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The Tortoise and His Children

By Idenze Ezeme

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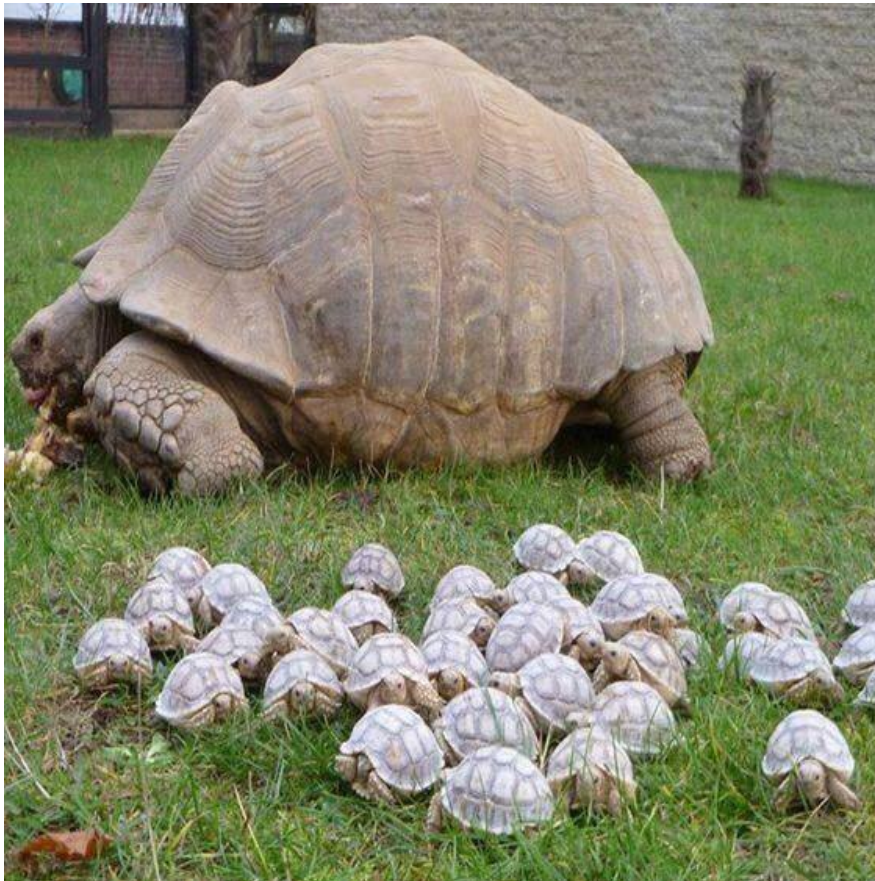
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THE TORTOISE AND HIS CHILDREN

The Tortoise and His Children

By Idenze Ezeme · Folklores · Ozikoro.com



The Tortoise and His Children. Photo: Reddit

Once upon a time, in a land brimming with life and laughter, there lived a wise old Tortoise with his children. One day, Tortoise sat his children down and said, “My dear ones, remember two things in life—never take what isn’t yours, and always tell the truth.”

His children nodded earnestly, replying, “We understand, Father.”

Not long after, a severe famine struck the land. Food became scarce, and hunger visited every home. For three days, Tortoise’s house was empty of food. Desperate and hungry, Tortoise decided to steal food from his neighbours.

Returning home with a sack filled with food, he called out to his children, “Look, little ones! I found this sack of food in the forest.”

However, his children were no fools. They knew their father hadn’t gone into the forest; they knew he’d taken the food from their neighbours. They confronted him, saying, “Father, you told us never to take what isn’t ours and always to tell the truth.”

Tortoise was taken aback. Feeling cornered, he retorted, “Who is the teacher here? You or me?!”

The children learned a hard truth that day: it is one thing to say something and another to live by it. They saw the desperation that led their father to steal and how this act led to lies and confusion. From then on, they understood more deeply why stealing is wrong and how it can lead to further dishonesty. They resolved never to follow their father’s poor example, thus learning from his mistakes.

This tale is part of a rich tradition of Igbo folklore, where the tortoise often embodies the role of a trickster, teaching moral lessons through his actions.

FableReads. (n.d.). The tortoise and his children.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Nze is an Igbo history and culture enthusiast with an in-depth passion for exploring the rich cultural heritage, traditions, and historical narratives of the Igbo people. His works is mostly focused on pre-colonial Igbo societies, traditional belief systems, leadership systems, and the impact of European colonialism.



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