

AESOP'S FABLE: "The Ass, The Fox, & The Lion"

A Dramatic Play Written by Connie Frank

Narrator on the Story: The Ass, the Fox, and the Lion



Narrator: In this story, the Lion exhibits a dominant, aggressive personality, which invariably produces favorable outcomes for itself. However, the Fox's shrewd and cunning nature proves both beneficial and dangerous for the animal, as it allows the Fox to escape the Lion's fangs in the first story for a short time but ends with his demise. Lastly, the Ass whose gullibility and unquestionable trust lands him in trouble, and death serves as evidence for the inevitable misfortunes of foolishness.

Characters:

Narrator:

Red Fox:

Donkey:

The Great Lion:

Script:

Narrator: The morning awoke sparkling and fresh, taking a hopeful approach to life. The trees and weeds stretched upward to enjoy the new day. Both predator and prey were waking now, facing the new challenges to survival that each day raised. A mob of black flies were buzzing everywhere. A donkey grazed on the tender grass in the field next to the great forest, while the red fox lay in the sun, grooming his shining coat. The fox had fed well this morning on several small deer mice, and he stretched, thinking on how lucky he was.

Red Fox: (Looking up and addressing Donkey): So how are you feeling about our friendship, Donkey?

Donkey: Looking up at Fox): I feel fine about it! As long as you are around, I do not have to fear any predators coming to attack me, and you had led me to the tastiest grasses I have ever enjoyed.

Red Fox: Yes, I am a connoisseur of fine food and fresh tasting water.

Donkey: Being a predator, you do not attack me and I like that part.

Red Fox: Of course not! We are friends!

Narrator: The donkey went back to enjoying his feast while the Fox looked at him carefully. Donkey had never realized how many times Fox had considered attacking and eating him. The idea of ripping into that soft flesh made the Fox drool.

Red Fox: That is surely a very tempting thought.

Donkey: What did you say? I could not hear you very well.

Red Fox: Oh nothing, comrade! I am just thinking about that rabbit I saw in the forest earlier. I am thinking about going after him in a few hours.

Donkey: (Shuddering): I am so glad we are friends! I would hate to be that rabbit!

Red Fox: (Muttering) You certainly would be!

Narrator:	The donkey continued eating, feeling content and safe, while the Fox stared at him. The day continued on. While the donkey cropped and chomped his way through the meadow, the Fox got up to wander to a local farmhouse where he entered the chicken coop and snatched a squawking chicken. The Fox devoured the chicken from the neighboring farmyard in just a few gulps, then he drifted over to eat a bit of cheese that he stole from the farmer's dairy. The days were lazy and the comrades were content until one day, a majestic predator, a great Lion, stepped into their lives.
Donkey:	(Quivering at the sight of the obviously hungry, slobbering Lion) No! No! He is looking at me! He wants to eat me!
Red Fox:	(Shuddering) Nonsense!
Donkey:	(Shivering in fear) Make him go away! I do not want to be eaten! If you are my friend, you will not let him eat me!
Red Fox:	(Eyeing the predator with caution): Nonsense! Calm down! Stop showing that you are afraid of him! He's just a bully. I will talk to him.
Narrator:	Fox knew that the great lion was hungry. He could smell it the need, and fear ran through him. Fox also knew that lions ate foxes and found them to be great feasts. Breathing deeply and hiding his fear, the Fox walked boldly up to the Lion.
Red Fox:	(As humbly as he could muster in himself): Your highness. (The Fox bowed.)
Narrator:	The great predator just stood there, motionless, as it eyed the Red Fox with disdain. The Fox swallowed his pride, and in an undertone, so the Ass could not hear him, the Fox spoke to the great Lion.
Red Fox:	Look. I know you are hungry. I can sense it on you. But I've got a fine scheme in my head. I
The Great Lion:	(Looking down at the now cowering Fox): Speak, oh sly one, or I will eat you now.
Red Fox:	(Fearfully yet boldly) If you promise not to hurt me, I have a plan to feed you well without any trouble at all.
The Great Lion:	I am curious now. Without any trouble at all, you say?
Red Fox:	(Boldly looking up at the Lion: If you promise not to hurt me.
The Great Lion:	(Snarling) Speak now or I will eat you right now!
Narrator:	The donkey was watching the interaction between the Red Fox and the Great Lion, and he became more fearful for his life. He started to run.
The Great Lion:	(Seeing the donkey's movements toward the forest): Do not move until I tell you to go, Donkey, if you value your life. Speak, you cunning old Fox!
Red Fox:	(Talking in an undertone to keep the donkey from hearing): You do not want to eat me. I am too stringy. (He hesitated then spoke again) I will lead that foolish creature yonder into a pit where he cannot get out. Then you can feast at your pleasure.
The Great Lion:	And why would you make this deal? Why would you do this against your friend, your comrade?

Red Fox:	(Smiling slyly with a crooked movement of his mouth): Focus, Lion! You can feast at your own leisure. You would not have to spend the energy chasing down your meal.
The Great Lion:	Hmmm. That might be nice. But how can I trust you?
Red Fox:	What's not to trust? I have his complete trust, because the Donkey is foolish. It is called Natural Selection, where he is doomed to be someone's meal. He might as well be your meal.
Narrator:	The Lion agreed. He looked at the Donkey and saw how frightened he was. Looking back at the Lion, the Fox returned to the Donkey with relief in his eyes.
Narrator:	Calm down, my friend. (Shaking his head). I made him promise not to hurt us.
Donkey:	(Hopefully, with relief in his voice): Really?
Red Fox:	Come. I know a good place to hide till he is gone.
Donkey:	(Shaking his head): How did you do that? He is a predator! I am his prey. And he is hungry!
Red Fox:	You do not trust me! Have I not been a good friend to you? Have I not led you to the best meals and the cleanest water possible? Why do you have so little faith in me?
Donkey:	I did not say that I did not trust you! I do trust you or I would not have been friends with you these past months!
Red Fox:	(Irritated) Are you coming?
Narrator:	With that, the Fox led the Ass to a deep pit.
Red Fox:	(Pointing to the pit) Get in.
Donkey:	Wow, that is deep! Really deep! Why would I go in there?
Red Fox:	You have to hide, of course, silly! You have to get in a place where you can feel safe.
Donkey:	And this...this pit...will make me feel safe?
Red Fox:	(Nodding and gesturing to the pit) Of course!
Narrator:	Despite his intuition telling him not to do it, the Donkey trusted the Fox and stepped carefully, then nearly fell into the pit. The Red Fox stared into the pit, looking into the Donkey's fearful eyes, then turning away.
Red Fox:	My friend, my comrade. It is time for us to part ways.
Donkey:	What?
Red Fox:	(Smiling sadly): It was a great friendship for a while, but now we can no longer be friends. It is time for me to go.
Donkey:	(Panicking) Wait! What have you done! Fox, you cannot do this to me!
Red Fox:	The Great Lion will have his feast today, but it will not be on me.
Narrator:	At that, with the Donkey crying in disbelief, the Fox turned away from his friend. His eyes grew big. Shock had taken hold of him. The Lion was standing right in front of him, prohibiting him from moving anywhere.
The Great Lion:	That was indeed a great plan. Your friend trusted you. He believed in you. But you broke his trust. You have destroyed his life out of selfishness.
Red Fox:	(Trembling) But I didn't!

The Great Lion:	(Nodding): Oh yes, you did. You did make my meal easy for me, didn't you? And you did it to save your own life. What a sniveling little coward you are!
Red Fox:	(Cowering): But you must let me go! You promised! We made a deal!
The Great Lion:	(Baring his teeth): I am too honorable to make deals with cowards. You are a traitor to your own friend. Treachery.
Red Fox:	No! Stop!
Donkey:	(Calling from the pit): Red Fox!
Narrator:	Donkey could hear the conversation, and he was dismayed. He had trusted the Fox and the betrayal hurt.
The Great Lion:	Now you must be rewarded for the treachery you have shown. You traitor!
Narrator:	With that, in one swipe of his sharp claws, the Great Lion barred his teeth and swiftly attacked the traitorous Fox. The poor Donkey had to hear the yelps from the Fox as the Great Lion ate his meal. Donkey trembled, knowing that he was next. He was humiliated and alone in the pit, knowing his fate.
Narrator:	Betrayal is the breaking or violation of a trust that produces moral and psychological conflict within a relationship. After the betrayal of his friend, the donkey felt humiliation and shame at having been fooled and manipulated by his betrayer, Traitors, who have betrayed someone they care for, do feel plagued by feelings of guilt, sadness, shame, or remorse. Their own capacity to hurt a loved one may also damage their own self-esteem and identity. However, in this case, the Red Fox felt nothing but pride that he had been able to manipulate and coerce the Donkey into a fake relationship that would end with the Donkey's death. The Red Fox just did not take into consideration how much the Lion would despise his traitorous act and kill him too.
The moral of the story:	
<i>"Traitors may expect treachery"</i>	