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STORIES
FROM
WEST AFRICA

Compiled and Illustrated by
David A. Naff



GOAT TRIES TO BE LEOPARD



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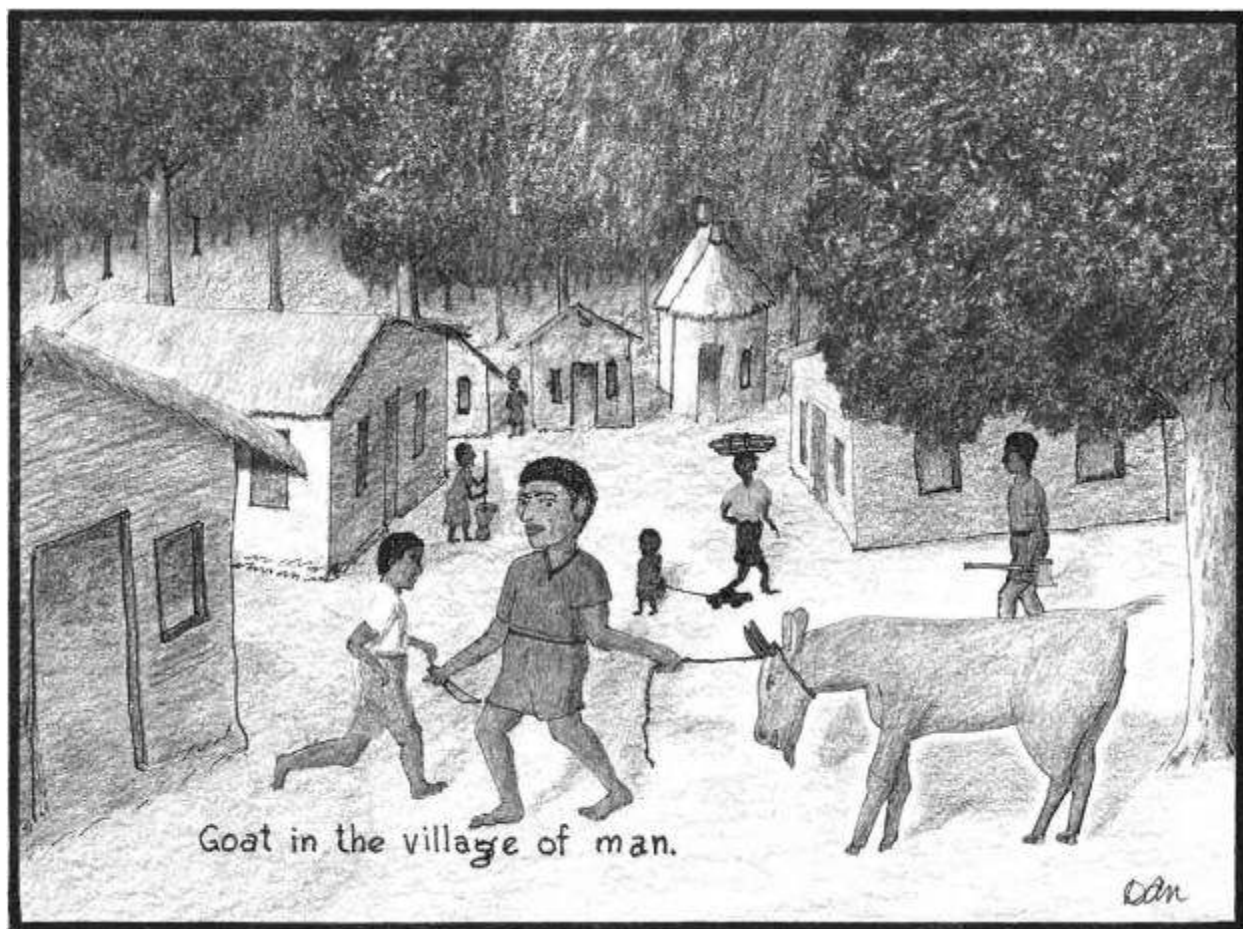
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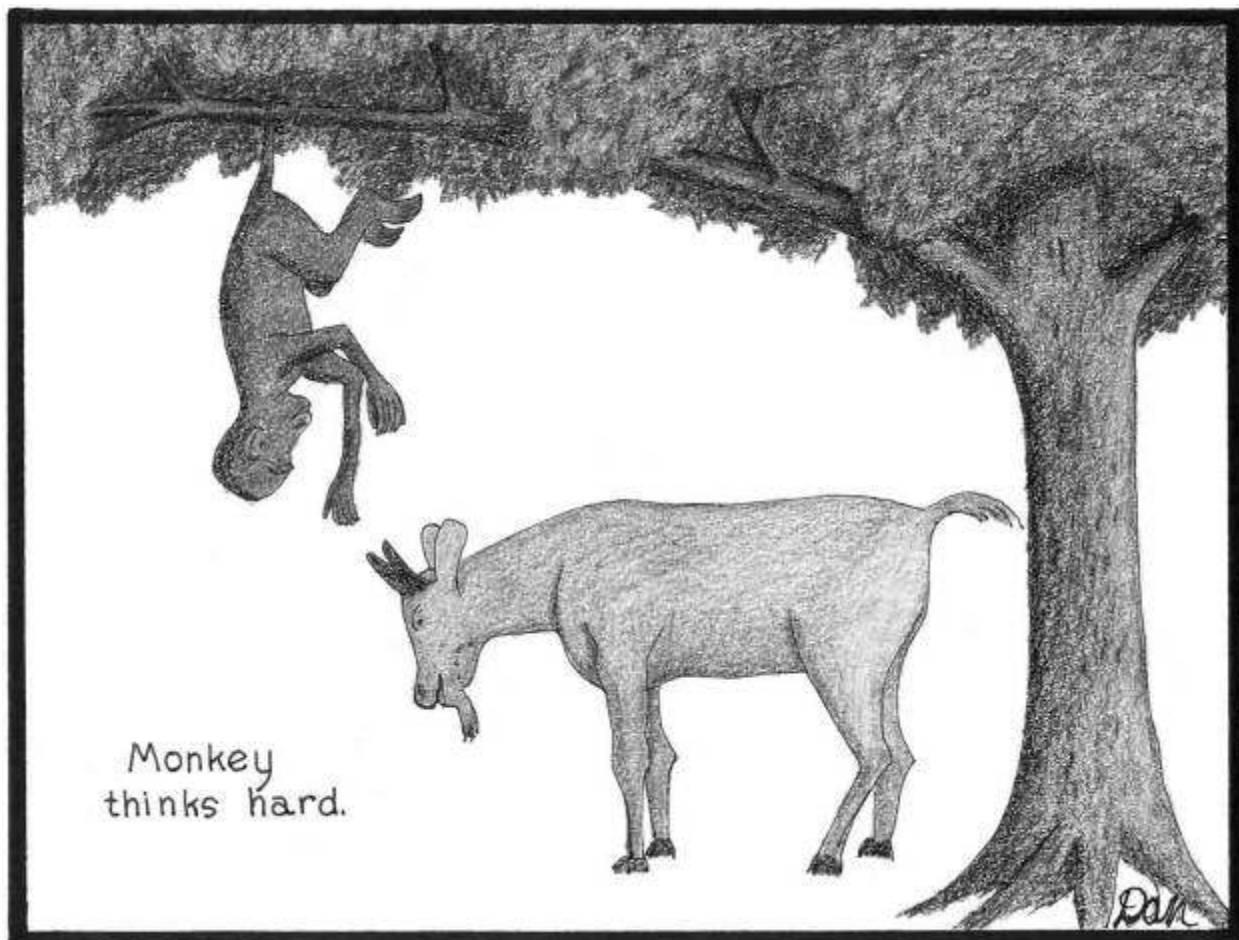
GOAT TRIES TO BE LEOPARD

Are you trying to make people think you are a Christian? Do you do certain things and act certain ways so others will think well of you?

Be careful! It can be dangerous!

Listen to what happened to Goat when he pretended to be someone else. He really got himself into big trouble!

Goat was living in the Village of Man. Every day he was in danger for his life, because Man was always having feasts.



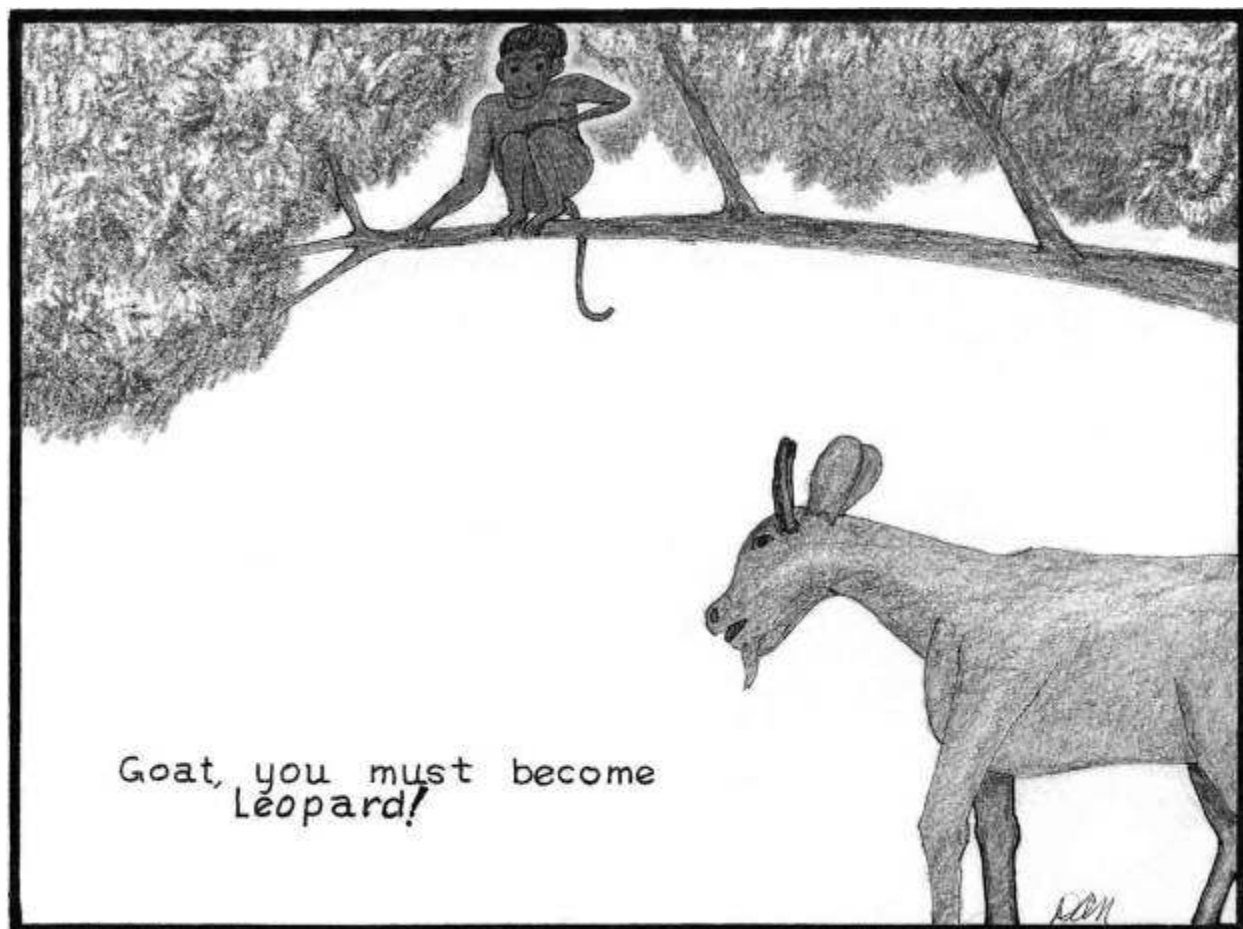
Every time some important person came to town like a District Commissioner, a government official or a chief, Man would have a feast. When a new boy-child was born Man would have a feast. When the harvest was all in Man would have a feast. Man was always having feasts.

Now Goat attended these feasts but not as a guest as he would have liked. Goat always went to the feast in the soup pot. Yes, Goat was Man's favorite meat for a feast.

Goat did not know what to do. Finally he decided to go to Old Monkey whom he thought was very wise.

"Oh, Monkey! Wise Monkey!" cried Goat under the Old Monkey's tree. "Oh! Please help me wise Monkey for I have terrible problems."

"Eh, Oh, hello Goat. How are you today?"



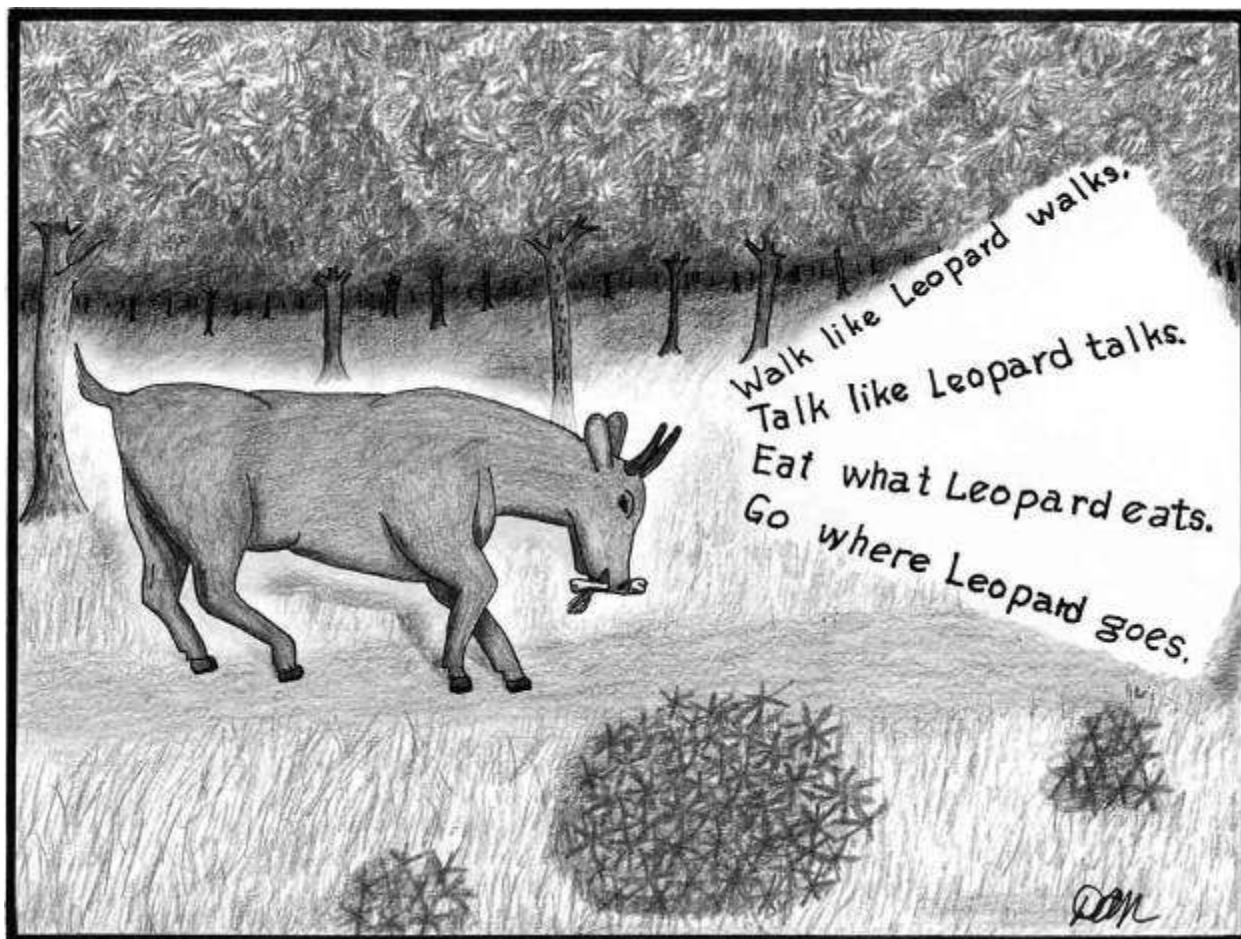
"Today I am very well, but tomorrow I may be gone; for every time Man has a feast he wants to put me into the soup pot. What can I do so that I will not soon be goat soup? Please help me."

"Ah, yes, er-r, ha ha ha, yes, a very serious problem indeed. Ha ha ha."

"Please don't laugh Monkey. Please help me to keep out of the soup pot."

"Yes, yes, of course. Let me think. How to keep Goat out of the soup pot, ha ha ha." So Monkey scratched behind his left ear. Then he scratched behind his right ear. Then he scratched all over the top of his head. Then he hung by his tail so that the blood would run down to his brain and he could think better. Monkey thought for a long time. Suddenly he jumped back up on to the tree limb.

"Oh, Monkey! wise Monkey!" cried Goat. "Can you save me from the soup pot?"



"Oh yes, Goat. I know how to save you from the soup pot."

"Oh, wise Monkey, please tell me."

"Well, Goat, it is really very simple. You must become Leopard," advised Monkey.

"What! Become Leopard?? How? But..... Why?"

"Why? To save your silly skin, Goat. Now you know that Leopard meat is never put into Man's soup pot. Man does not want Leopard meat in his soup pot. So, to stay out of the soup pot yourself, you must become Leopard."

"But how can I become Leopard?" wailed Goat.

"Well, Goat, you must do four things," Monkey said.

"You must walk like Leopard walks. You must talk like Leopard talks. You must eat what Leopard eats. And you must go where Leopard goes. Then you will be Leopard."

"Oh, dear me," groaned Goat. "I must walk like Leopard walks, talk like Leopard talks, eat what Leopard eats, and go where Leopard goes. Then I will be Leopard?"

"Yes! yes!" replied Monkey quickly. "Then you will be Leopard!"

"*For true, Monkey?*" asked Goat. But Monkey had already turned away and gone way up to the topmost branches of his tree. He paid no more attention to Goat.

So, Goat went on down the path. "Let me see now. I must walk like Leopard walks," Goat said to himself. So he tried to crouch down low to the ground on his long spindly legs to walk like Leopard. "Not very good, but if I keep on trying perhaps I'll do better."

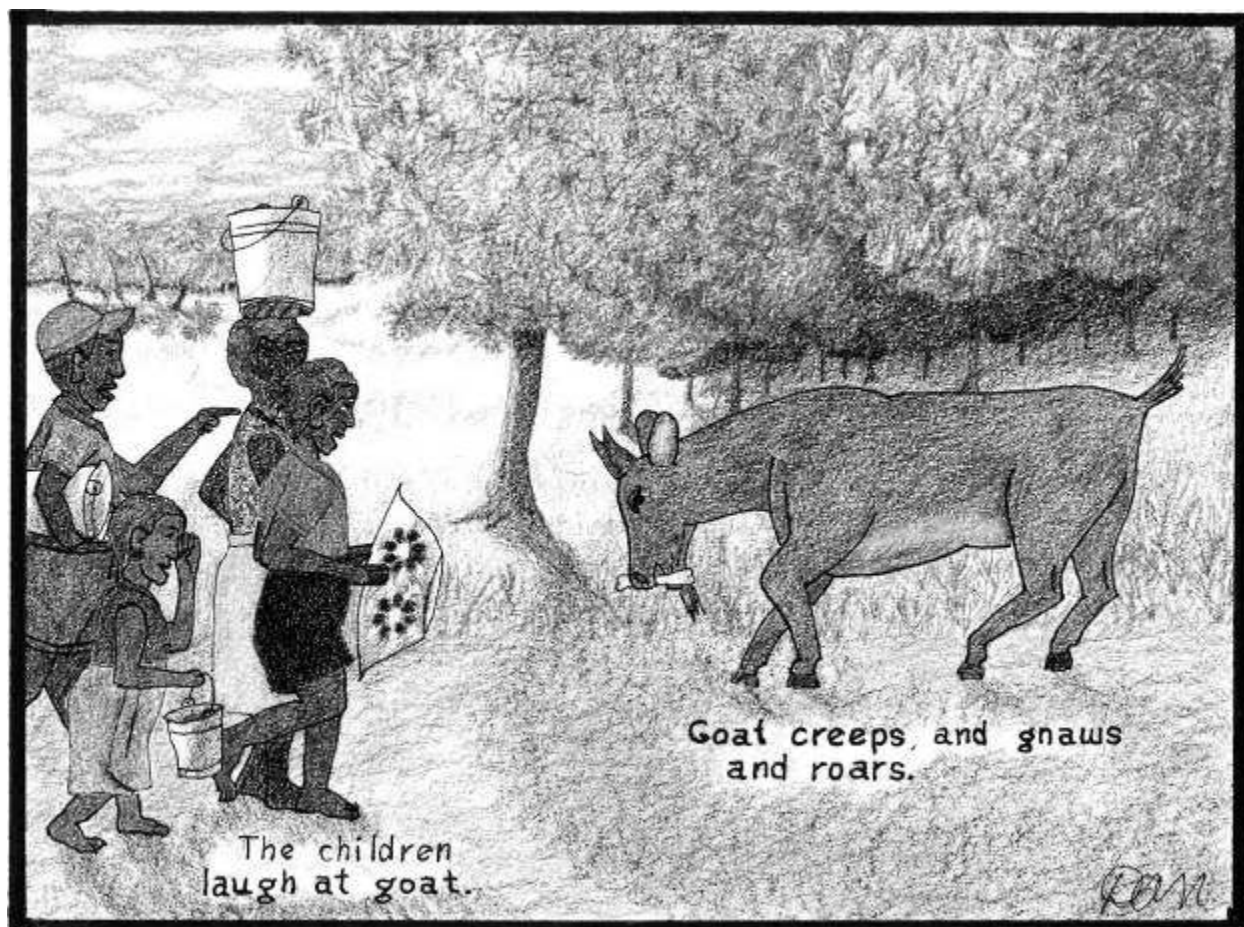
"I must also talk like Leopard talks. Oh! dear me." He tried to roar, but it sounded more like Baaaaaa. "I must try that one many times before I can talk like Leopard talks," he thought to himself.

"And, oh yes, I must eat what Leopard eats."

Well, he just could not find any fresh meat to kill and eat. The best he could do was to find an old bone that the dogs had left and gnaw on that.

"Now let me think," said Goat to himself. "I must also go where Leopard goes. Oh, no! that is a very scary place." Goat shivered as he thought of that place down by the big rocks. There were lots of shadows and creepy places around those rocks. But, it must be done. Goat shivered again. Leopard lived down there and if he was to become Leopard, he must go there. So Goat started down the path shivering as he went. He went to where the big rocks were, to where Leopard lived. As he went he tried to creep along like Leopard. He roared like Leopard -er, somewhat like Leopard, and gnawed on the old dry bone.

Just then some children came along with buckets and pans to get water. They saw Goat going along the path. He was creeping



and roaring and gnawing on the old dry bone. They stopped in amazement.

"Look at Goat," one said.

"Ha ha ha ha, I never saw Goat *do so* before," laughed another.

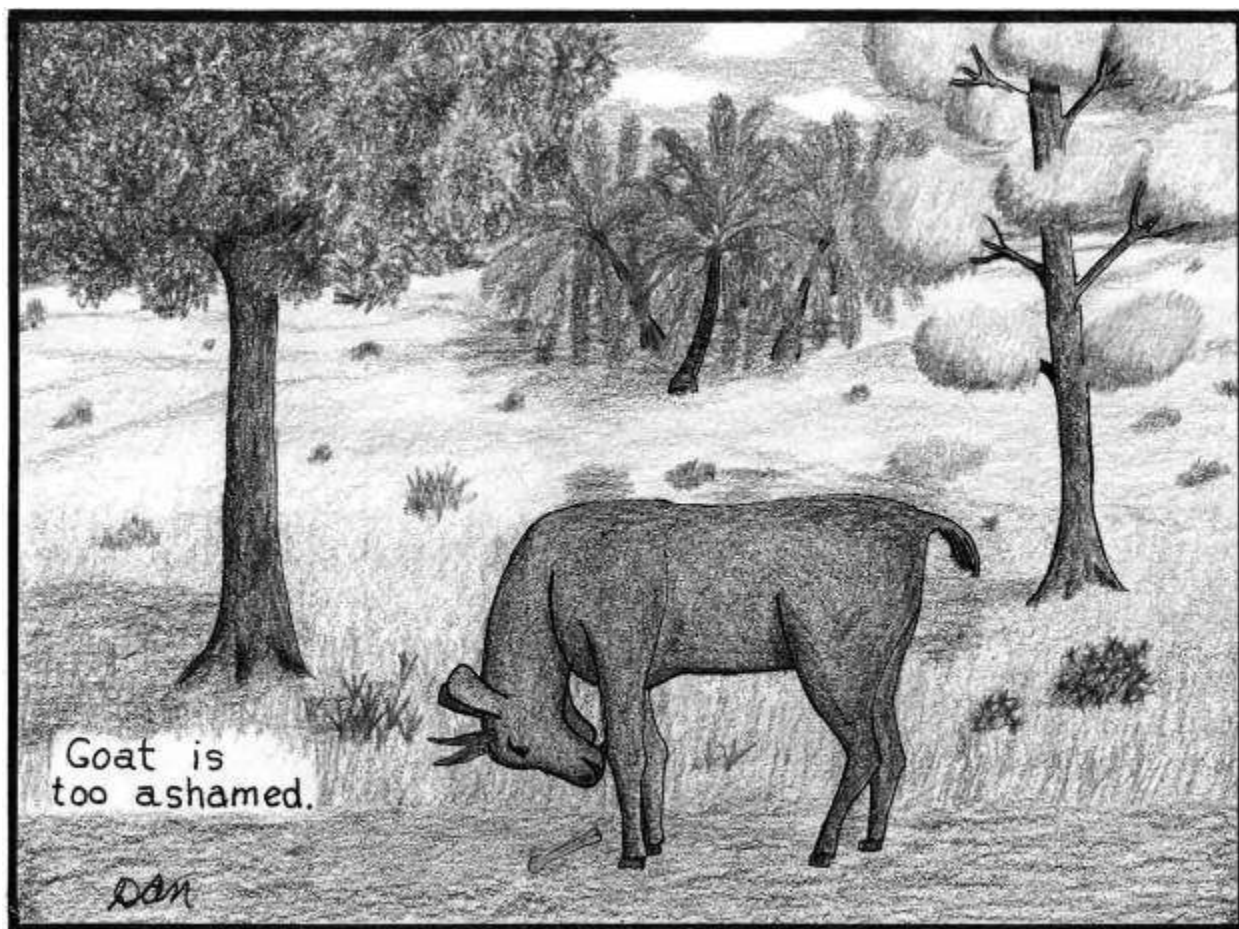
"Ha ha ha ha, look at funny Goat."

Then they all began to laugh and point and make fun.

"Ha ha ha ha ha ha!" they teased.

Goat was too ashamed. He straightened his legs, dropped the bone and walked off.

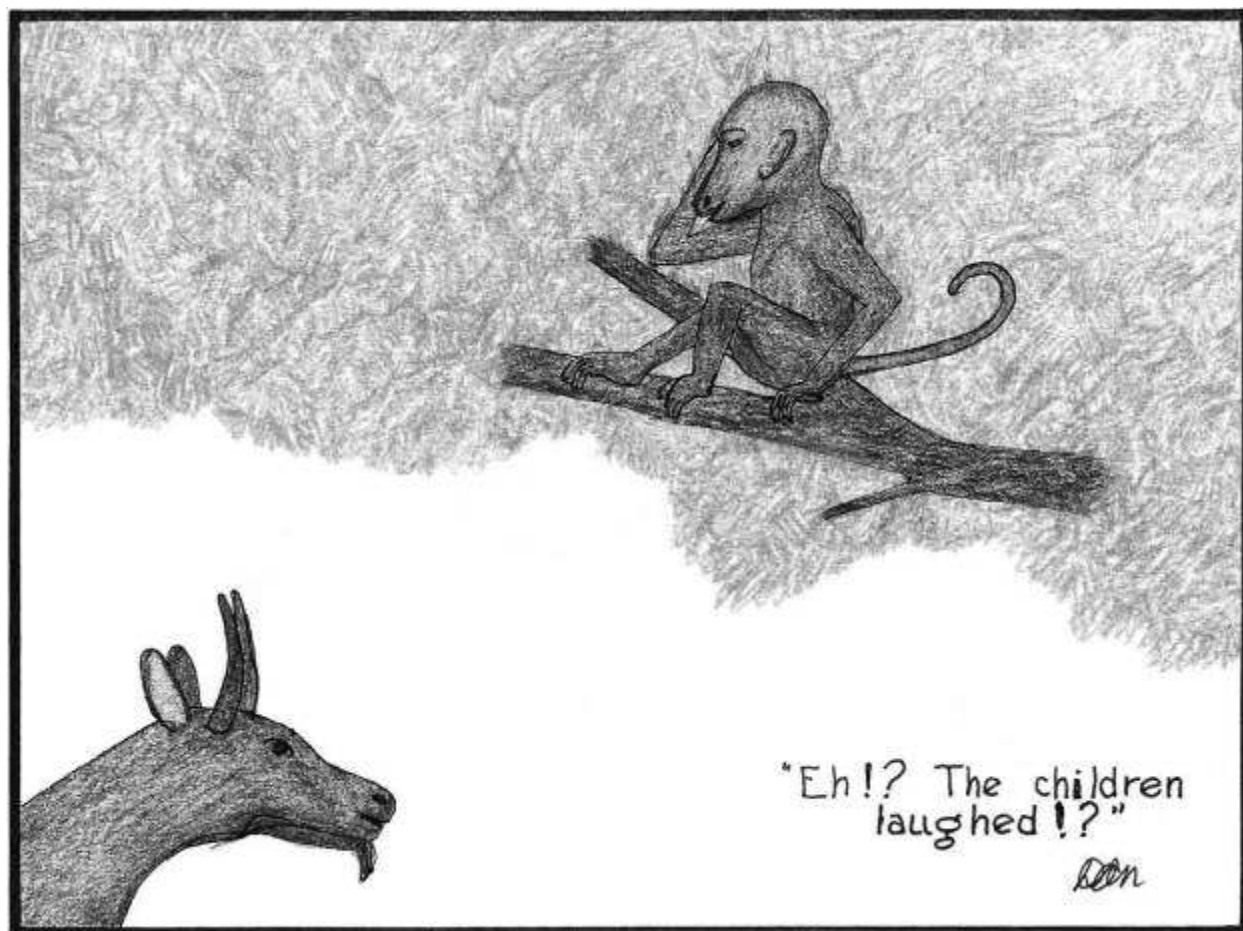
"But what is wrong?" Goat wondered. "I tried to walk like Leopard walks. I tried to talk like Leopard talks. I tried to eat what Leopard eats. I was going where Leopard goes. But the children only laughed at me and did not call me Leopard. There must be something else. Oh dear me."



Goat went back to Old Monkey again. "Oh, Wise Monkey," he cried. "I did try all that you told me to do, but I still am not Leopard. I walked like Leopard walks. I talked like Leopard talks. I ate what Leopard eats. And I was going to Leopard's place. But the children only laughed when they saw me. They just called me Goat. They did not call me Leopard. What must I do?"

"Eh? The children laughed?" Monkey asked. "So they laughed, did they? Harrump! Harrump!" Then Monkey scratched his head all over, thinking hard. "Ahum! Ahum!"

Finally Monkey hung by his tail to let the blood run down to his brain so he could think better. He hung there a very long time.

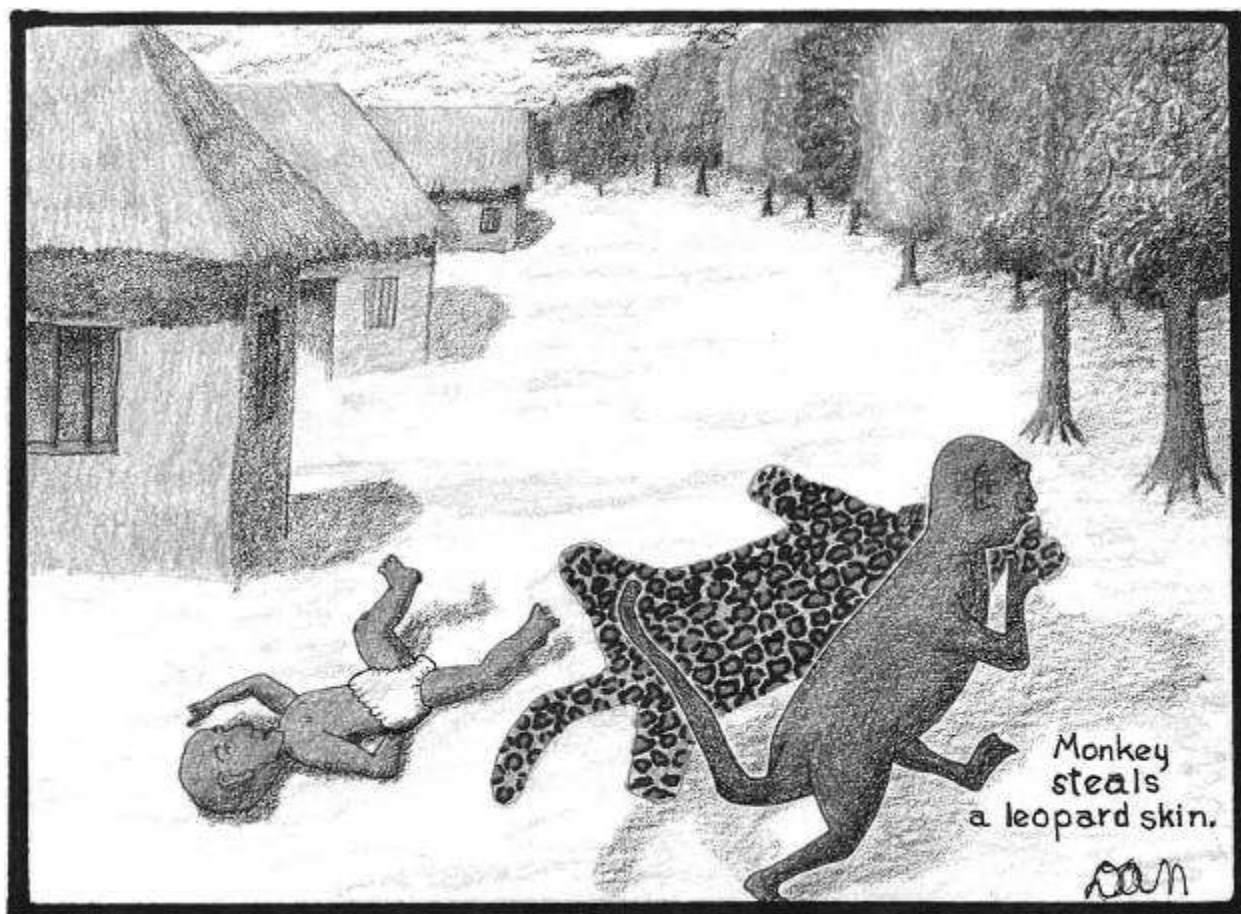


Goat tried to be patient. He wondered if Monkey was really asleep. But suddenly Monkey jumped up onto the branch again and said. "I have it! I have it!"

"What do you have, Monkey?" "The answer to your problem," Monkey said. Then he talked to himself, "Of course, of course. Why did I not think of it before?"

Then to Goat he said, "There is one more thing necessary for you. You must also look like Leopard."

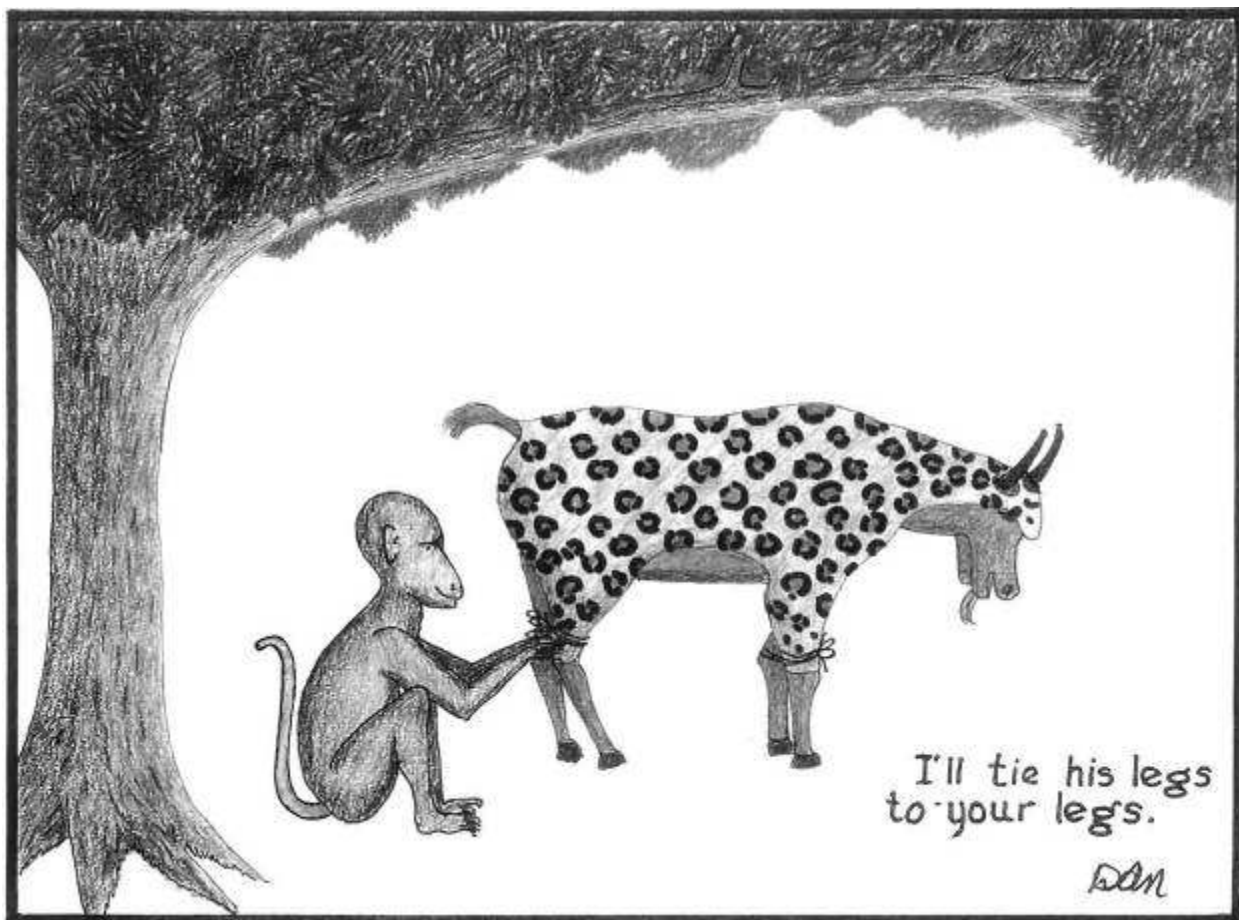
"Look like Leopard? I can't look like Leopard! That is impossible! I am Goat. I will never look like Leopard!"



"*Wait small,*" Monkey shouted and swung off through the trees toward the Village of Man. He looked through the leaves and branches. "Aha, just as I thought," he said to himself. There near one of the houses in the warm sun was a leopard skin lying on the ground. A baby was sitting on it, playing and cooing.

Monkey dropped quietly from the tree onto the ground and ran quickly and silently over to the leopard skin. He grabbed tight hold on the skin with both hands and pulled hard. The baby tumbled to the ground, crying loudly with pain and fear at such rough treatment. Some people came running out of the house. They were yelling at Monkey and shaking their fists and clubs angrily, but he was already well away into the bush, holding the skin in his teeth while he swung from branch to branch. Soon Monkey was back beside Goat with the skin.

"What is that?" Goat asked.



"A leopard skin."

"How can that help me?"

"People only see the outside," Monkey answered.

"Now stand still while I fasten this on you," ordered Monkey.

"Ugh, Ugh! There! Now, I'll tie its legs to your legs. Eh-he! Eh-he! Good! Good! Can you see, Goat?"

"Not very well," Goat replied. "Whew! It is hot in here."

"But it will keep you out of the very hot soup pot," Monkey assured him. "Now your horns are a problem; but we can't help that."

Old Monkey stood back and looked at Goat with the leopard skin tied over him. "You look just like Leopard. Well, that is, almost like Leopard. Now remember what I told you before. You must walk like Leopard walks, talk like Leopard talks, eat what Leopard eats, and go where Leopard goes."



Again Goat started off. He tried to crouch down and creep through the jungle just like Leopard, but his legs were too straight. He kept on practicing roaring like Leopard, but he sounded more like Goat.

“Baaaaa,” he roared.

He found the old piece of bone again and gnawed on it as he went along.

After a long walk, Goat was getting close to the big rocks with their many shadows. The sun was low in the sky. There were deep dark shadows and dark holes under the rocks. Goat was afraid, but also excited, for soon he would meet a real leopard and then he would be always with the leopards, and man would never again put him in the soup pot.



He roared again, “Baaaa,” but it did not sound very good because Goat was scared. Some of the shadows about him seemed to move. His attempts to roar echoed among the rocks.

Suddenly, above him on the rocks there was a movement; then a flash of very real leopard yellow, a very real leopard roar, and very real sharp leopard teeth. Goat never roared or squealed again. In a little while there was only an old leopard skin and a piece of an old dry bone on the ground.

Are you like Goat? Are you trying to walk, talk, look and act like a Christian when you really are not? The Bible says, "A man looks at the outside of a person, but the Lord looks at the heart" (I Samuel 16:7d). What does God see when he looks at you?

We all know that Goat would have to be born a leopard in order to be one. In order to be a Christian we have to be born one. In John 3:3 Jesus said to Nicodemus, "For sure, I tell you, unless a man is born again, he cannot see the holy nation of God"

God 'rebirths' us into His family when we receive Jesus into our hearts and lives. John 1:12 says, "He gave the right and the power to become children of God to those who received Him. He gave this to those who put their trust in His name."

Don't be like Goat. Let Jesus make you a new person inside.

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