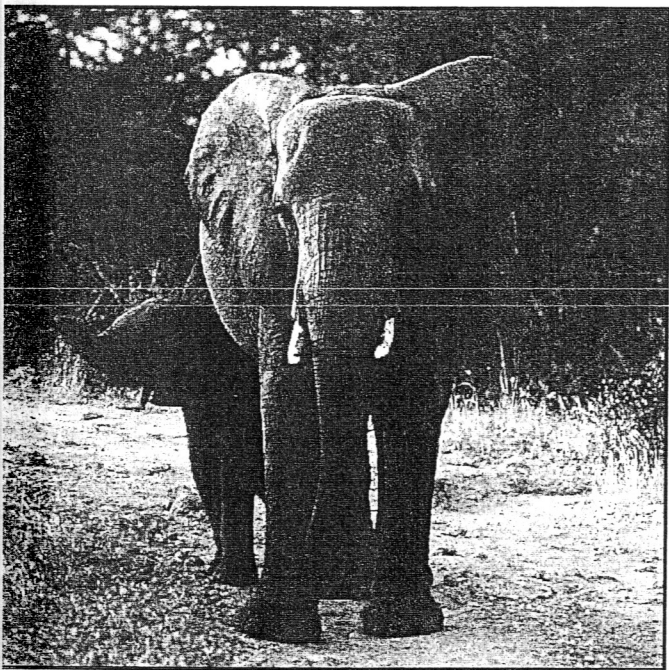

Good Luck, Bad Luck

Retold by Heather McNeil

A long time ago, Tembo the Elephant was going to visit his friend.⁽⁴²⁾ He had heard that his friend was *mgonjwa*, sick. So he filled two gourds with *mafuta*, fat, set the gourds on his back, and down the road went Elephant. Dhon! Dhon! Dhon!

Along came Sungura the Rabbit, hopping down the road past Elephant. Bba! Bba! Bba! "*Hujambo, Tembo! Hello, Elephant!*" Bba! Bba! Bba! "*Unakwenda wapi? Where are you going?*" Bba! Bba! Bba!



Ph.42. Tembo the Elephant.

"I am going to visit my friend who is *mgonjwa*. I am taking him two gourds of *mafuta* to make him strong and healthy again."

"*Mafuta?*" Rabbit stopped. He turned around and hopped quickly back to Elephant. Bba! Bba! Bba! "*Mabuyu mawili ya mafuta? Two gourds of fat? How kind of you, Tembo! Is it a long journey to see your friend?*"

"*Ndiyo, Sungura. Yes, Rabbit. Safari nrefu, a long journey.*"

"And you will be all by yourself. That will be very lonely, Tembo."

Elephant looked sad. "*Ndiyo, Sungura. Peke yake. All by my-*

self." Suddenly Elephant smiled. "*Sungura, why don't you come with me on safari?*"

"Come with you, Tembo? Oh, I would love to, but—I can't."

"Why not?"

"*Macho yangu.*"

"Your eyes
"My eyes
very hard for
"You will
the gourds."

"Eh, Tembo
trunk, wrapped
the road went

All that I
fat. His eyes
opened one.
and the gourds

Then Rabbit
feeling so bad
some leaves

Elephant
Rabbit stuffed
the road went

Rabbit
ate and he
Rabbit called
sitting up high
of dirt to stop

Elephant
Rabbit poured
Elephant. D

Just before
neath a tree
Elephant was

Elephant
friend! I had
mafuta to my
shoulders.

cannot see

His friend

"Your eyes? What about your eyes, Sungura?"

"My eyes are not seeing too well lately, and *safari nrefu* would be very hard for me. I might get lost."

"You will not get lost, Sungura. I will carry you on my back with the gourds."

"Eh, Tembo, you are *huruma*, so kind." Elephant reached out his trunk, wrapped it around Rabbit, and set him on his back. Then down the road went Elephant. Dhon! Dhon! Dhon!

All that Rabbit really wanted was *mafuta*, the rich, thick, delicious fat. His eyes had no trouble seeing the gourds, and he immediately opened one. He ate and he ate and he ate, until his belly was *jaa*, full, and the gourd was *ntupu*, empty.

Then Rabbit called down to Elephant, "Eh, Tembo! My eyes are feeling so badly. Tears are coming into my eyes. Would you give me some leaves so I can wipe *macho yangu*?"

Elephant pulled away palm leaves and handed them up to Rabbit. Rabbit stuffed the leaves into *buyu ntupu*, the empty gourd, while down the road went Elephant. Dhon! Dhon! Dhon!

Rabbit began eating *mafuta* from the second gourd. He ate and he ate and he ate until his belly was *jaa* and the gourd was *ntupu*. Then Rabbit called down to Elephant, "Eh, Tembo! I am so hot and sweaty, sitting up here in the sun on your back. Would you give me a little bit of dirt to sprinkle on myself?"

Elephant dug up dirt from the red earth and handed it up to Rabbit. Rabbit poured the dirt into *buyu ntupu*, while down the road went Elephant. Dhon! Dhon! Dhon!

Just before Elephant arrived at his friend's home, he walked underneath a tree. Rabbit reached up, grabbed a low-hanging branch, and Elephant went on down the road—without Rabbit! Dhon! Dhon! Dhon!

Elephant came to the end of his *safari*. "*Hujambo, rafiki!* Hello, friend! I heard you are *mgonjwa*, so I brought you *mabuyu mawili ya mafuta* to make you well and strong again. Just take the gourds off my shoulders. But be careful of Sungura. His eyes are not good, and he cannot see well at all."

His friend looked up at Elephant's back.

No Rabbit.

He lifted down a gourd and opened it up.

No fat.

He lifted down the second gourd and opened it up.

No fat.

"Tembo, there is no rabbit and there is no fat. You brought me two gourds full of leaves and dirt!"

Elephant was so ashamed and so angry. "I did not travel *safari nrefu* to bring my friend dirt and leaves. I will find that thief, SUN-GU-RA!" Elephant knew he would have to be clever. He put a beautiful necklace on his head and disguised his voice so Rabbit would not recognize him. Then back down the road went Elephant. DHON! DHON! DHON! Into the forest went Elephant. DHON! DHON! DHON! Over to Rabbit's house went Elephant. DHON! DHON! DHON! Elephant stopped.

"SUN-GU-RA!"

A rabbit came out of the house. "Eh, Tembo, what do you want? Why all this stomping and yelling?"

"I want to see the young rabbit who has 'bad eyes' and a full belly."

"Why do you want him?"

"I have something very special to give him."

"There are four of us in this house, but none of us have bad eyes."

"Then I will see the one with a full belly."

"That is not me. My belly is *ntupu*. *Kwaheri*, Tembo! Goodbye, Elephant. *Bahati mjema!* Good luck!" The rabbit hopped into the forest. Bba! Bba! Bba!

Elephant called out again. "SUN-GU-RA!" Out came another rabbit, but he, too, had an empty belly. Four times Elephant called out for a rabbit to come to him, and it was the last rabbit that had a round belly, tight like a drum.

"Eh, Tembo, what do you want?" asked the fourth rabbit.

"I want the rabbit with the 'bad eyes' and the full belly."

Rabbit took one step back. "Why do you want this rabbit?"

Elephant took one step forward. "I have something very special to give him."

Rabbit took another step back. "What do you want to give him?"

Elephant forgot."

"What h

"Yes, I a
he got all th

Rabbit g
that you gav

"Mabuyi

"Help! I
his little leg
rabbit, liftec

"Now, S
going to fin
beat you! Ba
DHON! DH

So there
wiggled and
his mind to
thinking, al

"Eh, Fis



"Sungu
monkey?"

"Tembo

"Why v

"Be cau

"What

Elephant took another step forward. "I want to give him what he forgot."

"What he forgot?"

"Yes, I already gave him something very special. But he left before he got all that he DESERVES!" Elephant pulled off the necklace.

Rabbit gasped. "And what exactly was the 'something very special' that you gave him?"

"*Mabuyu mawili ya mafuta!*"

"Help! That's me!" The rabbit turned to run for his life, but before his little legs could move, Elephant wrapped his trunk around the rabbit, lifted him onto a branch, and tied him to it with a vine.

"Now, SUN-GU-RA, you are going to get what you deserve. I am going to find a stick, a very large, thick, strong stick, and I am going to beat you! *Bahati mbaya!* Bad luck!" Then down the road went Elephant. DHON! DHON! DHON!

So there was Rabbit, tied to the thorny branch of an acacia tree. He wiggled and squirmed, but the vine held him tight. Finally, he put only his mind to work, trying to think of a plan. And while he was busy thinking, along came Hyena, sniffing and searching for food.

"Eh, Fisi! *Habari gani!* What news?"

Hyena stopped. He looked all around, sure that he had heard the delicious voice of Sungura.

"Fisi! Hyena! Here I am!"

Hyena looked to the right, to the left, in front of him, in back of him. Still no Rabbit.

"Fisi, up here! In the tree!"

Hyena looked up.... Rabbit was in a tree!

"Sungura, what are you doing up there? Do you think you are a monkey?"

"Tembo tied me up here."

"Why would he do that?"

"Because I did not want what he was going to give me."

"What was he going to give you?"



"*Mabuyu mawili ya mafuta.*"

"You refused two gourds full of fat? Why would you do such a foolish thing?"

"Because I do not deserve them. I told him he should give them to someone else, someone very hungry. But he would not listen to me. He tied me here and has gone home to get the gourds of fat. It is too bad he will not give them to someone who wants them."

"Sungura, I want them!"

"You do?"

"*Ndiyo*, yes, I really do. I will eat them for you!"

"Oh, Fisi, you are *huruma*, so kind. We will just put you here in my place, and when Tembo returns, you tell him to give *you* what he was going to give *me*."

So Hyena jumped up and grabbed the end of the vine with his teeth. He pulled until the vine broke and Rabbit fell free to the ground. Then Rabbit lifted Hyena up, and Hyena tied himself to the branch with another vine.

"*Asante sana*, Sungura! Thank you very much, Rabbit!"

"Oh, no, Fisi. It is I who should thank you. *Bahati mjema!* Good luck!" And Rabbit hopped back into the forest. Bba! Bba! Bba!

Hyena waited, his mouth drooling as he thought of all that rich, thick, delicious fat. Finally, he heard Elephant coming down the road. DHON! DHON! DHON! Elephant stopped and stared at Hyena.

"Eh, Fisi, what are you doing here? Where is Sungura?"

"I spoke with him, and he said he did not deserve what you were going to give him. So I set him free."

"YOU DID WHAT?"

"I set him free. But now I am here in his place because I really want what you were going to give him. I think *I* deserve it."

"You do? Then I will give you what I was going to give Sungura. *Bahati mbaya*, Fisi! Bad luck, Hyena!"

And Elephant began beating Hyena with the stick.

A long ti
gourds full of
The rabb
Theelep
So the ra
you. My eyes
Theelep
climbed onto
The rabb
he got onto l
empty.

The rabb
coming into
Rabbit put th
Rabbit b
told theelep
so I can sprin
When tl
friend, he ha
very low. Th
was left han
When h
he told his fr
I heard you
take it off fro
the rabbit. H

The sec
is no rabbit.
fat. One was
with leaves.

The ele
that way to l
to go look fo

He put
rabbit woul
and scream

A rabb
he wanted.

"The y
seen him?"

Original Translation

A long time ago, Elephant went to visit his friend. The elephant got two gourds full of fat. On his way, he met with Rabbit.

The rabbit asked the elephant, "Hey, my friend, where are you going?"

The elephant said, "I am going to visit my friend. I heard he is sick."

So the rabbit told the elephant, "If you are going there, I can accompany you. My eyes are not feeling too good, so you can carry me."

The elephant told the rabbit he could climb onto his back. So the rabbit climbed onto his back.

The rabbit really wanted a ride so he could eat the fat in the gourds. When he got onto Elephant's back, he started eating the fat until one gourd was empty.

The rabbit told the elephant, "My eyes are feeling so bad. The tears are coming into my eyes. Can you give me some leaves so I can wipe them?" Rabbit put the leaves into the empty gourd.

Rabbit began eating the fat in the second gourd. When he finished it, he told the elephant, "I am so sweaty. If you could just give me a little bit of dirt so I can sprinkle it on myself." When he got the dirt, he filled the second gourd.

When the elephant was just about to get to his friend, he had to pass under these branches. One was very low. The rabbit grabbed one of the branches and was left hanging there as the elephant went on.

When he got to his friend, he kneeled down and he told his friend, "I've just come to visit you because I heard you were sick. I've brought you some fat. Just take it off from my shoulders, please. But don't touch the rabbit. His eyes are not well, and he is very sick."

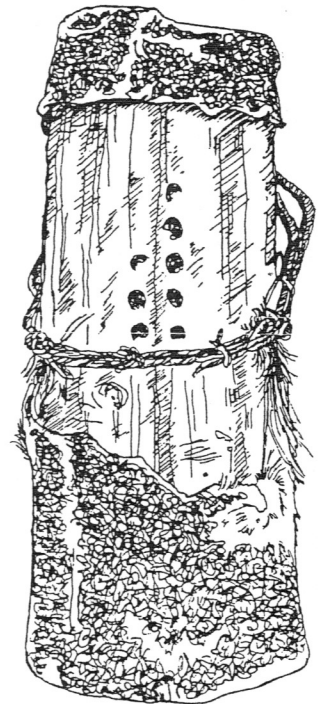
The second elephant keeps on looking, but there is no rabbit. Then they opened the gourds to eat the fat. One was filled with sand, and the other was filled with leaves.

The elephant was so ashamed after traveling all that way to help his sick friend. So he said, "I am going to go look for the rabbit." He took off.

He put this beautiful necklace on his head so the rabbit wouldn't recognize him. He went to the forest and screamed, "Rabbit, come here!"

A rabbit came out of the forest and asked what he wanted.

"The young rabbit who has bad eyes. Have you seen him?"



Buyu—a gourd fat container.

"No, I haven't seen him. There's only four in our house, and we all have this red mark on our forehead."

The elephant called four times. The rabbits keep on saying, "No, we don't know this rabbit with the bad eyes." The last rabbit asked the elephant, "Hey, what did you give him?"

"Fat."

The rabbit said, "That's me!"

The elephant grabbed him and tied him to a tree. The hyena came. The elephant had gone to get sticks to beat the rabbit. The hyena asked the rabbit, "Why are you tied here?"

The rabbit said, "I am tied here because I won't eat the elephant's fat."

The hyena said, "I am going to untie you, and you tie me, because I really want the fat. I don't fear this fat. I'll eat it all." The hyena untied the rabbit and the rabbit ran away.

The elephant came back and asked the hyena, "Who are you?"

"It's me, Hyena. I met Rabbit here, and he said he was afraid of what you were going to give him. But I am not afraid. I really want what you were going to give him."

The elephant said, "Oh, so you want it? I will give it to you!" And he began beating the hyena.

Notes

- Once a Chand Bre'r R rabbit dollar fascina stories realize gentle
- Quite : red ma it is an trip to

Tips

- You m is a fai not ha
- Use a sound encou hops before of the childr to sto
- Be su: rabbit
- Rabbi the te all hi: plan t
- Hyen voice
- *Bahat*

we all have

o, we don't
hant, "Hey,

i came. The
l the rabbit,

ant's fat."
use I really
e rabbit and

?"
of what you
were going

u!" And he

Notes and Tips on the Telling

Notes

- Once again, this is a story clearly linked to a Bre'r Rabbit story from Joel Chandler Harris. "A Dollar a Minute" tells how Bre'r Fox finally catches Bre'r Rabbit stealing his peanuts and has him hanging in a tree. But the rabbit convinces Bre'r Bear to take his place so the bear will earn "a dollar a minute" for keeping the crows out of the peanut patch. It is fascinating to me the elements that appear, over and over again, in stories throughout the world. The more I read and listen, the more I realize that it is through our stories we can understand the humor, gentleness, strength, and desires of us all.
- Quite frankly, I have no idea why the first rabbit says, "we all have this red mark on our forehead" in the original translation. I would assume it is an indication of a particular age set, but I'll have to wait for my next trip to Kenya to find out!

Tips

- You might want to explain that eating fat (as well as using it for cooking) is a fairly common dietary supplement in parts of Kenya where they do not have the variety of foods we are used to.
- Use audience participation whenever it seems appropriate to you. The sounds of Elephant walking and Rabbit hopping are easy ones to encourage. Listeners can use voices only, or foot stomps and slight body hops as well. Just remember that you must set the controls; explain before the story that each sound is done three times, or by certain parts of the audience, or following a particular gesture from you. Young children will love the stomping and hopping but need to know when to stop.
- Be sure to change Elephant's voice when he is trying to find the right rabbit. As far as I'm concerned, the sillier the voice, the better.
- Rabbit does not recognize Elephant until the necklace is removed. Then the tension and fear should be immediately obvious when Rabbit loses all his self-assurance. It returns, of course, when he comes up with a plan to trick Hyena.
- Hyena is stupid because of his greediness. Have fun with that through voice and facial interpretations.
- *Bahati mjema!*