



Ozi Ikòrò

AFRICAN HISTORY · CULTURE · INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

FOLKLORES

The Tortoise with a Pretty Daughter

By Idenze Ezeme

Ozikoro.com · Folklores · 4 min read

FEATURE
IMAGE

NO FEATURED IMAGE IN THE RECORD

The article carries no featured image, so this panel is left as an honest empty space rather than filled with one.

Ozi Ikòrò
THE TORTOISE WITH A PRETTY DAUGHTER

The Tortoise with a Pretty Daughter

By Idenze Ezeme · Folklores · Ozikoro.com

Once upon a time, there was a powerful king who ruled over both people and wild animals. Among all creatures, the tortoise was known as the wisest. The king had a son named Ekpenyon, and he gave him fifty young girls as wives. However, the prince did not like any of them. This made the king very angry, so he made a strict law: if any man had a daughter more beautiful than the prince's wives, and if the prince liked her, both the girl and her parents would be killed.

Around this time, the tortoise and his wife had a very beautiful daughter. The tortoise's wife was afraid that the prince might fall in love with her, so she told her husband they should kill the child to avoid danger. But the tortoise refused. Instead, he hid his daughter until she was three years old.

One day, while the tortoise and his wife were working on their farm, the king's son went hunting near their home. He saw a bird sitting on the fence, watching the little girl. The bird was so amazed by the girl's beauty that it didn't notice the prince coming. The prince shot the bird with his arrow, and it fell inside the fence. He sent his servant to pick it up, but the servant saw the little girl while searching. He was so stunned by her beauty that he rushed back to tell the prince. Curious, the prince broke down the fence, found the girl, and immediately fell in love with her. He talked to her for a long time, and she agreed to marry him. The prince went home but kept his love for the tortoise's daughter a secret from his father.

The next day, the prince called the royal treasurer and took sixty pieces of cloth and three hundred brass rods as gifts. He sent these to the tortoise and then went to his house to ask for his daughter's hand

in marriage. The tortoise was terrified because he knew that he and his family would be killed if the king found out. But the prince promised to protect them, even if it cost him his life. After much discussion, the tortoise agreed to let the prince marry his daughter when she was old enough.

Later, the prince told his mother, the queen, about his decision. She was worried because she knew the king would be furious and might even kill their son. But she also wanted her son to marry the girl he loved. So, she visited the tortoise and gave him more gifts—money, clothes, yams, and palm oil—to ensure he wouldn't give his daughter to someone else.

The prince often visited the tortoise's daughter, Adet, for the next five years. When Adet was ready to be married, the prince told his father about his plans. The king was furious and ordered all his subjects to gather in the marketplace for an important meeting.

On the chosen day, the marketplace was filled with people. The king and queen arrived and sat on their royal seats. The king ordered that Adet be brought before him. When he saw her, he was shocked by her beauty. He told the crowd that although he was angry at his son for disobeying him, he understood why the prince had chosen her. He forgave his son and agreed to the marriage.

The people, amazed by Adet's beauty, asked the king to cancel the harsh law. The king agreed. Since the law was under the "Egbo" society's rules, he called eight Egbo members, gave them palm wine and money gifts, and announced that the law was canceled throughout the kingdom. No one would be punished for having a daughter more beautiful than the prince's wives ever again.

The king then ordered the prince and Adet to marry the same day. A grand celebration followed, lasting fifty days. The king slaughtered five cows, provided plenty of foo-foo and palm oil dishes, and placed large pots of palm wine in the streets for everyone to enjoy. There was singing, dancing, and performances day and night. The prince and his

friends also entertained the crowd.

When the celebrations ended, the king gave the tortoise half of his kingdom to rule and three hundred slaves to work on his farms. The prince also gifted his father-in-law two hundred women and one hundred girls as servants. The tortoise became one of the richest men in the kingdom. The prince and Adet lived happily together for many years. After the king died, the prince became the new king.

01

Moral

Always cherish your daughters, no matter how poor you are. Their beauty might one day lead them to greatness, even into the royal family, bringing wealth and honor to your household.

How a Hunter Obtained Money From his Friends, the Leopard, Goat, Bush Cat, and Cock, and How He Got Out of Repaying Them

- Dayrell, E. (1910). Folk Stories from Southern Nigeria. London: Longmans, Green and Co.
- Edema, N. (2020). Okon the Tortoise and His Beautiful Daughter, Adet.
- The sacred texts of Africa: Folk stories from Southern Nigeria (n.d.).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Idenze Ezeme

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.



Ozi Ikòrò

History worth reading.

African history · culture · indigenous knowledge
