

DOVER

CHILDREN'S THRIFT CLASSICS

AESOP'S FABLES

Unabridged • In Easy-to-Read Type



Aesop

DOVER
CHILDREN'S THRIFT CLASSICS

Aesop's Fables

ILLUSTRATED BY
Pat Stewart

DOVER PUBLICATIONS, INC.
New York

DOVER CHILDREN'S THRIFT CLASSICS

EDITOR OF THIS VOLUME: CANDACE WARD

Copyright

Copyright © 1994 by Dover Publications, Inc.

Illustrations copyright © 1994 by Pat Stewart.

All rights reserved under Pan American and International Copyright Conventions.

Bibliographical Note

Aesop's Fables is a new selection of fables traditionally attributed to Aesop. The text has been adapted from *Aesop's Fables*, Cassell & Company, Limited, London, n.d., and other standard editions. The illustrations and the note have been specially prepared for this edition.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Aesop's fables. English. Selections

Aesop's fables / illustrated by Pat Stewart.

p. cm.—(Dover children's thrift classics)

Summary: A collection of concise stories told by the Greek slave, Aesop.

ISBN 0-486-28020-9 (pbk.)

1. Fables [1. Fables.] I. Aesop. II. Stewart, Pat Ronson, ill.

III. Title. IV. Series.

PZ8.2.A254Ste 1994

[398.24'52]—dc20

94-8782

CIP

AC

Manufactured in the United States of America
Dover Publications, Inc., 31 East 2nd Street, Mineola, N.Y. 11501

Note

The name Aesop has been associated with the fable for at least 2,000 years. Even though it is uncertain whether such a person even existed, he has traditionally been hailed as the creator of the genre. While this claim has been contradicted by historical and scholarly research, popular tradition attributes most fables, regardless of their origins, to Aesop.

The story of Aesop's life has often taken on the same legendary proportions as his literary reputation. According to Herodotus, the fifth-century Greek historian, Aesop—the “maker of stories”—lived in the mid-sixth century. Herodotus also tells us that Aesop was a slave, and that he was killed by the people of Delphi, perhaps for seditious or sacrilegious beliefs. From these bare facts, Aesop's legend grew, and by the time that Sir Roger L'Estrange published his collection of *Fables* in 1692, Aesop had acquired the rather grotesque physical

appearance that served as a marked contrast to his wit and wisdom. In fact, according to L'Estrange, Aesop, with his flat nose, humped back and misshapen head, was the "most scandalous figure of a man that ever was heard of."

Whatever Aesop's physical appearance, the fables attributed to him have remained popular for centuries. Most of the fables in this edition feature the animals that seem so human in their wit, vanity and benevolence: the clever Fox, the presumptuous Ass and the valiant Mouse. The morals, too, have become as familiar as the animals, and they hold as much wisdom today as ever.

Contents

The Ants and the Grasshopper	1
The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing	2
The Jackdaw and the Pigeons	3
The Belly and the Members	3
The Lion and the Four Bulls	4
The Goatherd and the She-Goat	5
The Fox and the Stork	6
The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse	7
The Cock and the Jewel	9
The Serpent and the Man	10
The Travelers and the Plane Tree	10
The Eagle and the Arrow	11
The Two Crabs	12
The Fox and the Woodman	12
The Lark and Her Young Ones	13
The Wolf and the Watchdog	16
The Dog and His Shadow	17
The Old Man, His Son and the Ass	18

Contents

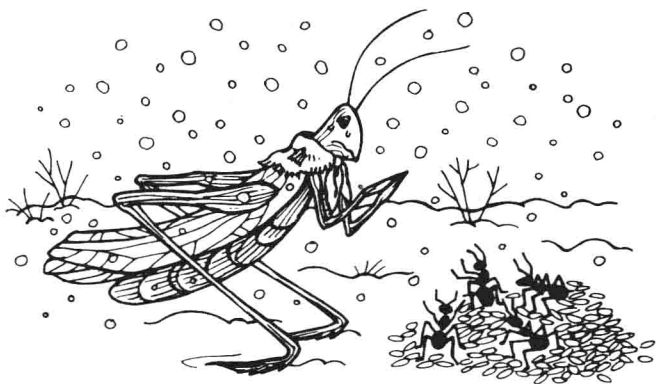
The Fox and the Lion	19
The Leopard and the Fox	20
Minerva's Olive	20
The Countryman and the Snake	21
The Wolf and the Kid	22
The Young Mouse, the Cock and the Cat	24
The Vain Jackdaw	25
Belling the Cat	26
The Covetous Man	27
The One-Eyed Doe	28
The Cock and the Fox	28
The Hare and the Tortoise	30
Jupiter's Two Wallets	31
The Stag Looking into the Pool	32
The Old Woman and the Doctor	33
The Gnat and the Bull	34
The Boy and the Figs	35
Socrates and His Friends	35
The Wolf and the Ass	36
The Crow and the Pitcher	36
The Mule Laden with Corn and the Mule Laden with Gold	37
The Fox and the Goat	38
The Kid and the Wolf	39
The Goose That Laid the Golden Egg	40

Contents

Mercury and the Woodman	40
The Wolf and the Crane	42
The Boys and the Frogs	43
The Hare and the Hound	43
The Ape and the Dolphin	44
The Goat and the Lion	45
The Ploughman and Fortune	46
The Fox and the Ass	46
The Cats and the Mice	47
The Peacock and the Crane	48
The Man and the Lion	49
The Old Hound	49
The Two Travelers	50
The Ass and the Little Dog	50
The Fox and the Grapes	52
The Fox in the Well	52
The Boy Who Cried Wolf	54
The Hart and the Vine	55
The Sow and the Wolf	56
The Frog and the Ox	56
The Lion and the Mouse	58
The Stag and the Fawn	59
The Hen and the Fox	59
The Farmer and the Eagle	60
The Dove and the Ant	61

Contents

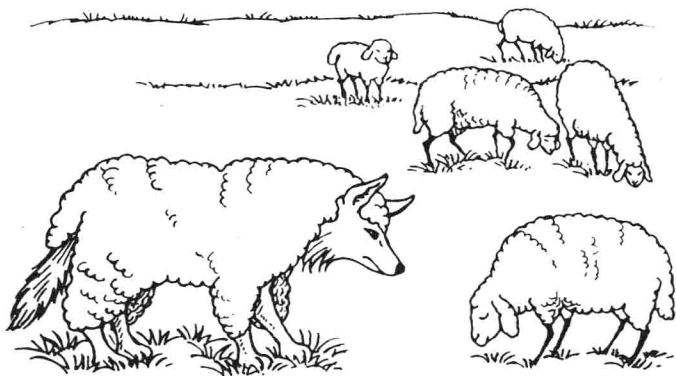
The Mischievous Dog	62
The Ass Laden with Salt and with Sponges	62
The Goatherd and the Goats	63
The Farmer and His Sons	64
The Horse and the Lion	64
The Ass, the Lion and the Cock	66
The Lion, the Tiger and the Fox	66
The Fortune-Teller	67
The Oak and the Reeds	68
The Fox and the Mask	69
The Sick Lion	69
Hercules and the Wagoner	71
The Travelers and the Bear	71
The Falconer and the Partridge	72
The Wind and the Sun	73
The Lion, the Fox and the Ass	74
The Fox and the Crow	74
The Wanton Calf	75
The Old Man and His Sons	76
The Satyr and the Traveler	77
The Maid and the Pail of Milk	79
The Frogs Asking for a King	80
The Farmer and the Stork	81
The Dog in the Manger	82
The Boasting Traveler	83



The Ants and the Grasshopper

A Grasshopper that had merrily sung all summer long, was almost perishing with hunger in the winter. So she went to some Ants that lived nearby, and asked them to lend her a little of the food they had stored. "You shall certainly be paid before this time of year comes again," she said. "What did you do all the summer?" they asked. "Why, all day long, and all night long too, I sang, if you please," answered the Grasshopper. "Oh, you sang, did you?" said the Ants. "Well, now you can dance too."

MORAL: Don't neglect the future in times of plenty, for tomorrow you may need what you wasted today.



The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing

A Wolf, wrapping himself in the skin of a Sheep, was able to sneak into a sheepfold, where he devoured several young Lambs. The Shepherd, however, soon discovered him and killed him and hung him up to a tree, still in his disguise. Some other Shepherds passing that way, thought it was a Sheep hanging there, and cried to their friend, "Is that the way you treat Sheep in this part of the country?" "No, friends," he cried swinging the carcass around so that they might see what it was, "but it is the way to treat Wolves, even if they are dressed in Sheep's clothing."

MORAL: A person's true nature will reveal itself despite disguise.

The Jackdaw and the Pigeons

A Jackdaw, seeing how well some Pigeons in a certain dovecote ate, and how happily they lived together, wished very much to join them. So, he whitened his feathers and slipped in among the Pigeons one evening just as it was getting dark. As long as he kept quiet he escaped notice, but soon he grew bolder, and feeling very jolly in his new home, he burst into a hearty laugh. His voice betrayed him. The Pigeons set upon him and drove him out. Afterwards when he tried to join the Jackdaws again, his discolored and battered feathers drew their attention to him. When his old friends found out what he had been up to, they would have nothing more to do with him.

MORAL: Be true to yourself, or run the risk of losing the respect of others.

The Belly and the Members

In olden days, when all a man's limbs did not work together as peacefully as they do now, but when each had a will and way of its own, the Members began to criticize the Belly for enjoy-

ing a life of idleness and luxury, while they spent all their time working to feed it. So they entered into a conspiracy to cut off the Belly's supplies in the future. The Hands were no longer to carry food to the Mouth, nor would the Mouth receive the food, nor the Teeth chew it. They had not long followed this plan of starving the Belly, when they all began, one by one, to fail and flag, and the whole body began to pine away. Then the Members realized that the Belly, too, cumbersome and useless as it seemed, had an important function of its own; that they could no more do without it than it could do without them; and that if they wanted to keep the body in a healthy state, they must work together, each in his proper sphere, for the common good of all.

MORAL: Only by working together can the greatest good for all be achieved.

The Lion and the Four Bulls

Four Bulls were such great friends that they always ate together. A Lion watched them for many days with longing eyes, but since they

were never far apart from each other, he was afraid to attack them. At length he succeeded in making them jealous of one another, and their jealousy eventually turned into a mutual aversion. When they strayed far away from each other, the Lion fell upon them singly, and killed them all.

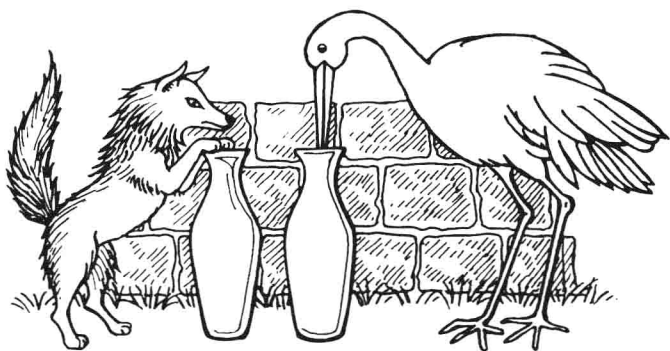
MORAL: The quarrels of friends are the opportunities of enemies.

The Goatherd and the She-Goat

One evening, a Boy, whose job it was to look after some Goats, gathered them together to lead them home. One of them, a She-Goat, refused to obey his call, and stood on a ledge of a rock, nibbling the grass that grew there. The Boy lost all patience, and picking up a great stone, threw it at the Goat with all his might. The stone struck one of the Goat's horns and broke it off at the middle. The Boy, terrified at what he had done and afraid of his master's anger, threw himself on his knees before the Goat and begged her to say nothing about the

accident, swearing that he never meant to aim the stone so well. "Tush!" replied the Goat. "Even if I say nothing at all, my horn is sure to tell the tale."

MORAL: Facts speak plainer than words.



The Fox and the Stork

One day a Fox invited a Stork to dine with him, and, deciding to play a joke on the Stork, he put the soup that he had for dinner in a large flat dish. Although the Fox himself could lap it up quite well, the Stork could only dip in the tips of his long bill. Some time after, the Stork,

remembering the Fox's trick, invited him to dinner. He, in his turn, put some minced meat in a long, narrow-necked jar, into which he could easily put his bill, while the Fox was forced to be content licking what ran down the sides of the jar. The Fox then remembered his old trick, and had to admit that the Stork had paid him back in his own coin.

MORAL: Don't complain when others treat you as you treat them.

The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse

A Country Mouse, a plain, sensible sort of fellow, was once visited by a former companion of his, who had moved to a neighboring city. The Country Mouse put before his friend some fine peas, some choice bacon, and a bit of rare old Stilton cheese, and told him to enjoy his dinner. The City Mouse nibbled a little here and there in a dainty manner, wondering at the pleasure his host took in such plain and ordinary food. After dinner, the Town Mouse said to the Country Mouse, "Really, my good friend, how can



you be happy in this dismal, boring place? You go on and on, in a dull humdrum sort of way, from one year's end to another. Come with me, this very night, and see with your own eyes what a life I lead." The Country Mouse agreed, and as soon as it was dark, off they started for the city, where they arrived just as a splendid supper given by the master of the house where our town friend lived was over. The City Mouse soon got together a heap of dainties on a corner of the handsome Turkish carpet. The Country Mouse, who had never even heard the names of half the meats set before him, was wondering where to begin, when the door creaked, opened, and in came a servant with a light. The companions ran off, but as soon as it was quiet again, they returned to their dinner. Once more the door opened, and the son of the master of the house came in with a great