

The Young Fir Tree

A young fir tree grew among many tall and handsome oak trees. The fir tree was slim and beautiful but she did not know this. She was an unhappy fir tree. One night before she fell asleep she was thinking, "Oak leaves are green and soft, but my leaves are hard and sharp like needles. That is why birds nest on oak trees but not in my branches. I wish my leaves were green and soft too!"

The next morning when Fir woke up her leaves were green and soft! She was very happy, and began to clap her leaves in the morning breeze, just like the oaks. But very soon a goat arrived. When it saw Fir's soft juicy leaves it started eating them up. And in no time all the new leaves were gone.

Poor Fir was very sad, but she could not stop the goat. She thought, "I wish my leaves were made of gold. No goat can eat gold leaves."

The next day when she woke up she was thrilled to see that all her leaves were made of gold.

But then a thief came along and took away all the gold leaves.

In the morning when Fir saw her bare branches she was very upset.

"It would be wonderful if all my leaves were made of glass. The goat would not eat glass leaves, and no thief would steal them," she thought.

The next day when she woke up all her leaves were made of glass. They were glittering in the morning sunlight. In the evening when the sun and

the sky turned red it seemed as if there was a fire burning inside each glass leaf. Fir was very happy.

But . . . a strong wind blew that night. The glass leaves swung madly in the wind, and as they swung they crashed against each other and were smashed into tiny pieces. Once again there were no leaves left on Fir's branches.

That morning as she looked down on the tiny points of light scattered around her, that used to be her glass leaves, she thought, 'My needle-like, hard leaves were the best. The goat could not eat them, no thief ever stole them, and the strongest wind could not smash them. I wish I had them back!'

The next morning when Fir woke up her leaves were like they were before, sharp as needles and hard. She was very happy to get them back. Never again did she wish for different leaves.

Translated and adapted into Urdu from an old English story.

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