

## **The Lion and the Antelope**

by Quiana, age 13

Lion lived in a vast savannah, with barely any food or water, because it was an exceptionally dry season. Most days, Lion ran around the grass to see if he could find something to eat. Most days, Lion went to bed tired, thirsty, and hungry.

While the sun set, Lion decided to take a nap under a giant Umbrella Thorn that he claimed was his. Lion was very sleepy and hungry from a long day of looking for food. He was about to take a quick nap, when he sleepily took a brief glance with his heavy eyes, and noticed a mysterious shadow appear right before him. The shadow was in the shape of an antelope! Hooray! Lion would have a hearty meal tonight before bed! Lion was up on his paws in a flash. The antelope must have seen him, because it was gone in the blink of an eye.

“Better luck next time,” Lion mumbled to himself, and plopped down to take a nap.

The next day, Lion walked around his big tree scouting for food. He knew not to go far from the tree because he was pretty weak from hunger. If he wandered off too far, he worried there wouldn't be enough shade to have a nap in and where he could restore his energy. While wandering around, Lion noticed a big brown spot far off in the savannah. He thought about the antelope he had seen the night before, and he began to think. *If I run away from my tree, I won't have shade if I want a nap. If I run toward the brown spot, I might be able to get food.* The word that stuck was *food*. In a flash, Lion was sprinting as fast as his body could run toward the brown splotch. As he got closer, he found that the big brown splotch was indeed an antelope. The antelope was turned away, perfect for Lion to creep toward the antelope. Lion had slowed to a walk, making very little sound. Right before he was about to pounce, the antelope turned around and saw the Lion. Immediately, the antelope started to run, and Lion went right after him.

Soon after a long chase, Lion was too tired to keep going, so he called out to the antelope, “Hey Antelope, can we stop and catch our breaths, and then keep on going?”

“Sure, why not,” the antelope replied.

After both Lion and the antelope stopped, Lion asked the antelope, “What's your name? Why have you come here?”

“My name is Antelope, and I was traveling with my herd, but got left behind when I was sleeping. I have come here to look for food. I lived with my herd on the western part of this savannah, but then after they left me, I went looking for food. I saw a big tree, and I started to run toward it. What I didn't realize was that you, a lion, were there. Once you pounced on your feet, from my common instinct, I ran away.”

“Oh, I'm very sorry about losing your herd. My name is Lion. I haven't seen food for days; that's why I am so weak, and have asked you to take a break with me,” Lion replied.

“Nice to meet you, Lion. I know you usually eat meat, but I would recommend some grass. It tastes delicious, and it is everywhere here! If you start eating grass, you’ll never feel weak, or hungry again! This is what I eat. It tastes delicious, and I love it!” Antelope suggested.

“Ew, disgusting, grass is something all creatures step in, go to the bathroom in, and sleep in. You don’t know how gross it is, do you? Have you ever heard of hygiene? I prefer to keep myself clean, and eat clean food. Meat is one of the cleanest foods in this savannah,” Lion said.

“Just try it!” Antelope said, “Maybe you’ll like it. Depending on the grass, it’ll taste sweet, salty, bitter, or savory. I love the sweet kind! I have a sweet tooth.”

“Okay, fine, I love savory meat, so I guess I’ll try savory grass but only after it’s been cleaned off,” Lion replied, while giving in.

“Follow me, I know where savory grass is. It’s right by a pond, so you can wash it off in the pond,” Antelope said excitedly.

So, Lion and Antelope traveled together. Lion thought about devouring Antelope while they walked to the savory grass, but he thought better of it, because meat was scarce and if he liked the grass, he could have it every day and never go to bed hungry again!

Once they arrived at the pond, Antelope showed Lion the savory grass. “The savory grass is a lighter tint of green, and sometimes a yellowish green. This grass tastes okay to me, but it might taste great to you. Go ahead, take a bite!”

Lion took a bite, swallowed, and took another, and another, and another. It was too good to stop! Lion kept on going, but the light green patch, didn’t seem to end. Today Lion would go to bed with a full stomach. Lion didn’t even mind that he forgot to wash the grass, he just kept on going, until he stopped, rolled over with a big and full stomach, and started to snore. Antelope took one look at the full Lion, and started to eat some grass, because he had spent a day running away from Lion. He was very tired, and he also needed food.

Once Lion woke up from his nap, he noticed that Antelope was napping right next to him with a full stomach, too. Lion woke Antelope up and said, “Hey, thanks for introducing me to grass. My food was right in front of me the whole time. I just didn’t know where to look for it!”

“No problem. When you started to eat grass, I started to calm down because I knew that you wouldn’t eat me, and you would still be full,” Antelope replied.

“I know, our solution is a win-win for both of us! It’s great!” Lion said.

From then on, both Antelope and Lion looked out for each other, and never went hungry again.