

The Goat and the Ram

Once upon a time there lived a man and a woman who owned a goat and a ram. The animals were great pals. Wherever you saw the goat you would see the ram. If the goat went into the garden to get some cabbage, the ram would follow. If the ram went into the orchard, the goat went after him.

One day the man said to his wife, "I have decided to get rid of the ram and goat. They're nothing but a lot of trouble to us. Just look at what they are doing to the orchard and garden with all their digging and rooting about!" So saying, he yelled angrily to the animals, "Beat it, you goat and ram! And if I ever see you again it will be too soon!"

The goat and ram heard him and immediately made themselves scarce. They served themselves a big bag and set off. They walked and walked and in the middle of a field they came upon a wolf's head. Now the ram was strong, but rather timid, whereas the goat was bold, but not very strong.

"Ram," said the goat. "How about picking up the head since you are stronger than I am?"

"No, you do it. You are braver than I am," answered the ram.

They couldn't agree, but at last both decided to pick it up and throw it into the sack.

They kept on walking until in the distance they saw a camp fire. "Let's camp there, where we can spend the night safe from the wolves," remarked one of them. But when they arrived, what did they see? Some wolves cooking a pot of porridge!

"Hello, friends," said the two.

"Hello, hello. Our porridge isn't quite ready yet. But in the meantime, you two will make a tasty meat dish!"

At these alarming words the ram started to quake in his boots, whereas the goat had already been trembling since they had first laid eyes on the wolves. But all was not lost.

“Ram,” said the goat, “would you please haul out that wolf’s head?” And the ram brought it out.

“No, not that one, the bigger one,” ordered the goat. So the ram pretended to pull out another head.

By this time the wolves were beginning to feel very scared after seeing the head, and wondered how best they could make a hasty retreat.

“These are such scallywags that one could easily lose one’s head. Just see how they keep dragging out all those heads from that bag!” they said to themselves. Then one wolf began to voice the thoughts of the others. “Fine company we’re having, brothers. And the porridge is cooking nicely, but we have a little problem. We need to add more water to it, so I’ll just run off and get some!”

So the first wolf went off for the water, meanwhile muttering angrily to himself, “Drat that company anyhow!”

Then after awhile a second wolf also began to scheme how to make a quick exit. Said he, “That fiend ran off and I’ll bet he is just sitting down waiting time. Meanwhile there is no water to add to the porridge. I’ll just take a big stick and send him packing like the dog he is.”

So the second wolf rushed off, but neither did he return. The third wolf sat and sat and finally remarked, “Well, well, it looks as if I’ll have to go and chase them both back.” He, too, went off and was glad to have escaped.

Then the goat said to the ram, “Come along, brother. Let’s hurry and eat up this porridge and leave the camp as soon as possible.”

Meanwhile, the wolves had had time to consider their actions. “How come the three of us are scared of a goat and a ram? Let’s go back and finish off the rascals!” They returned, but the two culprits had done a good job of it. They had cleaned up everything and had run off and climbed an oak tree. The wolves began to figure out how the chase down the goat and the ram. The goat, who was the bolder, had managed to climb to the very top of the tree, but the more timid ram had only reached a lower branch.

Suddenly, one of the wolves spoke to an older and very shaggy wolf, “Lie down here and, as you are the oldest, do some real deep thinking and advise us how we can catch the two scoundrels.”

The shaggy wolf lay on his back with his feet in the air and started to do as he was told. The ram, who was sitting on a branch, trembled so hard that he fell plop!—right on top of the wolf. The goat, on the other hand, was braver and without stopping to think suddenly cried out, “Hand over that monster, star gazer!”

The wolves sprang up and ran so fast that a cloud of dust rose after them.

As for the goat and ram, they went off without a care in the world, and built themselves a hut where they still live to this day.