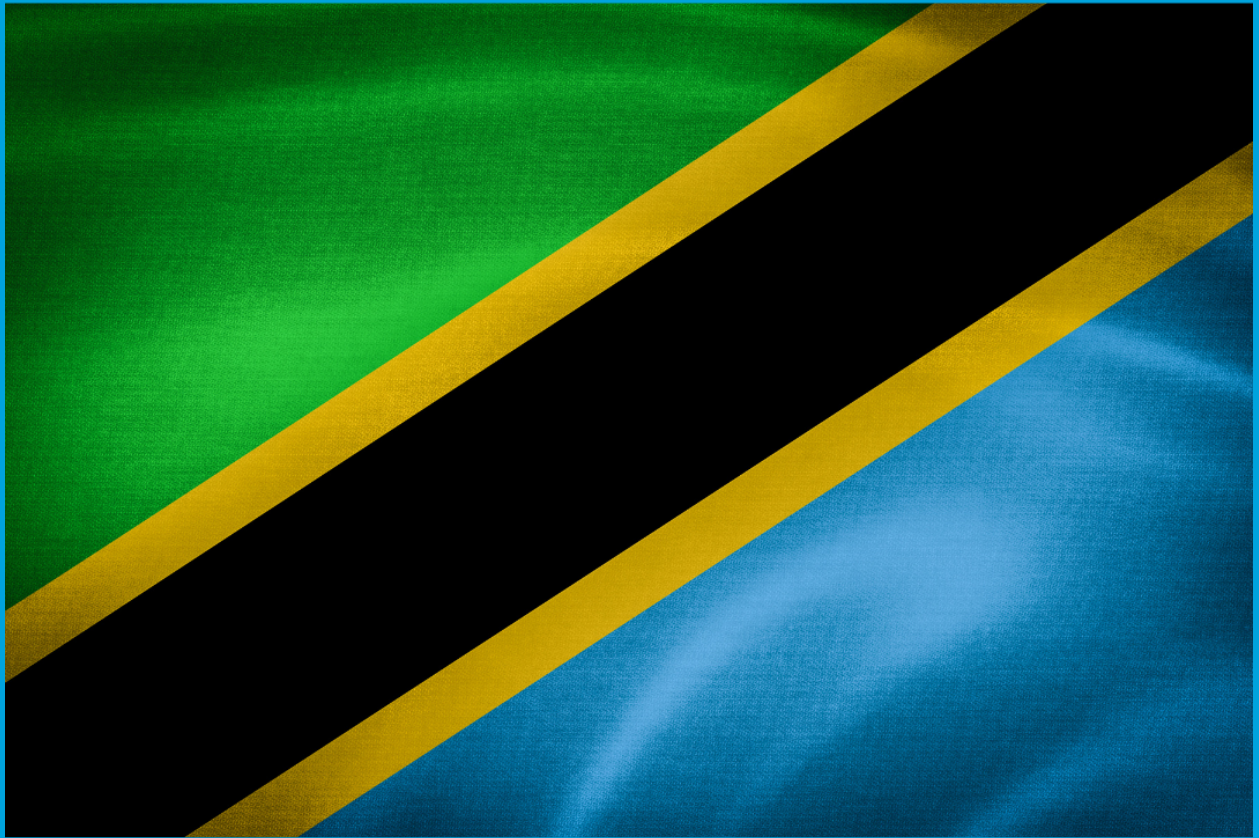


# Tanzanian Folktales



## The monkey, the shark and the washerman's donkey

Once upon a time Kee'ma, the monkey, and Pa'pa, the shark, became great friends. The monkey lived in an immense mkooyoo tree which grew by the margin of the sea half of its branches being over the water and half over the land.

Every morning, when the monkey was breakfasting on the kooyoo nuts, the shark would put on an appearance under the tree and call out, "Throw me some food, my friend;" with which request the monkey complied most willingly.

This continued for many months, until one day Papa said, "Keema, you have done me many kindnesses: I would like you to go with me to my home, that I may repay you."

"How can I go?" said the monkey; "we land beasts can not go about in the water."

"Don't trouble yourself about that," replied the shark; "I will carry you. Not a drop of water shall get to you."

"Oh, all right, then," said Mr. Keema; "let's go."

When they had gone about half-way the shark stopped, and said: "You are my friend. I will tell you the truth."

"Why, what is there to tell?" asked the monkey, with surprise.

"Well, you see, the fact is that our sultan is very sick, and we have been told that the only medicine that will do him any good is a monkey's heart."

"Well," exclaimed Keema, "you were very foolish not to tell me that before we started!"

"How so?" asked Papa.

But the monkey was busy thinking up some means of saving himself, and made no reply.

"Well?" said the shark, anxiously; "why don't you speak?"

"Oh, I've nothing to say now. It's too late. But if you had told me this before we started, I might have brought my heart with me."

“What? haven’t you your heart here?”

“Huh!” ejaculated Keema; “don’t you know about us? When we go out we leave our hearts in the trees, and go about with only our bodies. But I see you don’t believe me. You think I’m scared. Come on; let’s go to your home, where you can kill me and search for my heart in vain.”

The shark did believe him, though, and exclaimed, “Oh, no; let’s go back and get your heart.”

“Indeed, no,” protested Keema; “let us go on to your home.”

But the shark insisted that they should go back, get the heart, and start afresh. At last, with great apparent reluctance, the monkey consented, grumbling sulkily at the unnecessary trouble he was being put to.

When they got back to the tree, he climbed up in a great hurry, calling out, “Wait there, Papa, my friend, while I get my heart, and we’ll start off properly next time.”

When he had got well up among the branches, he sat down and kept quite still. After waiting what he considered a reasonable length of time, the shark called, “Come along, Keema!” But Keema just kept still and said nothing.

In a little while he called again: “Oh, Keema! Let’s be going.”

At this the monkey poked his head out from among the upper branches and asked, in great surprise, “Going? Where?”

“To my home, of course.”

“Are you mad?” queried Keema.

“Mad? Why, what do you mean?” cried Papa.

“What’s the matter with you?” said the monkey. “Do you take me for a washerman’s donkey?”

“What peculiarity is there about a washerman’s donkey?”

“It is a creature that has neither heart nor ears.”

The shark, his curiosity overcoming his haste, thereupon begged to be told the story of the washerman's donkey, which the monkey related as follows:

"A washerman owned a donkey, of which he was very fond. One day, however, it ran away, and took up its abode in the forest, where it led a lazy life, and consequently grew very fat.

"At length Soongoo'ra, the hare, by chance passed that way, and saw Poon'da, the donkey.

"Now, the hare is the most cunning of all beasts if you look at his mouth you will see that he is always talking to himself about everything.

"So when Soongoora saw Poonda he said to himself, 'My, this donkey is fat!' Then he went and told Sim'ba, the lion.

"As Simba was just recovering from a severe illness, he was still so weak that he could not go hunting. He was consequently pretty hungry.

"Said Mr. Soongoora, 'I'll bring enough meat to-morrow for both of us to have a great feast, but you'll have to do the killing.'

"All right, good friend,' exclaimed Simba, joyfully; 'you're very kind.'

"So the hare scampered off to the forest, found the donkey, and said to her, in his most courtly manner, 'Miss Poonda, I am sent to ask your hand in marriage.'

"By whom?' simpered the donkey.

"By Simba, the lion.'

"The donkey was greatly elated at this, and exclaimed: 'Let's go at once. This is a first-class offer.'

"They soon arrived at the lion's home, were cordially invited in, and sat down. Soongoora gave Simba a signal with his eyebrow, to the effect that this was the promised feast, and that he would wait outside. Then he said to Poonda: 'I must leave you for a while to attend to some private business. You stay here and converse with your husband that is to be.'

“As soon as Soongoora got outside, the lion sprang at Poonda, and they had a great fight. Simba was kicked very hard, and he struck with his claws as well as his weak health would permit him. At last the donkey threw the lion down, and ran away to her home in the forest.

“Shortly after, the hare came back, and called, ‘Haya! Simba! have you got it?’

“‘I have not got it,’ growled the lion; ‘she kicked me and ran away; but I warrant you I made her feel pretty sore, though I’m not strong.’

“‘Oh, well,’ remarked Soongoora; ‘don’t put yourself out of the way about it.’

“Then Soongoora waited many days, until the lion and the donkey were both well and strong, when he said: ‘What do you think now, Simba? Shall I bring you your meat?’

“‘Ay,’ growled the lion, fiercely; ‘bring it to me. I’ll tear it in two pieces!’

“So the hare went off to the forest, where the donkey welcomed him and asked the news.

“‘You are invited to call again and see your lover,’ said Soongoora.

“‘Oh, dear!’ cried Poonda; ‘that day you took me to him he scratched me awfully. I’m afraid to go near him now.’

“‘Ah, pshaw!’ said Soongoora; ‘that’s nothing. That’s only Simba’s way of caressing.’

“‘Oh, well,’ said the donkey, ‘let’s go.’

“So off they started again; but as soon as the lion caught sight of Poonda he sprang upon her and tore her in two pieces.

“When the hare came up, Simba said to him: ‘Take this meat and roast it. As for myself, all I want is the heart and ears.’

“‘Thanks,’ said Soongoora. Then he went away and roasted the meat in a place where the lion could not see him, and he took the heart and ears and hid them. Then he ate all the meat he needed, and put the rest away.

“Presently the lion came to him and said, ‘Bring me the heart and ears.’

“Where are they?’ said the hare.

“What does this mean?’ growled Simba.

“Why, didn’t you know this was a washerman’s donkey?’

“Well, what’s that to do with there being no heart or ears?’

“For goodness’ sake, Simba, aren’t you old enough to know that if this beast had possessed a heart and ears it wouldn’t have come back the second time?’

“Of course the lion had to admit that what Soongoora, the hare, said was true.

“And now,” said Keema to the shark, “you want to make a washerman’s donkey for me. Get out of there, and go home by yourself. You are not going to get me again, and our friendship has ended. Good-bye, Papa.”

Author: Various

Published: 1901

## The hare and the lion

One day Soongoo'ra, the hare, roaming through the forest in search of food, glanced up through the boughs of a very large calabash tree, and saw that a great hole in the upper part of the trunk was inhabited by bees; thereupon he returned to town in search of some one to go with him and help to get the honey.

As he was passing the house of Boo'koo, the big rat, that worthy gentleman invited him in. So he went in, sat down, and remarked: "My father has died, and has left me a hive of honey. I would like you to come and help me to eat it."

Of course Bookoo jumped at the offer, and he and the hare started off immediately. When they arrived at the great calabash tree, Soongoora pointed out the bees' nest and said, "Go on; climb up." So, taking some straw with them, they climbed up to the nest, lit the straw, smoked out the bees, put out the fire, and set to work eating the honey.

In the midst of the feast, who should appear at the foot of the tree but Sim'ba, the lion?

Looking up, and seeing them eating, he asked, "Who are you?"

Then Soongoora whispered to Bookoo, "Hold your tongue; that old fellow is crazy." But in a very little while Simba roared out angrily: "Who are you, I say? Speak, I tell you!"

This made Bookoo so scared that he blurted out, "It's only us!"

Upon this the hare said to him: "You just wrap me up in this straw, call to the lion to keep out of the way, and then throw me down. Then you'll see what will happen."

So Bookoo, the big rat, wrapped Soongoora, the hare, in the straw, and then called to Simba, the lion, "Stand back; I'm going to throw this straw down, and then I'll come down myself." When Simba stepped back out of the way, Bookoo threw down the straw, and as it lay on the ground Soongoora crept out and ran away while the lion was looking up.

After waiting a minute or two, Simba roared out, "Well, come down, I say!" and, there being no help for it, the big rat came down.

As soon as he was within reach, the lion caught hold of him, and asked, "Who was up there with you?"

"Why," said Bookoo, "Soongoora, the hare. Didn't you see him when I threw him down?"

“Of course I didn’t see him,” replied the lion, in an incredulous tone, and, without wasting further time, he ate the big rat, and then searched around for the hare, but could not find him.

Three days later, Soongoora called on his acquaintance, Ko’bay, the tortoise, and said to him, “Let us go and eat some honey.”

“Whose honey?” inquired Kobay, cautiously.

“My father’s,” Soongoora replied.

“Oh, all right; I’m with you,” said the tortoise, eagerly; and away they went.

When they arrived at the great calabash tree they climbed up with their straw, smoked out the bees, sat down, and began to eat.

Just then Mr. Simba, who owned the honey, came out again, and, looking up, inquired, “Who are you, up there?”

Soongoora whispered to Kobay, “Keep quiet;” but when the lion repeated his question angrily, Kobay became suspicious, and said: “I will speak. You told me this honey was yours; am I right in suspecting that it belongs to Simba?”

So, when the lion asked again, “Who are you?” he answered, “It’s only us.” The lion said, “Come down, then;” and the tortoise answered, “We’re coming.”

Now, Simba had been keeping an eye open for Soongoora since the day he caught Bookoo, the big rat, and, suspecting that he was up there with Kobay, he said to himself, “I’ve got him this time, sure.”

Seeing that they were caught again, Soongoora said to the tortoise: “Wrap me up in the straw, tell Simba to stand out of the way, and then throw me down. I’ll wait for you below. He can’t hurt you, you know.”

“All right,” said Kobay; but while he was wrapping the hare up he said to himself: “This fellow wants to run away, and leave me to bear the lion’s anger. He shall get caught first.” Therefore, when he had bundled him up, he called out, “Soongoora is coming!” and threw him down.

So Simba caught the hare, and, holding him with his paw, said, “Now, what shall I do with you?” The hare replied, “It’s of no use for you to try to eat me; I’m awfully tough.” “What would be the best thing to do with you, then?” asked Simba.



“I think,” said Soongoora, “you should take me by the tail, whirl me around, and knock me against the ground. Then you may be able to eat me.”

So the lion, being deceived, took him by the tail and whirled him around, but just as he was going to knock him on the ground he slipped out of his grasp and ran away, and Simba had the mortification of losing him again.

Angry and disappointed, he turned to the tree and called to Kobay, “You come down, too.”

When the tortoise reached the ground, the lion said, “You’re pretty hard; what can I do to make you eatable?”

“Oh, that’s easy,” laughed Kobay; “just put me in the mud and rub my back with your paw until my shell comes off.”

Immediately on hearing this, Simba carried Kobay to the water, placed him in the mud, and began, as he supposed, to rub his back; but the tortoise had slipped away, and the lion continued rubbing on a piece of rock until his paws were raw. When he glanced down at them he saw they were bleeding, and, realizing that he had again been outwitted, he said, “Well, the hare has done me to-day, but I’ll go hunting now until I find him.”

So Simba, the lion, set out immediately in search of Soongoora, the hare, and as he went along he inquired of everyone he met, “Where is the house of Soongoora?” But each person he asked answered, “I do not know.” For the hare had said to his wife, “Let us remove from this house.” Therefore the folks in that neighborhood had no knowledge of his whereabouts. Simba, however, went along, continuing his inquiries, until presently one answered, “That is his house on the top of the mountain.”

Without loss of time the lion climbed the mountain, and soon arrived at the place indicated, only to find that there was no one at home. This, however, did not trouble him; on the contrary, saying to himself, “I’ll hide myself inside, and when Soongoora and his wife come home I’ll eat them both,” he entered the house and lay down, awaiting their arrival.

Pretty soon along came the hare with his wife, not thinking of any danger; but he very soon discovered the marks of the lion’s paws on the steep path. Stopping at once, he

said to Mrs. Soongoora: "You go back, my dear. Simba, the lion, has passed this way, and I think he must be looking for me."

But she replied, "I will not go back; I will follow you, my husband."

Although greatly pleased at this proof of his wife's affection, Soongoora said firmly: "No, no; you have friends to go to. Go back."

So he persuaded her, and she went back; but he kept on, following the footmarks, and saw as he had suspected that they went into his house.

"Ah!" said he to himself, "Mr. Lion is inside, is he?" Then, cautiously going back a little way, he called out: "How d'ye do, house? How d'ye do?" Waiting a moment, he remarked loudly: "Well, this is very strange! Every day, as I pass this place, I say, 'How d'ye do, house?' and the house always answers, 'How d'ye do?' There must be some one inside to-day."

When the lion heard this he called out, "How d'ye do?"

Then Soongoora burst out laughing, and shouted: "Oho, Mr. Simba! You're inside, and I'll bet you want to eat me; but first tell me where you ever heard of a house talking!" Upon this the lion, seeing how he had been fooled, replied angrily, "You wait until I get hold of you; that's all."

"Oh, I think you'll have to do the waiting," cried the hare; and then he ran away, the lion following.

But it was of no use. Soongoora completely tired out old Simba, who, saying, "That rascal has beaten me; I don't want to have anything more to do with him," returned to his home under the great calabash tree.

Author: Various

Published: 1901

## Mkaaah Jeechonee, the boy hunter.

One Sultan Maaj'noon had seven sons and a big cat, of whom he was very proud. Everything went well until one day the cat went and caught a calf. When they told the sultan he said, "Well, the cat is mine, and the calf is mine." So they said, "Oh, all right, master," and let the matter drop.

A few days later the cat caught a goat; and when they told the sultan he said, "The cat is mine, and the goat is mine;" and so that settled it again. Two days passed, and the cat caught a cow. They told the sultan, and he shut them up with "My cat, and my cow."

After another two days the cat caught a donkey; same result.

Next it caught a horse; same result.

The next victim was a camel; and when they told the sultan he said: "What's the matter with you folks? It was my cat, and my camel. I believe you don't like my cat, and want it killed, bringing me tales about it every day. Let it eat whatever it wants to."

In a very short time it caught a child, and then a full-grown man; but each time the sultan remarked that both the cat and its victim were his, and thought no more of it. Meantime the cat grew bolder, and hung around a low, open place near the town, pouncing on people going for water, or animals out at pasture, and eating them. At last some of the people plucked up courage; and, going to the sultan, said: "How is this, master? As you are our sultan you are our protector, or ought to be, yet you have allowed this cat to do as it pleases, and now it lives just out of town there, and kills everything living that goes that way, while at night it comes into town and does the same thing. Now, what on earth are we to do?"

But Maajnoon only replied: "I really believe you hate my cat. I suppose you want me to kill it; but I shall do no such thing. Everything it eats is mine."

Of course the folks were astonished at this result of the interview, and, as no one dared to kill the cat, they all had to be removed from the vicinity where it lived. But this did not mend matters, because, when it found no one came that way, it shifted its quarters likewise.

So complaints continued to pour in, until at last Sultan Maajnoon gave orders that if any one came to make accusations against the cat, he was to be informed that the master could not be seen.

When things got so that people neither let their animals out nor went out themselves, the cat went farther into the country, killing and eating cattle, and fowls, and everything that came its way.

One day the sultan said to six of his sons, "I'm going to look at the country to-day; come along with me."

The seventh son was considered too young to go around anywhere, and was always left at home with the women folk, being called by his brothers Mkaa'ah Jeecho'nee, which means Mr. Sit-in-the-kitchen.

Well, they went, and presently came to a thicket. The father was in front and the six sons following him, when the cat jumped out and killed three of the latter. The attendants shouted, "The cat! the cat!" and the soldiers asked permission to search for and kill it, which the sultan readily granted, saying: "This is not a cat, it is noon'day. It has taken from me my own sons."

Now, nobody had ever seen a noondah, but they all knew it was a terrible beast that could kill and eat all other living things.

When the sultan began to bemoan the loss of his sons, some of those who heard him said: "Ah, master, this noondah does not select his prey. He doesn't say: 'This is my master's son, I'll leave him alone,' or, 'This is my master's wife, I won't eat her.' When we told you what the cat had done, you always said it was your cat, and what it ate was yours, and now it has killed your sons, and we don't believe it would hesitate to eat even you."

And he said, "I fear you are right."

As for the soldiers who tried to get the cat, some were killed and the remainder ran away, and the sultan and his living sons took the dead bodies home and buried them. Now when Mkaaah Jeechonee, the seventh son, heard that his brothers had been killed by the noondah, he said to his mother, "I, too, will go, that it may kill me as well as my brothers, or I will kill it."

But his mother said: "My son, I do not like to have you go. Those three are already dead; and if you are killed also, will not that be one wound upon another to my heart?" "Nevertheless," said he, "I can not help going; but do not tell my father."

So his mother made him some cakes, and sent some attendants with him; and he took a great spear, as sharp as a razor, and a sword, bade her farewell, and departed.

As he had always been left at home, he had no very clear idea what he was going to hunt for; so he had not gone far beyond the suburbs, when, seeing a very large dog, he concluded that this was the animal he was after; so he killed it, tied a rope to it, and dragged it home, singing,

“Oh, mother, I have killed

The noondah, eater of the people.”

When his mother, who was upstairs, heard him, she looked out of the window, and, seeing what he had brought, said, “My son, this is not the noondah, eater of the people.” So he left the carcass outside and went in to talk about it, and his mother said, “My dear boy, the noondah is a much larger animal than that; but if I were you, I’d give the business up and stay at home.”

“No, indeed,” he exclaimed; “no staying at home for me until I have met and fought the noondah.”

So he set out again, and went a great deal farther than he had gone on the former day. Presently he saw a civet cat, and, believing it to be the animal he was in search of, he killed it, bound it, and dragged it home, singing,  
“Oh, mother, I have killed the noondah, eater of the people.”

When his mother saw the civet cat, she said, “My son, this is not the noondah, eater of the people.” And he threw it away.

Again his mother entreated him to stay at home, but he would not listen to her, and started off again.

This time he went away off into the forest, and seeing a bigger cat than the last one, he killed it, bound it, and dragged it home, singing,

“Oh, mother, I have killed  
The noondah, eater of the people.”

But when his mother saw it, she had to tell him, as before, “My son, this is not the noondah, eater of the people.”

He was, of course, very much troubled at this; and his mother said, “Now, where do you expect to find this noondah? You don’t know where it is, and you don’t know what it

looks like. You'll get sick over this; you're not looking so well now as you did. Come, stay at home."

But he said: "There are three things, one of which I shall do: I shall die; I shall find the noondah and kill it; or I shall return home unsuccessful. In any case, I'm off again."

This time he went farther than before, saw a zebra, killed it, bound it, and dragged it home, singing,

"Oh, mother, I have killed

The noondah, eater of the people."

Of course his mother had to tell him, once again, "My son, this is not the noondah, eater of the people."

After a good deal of argument, in which his mother's persuasion, as usual, was of no avail, he went off again, going farther than ever, when he caught a giraffe; and when he had killed it he said: "Well, this time I've been successful. This must be the noondah."

So he dragged it home, singing,

"Oh, mother, I have killed

The noondah, eater of the people."

Again his mother had to assure him, "My son, this is not the noondah, eater of the people." She then pointed out to him that his brothers were not running about hunting for the noondah, but staying at home attending to their own business. But, remarking that all brothers were not alike, he expressed his determination to stick to his task until it came to a successful termination, and went off again, a still greater distance than before.

While going through the wilderness he espied a rhinoceros asleep under a tree, and turning to his attendants he exclaimed, "At last I see the noondah."

"Where, master?" they all cried, eagerly.

"There, under the tree."

"Oh-h! What shall we do?" they asked.

And he answered: "First of all, let us eat our fill, then we will attack it. We have found it in a good place, though if it kills us, we can't help it."

So they all took out their arrowroot cakes and ate till they were satisfied.

Then Mkaaah Jeechonee said, "Each of you take two guns; lay one beside you and take the other in your hands, and at the proper time let us all fire at once."

And they said, "All right, master."

So they crept cautiously through the bushes and got around to the other side of the tree, at the back of the rhinoceros; then they closed up till they were quite near it, and all fired together. The beast jumped up, ran a little way, and then fell down dead.

They bound it, and dragged it for two whole days, until they reached the town, when Mkaaah Jeechonee began singing,

"Oh, mother, I have killed

The noondah, eater of the people."

But he received the same answer from his mother: "My son, this is not the noondah, eater of the people."

And many people came and looked at the rhinoceros, and felt very sorry for the young man. As for his father and mother, they both begged him to give up, his father offering to give him anything he possessed if he would only stay at home. But he said, "I don't hear what you are saying; good-bye," and was off again.

This time he further increased the distance from his home, and at last he saw an elephant asleep at noon in the forest. Thereupon he said to his attendants, "Now we have found the noondah."

"Ah, where is he?" they said.

"Yonder, in the shade. Do you see it?"

"Oh, yes, master; shall we march up to it?"

"If we march up to it, and it is looking this way, it will come at us, and if it does that, some of us will be killed. I think we had best let one man steal up close and see which way its face is turned."

As everyone thought this was a good idea, a slave named Keeroboto crept on his hands and knees, and had a good look at it. When he returned in the same manner, his master asked: "Well, what's the news? Is it the noondah?"

"I do not know," replied Keeroboto; "but I think there is very little doubt that it is. It is broad, with a very big head, and, goodness, I never saw such large ears!"

"All right," said Mkaaah Jeechonee; "let us eat, and then go for it."

So they took their arrowroot cakes, and their molasses cakes, and ate until they were quite full.

Then the youth said to them: "My people, to-day is perhaps the last we shall ever see; so we will take leave of each other. Those who are to escape will escape, and those who are to die will die; but if I die, let those who escape tell my mother and father not to grieve for me."

But his attendants said, "Oh, come along, master; none of us will die, please God." So they went on their hands and knees till they were close up, and then they said to Mkaaah Jeechonee, "Give us your plan, master;" but he said, "There is no plan, only let all fire at once."

Well, they fired all at once, and immediately the elephant jumped up and charged at them. Then such a helter-skelter flight as there was! They threw away their guns and everything they carried, and made for the trees, which they climbed with surprising alacrity.

As to the elephant, he kept straight ahead until he fell down some distance away. They all remained in the trees from three until six o'clock in the morning, without food and without clothing.

The young man sat in his tree and wept bitterly, saying, "I don't exactly know what death is, but it seems to me this must be very like it." As no one could see any one else, he did not know where his attendants were, and though he wished to come down from the tree, he thought, "Maybe the noondah is down below there, and will eat me." Each attendant was in exactly the same fix, wishing to come down, but afraid the noondah was waiting to eat him.

Keeroboto had seen the elephant fall, but was afraid to get down by himself, saying, "Perhaps, though it has fallen down, it is not dead." But presently he saw a dog go up to



it and smell it, and then he was sure it was dead. Then he got down from the tree as fast as he could and gave a signal cry, which was answered; but not being sure from whence the answer came, he repeated the cry, listening intently. When it was answered he went straight to the place from which the sound proceeded, and found two of his companions in one tree. To them he said, "Come on; get down; the noondah is dead."

So they got down quickly and hunted around until they found their master. When they told him the news, he came down also; and after a little the attendants had all gathered together and had picked up their guns and their clothes, and were all right again. But they were all weak and hungry, so they rested and ate some food, after which they went to examine their prize.

As soon as Mkaaah Jeechonee saw it he said, "Ah, this is the noondah! This is it! This is it!" And they all agreed that it was it.

So they dragged the elephant three days to their town, and then the youth began singing,

"Oh, mother, this is he,

The noondah, eater of the people."

He was, naturally, quite upset when his mother replied, "My son, this is not the noondah, eater of the people." She further said: "Poor boy! what trouble you have been through. All the people are astonished that one so young should have such a great understanding!"

Then his father and mother began their entreaties again, and finally it was agreed that this next trip should be his last, whatever the result might be.

Well, they started off again, and went on and on, past the forest, until they came to a very high mountain, at the foot of which they camped for the night.

In the morning they cooked their rice and ate it, and then Mkaaah Jeechonee said: "Let us now climb the mountain, and look all over the country from its peak." And they went and they went, until after a long, weary while, they reached the top, where they sat down to rest and form their plans.

Now, one of the attendants, named Shindaa'no, while walking about, cast his eyes down the side of the mountain, and suddenly saw a great beast about half way down; but he could not make out its appearance distinctly, on account of the distance and the trees.

Calling his master, he pointed it out to him, and something in Mkaaah Jeechonee's heart told him that it was the noondah. To make sure, however, he took his gun and his spear and went partly down the mountain to get a better view.

"Ah," said he, "this must be the noondah. My mother told me its ears were small, and those are small; she told me the noondah is broad and short, and so is this; she said it has two blotches, like a civet cat, and there are the blotches; she told me the tail is thick, and there is a thick tail. It must be the noondah."

Then he went back to his attendants and bade them eat heartily, which they did. Next he told them to leave every unnecessary thing behind, because if they had to run they would be better without encumbrance, and if they were victorious they could return for their goods.

When they had made all their arrangements they started down the mountain, but when they had got about half way down Keeroboto and Shindaano were afraid. Then the youth said to them: "Oh, let's go on; don't be afraid. We all have to live and die. What are you frightened about?" So, thus encouraged, they went on.

When they came near the place, Mkaaah Jeechonee ordered them to take off all their clothing except one piece, and to place that tightly on their bodies, so that if they had to run they would not be caught by thorns or branches.

So when they came close to the beast, they saw that it was asleep, and all agreed that it was the noondah.

Then the young man said, "Now the sun is setting, shall we fire at it, or let be till morning?"

And they all wished to fire at once, and see what the result would be without further tax on their nerves; therefore they arranged that they should all fire together.

They all crept up close, and when the master gave the word, they discharged their guns together. The noondah did not move; that one dose had been sufficient. Nevertheless, they all turned and scampered up to the top of the mountain. There they ate and rested for the night.

In the morning they ate their rice, and then went down to see how matters were, when they found the beast lying dead.

After resting and eating, they started homeward, dragging the dead beast with them. On the fourth day it began to give indications of decay, and the attendants wished to abandon it; but Mkaaah Jeechonee said they would continue to drag it if there was only one bone left.

When they came near the town he began to sing,

“Mother, mother, I have come

From the evil spirits, home.

Mother, listen while I sing;

While I tell you what I bring.

Oh, mother, I have killed

The noondah, eater of the people.”

And when his mother looked out, she cried, “My son, this is the noondah, eater of the people.”

Then all the people came out to welcome him, and his father was overcome with joy, and loaded him with honors, and procured him a rich and beautiful wife; and when he died Mkaaah Jeechonee became sultan, and lived long and happily, beloved by all the people.

Author: Various  
Published: 1901