

was the lion asleep under a tree.

'How did you know there was a lion there?' asked the hunter.

'Because I see with my ears,' said the blind man.

The hunter thought this was a strange thing to say, but he said nothing.

After a while, they came to a place in the forest where there were no trees, and the hunter said,

'We will leave our traps here.'

So the hunter set his own trap first, and then showed the blind man how to set a trap.

'We'll go home now, and come back tomorrow and see what we've caught,' said the hunter.

The hunter took the blind man by the hand again to lead him home but the blind man said, 'It's fine, I know the way back.'

And sure enough he walked ahead of the hunter all the way home along the twisting path, climbing over fallen trees and crossing streams and didn't trip or get lost at all.

The next morning they set off together and after walking for many hours, they came to the place where they had left their traps. The hunter saw straight away that there were two birds caught in the traps. In the hunter's trap was a plain little grey bird, but in the blind man's trap was a beautiful bird with feathers of many colours.

'A blind man will never know the difference,' thought the hunter, and taking both birds, he gave the grey one to the blind man and kept the colourful



one for himself. The blind man said nothing, and they started to walk home together. They walked in silence, but the hunter was turning over in his mind what he had done.

Eventually, he burst out, 'If you are so clever and see with your ears, tell me this, why is there so much anger and hatred and cruelty in the world?'

The blind man replied,

'Because there are so many people like you, who take what is not theirs.'

The hunter understood then that the blind man knew what he had done, that he had tricked him and given him the wrong bird. He felt very ashamed of himself and handed the blind man the lovely bird of many colours.

'I'm sorry,' said the hunter.

They carried on walking and he carried on thinking. He had another question. 'If you are so clever and see with your ears, tell me this, why is there so much love and kindness and gentleness in the world?'

The blind man replied, 'Because the world is full of people like you, people who learn from their mistakes.'

And they carried on walking together until they reached their home. After that the hunter had really learned from his mistakes, and wasn't unkind to the blind man again.

Retold by Ruth Davies, Global Link, Lancaster

Further information

A beautifully illustrated, written version of this story can be found in *Tales of Wisdom and Wonder* by Hugh Lupton (Barefoot Books).

