

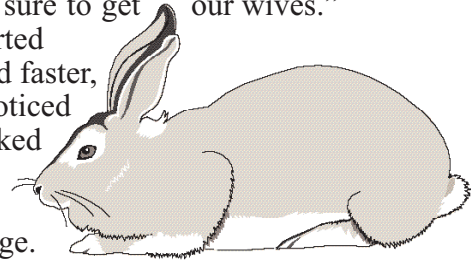
Traditional Stories from the Cherokee Nation

The Rabbit and the Possum Seek a Wife

Part 1 of 1

The Rabbit and the Possum each wanted a wife, but no one would marry either of them. They talked over the problem, and the Rabbit said, "We cannot get wives here. Let's go to the next town. I am the messenger for the council, and I will tell the people that I bring an order that everyone must marry at once. Then we'll be sure to get our wives."

The Possum thought this was a fine plan. So they started off together to the next town. Because the Rabbit traveled faster, he got there first. He waited outside until the people noticed him and took him into the townhouse. When the chief asked his business, the Rabbit said he brought an order from the council that everybody must marry without delay. The chief called the people together and gave them message. Every animal took a mate at once. And the Rabbit got a wife.



The Possum traveled so slowly that he got to the town after all the animals were married, leaving no wife for him. The Rabbit pretended to feel sorry for him and said, "Never mind. I'll carry the message to the people in the next town. You hurry on as fast as you can. This time you will get a wife."

So the Rabbit went to the next town, and the Possum followed close behind him. But when the Rabbit got to the townhouse, he told the people that, because there had been peace so long that everybody was getting lazy, the council had ordered that there must be a war at once. And he said it must begin right there in the townhouse. So the animals all began fighting, as they were told. But the Rabbit made four great leaps and got away, just as the possum came in.



Reporter's Notebook:

- Write a wedding announcement for Rabbit. Use the newspaper as a guide.
- Create an editorial cartoon or a comic strip illustrating this story. Use quotes.

Everybody jumped on the possum. He had not thought to bring weapons on a wedding trip, so he could not defend himself. After he fought and had no chance to get away, he fell over and pretended to be dead, until he saw a good chance to jump up and get away.

The possum never got a wife. But he remembered the lesson, and ever since he shuts his eyes and pretends to be dead whenever a hunter has him in a close corner.

The End

Arkansas Education Standards: Oral & Visual Communications: Speaking, Listening & Media Literacy; Writing 4-7; Reading 8-11



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