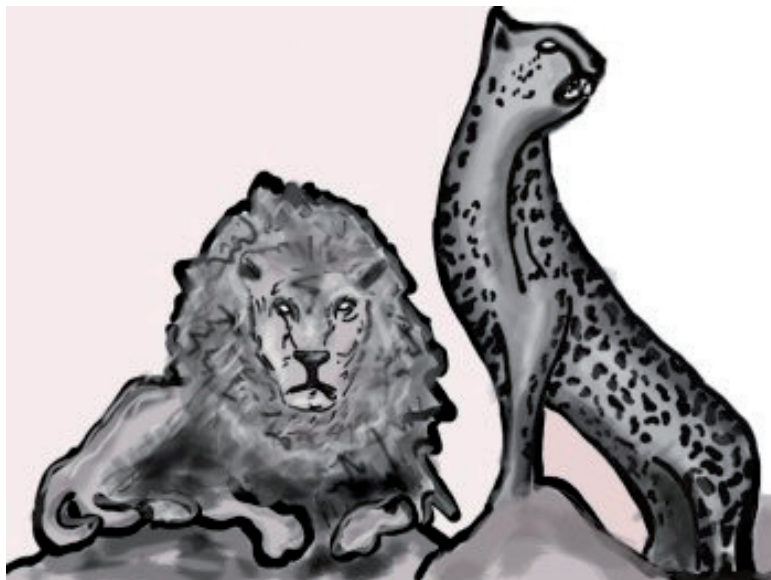


The lion and the cheetah

In a remote place of the vast African savannah, a stately lion and a slender cheetah covet a narrow path along which the herds of buffaloes and antelopes go every day. They want the same hunting ground which could feed their whole families throughout the year.

Each one has taken up position on a side of the path. They have already been looking each other up and down for several hours, without moving, without saying anything. The lion, in a stately manner, watches the cheetah intently. The cheetah, in a scornful manner, watches the lion intently. Who among the lion and the cheetah will give up first?

Suddenly, the lion and the cheetah stand up at the same time; they get closer to the point of touching each other's nose. They insult and abuse each other. They bare their teeth and growl. Time passes by. The time when the herds go by draws near but they do not notice it.



The herd of buffaloes and antelopes, as punctual as a clock, goes by at the usual time. But the two opponents are too busy quarrelling to react. Neither the lion, nor the cheetah dare moving, for fear the other might rush forward first. And the herd goes along.

The lion, furious, accuses the cheetah of having diverted his attention to let the herd go by. The cheetah denies this accusation and asserts it is the lion's fault.

Three herds have already gone by, free from any assault by either the lion or the cheetah. The mummy lion and the mummy cheetah consider they have waited long enough. They must feed their cubs. They leave.

But the two enemies have not yet learnt the lesson from it. They keep on quarrelling for days. The lion and the cheetah are hungry. They are tired but they do not want to give up. The herds go by without any damage.

One day, a mischievous-looking tiny monkey comes up. He settles on a rock that dominates the path, not impressed at all by the two big cats. The lion and the cheetah watch him settle without moving. The monkey laughs at their stupidity.

The lion is angry over this minute monkey laughing at them. While the cheetah just waits for a signal to rush forward.

But the cunning tiny monkey interrupts them and suggests a solution to their problem: why not use the lion's strength and the cheetah's velocity to hunt together. In this way, the hunt would be safer and they would get more meat to feed their families.

Since that day, in a remote place of the vast African savannah, a lion and a cheetah hunt together at the beginning of a narrow path along which the herds of buffaloes and antelopes go at fixed times. The lion's and the cheetah's families are together again and are happy at last.