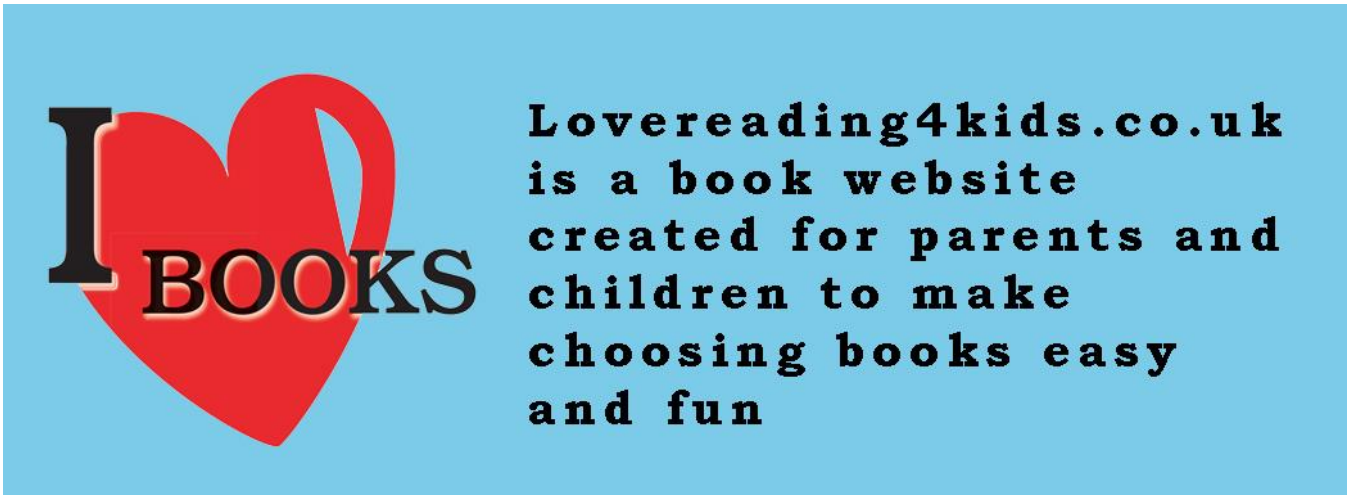


Opening extract from

Greatest Animal Stories

Chosen by

Michael Morpurgo

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For Jonathan and his family, with our thanks.

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GREATEST ANIMAL STORIES



Chosen By
MICHAEL MORPURGO

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Have you ever seen a dog with a bone? And if you did see one, would you ever try to take the bone away? I wouldn't if I were you. And I don't think Aesop would, either. Aesop may have written this fable over 2,500 years ago, but his stories, and the lessons in them, are timeless. Dogs will always love bones, and dogs (and people) will always be tempted by what they haven't got. But remember, if you're too greedy, then you may risk what you already have . . .

The Dog and His Reflection

Retold by Joanna Nadin

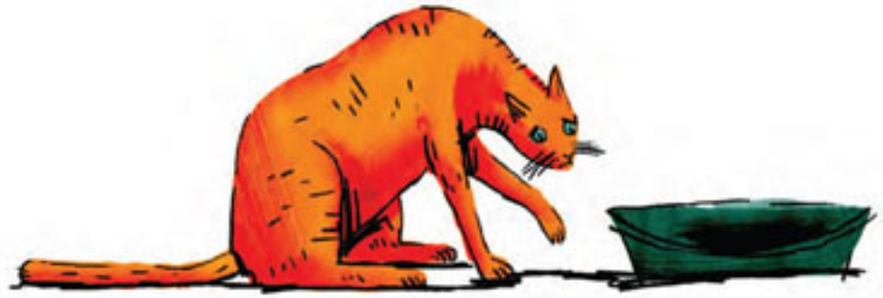
Illustrated by Irina Troitskaya



Once upon a time there was a greedy dog. He didn't think his own food was enough, so he stole from his friends when they weren't looking.



'How rude,' moaned Cat, whose milk had disappeared for the third time that week.



'It's not fair,' groaned Goat, whose scraps had vanished into thin air, or rather, into Dog.





But Cow was wise. She told them, 'Be patient. Dog will get his comeuppance one day soon.'

This went on for months and months. Dog stole food, and Cat and Goat moaned and groaned.

But Cow always said the same thing: 'Be patient. Dog will get his comeuppance one day soon.'

One day, Dog went for a long walk to town and spotted a bone in the tailor's backyard. It was meant for the tailor's wolfhound, but Dog wanted it for himself.

So, when Wolfhound was busy with a ball, and the tailor was busy with his mending, Dog snuck through the gate and snapped up the bone. Then he trotted off in the direction of home, with his treasure firmly between his teeth.



Along the way was a ford, which is a small river that runs right across a road.

As he was crossing the ford, Dog looked down and was surprised to see another dog that looked just like him.

What's more, this dog had a bone between his teeth, too. But Dog thought this other bone looked far nicer than his, and greed got the better of him.

'It's even bigger and even more juicy,' said Dog to himself. 'I must have it!'

But when he opened his mouth to take the bone, his own bone fell from his jaws. It floated away down the river.

'I don't care,' said greedy Dog. 'Because now I have the bigger, juicier bone!'

But when he tried to snap up the bigger, juicier bone he got a shock! That one was sailing down the river, too. And in the end Dog was forced to slink home, his stomach empty and his tail between his legs.





'Not thirsty?' asked Cat, when Dog didn't try to take her milk.



'Not hungry?' asked Goat, when Dog didn't try to steal his scraps.

'No,' said Dog. 'I'm full already.'

But Dog wasn't full. He was feeling foolish, because he had lost his perfectly good bone trying to snap up a better one.

Only Cow was wise, and guessed the truth. She also guessed that Dog had learned his lesson, and would never be greedy again.

And she was right.



MORAL

If you're greedy, you might lose out on the good things you already have.