

AESOP'S FABLE: "The Birds, the Beasts, & the Bat"

A Dramatic Play Written by Connie Frank

Narrator of the Story: The Birds, the Beasts, and the Bat- Teeth and Claws



Narrator: In this story, the Bats exhibit a dominant, deceitful, and aggressive personality, which invariably leads to many deaths during the Great Battle. The Bats shrewd and cunning nature proves both beneficial and dangerous for the animal, as they play both sides against each other in the battle to be on the winning side. Such betrayal is discovered and punished by the Birds and the Beasts, who have now sat down at the table of diplomacy to end the war with a Peace Treaty. The bats do not feel that they have received fair treatment.



Characters:

	Narrator:
	Flutter:
	Mrs. Bat:
	King Eyeball:
	Bruce Goose:
	Kit Fox:
	Kat Fox:
	Mr. Goose:
	Mr. Bear:
	Mr. Fox:

Script:

Narrator:	The rich earth bathed in the last rays of light as evening set in. The smell of rotting leaves welcomed the bats in their deep cavernous caves as they ventured out for the evening round of hunting their victims. The whistling wind flew through the dry branches of the old trees which welcomed the bat's entry into the dusking sky. The undergrowth was thick in this part of the forest, but the bats could pick up the scent of something rotting. It had been six month since the Birds and the Beasts had declared war on each other, and the losses had been severe. The bats had nicknamed it the Tooth and Claw War, one that would go down in Nature's history as being one of the most vicious. Mrs. Bat was signaling to her young son, Flutter, to carefully fly over the bodies of the geese, the rabbits, and the mice.
Flutter:	Mama, what is going on?
Mrs. Bat:	It's okay, Eyeball. Be careful as you come out tonight. Try not to look too closely. There are a lot of bodies out here tonight.
Narrator:	The bats were quiet, except for the flapping of their dark wings. Mrs. Bat was grateful that the predators were not focused on them, not yet, thanks to the quick thinking of King Eyeball, who had shown his cunning. The stench was terrible, and Flutter held his nose.
Flutter:	I do not understand what is going on, Mama.

Mrs. Bat:	(Pulling Flutter aside and talking quietly): My son, you are now old enough for me to tell you what happened, but stay quiet about it. We cannot reveal our secrets to others.
Narrator:	Flutter had been taught very well not to speak out when he wanted, and be too noisy, too flamboyant, too anything. He was a quiet, thoughtful bat. Flutter lighted on a branch of an old, dead tree and waited, watching his mother.
Mrs. Bat:	In the beginning the predators were attacking their prey so viciously that the prey had been forced to go to war against the predators. We call it The Tooth and Claw War. Neither side will compromise, so the war has been devastating on the populations of both sides.
Flutter:	I do not understand. All it takes is respect for life.
Mrs. Bat:	Yes, indeed. And what started the war was, in many ways, horrifying.
Narrator:	Mrs. Bat grew quiet and looked down. Below them, a red fox with two young foxes moved stealthily through the crunching leaves, baring his teeth with their tails high off the ground. Flutter shuttered, thinking how sharp those teeth were. Once the Fox and her children had moved out of sight, Mrs. Bat nervously continued.
Mrs. Bat:	The quarrel grew out of the persecution the race of Geese suffered at the teeth of the Fox family. We are very careful around foxes. They are not to be trusted. The Beasts, too, had cause to fight in this war of survival. The Eagle was constantly pouncing on the Hare, and the Owl dined daily on the mice of the field, decimating their families.
Flutter:	Wow! that is terrible!
Mrs. Bat:	(Dropping her voice lower so Flutter had a hard time of hearing her): Many a Hare and a Mouse died. Chickens and Geese fell by the score—and the victor always stopped for a feast. It has led to slaughter on both sides, as the rabbits, the mice, the chickens, and the geese use tactical maneuvers to surround the predator attacking and hit him with teeth, nails, and claws.
Narrator:	The forest had grown quiet. Nature dared not make a sound, as the time for predators to stalk through the forest had come. Mrs. Bat encouraged him to fly with her, and she led him to some bushes full of fresh, lush fruit. Flutter ate quickly and satisfyingly, but his mind was still on the events his mother had just told him. After eating, the two of them flew through the air to find where the bats were, then lighted again in a tree away from the group. Mrs. Bat looked at Flutter anxiously, waiting for him to settle before she finished her story.
Flutter:	Mama, why are we not involved in the war? Neither Bird or Beast bothers us as we leave our home to eat each night.
Narrator:	Mrs. Bat did not look him in the eye, and Flutter was not sure whether or not she would answer him.
Flutter:	So, how did we stay out of the Tooth and Claw War?
Mrs. Bat:	(Looking around carefully, fearfully): King Eyeball struck a deal.
Flutter:	A-a deal?

Mrs. Bat:	(Nervously) Yes, a deal. King Eyeball decided that we would not join the Tooth and Claw war. He in fact decided that we would not join either side.
Flutter:	Really? Is that possible? Is it ethical when so many are dying?
Mrs. Bat:	Do not tell anyone I said this, okay? When King Eyeball saw the Birds getting the better of it, we joined the Birds because we can fly, and it is well known that mammals do not fly. But when the tide of battle turned, King Eyeball immediately sided with the Beasts.
Flutter:	(thinking aloud): That does not sound right, Mama! How can we on one side and then the other? You know that this is wrong.
Mrs. Bat:	(Looking behind him): Shush, Flutter! Shush!
Narrator:	Flying toward them was King Eyeball. He was a massive dark shadow looming through the night. His fur is long, tended to be oily, and was dark brown in color, contrasting with the black of his muzzle, ears, and wing membranes. His ears are short and blunt, his snout and mouth was broad, and this tail membrane is not furred. Flutter shrunk back from him, intimidated from the deep frown on the sharp features of his face.
King Eyeball:	Well, if it isn't my son, Flutter. Good to see you out here hunting, my son. You are a chip off the old block, I see. You look like me. Mrs. Bat, you have raised him well.
Mrs. Bat:	(Bowing to the King): Thank you, King Eyeball.
Narrator:	Silence reigned during those few moments which seemed like an hour to Flutter. The King was eyeing him, judging him, and Flutter felt uncomfortable. King Eyeball then turned to Mrs. Bat.
King Eyeball:	It appears that the war may end. We may not have to fight on either side if this Peace Conference takes place. Mrs. Bat, I would like for you and Flutter to go with me to the Conference. I must show off my son to the world.
Mrs. Bat:	Sire, is this wise? At your orders, we have been fighting on both sides of the war. Neither side is our friend. Do you not think we need to stay away from the Conference?
King Eyeball:	(Stretching and pulling himself to his full height in fury): Mrs. Bat! Am I not your King? You will do as I say and not question what I do.
Mrs. Bat:	(Dropping her eyes to the forest floor): Aye, yes, Sire. I will comply.
King Eyeball:	(Staring at Flutter with a deep frown on his face): Care to question me, son?
Flutter:	(Dropping his eyes down, not looking at his father): No, Sir.
King Eyeball:	(Scrutinizing Mrs. Bat cynically): That's much better. Now ready yourselves. The Conference will take place very soon. I will signal you when I am ready for the both of you to join me.
Narrator:	Flutter did not have to say a word. He just followed his mother when the signal came, and they entered the Conference. Flutter was not allowed to join King Eyeball at the meeting area, but he stood on the outside of the discussion with the two small foxes he had seen walking through the forest, along with a young goose.
Flutter:	(Looking at them, addressing them shyly): Hi. I am Flutter. What are your names?

Kit Fox:	(Quietly speaking so not to interrupt the conference): I am Kit. This is my sister, Kat.
Bruce Goose:	(Speaking from the side of his mouth): I am Bruce. I was the only one brave enough to come with my mother and father to the Conference. Everyone was too afraid to be eaten by the predators.
Kit Fox:	I will not eat you!
Kat Fox:	Nor will I!
Flutter:	I want to tell you that I am sad that this war has gone on so long. I will be so happy to have it over and done.
Kat Fox:	Same here.
Bruce Goose:	I cannot wait for it to be over. I am so tired of all of us being afraid.
Flutter:	Yeah, fear can be boring. It makes it so you cannot sleep at night, and if I am afraid, I do not digest my food very well. The berries I eat start tasting like dirt, and I want to burp all the time.
Narrator:	All of the young ones started laughing with Flutter as he chuckled at his own words. King Eyeball turned and stared at him. Flutter sighed.
Bruce Goose:	Your father is really hard on you, isn't he?
Flutter:	Yes, but I try to make the most of it. He made me come, but wouldn't he be surprised if I made friends here? That would really shock him!
Kit Fox:	Then let's all make a pact ourselves. From now on, we will be friends. True friends, not like our parents.
Flutter:	(All of the eyes of his friends looked at him, judging Flutter): What? What is it?
Bruce Goose:	The bats have not been friends with anyone.
Kat Fox:	(Clearing her throat): It's true, Flutter. They have been playing both sides against the middle, so to speak.
Narrator:	Flutter knew they were true. He accepted that his mother's words verified that what they said was true.
Flutter:	I know, and I am sorry. I just found out today. My mother told me the truth, not the made up stories that my other family members have told me.
Narrator:	The young ones could hear voices changing, and looked at the meeting area. Everyone was shaking hands, but Flutter noticed that every leader was ignoring King Eyeball, who stood in stunned silence.
Mr. Goose:	Thank you to everyone who made this Peace Conference possible. The Peace Treaty has been signed, and all present will make sure that their family members still adhere to their agreements. Now to the next order of business.
Narrator:	Every single Bird and Beast at the Peace Conference was staring at the King of the Bats, whose eyes were growing bigger with every second.
Mr. Fox:	The war is over, but we now have to discuss the conduct of the Bats, especially the King of the Bats.
Mr. Goose:	King Eyeball and his family.
Mr. Fox:	Yes.
King Eyeball:	Why are you looking at me?
Narrator:	The silence was so thick it could not be sliced. The sheer volume of fear coming with King Eyeball's denial was palpable.

Mr. Goose:	You know what you have done.
Mr. Fox:	Murderer!
Mr. Bear:	Betrayal!
Mr. Goose:	Treachery!
Mr. Bear:	Such deceit that you have shown is incomprehensible.
Mr. Goose:	And unpardonable!
Narrator:	Dark murmurings swam through the crowd. Flutter began to fear for his father's life. He looked at his new friends, and their faces were angry but also sad.
Mr. Fox:	Such deceit that you have shown is unpardonable.
King Eyeball:	(Backing away): Of what am I being accused? I have done nothing wrong!
Narrator:	King Eyeball sputtered and stuttered, making excuses and trying to give reasons behind why he had chosen to play traitor with both sides in the war.
King Eyeball:	I did what I had to do for the safety of my family!
Narrator:	At this point, the Birds and Beasts made common cause to drive out the Bats. Flutter was frightened now. His father and mother were rushing out of the Conference, with his mother gesturing him to hurry. Flutter turned to his new friends, and their faces were frozen. Just as he was about to join his mother, they quietly and deliberately turned their backs to him. Flutter's heart stopped for just a moment, then he turned to his mother and heaving himself into the night, he flew away with his mother and father, silently and quickly. King Eyeball felt nothing but pride that he and his family had been able to manipulate and coerce the Birds and the Beasts by playing both sides in the war that would end with many deaths. "Good riddance!" he would say. Since then, the Bat family has hidden in dark towers and deserted ruins, flying out only in the night. When Flutter got to the dark cave, he cried himself to sleep at the thought of never getting a chance to make friends again. The sins of the father had isolated Flutter, who had not taken part in the deceitful actions of his family, but he still stood to be blamed.

Narrator:

Betrayal is the breaking or violation of a trust that produces moral and psychological conflict within a relationship. After the betrayal by the Bats of both the Birds and the Beasts during their war for survival, both sides felt humiliation and shame at having been fooled and manipulated by their betrayer, Traitors, who have betrayed someone they care for, usually do feel plagued by feelings of guilt, sadness, shame, or remorse. Their own capacity to hurt others may also damage their own self-esteem and identity. However, in this case, King Eyeball had underestimated the Birds and the Beasts though. He had just not taken into consideration how much animosity they would get when the war was over and peace was declared. The only regret he felt was anger in not being able to enjoy the fruits of their labors. Flutter, however, was different from his father, and he mourned the loss of friends. It was many months later that he spied Kit and Kat Fox talking with Bruce Goose in the forest, picking the tiny flowers that sprang up in the Spring through the rot on the forest floor. When they saw him, they got in a circle and talked quietly, but they did not move away from him. Just as Flutter decided he had to fly into the trees to get away, Kit Fox broke the circle and waved his hand for Flutter to come back. The friends had listened to their parents, then had conferenced together, deciding that Flutter could be a good friend if they allowed him to be, as Flutter had not taken part in his father's scheming. After that, they all stayed friends and helped each other through the Winter snows and the Spring floods. Flutter had finally found friends who thought and acted like him, having empathy for one another.

The moral of the story:

"The deceitful have no friends"