

The Blind Man and the Hunter

Once upon a time there was a blind man who lived in a little house in a village at the edge of a big forest. He lived there with his sister, and they were very happy together.

The blind man was very clever – he seemed to know more about the world than people who could see. He would sit outside his house and talk to people as they came by – and as he was so clever, people would often ask him about their problems, and he always knew what was the best thing to do.

'Blind man, how is it that you are so wise?' they would ask.

He would smile and say, 'Because I see with my ears.'

One day his sister, who was a grown-up woman, met a fine young man and fell in love. This man was a brave, strong hunter, and as he loved the blind man's sister, they decided to marry. There was a big party and everyone came to dance, sing, eat, drink and wish the husband and wife a happy life together.

After the wedding, the hunter came to live in the house with his new wife and her brother, the blind man. But the hunter wasn't a kind man and would say horrible things about the blind man.

'What use is a man who can't see?' asked the hunter.

'But husband, he knows more about the world than people who can see,' his wife would reply.

'What nonsense! What can a blind man

know, who lives in darkness all the time?' said the hunter.

And so every day the hunter would go off into the forest to catch animals for them to eat. And every day when he came home with his spears, and arrows and traps, the blind man would say, 'Please, tomorrow, take me hunting with you.'

But the hunter would shake his head and say, 'What use is a man who can't see?'

And this went on for weeks and weeks. Every night, the blind man would ask if he could go hunting and every night the hunter would say no.

But one evening the hunter was in a good mood, and he said, 'Very well, tomorrow you will come to the forest with me.'

So they got up early the next morning and set off together. Across his back, the hunter carried his bow, his arrows, his spear and his traps, and with his hands he guided the blind man along the twisting path that led to the middle of the forest. They walked for hours and hours, seeing nothing, until the blind man suddenly stopped – he put his hand on the hunter's arm.

'Shh, there's a lion!' said the blind man.

The hunter looked around – he couldn't see a lion anywhere.

'There is a lion,' said the blind man, 'but it's all right, he won't hurt us, he's just had a big meal and he's fast asleep.'

Sure enough, as they followed the path around a bend, there

