



Goat's Encounter with Tiger

A West African Folktale

This story, about Goat and Tiger, takes flight over countries and kingdoms of long ago... and alights on Goat.

One day, Goat's mother said to him, "Goat, please walk to our neighbor's house and get some cheese for me." Goat said, "OK, Mommy!" and off he went on his errand.

But little Goat was a bit absent-minded — a little too easily distracted — and it wasn't long before he forgot what his mother had asked him to do. He started wandering here, there, and everywhere, with his nose in the air!

All of a sudden, he found himself face to face with Tiger because, at that time, the village and the jungle were not too far from each other. The moment that Tiger saw Goat, he said, "Mmmm! I'm going to eat you up!"

"Oh! Please don't eat me, Tiger. Please!" responded Goat.

But Tiger kept saying, "I'm going to eat you, and eat you, and eat you!"

"Please, Tiger! Please don't eat me! Isn't there anything that I can do?" asked Goat.

"Well," said Tiger, "As a matter of fact, I am in a very good mood today. So, I'll give you a chance."

"Oh really!" cried Goat. "Thank you! But, how are you going to do that?"

"Quiet!" roared Tiger. "No more questions! Otherwise, I'm going to eat you right now."



Then, he growled, "I'm going to give you a test: Tell me three things about our meeting here in the jungle that nobody can disagree with. If you can make three true statements, then you will pass the test, and I will let you go. But, if you can not tell me three things that nobody can disagree with, then you will fail the test, and I will eat you up."

"Oh! Please don't eat me!" cried Goat.

"Alright, then," grumbled Tiger, "What is the first thing you can tell me that no one can argue with? Make your first statement."

"Let me think a bit," said Goat, "For this is a very serious matter. I need to think." Goat thought and thought and then he cried, "Ah! I have it!"

"Well, let's hear it," said Tiger.

"Here it is," said Goat. "If you let me go now, and I run home to tell my family that I met you, Tiger, face to face here in the jungle but you decided to let me go instead of eating me, no one will believe it!"

"Right on!" Tiger said. "You seem to be a very smart Goat! What is your next statement?"

"OK. Let me think about it a bit," said Goat, "For this is a very serious matter." Goat thought and thought, and then he cried, "Ah! I have it!"

"What is it?" asked Tiger.

"Here it is," said Goat. "If you let me go now, and you, Tiger, go back to your family and tell them that you met me face to face here in the jungle, but you decided to let me go instead of eating me, no one will believe it!"

"Right on!" Tiger said. "You seem to be a very smart Goat! Tell me, what is the third and final thing you can tell me that no one will disagree with?"

"This is a very serious matter," said Goat. "Let me think."

And so Goat thought and thought. "OK! I Have it!"

"What is it?" asked Tiger.

"Here it is," said Goat. "Before you and I met this morning, you had a very big and delicious meal, which put you in a good mood. And that is why you gave me a chance."

"Right on!" Tiger said. "You are indeed a very smart Goat! Go home, then. And don't ever come back to this part of the jungle!" Tiger roared, showing his sharp teeth, "For if you do, I'm going to eat you, and eat you, and eat you!"

Goat didn't hesitate. He turned and ran away, back to his home. And he never saw Tiger again.

