



Monkey and Crocodile

Mozambican folktale
English



Monkey lived in a big tree on the bank of a river. In the middle of the river there was a small island. Lots of fruit trees grew on that island.



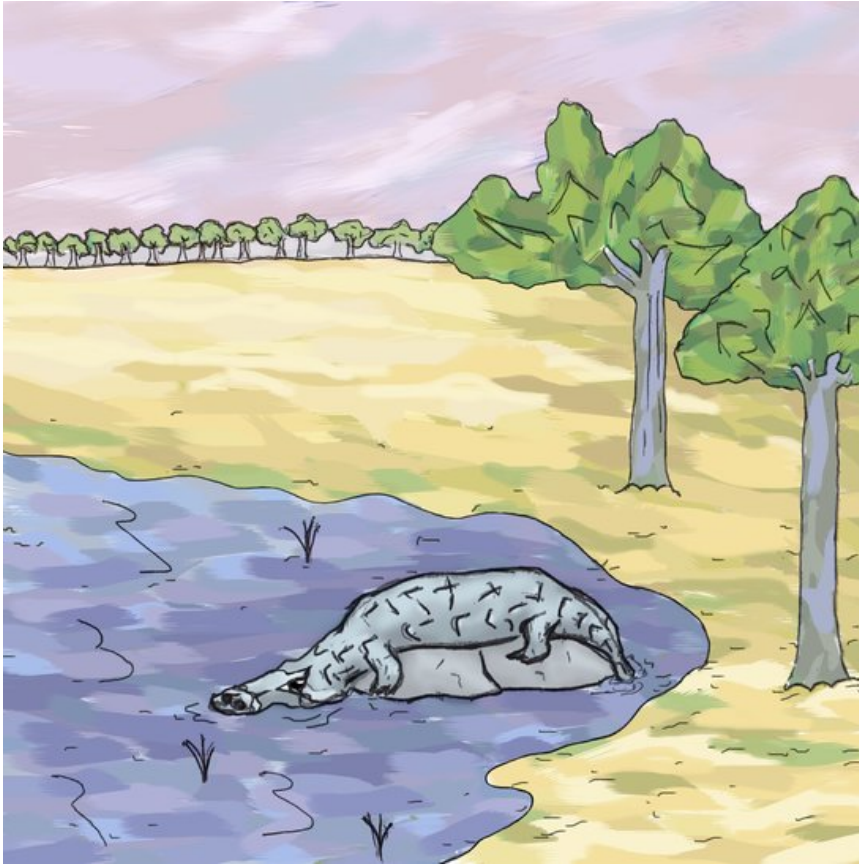
Monkey wanted to go and eat the fruit. He saw a big rock half way across the river and he thought he could jump onto the rock, and then onto the island.



He jumped into the air and landed on the rock. He jumped again and reached the island. He enjoyed eating the fruit and then went back home. He did this several times.



But Crocodile lived in the river with his wife! The wife said, "Dear husband, you should go and lie on the rock. The colour of your skin matches the colour of the rock."



A few days later, Crocodile saw Monkey coming onto the island. He quietly climbed over the rock and carefully lay down on it and kept his face underwater.



Monkey finished eating and was ready to go back. But the rock looked higher than usual, so he spoke to the rock, "Dear rock, you seem to have grown. Are you all right?"



Crocodile was a fool and thought the rock must be a talking rock. So he answered Monkey and said, "I look bigger because a big crocodile is lying on me".



Monkey said, "Dear Crocodile, I know you want to eat me. I am very old and you can have my body. But I must say goodbye to my children in that big tree." So Crocodile gave him a ride on his back!



As soon as they were there, Monkey climbed the tree and said, "Thank you for the ride, my dear friend. Goodbye, now you can go home!" But Crocodile said, "But you promised...."



Monkey laughed and said, "What a fool you were to believe me!" and disappeared behind the branches of the tree. Crocodile never did catch clever Monkey!

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This story was written down in 2013 by students at Universidade Pedagógica-Maxixe, Mozambique, from their memory of what was told at home, and edited by their English teacher, Ingrid Schechter.

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