



THE TORTOISE AND THE HARE

Once upon a time, a tortoise and a hare were neighbours. Whenever the hare would go anywhere, he would stop at the tortoise's house first to boast about how fast he could run or mock the tortoise for being so slow.

"Jeesh, you must be the slowest animal in the world!" he would say. "Are you even capable of moving faster?"

But the tortoise never paid attention to him. She was happy walking on at her own pace.

One day, they bumped into each other outside of their houses and the hare immediately started throwing insults at the tortoise. Finally, she ran out of patience, pulled her long neck from her shell and said: "Fine, let's have a race. Then we'll see if you can really beat me to the finish line."

The hare was so amused by this proposal that he fell down laughing. He laughed so hard he cried, rolling around on the ground, and when he finally calmed down, he said,

"I haven't had a laugh like that in ages. You? Racing? You would really dare to race me – such an extraordinary runner?" The tortoise only nodded, so the hare said, "Okay, suit yourself! Let's have a race."

The news of the race quickly spread all over the forest and when the day came, nearly all the animals had gathered to watch the event.

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They helped the two runners set up the start and the finish line and chose a referee. Then they fired the starting pistol, and the race began!

The hare immediately took off like, fast like lightning, and left the tortoise in his dust. He quickly made it to the other side of the racing track, but as he approached the finish line he started to think about how to show up the tortoise even more. He decided to wait for her so she could see his glorious victory with her own eyes. And because he had a lot of time left, he hopped off the track to have a quick snack in a nearby meadow.

The weather was lovely and warm, and after his snack, he decided to lie down for a little while and enjoy the sunshine.

“I have so much time before that sluggish tortoise gets even halfway around the track,” he thought, and settled onto a cozy patch of moss under a tree. Within minutes, he was fast asleep.

Meanwhile, the tortoise steadily shuffled towards the finish line. She took her time and moved very, very slowly, but she never slowed down and with every step she got closer and closer to the finish line.

It was getting dark when the hare jolted awake to the sound of loud cheering and applauding.

“What’s that sound? Good thing I woke up, it’s time to finish the race and claim my victory!” the hare thought. He stretched his legs and wiggled his nose, then hopped back onto the track and galloped like never before. He had never run this fast in his life! In what felt like seconds, he crossed the finish line. He started to celebrate, but what he saw made his jaw drop to the floor. The tortoise was already there! All the animals were cheering for her, not him! They were celebrating, and everyone was happy she had defeated such a puffed-up pig-headed hare.

And after that day, the hare never again acted arrogantly or teased his neighbour the tortoise for walking slowly.