

Story

Tortoise and his shell

Once there was a tortoise and he lived by himself in the veld. Every day he watched all the other animals running fast and he felt sad because he was so slow. Tortoise was sad because he could not run fast like the other animals. He could only walk very slowly.

Tortoise thought for a while and then he said, "I can't run fast because my shell is too heavy. I think I will crawl out of my shell, and then I will run fast". So Tortoise crawled out of his shell. He ran off, calling, "Look at me, now I can run fast!" He was very happy.

But, what do you think happened? Tortoise was running down the path when he bumped into a big dog. Tortoise got a big fright! He stopped, turned around and ran away as fast as he could. What do you think Tortoise was thinking? Yes, he thought the dog was going to chase him. And the dog did chase after him, barking like this as he went, "Woof-woof-woof!" Tortoise was very frightened. He ran off the path and hid behind a big rock. The dog did not see Tortoise hiding, and ran on.

When the dog had gone, Tortoise came out from behind the rock and started running again. It was not long before Tortoise heard a noise. He looked up and there was a big bird. What do you think the big bird was thinking? Yes, the big bird wanted to eat Tortoise. Again, Tortoise ran away as fast as he could. He saw a tree with a hole

in it, and he quickly ran into the hole. Tortoise waited for the bird to fly away, then he came out of the hole.

Tortoise was not very happy. Why wasn't he happy? Yes, because he was frightened. He had no shell to hide in. Soon it started to rain and it was cold. Tortoise got very wet and he shivered. He did not like it. Now he was very, very unhappy. So what do you think he did?

Yes, he crawled back into his strong shell. He said, "I don't care if I can't run fast. I am a tortoise. I am happy to be me!" And to this day, tortoises cannot take off their shells.

And that is the end of the story.

