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## FOLKLORES

## Why the Bat is Ashamed to be Seen in the Daytime

By Idenze Ezeme

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FEATURE  
IMAGE

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**WHY THE BAT IS ASHAMED TO BE SEEN IN THE DAYTIME**

# Why the Bat is Ashamed to be Seen in the Daytime

*By Idenze Ezeme · Folklores · Ozikoro.com*

Once, there was an old mother sheep who had seven lambs. One day, a bat wanted to visit his father-in-law, who lived far away. He went to the mother sheep and asked her to lend him one of her lambs to carry his load.

At first, the mother sheep refused, but the young lamb was excited to travel and begged her to let him go. Finally, she agreed.

Early in the morning, the bat and the lamb started their journey. The lamb carried the bat's drinking horn. When they reached halfway, the bat told the lamb to leave the horn under a bamboo tree.

When they arrived at the house, the bat sent the lamb back to get the horn. While the lamb was gone, the bat's father-in-law gave him food. The bat ate everything and left nothing for the lamb.

When the lamb returned, the bat said, "Oh! You're finally here. But you're too late; the food is finished."

The bat then sent the lamb back again with the drinking horn. When the lamb returned, it was late, and he had to sleep without food.

The next day, just before food was served, the bat sent the lamb again for the drinking horn. When the food arrived, the bat ate everything before the lamb returned.

This continued for four days. The lamb became very weak and thin because he had no food.



Finally, they went home. The lamb complained to his mother about how the bat treated him. He cried all night because his stomach hurt from hunger.

The mother sheep was very angry and wanted revenge. She went to the wise tortoise and told him everything. The tortoise listened carefully and told her not to worry—he would take care of the bat.

## **The Tortoise's Plan**

Soon after, the bat wanted to visit his father-in-law again. He asked the mother sheep for one of her lambs to carry his load.

The tortoise, who was there, said, “I am going that way. I can carry your load for you.”

The bat agreed, and they started their journey the next day.

When they reached halfway, the bat told the tortoise to leave the drinking horn under the same bamboo tree. The tortoise pretended to do so, but instead, he hid it in his bag.

At the house, the tortoise secretly hung the horn in the backyard and sat down.

The bat sent the tortoise to get the drinking horn just before food was served. The tortoise went outside and waited until the food was ready. Then, he returned and gave the bat the horn.

The bat was surprised and angry. When the food came, he refused to eat. So, the tortoise ate everything.

This continued for four days. The bat became weak and thin, just like the lamb had been.

Finally, the bat couldn't take it anymore. He secretly told his mother-in-law to bring him food when the tortoise wasn't looking. He



said, "I will sleep now, but wake me up when the food is ready."

The tortoise, who had been listening, waited for the bat to fall asleep. Then, he quietly picked up the bat and placed him in another room on his own bed.

The tortoise then took the bat's cloth and covered himself with it. He lay down in the bat's place.

Soon, the bat's mother-in-law brought the food. She pulled the cloth to wake who she thought was the bat and left the food beside him.

The tortoise got up and ate everything. When he finished, he carried the sleeping bat back and put some palm oil and foo-foo inside his lips. Then, he went to sleep.

## **The Bat is Caught**

In the morning, the bat woke up very hungry and in a bad mood. He went to his mother-in-law and shouted, "Why didn't you bring me food?"

His mother-in-law replied, "I did bring your food, and you ate it!"

The bat was shocked. "No! I haven't eaten in five days!" he argued.

The tortoise, who was listening, said, "We can find out the truth. Let both of us rinse our mouths into a bowl of clean water. Then, we will see who ate the food."

The people agreed. The tortoise used his toothstick, cleaned his mouth, and washed it with water.

The bat also washed his mouth. But when the people looked at the water, they saw pieces of palm oil and foo-foo floating in it.

Now, everyone knew that the bat had eaten the food.



The bat was so ashamed that he ran away and hid in the bushes. Since then, he has only come out at night so no one can see him.

The next day, the tortoise returned to the mother sheep and told her everything. She was very happy and told all her friends about it.

Because of this, everyone in the land believed that the tortoise was the wisest of all animals.

### *The Tortoise with a Pretty Daughter*

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## References:

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#### 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.



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