

The Lion and the Clever Hare (Kalila wa Dimna)

Long ago, many animals lived together in the forest. All the animals in the forest feared the lion, who was famous for his anger and ferocity. Frightened for their lives, the animals agreed to pacify the lion by bringing him a platter of meat every morning, drawing lots to choose the unlucky victim each day. Many animals were sacrificed until one day it was the turn of a clever hare. The hare thought all night how he could save his life. Suddenly an idea struck him. The next day, panting heavily, he reached the lion. He found the lion impatiently waiting for his food. “Oh king, I am sorry to be late. There is another lion who is threatening to capture your territory, and who took the other hare that was with me, for his own breakfast,” said the hare. “Show me the villain! I will kill him!” roared the lion. The clever hare led him to a well filled with water. When the lion peered in, he saw his own reflection in the water. Mistaking the image for his enemy, the foolish lion jumped into the well, where he was swallowed up in the waters. The clever hare rejoiced and went back to tell all the animals that they had nothing to fear anymore.