

## ***The Lion and a mouse.***

One day a mouse was in search of food in the forest. While searching it came near the den of a lion and smelt something very good. Guided by the smell, it went inside the den and found several pieces of meat of an animal that was eaten by the lion. The mouse ate quite a few pieces. Seeing the many pieces that are left over there, it has decided to stay on so that it can eat it in the night also. Having eaten so



much meat it was fast asleep within minutes.

It has become dark and the Lion returned to its den. Since it was dark it could not see the mouse sleeping on the floor. The Lion had brought with it a piece of a lamb and ate it fully, leaving the bones aside.

The Lion after sometime had slept off and started snoring loudly. The lion's snoring woke up the mouse. The mouse ran helter-skelter and bumped on the lion's leg. The mouse felt the fur on the leg smooth and started exploring it. As it reached the ear of the lion, the lion got disturbed and woke up with a sudden jerk that made the mouse slip down. Who is here? – the lion roared. The little mouse with a feeble voice replied, "I am a mouse here". How dare you disturb my sleep and where are



you? – again shouted the lion.

I am sorry and I am here – said the mouse. The Lion lit a lamp and searched for the mouse. It found the den very clean with no pieces of meat and bones and finally it saw a mouse in a corner of its den shivering with fear. The mouse looked pretty. The lion thought for a while. It thought that since the mouse was here its den is kept clean otherwise it would be stinking with meat pieces and bones all around. Why not allow this mouse to be here so that it keeps the den clean by eating away the bones and leftover meat – thus the lion thought about.

Ok tell me why did you enter my den? – The lion continued its question.

The mouse replied with folded hands: I was in search of food and the smell of the bones and meat pieces led me to your den. I am sorry, I shall leave now, please allow me go".

Ok, if you want to stay here you can do so, but you shall not disturb my sleep.

The fear of the mouse did not reduce. So it has repeated:" Please allow me go".

Seeing the mouse in that fearful condition, the lion felt sorry for it and said in a very soft tone: Oh little mouse do not get frightened. Just listen to me carefully. I hunt everyday and bring the carcass of some animal. I do not eat it fully. You are a small

animal and hence you can easily eat the leftovers and be happy. If you like eating like this without searching for food, you can stay here.

The mouse was surprised and with happiness it said “ Yes Mr. Lion, I shall stay in the den” One more condition: Said the lion.

You must keep the den clean by eating all the leftover pieces of meat and bones. If you can not eat fully, you shall carry them away and keep the den clean.

OK Mr. Lion said the mouse.

OK now you sleep in that corner and I shall sleep here in the middle of the den: saying this the lion went to sleep.

Both the lion and the mouse were fast asleep. The mouse has a habit of rolling freely on the floor while sleeping. So, by midnight the mouse came nearer to the lion and started feeling its warmth and went further deep into the sleep. In the sleep it started comforting itself by placing itself in the fold of the lion’s leg.

The lion too felt it OK and adjusted its leg to allow the mouse to sleep. The early rays of the sun passing through the crack in the den fell on the lion’s eyes and made it wake up. As it opened its eyes, it found the mouse sleeping innocently well on its leg.

The lion watched the mouse for sometime and later it woke up the mouse gently with its paw. The mouse woke up and looked straight into the face of the lion that appeared so big as it was very close. It cried loudly and tried to jump out but prevented gently by the lion.

Do be frightened, you have slept on my leg and hence I woke you up: said the lion. Looking straight into the eyes of the lion the mouse broke into peels of laughter. Seeing mouse the lion too started laughing.

Together the lion and the mouse lived forever....