

# Amazing Folktales



## From Different Countries

Written by Inver Hills Community College  
students Spring 2016

# Folktales

A folktale can be defined as a story, legend or traditional tale originating among people or folk that parents have passed on to their children through speech over many years. It also can be described as a characteristically anonymous, timeless, and placeless tale, considered to be false or based on superstition, forming part of the oral tradition of the common people. Often, folktales have a deep meaning with the purpose of providing the audience a positive message.

Each country has its own folktale that has been passed around generation after generation. We are a group of students who are currently taking a course called English for Academic Purposes in Inver Hills Community College. We are originally from different parts of the world and each one of us has written a folktale originated from our home country. We'd like to share them with you.

Addullahi Abdi – Somalia

Sandra Vargas – Mexico

Ahmed Almadan – Saudi Arabia

Leslynn Kurterbis – Palau

Cristina Sanchez - Spain

Mohamed Hussein – Somalia

Jimena Cruz – Guatemala

Phu Le – Vietnam

Charles Saloe – Liberia

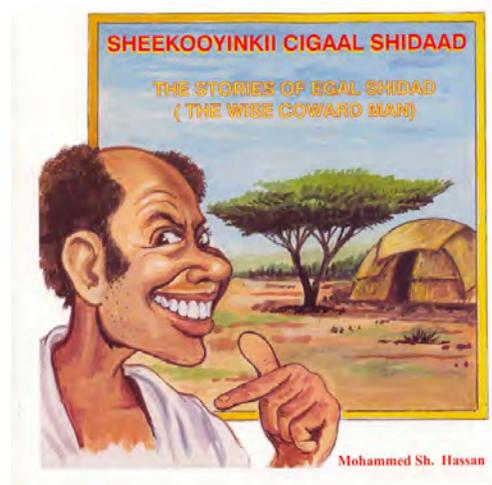
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## A Somali Folktale: A Coward Man and His Enemy

Igal Shidaad is a man with his stories about being a coward. These stories are popular throughout Somalia. Igal was a nomadic man who makes his living for raising livestock, such as camels, cattle, and goats. Usually, the nomad lifestyle is very difficult because there are a lot of predators and clan wars. Igal is a very coward and he hates all those things.

One day Igal was sleeping in his small tent house, and his wife heard news a group of enemies who entered their village and wants to kill every man from Igal's clan. Then, she quickly ran towards where her husband was sleeping in order to notify him of the bad news and tell him for ready to fight.



“Igal, wake up please there is an enemy from another city who wants to attack us soon,” she said. Igal didn't believe the story of his wife, and he said, “Why you always terrified me and tell scariest stories I ever heard?”

Igal's wife continued to talk very loudly and she said, “This isn't fairytale story, and it's not something that I want make you frightening, but it's true, and all our neighbors are talking about the attack, so you are the man who should defend our life and our property.”

Forgetting to defend the family, Igal was too scarred for himself, and he was thinking how he can survive from this enemy. While Igal was thinking what he should do, the enemies are getting closer, and all the villagers started screaming. Right away, he got an

idea, and he ordered his spouse to roll under a mat and cry, and tell the enemy that her husband died. The wife did so, but Igal was unsatisfied how she is crying, and he said to her under the rug "Please, cry louder, so the enemy think you are really crying."

Finally, the enemy came to Igal's house and asked the wife what happened to her and she responded that her husband died, and that is why she is crying. The enemy asked her when her husband died, but there is a big problem from there, because Igal and his wife did not agree to tell a time about when he died. Before she had responded, Igal speaks out from the inside of the rug and said, "Tell them he died yesterday." At that moment the enemy knew that Igal was hiding. The enemy was shocked, and they surprised how he is coward, and they said, "What a foolish guy. This is not a full man. Although he already died, let him lives."

Always, it's not better to be coward it's better to be a strong man who can protect his life and his family or people will call you "dead man walking!"

### The Rat and a Crab: a Palauan Folktale

Once upon a time there was a rat a crab. They were great friends. One day they went to the forest to get fire-woods. As they were going through the woods enjoying each other's company, they came across a papaya tree with a fruit that seemed too good not to get. They stopped and debated who will climb up and get it. Then the crab said, "Let me climb up first." So the crab decided to go up, but half way up he broke off one his legs and so he climbed back down. The rat climbed all the way up and reached the fruit and started eating the fruit. The crab was on the ground and asked him, "Aren't you going to share with me?" The rat didn't respond and kept eating. The crab then left the rat and went on his way. While walking beside the stream he saw a fish, a big red snapper fish. He caught the fish and brought it up. While he was getting the fish, the rat caught up to him and saw him with the red snapper fish and said, "That looks delicious." The crab said to him, "Even though you didn't share, I would still share mine if you promise to share whatever you have." They agreed on it and left together with a delicious meal waiting to be eaten.

Moral: Great satisfaction comes from sharing. The more you give the more you have.

Sharing is caring!



### The Conceited Cow

Once upon a time there was an extremely large cow and a very small mosquito. The cow was very proud of her size, and she felt very beautiful. One day, the mosquito heard the cow say: "It would be very difficult to find another animal bigger or more beautiful than myself." Then the mosquito sat on her back and he said, "Don't pressure so much, dear cow, there is always somebody bigger and more beautiful than you." The cow laughed and she exclaimed, "You are an insignificant animal!" The mosquito didn't say anything, but he took out his stinger, and he started to sting her. Then the cow started to move her tail with all her strength at the mosquito because she felt pain. After swatting at the mosquito very hard, many times, the cow was very sore. She tried so hard to stop the mosquito from stinging her that she hurt herself. She had bruises on her body and she asked him to stop stinging. "Can you believe that there is somebody stronger than you," asked the mosquito, "or do you prefer that I continue to sting you?" "Please no! No, I think that is enough today!" exclaimed the cow. "I hope that you learned that you never call animal unimportant again," repeated the mosquito. From that day, the cow let the mosquito stay on her back.

Message: You can't believe that you are the best and despise another person.



## The Monster Will Sleep in Your Bed

### A Folktale from Saudi Arabia

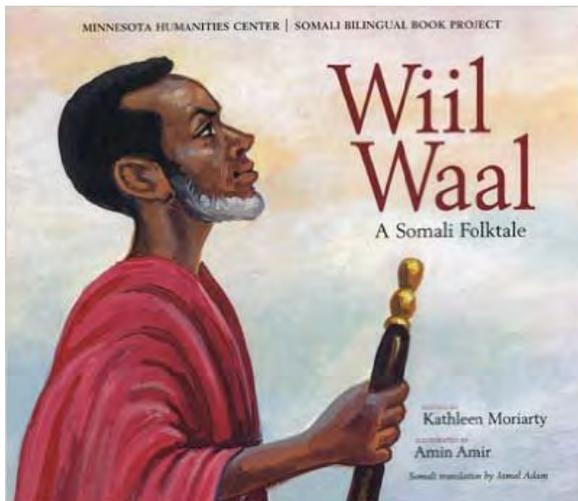
When I was a little kid, I hardly ever went to my bed early. Because of that my father told my grandfather that I always made a problem when my parents wanted me to go to bed. One day, when my family and I were visiting my grandfather's house, my grandfather told me and the other kids a story called "The Monster Will Sleep in Your Bed". My grandfather told us our younger uncle Hussain almost every day stayed up late. One night, around the same time like always, my uncle Hussain was going late to his bed. When my uncle approached his room, he saw someone was sleeping in his bed! The monster was bald with an ugly face that has one big eye in the middle, also he had big ears that are covered with thick hair and three hands with seven fingers in each with very long dirty nails. Moreover, the monster had only two sharp teeth with bad breath that you can smell from far away. He freaked out and screamed like a little baby, "THE MONSTER IS IN MY ROOM! HE IS COMING TO TAKE ME!" He ran fast to my grandparents' bedroom and told them about the monster he saw who had a horrifying voice that sounds like thunder. My grandmother told him, "Stay with us tonight and tomorrow we will find who that was." The day after, my grandfather told him, "The monster was sleeping in your bed. If you do not listen to me and your mother and stay up late, the monster will sleep in your bed. Not only that, but he will also sleep there if you do bad things, too." The next day, my uncle Hussain still would not go to bed early. He did not believe in the monster. My grandfather, to trick my uncle Hussain lay in Hussain's bed and start whispering "WOOOOOO WOOOOO I AM

THE MONSTER. IF YOU DON'T SLEEP EARLY I WILL COME TO YOUR ROOM AND SLEEP WITH YOU. WOOO WOOO!" My uncle ran to my grandmother and said "HE IS BACK. HE IS BACK!" My grandmother told him, "See listen to me and your dad and go to your bed early and the bad monster will never come back." The next day he went to bed earlier than anyone in the house. After that my uncle never stayed up late. Also, I started to go to my bed early because I did not want the monster to sleep in my bed.



## Intellectual Girl

Once upon a time, there was a powerful man in Somalia. His name was Wii-Waal (mad boy). He was a poet and a warrior. He used to check the thinking of every man in the community. One day he wanted to test the men of village, so he called every man and asked them to bring an animal flesh that represents violence and peacefulness. Every man



thought about this and went back to their house to find flesh. They all gathered their goats; sheep, cows and camels to slaughter, but one man met his family and told the story about Wii-Waal.

Fortunately, the man's daughter gave good advice to her father to slaughter the skinny goat but not the fat one, and remove its throat, and that's what Wiil-Waal needed to find. The man thought about his daughter's idea to go for the skinny goat instead of the fat goat. At last, the daughter insisted to take the skinny goat's throat. The man took the small throat and stood behind the men. He was scared to put the flesh in front of the Wiil-Waal. When the men dropped what they were carrying, he became the last in line.

Wiil-Waal saw him and asked the man, "why did you bring this skinny goat's throat?" Then the old man started to curse his daughter's advice and said, "Sir, this is not my idea. It's my daughter's advice." Then, Wiil-Waal asked him to call his daughter.

On the way to his home, he kept complaining about his daughter. "Why did I follow her idea?" Afterword's, they returned together to the location of Wiil-Waal. Then Wiil-waal said "You have one of the most intellectual girls in our community. This throat is the flesh I needed because human's bad gluttony eagerly causes problems in the society". Basically the goat's throat represented the greed between men that causes violence. Then, Wiil-Waal married the man's daughter, which was the only girl who found the right answer among the community men.

### The Rabbit on the Moon

Quetzalat was a very generous and powerful God. He was always traveling around the world. Quetzalat transformed himself as a man, so no one would notice he was a God. He was walking the whole day, and he was very hungry and tired. It was getting late, the sky was dark and the stars were starting to shine brightly. Because he was very tired from walking almost the whole day, he sat on the side of the road to rest for a little bit, but he was very hungry. He looked to his left side and saw a happy and beautiful rabbit white like

the snow.



The rabbit was eating dinner. His dinner was just fresh green grass. Quetzalat told the rabbit how hungry he was. The rabbit asked Quetzalat, “Would you like to eat some grass with me?” Quetzalat replied, “Sorry and thank you but I don’t eat grass.”

Quetzalat was so hungry so he told the rabbit, “I will die from hunger.” The rabbit so kind and generous said, “No you will not die, eat me! Eat me please but don’t die.” Quetzalat was so thankful and happy he told the rabbit, “I will not eat you, but because of your generosity the whole world will always remember you.” Quetzalat lifted the rabbit so high to the moon that Quetzalat planted the generous rabbit’s image on the moon. Quetzalat brought the rabbit back to the earth and said, “Rabbit now your image is planted on the moon

the beautiful bright moon, and everybody will always remember you." The rabbit was so happy and proud of himself for his generosity.

When you are a generous person you would be well known and gifted.

### A Shepherd Boy and the Wolf



One day, a boy is sitting to take care of sheep on a hill. To make himself happy, he took a deep breath and yelled, "Wolf! Wolf! The wolf is chasing the sheep!"

The villagers ran up the hill to help him drive the wolf away. But when they came the hill, they did not find any wolf there. The faces of the villagers were angry. People immediately told the boy "Shepherd boy, do not cry wolf when there is no wolf". Then they went back down the mountain.



Later, the boy yelled out again, "Wolf! Wolf! The wolf is chasing the sheep!"

He watched the villagers run up the hill to help him drive away the wolf. But when people did not see any wolf. They told the boy, "Save your frightened song for when there is really something wrong! Do not cry wolf when there is no wolf!" But the boy just grinned and watched them go down the hill one more time.

A moment later, when he saw a REAL wolf prowling about his sheep. Very frightened, the boy ran away to call people helping. But the villagers thought he was trying

to trick them, so no one ran up the hill.



At sunset, everyone wondered why did not see the boy and the sheep back. They went up the hill to find the boy, and they saw he was crying. "There really was a

wolf here! The sheep has scattered! I shouted Wolf! Why do you not come?"

When he returned to the village, an old man put his hand on the boy's shoulder and said "Tomorrow morning we will help you find the lost sheep. Nobody believes a liar even when they are telling the truth, child!".

### Mr. Spider, His Family, and The Dead Elephant

Once upon a time, there lived Mr. Spider and his family. Mr. Spider had four boys, three girls and his wife. He and his family always used to go hunting and fishing. Spider was known as the greediest man in his village. There came a time that whenever Mr. Spider and his family went hunting or fishing, he will not catch any fish or kill any animal. So due to this, Mr. Spider passed a law in his household that whosoever catches a fish or kills an animal is not allowed to eat any of the food. The law went on in the spider's family household for a long period of time. Unfortunately, the table turned upside down on Mr. Spider and he got caught in his own game.

One day, Spider went to pay a visit to his home town, and on his way back from visiting his parents, he saw a big elephant and without hesitation, Spider went ahead and killed the elephant. While he was happily bringing the elephant home to his family, he suddenly remembered the law that he had passed so many years ago. As he remembered this, he dropped the dead elephant about three blocks away from his house by a river bank and he rushed home. He asked his older sons to go in that same direction giving specific instructions to bring him some fresh water to drink but his wife said, "this is fresh water the kids just brought it." Mr. Spider insisted on the kids going that way to get his water. The children went and brought the water without bringing the elephant or saying anything. When they came back with the fresh water he asked if they saw anything at all by the river bank. The boys replied no and they told their mother what they think their father was up to. So they all agreed not to bring the elephant home. Spider went and brought it closer and sent his other boys for something else. They went and brought it without bringing the elephant. He once again asked if they saw anything at all on the way and the kids said no. So

Mr. Spider went and brought the elephant right behind his house under his bedroom's window and asked his wife to go sweep the backyard. So she went and swept the backyard without bringing the elephant or saying anything. Once again he asked if she saw anything she replied no.

Finally, Spider gave up and said "So everyone of you teamed up against me and say you did not see anything?" Then he told them to go and get the elephant and since then he decided to abolish the law in the spider household and the Spider's family lived happily ever after.

## A True Friend

Once upon a time, there were two true friends. They shared everything, and they lived in perfect harmony. One night, one of the friends woke up shocked. He jumped out of bed, quickly dressed, and went to his friend's house. When he arrived, he knocked to the door: "TOC TOC TOC."



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Someone opened the door, scared.

The owner of the house, his friend, woke up immediately and went downstairs to see what was happening. When he saw that was his friend, he told him.

"My friend I know that you're not that kind of person that comes to my house in the middle of the night without any reason. If you came to my house is because something bad happen to you. If you lost all your money in the game, here you can have this money, take it. And if you had a fight with someone and need help to face him, together we will fight. You already know that you can count on me in everything you need."

The other friend responded "I am very grateful for your generous offers, but I am not here for any of those reasons ... I was sleeping and I had a nightmare I was dreaming that you were worried and sad. The nightmare worried me so I decided to come to your house to check if you were okay, because you are my friend and I care about you."

Real friendship means being loyal to each other, being generous, sharing good moments, and supporting each other in bad moments.



*Thank you, EAP 90 students, for your effort on the folktale project and for your effort in the class. You are all amazing, talented, hardworking students, and I was so lucky to be your instructor.*

*Laura Funke*

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