

I. The Woman Runner

Anita was the most beautiful woman in the country. Many men wanted to marry her, but she always said, "No!" Anita wanted to be a runner, not a wife. She practiced running every day. Soon she was faster than every other woman and man in the country.

A prince saw Anita running and fell in love with her. But when he asked her to marry him, Anita said, "No!" The prince followed Anita everywhere. "Will you marry me?" he asked her again and again. How could Anita get him to stop bothering her? Anita had an idea. "I will marry you, if you can beat me in a running race." The prince could not run faster than Anita. He asked the goddess of love for help. The goddess gave him three golden apples and said, "These apples will help you win the race."

A large crowd gathered to watch the race. The crowd shouted, "On your mark, get set, go!" Anita sprinted away, leaving the prince in the dust! But the prince smiled. He knew just what to do. The prince rolled a golden apple in front of Anita. When Anita stopped to pick it up, he raced ahead. Each time Anita ran ahead of the prince, he rolled a golden apple in front of her. Each time Anita stopped to pick it up, the prince ran ahead.

Finally, the prince won the race and Anita kept her promise and married the prince.

II. A Jar of Candy

One day a mother said to her son, "There is some candy in the kitchen. It is in a jar. You can go and take some." The boy loved candy very much. He ran to the kitchen, put his hand into the candy jar, and grabbed a handful of candy. Just then, he realized something was wrong. "I cannot get my hand out of the jar," he shouted. "The neck of the jar is too small. What can I do? HELP ME!"

His little sister, who is a great fan of Harry Potter, came into the room. "What's wrong?" she asked. She looked at his hand and said, "I know what to do!" She took out a magic wand, waved it around and began quietly, becoming louder and louder, "handicus, outicus...shazam!" The boy tried again to pull his hand out, but it was still stuck. "Oh no," he moaned.

His older brother came into the room to help. "It's

easy. You need to pull harder." He said. His brother pulled and pulled the jar as hard as he could. "Stop! Stop! That hurts!" the boy shouted and started to cry, but his hand would not come out.

His mother walked into the kitchen and looked at him. "Your hand is full of candy. Drop some. Then your hand can come out."

The boy dropped some of the candy into the jar, and his hand came out. He said, "Next time, I won't be greedy."

III. How Zebras Got Their Stripes

Long, long ago, there were no zebras. But there were a lot of donkeys. The donkeys worked hard every day. They had no time to play or to rest.

One day two donkeys went to a wise old man for help. The wise old man thought for a while, and then he went off to get two pots of paint. First he painted the donkeys white, and then he painted black stripes over the white paint. When he was finished, the donkeys did not look like donkeys at all. "Everyone will be fooled," he said, "I will call you 'zebras' from now on."

The two "zebras" went to a field to graze and sleep. No one bothered them. They were so happy that they told other donkeys their secret. The donkeys all rushed to see the wise old man. "P-l-e-a-s-e. Make us into zebras, too," they pleaded. So the wise old man painted more

donkeys. As he did, more and more donkeys came.

The old man could not paint fast enough. Soon the donkeys became impatient. They began to kick and stir about. CLANK! They knocked over the paint pots. There was no more paint. Therefore, while the painted donkeys ran off to become zebras, the unpainted donkeys had to return to work. This is why there are zebras on earth. This is also why it is important to be patient.

IV. Tall or Short

Long ago, there were a camel and a pig arguing about whether it was better to be tall or short. The Camel said, "Nothing like being tall! See how tall I am!" The Pig who heard these words said, "Nothing like being short! See how short I am!" The Camel said, "Well, if I can't prove what I said is true, I will give up my hump." The Pig said, "If I can't prove what I said is true, I will give up my snout." "Agreed!" said the Camel. "Just so!" said the Pig.

First they came to a garden enclosed by a low wall without any opening. While the Pig could hardly see the plants in the garden, the Camel was tall enough to reach them and made a breakfast on them. So he said jeeringly to the Pig, "Now, would you be tall or short?"

Next they came to a garden enclosed by a very high wall with a wicket-gate at one end. While the

camel could only stay outside, the Pig was short enough to enter by the gate and ate his fill of the vegetables within. So the Pig said happily to the Camel, "Now, would you be tall or short?"

Then they thought the matter over, and came to the conclusion that the Camel should keep his hump and the Pig should keep his snout because they found out...

"Tall is good, where tall would do; Of short, again, 'it's also true!"

V. Why Ants Are Found Everywhere

One day, Lion, the king of the beasts, ordered all the other animals to honor him. One by one, Tiger, Elephant, Snake, and many other animals came to bow before Lion.

Even Ant set out on the journey. It was a long and tough trip for a tiny creature like Ant. As a result, he was the last one to arrive. The other animals made fun of Ant. This made Lion roared with laughter and said, "It's about time you got here!"

Ant crawled away in shame. He told the Ant Queen what happened. The Ant Queen was very angry.

She asked Worm to crawl in Lion's ear.

Worm crept into Lion's ear. He twisted and turned. Lion roared painfully. He tried everything, but he couldn't get Worm out.

At last he realized only Ant could help him. Lion asked Ant Queen for help. The Ant Queen decided

Lion had been punished enough, so she sent Ant to help.

When Ant finally arrived, Lion was rolling on the ground in pain. Ant crawled into his ear and called out, "Thank you, Worm. You can come out now."

Lion was so relieved that he rewarded Ant. He said, "Well done, Ant. From now on you and your people may live anywhere you'd like."

And that is why, to this day, even though some animals can live only in the jungle, some only in the desert, and others only in the rain forest, ants live everywhere.

VI. A Man Who Swallowed a Horse

One day Mr. Green rushed into Mr. Williams' clinic. "What's wrong with you?" asked the doctor. Mr. Green said, "I have a stomachache. I've swallowed a horse, doctor, and I feel very ill." "Oh, when did you swallow the horse?" asked the doctor. "It was yesterday. I couldn't sleep well last night," said the man. Mr. Williams is a good doctor. He always does his best to help his patients feel better. He thought for a few seconds and then said, "All right, Mr. Green, I'll help you. Was it a male horse or a female one?" "Well, I'm not sure," answered the man. "Was it young or old?" asked the doctor. "Sorry, doctor, I can't remember that, either," said the man. "It's O.K. All right. Please lie down on this bed," said the doctor. The doctor's nurse gave the man an injection, and the man went to sleep very soon. Then the doctor went out quickly to look for a horse in the town. After

half an hour he found one, borrowed it and took it back to his office, so when Mr. Green woke up, it was there in front of him. "Here's the horse, Mr. Green," the doctor said. "I've taken it out of your stomach, and it won't give you any more trouble from now on. Here is your medicine. Don't forget to take it every day." At first Mr. Green was pleased, but then he looked at the horse again and said, "But, doctor, my horse was white, and this one is brown!"

VII. The Greedy mouse

Ananse the mouse was once a very greedy eater. He gobbled everything in sight day and night, trying to fill his giant round belly.

One morning Ananse met Hippo, who was stomping up the path. "Get out of the way! I'm going to a banquet," Hippo said impatiently as he hurried on his way. "Not without me!" Ananse replied, for he never missed a banquet.

But just then Ananse saw Zebra trotting down the path in the other direction. "Get out of my way! I'm going to a banquet" Zebra declared.

"Two banquet!" Ananse exclaimed, patting his belly with big smile. "How delightful!"

Then he frowned. "Which will begin first?" he wondered. "If I go to the wrong banquet first, I might not get anything to eat!"

Ananse grew faint at such an idea, so he made a plan.

He spun two threads and tied them around his middle.

Then he called for two of his daughters.

"Take these threads and hurry to the banquet!" Ananse commanded. "When it's time to eat, pull hard and I will come!" He sent his daughters scurrying in opposite directions. At first Ananse waited patiently, but soon his belly began to rumble. "I want to eat!" he screamed. "I want to eat now! I'm starving!" At that very minute, one daughter pulled his thread. "Hooray!" cheered Ananse.

Then the other daughter pulled his thread. "Oh no!" Ananse yelped as he bobbed back and forth between them. With every pull, Ananse's fat belly got thinner and thinner. "Help!" he cried. At last, no one heard him. To this day Ananse's waist is as slender as a pin. He no longer feasts day and night. Instead, he sadly snacks on a slice of cheese for that is all he can squeeze through his tiny waist.

VIII. The Little Pink Rose

Once there was a little pink Rosebud, and she lived down in a little dark house under the ground. One day, she heard a little TAP, TAP, TAP, at the door. "Who is that?" she said. "It's the Rain, and I want to come in;" said a soft, sad, little voice. "No, you can't come in," the little Rosebud said. By and by, she heard another little TAP, TAP, TAP on the window pane.

Then it was still for a long time. At last, there came a little rustling, whispering sound, all round the window: RUSTLE, WHISPER, WHISPER. "Who is there?" said the little Rosebud. "It's the Sunshine," said a little, soft, cheery voice, "and I want to come in!" "N--no," said the little pink rose, "you can't come in." And she sat still again.

By and by, as she sat so still, she heard TAP, TAP, TAP, and RUSTLE, WHISPER, RUSTLE, all up and

down the window pane, and on the door, and at the key-hole. "WHO IS THERE?" she said. "It's the Rain and the Sun, the Rain and the Sun," said two little voices, "and "We want to come in! We want to come in! We want to come in!"

"Dear, dear!" said the little Rosebud, "If there are two of you, I think I shall let you in." So she opened the door, and in they came. And one took one of her little hands, and the other took her other little hand, and they ran with her, right up to the top of the ground. Then they said, "Poke your head through!"

It was springtime, and all the other flowers had their heads poked through; and she was the prettiest little pink rose in the whole garden!