



HARE THE LAWYER

One day a lion roasted a piece of meat in his garden. The tortoise living next door smelled the amazing steak and it made her mouth water instantly. She only had some porridge at home, so she decided to go outside and eat her porridge while smelling the aroma coming from the lion's garden. That way, she would enjoy her meal more, she hoped.

The next day, she met the lion and told him: "What a splendid dinner you were making yesterday! It smelled so heavenly! Even my porridge tasted much better with the delicious smell of your meat in my nose!"

The lion growled and said: "So that's why my meat didn't taste good at all! You sniffed all the taste away!"

The scared tortoise didn't even manage to respond before the lion continued: "Because you stole all that scent, I'll now go to the sultan and tell him everything. I still have a piece of the meat from yesterday and he'll see right away there's not a trace of taste in it. I'll demand five barrels of mead as compensation for your crime as well as punishment for you!" The desperate tortoise immediately set off to get the mead for the lion, racking her brain in the meantime, trying to figure out what to tell the sultan to avoid any extra punishment. Suddenly, she heard a rustle in the grass and noticed a hare walking towards her.

"Why are you walking here with your head hanging so low?" asked the hare.

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“Oh, don’t even ask me. My neighbour was roasting meat in his garden yesterday and the scent of it was delicious. It smelled so good that I went outside to eat my porridge. It tasted better than ever before thanks to the delicious smell of the roasting meat. Except now the lion wants to report me to the sultan. He says I sniffed all the taste from his dinner and asks for five barrels of mead and an extra punishment for me.”

The hare didn’t have to think long: “I’ll help you. I’ll go with you to the sultan as your lawyer. You just have to make sure that the barrels of mead are only half-full.”

The tortoise agreed, and to seal their deal, they opened one of the barrels then and there and drank from it.

On the day of the trial, the lion and the tortoise stepped in front of the sultan and the lion described the injustice he had suffered. The sultan asked the tortoise whether it was true.

The tortoise sighed and said: “Yes, I was inhaling the scent of the lion’s dinner, but how could I not? He lives just behind the fence.”

The sultan, wrinkling his brow, took a good stern look at the tortoise. Then he quickly glanced at the fuming lion and made his decision. He ordered the tortoise to give the lion five barrels of mead. In addition, she was to raise the height of the fence between the two gardens so that no smell from the lion’s cooking would ever again drift her way.

In that moment, the hare leapt forward and cried:

“Oh, sultan, is that how one is tried these days? You would carry out your trial without a lawyer? The tortoise only smelled the meat, she didn’t eat a single bit! Why should she give the lion five barrels of mead?”

Then he turned to the tortoise and said:

“Go on, rock the barrels a bit!”

The tortoise lay one of the barrels on its side and started rolling it.

The hare asked the lion: “Can you hear anything?”

“Yes, I can,” said the lion.

The hare continued: “You can hear the mead splashing against the barrel, but you

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didn't drink it – just as the tortoise only smelled your meat, never taking a single bite.“

The sultan was puzzled at first, but then he said:

“Well, hare, aren't you a clever fellow! I hereby declare the dispute between the lion and the tortoise over. The tortoise is innocent!”