

HANDOUT

THE PIGEONS AND THE BIRDCATCHER'S NET

There was once a very old oak and in it there lived many pigeons. All day long the pigeons would fly around and look for food, but in the evenings, they would return to spend the night in the oak.

One day, the pigeons were out looking for food as usual. Suddenly, a small pigeon said:

"Look, look how many seeds there are, and how much food there is laying strewn on the ground!"

The other pigeons saw that she was right, and flew there to settle down, but an old wise pigeon shouted:

"Stop! Don't fly there. How come there is so much seed in the middle of the ground?"

"Never mind!" said another pigeon. "Come, let's eat together."

The whole flock landed, except the old wise pigeon. They began feasting while she followed their actions from a distance. When the pigeons had feasted on the seed, they wanted to fly away – but could not. They were caught in the birdcatcher's net and started crying out in despair:

"Help! We are caught! Help!"

The old wise pigeon replied:

"Don't worry!"

But one of the pigeons shouted:

"Look! Someone is coming this way. It is the birdcatcher who is coming to catch us."

The old wise pigeon said:

"Calm down. Lift off the ground all at once and you'll be able to lift the net."

The whole flock helped each other and the net lifted a bit. Now, all the pigeons tried as hard as they could and managed to lift the net so that they could fly away with it. The old wise pigeon flew first and the others followed her.

They flew for a long time until they came to a tree. Then the old wise pigeon said to them, while showing them the tree:

"You can settle down here. A good friend of mine lives here, a mouse."

She called for the mouse, who came and gnawed a hole in the net so that the pigeons were let free.

THE BLIND WILD BOAR

Once upon a time there was a hunter who went out into the bush with his rifle. There, he caught sight of two wild boars walking one behind the other. The hunter took aim and shot at the second boar but something that astonished him happened: the leading boar ran away, while the other one did not seem to know what to do. It was left standing with something that looked like a dry twig in its mouth.

The hunter carefully approached, because he thought the wild boar would attack him. He soon noticed that it was standing still where it had stopped, without following his friend. Curious, the hunter came closer to have a better look. Then he saw that what had looked like a dry twig was the tail of the wild boar that had run away. Now the hunter understood that the wild boar was blind, and that his bullet had hit the leader's tail and had cut it off. He caught the blind wild boar and took it home and all the while it still carried the cut-off tail in its mouth.

In his house, the hunter fed the wild boar and took care of it in the best way possible.

THE TALE OF W. X. WHO CAUGHT FISH FOR HIS STEPMOTHER IN THE COLD WINTER

W. X. was a man who lived a long time ago. His real mother died early and his father remarried a woman whose family name was Z. Thereby she became W. X.'s stepmother.

The stepmother was mean and did not like W. X., so she used to slander W. X. in front of his father. As time went by, the father began to dislike his son, too. The son remained kind and considerate to his parents despite this.

One winter, the weather was very bad with lots of snow falling, often for several days on end. It was so cold after the snowfalls that the small river nearby, which usually sang so cheerfully, now lay there quiet and frozen.

The people stayed at home because of the cold, and the animals also rarely went out. The ground was completely covered with snow.

One day, W. X.'s stepmother decided that she wanted fresh fish for dinner and told her stepson. He thought:

– Where can I get fresh carp when it is snowing all day and all the rivers are frozen?

As mentioned before, W. X. was a considerate son so he immediately went out into the white wilderness to look for fish.

W. X. looked for a long time but how should he find fresh fish? Eventually he went down to the riverbank. The ground was hard and cold and the wind was howling. It was so cold, his whole body shivered.

Now W. X. lay there staring at the frozen river and thought:

– I cannot come home empty-handed, when my stepmother wants fish.

What would he do? W. X. thought and thought, but could not think of a solution. In the end, he broke down into tears of despair, and tears flowed down his cheeks. The more he cried, the more tears there were, and eventually there was a hole in the ice that covered the river. Suddenly, two fish jumped up onto the ice next to the hole. They had come to life from the warmth in W. X.'s tears.

Overjoyed, W. X. picked up the fish and carried them home to his stepmother.