish I could learn to play this instrument!" The musician replied, "It's easy, it's just a matter of will." While the music continued, the wolf managed to

free his leg from the trap and became a path. He thought to himself, "I will go in search of this musician and cut him into pieces." As he was on his way, he heard the fox calling for help. He freed him and they walked together, following the footsteps of the music. The hunter saw the wolf and fox approaching and aimed his gun at them, saying, "I will shoot anyone who takes one step forward." The animals fled quickly. The musician played his

best melody for the hunter as a reminder of his kindness and having an ideal friend. History says that the hunter and musician never parted ways.

6. THE MUSICIAN AND THE WOLF AND THE FOX

There was a musician known for his skill on the violin, but the danger was increasing every day, so he decided to search for a companion. He went to the forest and started playing, and in front of him he found the wolf. He said to him cunningly: "You are a knowledgeable and wise creature, it would please me if you could teach me this wonderful art." The wolf

answered without confidence: "It will be easy to learn if you follow my instructions." The wolf promised to do everything asked of him, so the musician said to him: "Put your foot in the hollow of this trunk, and this is how you will learn to play." The wolf obeyed, so the musician secured the wolf's foot in the hollow with a stone, then said as he left: "Wait for me until I return." After that, a fox appeared in front of him and asked for the

same thing that the wolf had asked for.

The musician realized that he had to do what he was told if he wanted to learn how to play the violin. When they reached a narrow path, he pulled a branch from a tree and pressed it against his ear, then did the same with another branch in the opposite direction and said to the fox: "If you want to learn how to play the violin, give me your left foot." The fox obeyed so the

musician tied it with a branch of a hazelnut tree. After that he tied his right foot with another branch and then lifted his leg so suddenly both branches returned to their natural state...and suddenly, the fox was hanging in mid-air and getting weaker. The musician said as he left: "Wait for me here."

7. THE SERVANT AND THE CAT

There was a servant who, despite being foolish, was honest, which made his master keep him in his service.

One day, the master gave him a leg of lamb and said to him, "Take this and don't eat it."

The servant asked, "How should I cook it?"

His master replied, "I forgot that you are ignorant. It is better for me to write down for you how to cook it because if I tell you, you will forget."

He wrote down in detail on a piece of paper the steps to follow in order to make the lamb leg tasty. The servant placed the meat and the paper on the table and went to look for the salt. The cat came and snatched the meat,

leaving the servant astonished.
But when he saw the
instructions on the table, he
burst into laughter and said:"

"You will not benefit from your
action, except regret, oh cat,
because the meat will not avail
you at all if you do not know how
to cook it."

8. THE PERQUISITE OF THE PRINCESS

There was a beautiful princess whose father wanted her to get married. Suitors would come to the palace in dozens, but she would find a flaw in each one of them. Sometimes she was annoyed by their way of talking about their military exploits or hunting skills, and other times she couldn't bear to hear their poems and songs, or see their untidy clothing. They were unbearable... The princess used to say that. One day, the princess stopped when she was taking a walk in the outskirts of the city, in front of a beautiful house, although humble, and looked from the window without being seen by anyone. There was a young man writing continuously on polished leather pages

with beautiful handwriting. She learned that he dedicated his life to this work and also supported four younger siblings because they were orphans.

The princess then saw the arrival of the children who were happy and their eldest headed towards a large blackboard and wrote some numbers on it followed by some words because he was the teacher and did everything with great joy, laughing and singing to entertain the children who were learning quickly... The princess said: I have found my dream boy, he is a hardworking young man who is helpful to others and has a big heart... The princess ordered her servant to search for the young writer and told him: I will marry

you on condition that your feelings towards me are like your feelings towards your siblings... The young man was very happy and greeted her with all dignity and respect, confirming that he loved her. He became an ideal husband and a good king who managed to praise his people and his country.

9. THE PILGRIM AND THE THIEF.

Many years ago, when people used to come to the holy lands walking on foot from all corners of the earth, there was a pilgrim walking on a secluded path with only a small bag containing some food. The pilgrim had traveled thousands of kilometers and walked confidently, only occupied with his prayers, never thinking about the hardships that may befall him.

There was a thief following the pilgrims' trail, hiding among the trees. Suddenly, he attacked the man and stole his bag. When he found nothing valuable in it, he became angry and beat the kind pilgrim with a stick until he was exhausted. With great difficulty, the man continued on his way... Luckily, he met other

pilgrims on the road who helped him and took care of him until he regained his strength and reached the holy lands. There, he prayed for those sinners to be guided by God. On his way back, he found the thief who had attacked him on his way there wounded severely as a result of attacking some honorable travelers who defended themselves and injured him.

Death could have been his fate if it weren't for God causing this man who cared for him and carried him on his back to a populated place. During this long journey, the thief seriously reflected on his life and promised that if he were healed, he would return to God and seek forgiveness. God healed him, changed his life,

and then became a good person, and spent his days serving pilgrims.