



How Goat Moved to the Village

Haiti

One afternoon, Goat was sitting by a fire just outside his house in the jungle, baking sweet potatoes. He had worked very hard during the planting season so he had a good harvest. Now he was going to satisfy his hunger for fresh-baked sweet potatoes. **(1)**

He blew on the ashes and stirred the fire, and soon the delicious smell of sweet potatoes went floating through the jungle, carried along by the breeze. When the fire burned itself out, Goat, licking his lips, got a stick and quickly took out the big, steaming sweet potatoes from under the ashes. Grabbing a sweet potato, he blew on it: “Pff . . . pff . . . pff . . .” **(2)**

But before he could bite into it, a voice called out behind him: “Good afternoon.” **(3)**

Goat jumped up and dropped the sweet potato, as if those words had turned the potato into a red-hot coal. When he turned around, he saw Hyena standing in back of him. Hyena’s eyes were shining with bad intentions. “Good afternoon,” Goat replied. His voice was trembling in fear. “You have arrived just in time for a meal. Come and help yourself to fresh-baked sweet potatoes.” **(4)**

“I’m starving,” Hyena replied, looking hungrily at Goat, “but I will eat no sweet potatoes.” **(5)**

“I have cassava and sweet corn, if you can wait a few moments,” Goat said, struggling to hide his fear. **(6)**

“I am really hungry,” Hyena answered, “but I am not hungry for cassava or sweet corn. I am hungry for you!” **(7)**

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Shivers ran down Goat's back. He wanted to run away, but where could he run? He knew Hyena could always catch up with him. **(8)**

"My grandfather and yours were great friends. They were so close . . . ," Goat said, trying to talk his way out of danger. **(9)**

"Shut up!" Hyena screamed, clawing the air in anger. "What do I care about your grandfather! I am hungry, not for words or friendship, but for goat-meat!" **(10)**

Seeing that Hyena wanted to eat, not talk, Goat quickly changed his strategy. He took a sweet potato and made a great show of biting into it. The sweet potato tasted like ashes, but that didn't prevent Goat from smacking his lips. He took little bites, but he chewed on and on. Goat was buying time while looking to escape from the jaws of death. Despite his hunger, Hyena decided to wait a little while. Hyena wanted Goat to eat as much as possible so that Goat would be big enough to fill his stomach. As Goat ate on and on, however, Hyena's patience ran out. "What is taking you so long?" he howled. "I cannot wait here all evening while you go on eating. That bite will be your last one. I am starving!" **(11)**

He came toward Goat, his eyes shining, his claws itching to get at him. **(12)**

At that moment, they heard a loud, blood-chilling noise that sounded like thunder as Lion came walking toward them. **(13)**

"Good afternoon," Lion roared, glaring at both Hyena and Goat. "Good afternoon," Hyena stammered, but Goat remained silent. **(14)**

"You look so sad, as if you had been sentenced to death. What's the matter with you?" Lion said, fixing his eyes on Goat with a fierce gaze. **(15)**

“I was about to eat my fresh-baked sweet potatoes when Hyena came by. I invited him to join in. I offered to cook cassava and sweet corn for him if he preferred, but he said he was going to eat me instead. I don’t think he’s being fair. Maybe you can settle the matter.” **(16)**

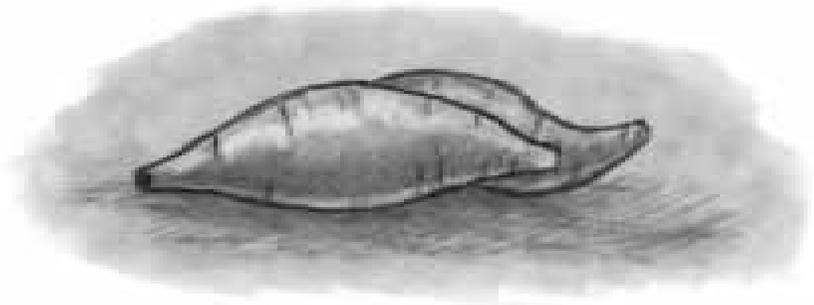
“I really cannot say whether Hyena is fair or unfair,” Lion replied, staring at Hyena with hunger in his eyes. “But it seems to me there is only one way to settle such a delicate matter. Let Goat eat his sweet potatoes, let Hyena eat Goat, so I can eat Hyena! That will settle the matter once and for all!” Hyena felt numb all over and broke out in a sweat. He thought Lion’s solution was terribly unfair, but he was silenced by the look in the big cat’s eyes. **(17)**

Trying to put a good face on a disaster, Hyena laid his paw on Goat’s neck, and shaking him said: “Hurry up and finish your sweet potatoes, so I can eat you up, and Lion can eat me. But first I must step into the bush to relieve myself. Excuse me a moment.” And Hyena disappeared into the bush. **(18)**

A few moments later, Goat saw Hyena running as fast as he could. He was running for his life. “Your food is running away,” Goat shouted to Lion, pointing in the direction Hyena was running. In a flash, Lion went flying through the jungle in hot pursuit of Hyena. **(19)**

Goat sprang to his feet and ran in the opposite direction. Promising never to return to the jungle, Goat ran straight to the village. Soon afterwards, his parents and all his relatives joined him. But whether Goat and his family intended to remain in the village or live somewhere else is still a mystery. **(20)**

How Goat Moved from the Jungle to the Village



Connecting to the story

Think about and discuss these questions:

Have you ever moved from a rural area to an urban one?
Why?

Have you ever been in a dangerous situation that you
escaped from? Explain.

Glossary

(Numbers refer to the paragraph number)

Words

cassava (16), n. — A root vegetable, somewhat like a potato.

Phrasal verbs and verb-preposition combinations

turned into (4) — changed; became something else

catch up with (8)

— come from behind to the same place as someone else

talk (someone) out of (9)

— convince someone not to do something

ran out (11) — finished; consumed completely

came by (16) — visited, stopped to visit

broke out in a sweat(17) — suddenly started to sweat

Additional Vocabulary

Do you know these words and phrases?

___ harvest (1)

___ to chew (11)

___ ashes (2)

___ to howl (11)

___ to bite (3)

___ fierce (15)

___ to struggle (6)

___ numb (17)

___ to claw (10)

Look them up or look for them in the workbook.

Pearls of Wisdom: African and Caribbean Folktales

Text: Stories with vocabulary. 2 audio CD's of Dr. Mama telling the stories.

Student workbook by Dr. Romney

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