The Gingerbread Man

Once upon a time, an old woman baked a gingerbread man. She put it on a plate to cool. But the naughty cookie jumped off the plate and dashed out the door.

“Run, run, as fast as you can. You can’t catch me. I’m the Gingerbread Man!” He sang. The cookie was right. Try as she might, the old woman was just too slow.

After a while, the cookie came to a dog. “I’m going to eat you up!” said the dog.

“Run, run, as fast as you can. You can’t catch me. I’m the Gingerbread Man!” sang the cookie. The cookie was right. Try as he might, the dog was just too slow.

After a while, the cookie came to a cow. “I’m going to eat you up!” said the cow.

“Run, run, as fast as you can. You can’t catch me. I’m the Gingerbread Man!” sang the cookie. The cookie was right. Try as he might, the cow was just too slow.

After a while, the cookie came to a fox standing by a river. The fox was licking his lips.

“Don’t even think about eating me up. I ran away from an old woman and a dog and a cow. And I will run away from you, too!” said the cookie.

“I don’t like cookies,” fibbed the clever fox. “I just want to help you get across this river. Hop on my shoulder! I promise you will not get wet.”

“OK,” said the cookie. So he did.

“CRUNCH!” The fox munched the cookie in one bite. “My, what a tasty treat!” he said.

And that was the end of the poor Gingerbread Man.

The Princess and the Pea

Once upon a time, there lived a prince. He was very lonely and wanted to get married. The prince looked high and low for the perfect wife, but had no luck. He could not find a real princess anywhere!

One stormy night, there was a knock on his door. When the prince opened it, he saw a girl. Her hair was wet. Her clothes were muddy. And she was shivering.

“Hello. I am a princess. May I stay here tonight?” she asked.

“Of course,” he said kindly.

The prince invited the girl in.

“Come warm yourself by the fire. Have a cup of hot chocolate,” he said.

“Thank you,” she said sweetly.

The girl seemed very nice. Could she really be a princess? The prince had a plan to find out.

First, he put a tiny pea on a bed. Second, he piled 20 mattresses on top of the pea. Third, he piled 20 quilts on top of the mattresses.

“Here is your bed. Sweet dreams,” he said.

But the girl’s dreams were not sweet. She tossed and turned. She barely slept at all.

The next morning, the price invited the girl to have some pancakes.

“How did you sleep?” he asked.

“I don’t mean to be rude, but I slept very badly. It felt like there was a boulder under my back!” She said with a yawn.

The prince smiled. Then, he got down on one knee and asked the girl to marry him.

Why? He knew that only a real princess could feel a tiny pea under 20 mattresses and 20 quilts!

The girl said yes, of course. Then they both lived, and snoozed, happily ever after.

The Three Little Pigs

Once upon a time, there lived three little pigs.

One day, each pig decided to build a house to keep safe from the big bad wolf.

You see, the wolf loved to eat little pigs.

The first pig built a cozy house of straw. But the big bad wolf huffed and puffed and blew the house down.

Quick as a wink, the first little pig ran away before he became breakfast.

The second little pig built a cozy house of sticks. But the big bad wolf huffed and puffed and blew the house down.

Quick as a wink, the second little pig ran away before he became lunch.

The third little pig built a cozy house of bricks. He invited the two other pigs to live with him.

The big bad wolf huffed and puffed and huffed and puffed. But he just could not blow the brick house down.

“I’m coming down the chimney to eat you for dinner!” said the wolf.

“Please do!” said the pigs sweetly.

You see, they had put a pot of very hot stew at the bottom of the chimney.

When the wolf came down the chimney, he landed right in the pot.

“OUCH! OUCH! OUCH!” he yelled.

Then, quick as a wink, he dashed out the door and ran far, far away.

The Turtle and the Rabbit

Once upon a time, there lived a turtle and a rabbit. The rabbit, who was very fast, always teased the slow turtle.

“Ha, ha, ha! Even a snail is faster than you!” he said.

The turtle did not like the teasing one bit. Finally, he decided to do something about it. “Let’s have a race,” he said.

The rabbit fell down laughing.

“OK, but you know I will win,” he said.

“We will see,” said the turtle.

On the day of the big race, all of the animals came to watch.

“On your mark, get set, go!” said the fox.

The rabbit hopped. Fast, fast, fast.

The turtle walked. Slow, slow, slow.

Soon the rabbit was way ahead of the turtle.

“Ha, ha, ha! I can take a nap and still wake up in time to beat the turtle,” said the rabbit.

So he did. Snore, snore, snore.

But as the rabbit napped, the turtle walked. Slow, slow, slow. And guess what? By and by, the turtle passed the rabbit!

After a while, the rabbit woke up.

“Oh, no! The turtle is winning!” he yelled.

He jumped up and hopped along the path. But it was no use. The turtle crossed the finish line first.

“The turtle won! The turtle won!” all the animals cheered.

“How did you ever beat the rabbit?” asked the horse.

The turtle grinned, “The rabbit may be fast, but slow and steady wins the race.”

The Ugly Duckling

Once upon a time, five eggs began to hatch. Crack! Crack! Crack! Crack! Crack!

Out popped five little ducklings. Four were fluffy and cute. One was gray and ugly.

The cute ducks were mean to their ugly brother. They pecked at him. They said, “You are ugly. Go away!”

One day, the ugly duckling did go away. He swam and swam. After a while, he met some geese. But the geese were just as mean as the ducks. They pecked at him. They said, “You are ugly. Go away!”

Once again, the ugly duckling did go away. He swam and swam. After a while, he met some herons. But the herons were just as mean as the geese. They pecked at him. They said, “You are ugly. Go away!”

Once again, the ugly duckling did go away. He swam and swam. After a while, he came upon some swans. They were the most beautiful birds he had ever seen.

When the swans swam near, the ugly duckling hid his face and cried. He did not want them to see how ugly he was.

Life went on like this for many months. The ugly duckling stayed by himself. He also grew and grew.

One day, a swan swam over and spoke to him.

“Why are you so shy?” he asked.

“Because I am ugly,” said the ugly duckling.

The swan laughed, “Have you looked in a mirror lately?”

That made the ugly duckling curious. He looked into the shiny water.

Wow! He had grown into a beautiful swan, just like them!

From that day on, the ugly duckling lived happily ever after. And he was always kind to all living things, from peacocks to potato bugs.

The Clever Crow

Once upon a time there lived a crow. She had built her nest on a tree. At the root of the same tree, a snake had built its home.

Whenever the crow laid eggs, the snake would eat them up. The crow felt helpless. “That evil snake. I must do something. Let me go and talk to him," thought the crow.

The next morning, the crow went to the snake and said politely, “Please spare my eggs, dear friend. Let us live like good neighbors and not disturb each other."

“Huh! You cannot expect me to go hungry. Eggs are what I eat," replied the snake, in a nasty tone.

The crow felt angry and she thought, “I must teach that snake a lesson."

The very next day, the crow was flying over the King’s palace. She saw the Princess wearing an expensive necklace. Suddenly a thought flashed in her mind and she swooped down, picked up the necklace in her beak and flew off to her nest.

When the Princess saw the crow flying off with her necklace, she screamed, “Somebody help, the crow has taken my necklace."

Soon the palace guards were running around in search of the necklace. Within a short time, the guards found the crow. She still sat with the necklace hanging from her beak.

The clever crow thought, “Now is the time to act." And she dropped the necklace, which fell right into the snake’s pit of house.

When the snake heard the noise, it came out of its pit of house. The palace guards saw the snake. “A snake! Kill it!" they shouted. With big sticks, they beat the snake and killed it.

Then the guards took the necklace and went back to the princess. The crow was happy, “Now my eggs will be safe," she thought and led a happy and peaceful life.