

# The Proud Peacock and the Lazy Leopard

by Suriya

The Lazy Leopard stretched her paws and yawned. It was a hot day and the sun was shining brightly. She suddenly noticed The Proud Peacock strutting her colourful feathers and holding a large basket. Proud Peacock noticed the Leopard and hid the basket with a smile.

“Not for you, Leopard! Maybe next time? These delicious strawberries in this basket are for me! Freshly picked by me, too!” The Proud Peacock said happily. She held a single strawberry out to The Lazy Leopard and swirled the basket with a flourish,

Lazy Leopard took it without hesitation and munched hungrily on it. It was fantastic! She wanted more and more! Leopard reached out an arm to grab the basket.

“Can I have all of them? Please? I will never ask for anything again.” Lazy Leopard pleaded.

“Oh, stop whining! There is another strawberry bush out there; go and pick some yourself!” Proud Peacock rolled her eyes in frustration.

Leopard was annoyed and angry with the Peacock for refusing. An idea came to her and she clapped her paws together excitedly.

“Wait!” called the Lazy Leopard as Proud Peacock started to leave, “I’ve heard you are an excellent singer and a pretty talented dancer. Could you um, you know...” Leopard nodded to a spot at least nine steps away from her. Peacock brightened up at once at this remark and smiled in glee.

“How thoughtful of you! Of course!” Proud Peacock cried.

“And could I have the basketful of strawberries as well, by the way?” Lazy Leopard asked sneakily.

“Yes...” Proud Peacock said dreamily, not focusing. Little did she know, she was agreeing to something she didn’t want to.

“Wait. What did I just say?” asked Peacock suspiciously.

“Nothing!” chirped Leopard.

Peacock placed the basket, coincidentally, in front of Lazy Leopard. She walked over to the spot where Leopard had nodded at and started

singing, her eyes closed. She opened up her feathers and displayed the purple, green and pink colours. Proud Peacock started dancing and swaying, taking no notice of Leopard, as she was so absorbed in her singing.

Meanwhile, Lazy Leopard had snuck over to the strawberry basket and she opened the thatched lid. Her eyes glazed over to the strawberries and she sighed.

“Just one bite of these can open the doorway to heaven!” Lazy Leopard practically trembled with excitement.

“What’s that, dear?” Proud Peacock wondered aloud, just after a breath taking leap, her eyes shut firmly {thankfully.}

“Nothing.” Lazy Leopard repeated and she grinned to herself. Her face was slightly smeared with strawberry. She gobbled up the remains of the strawberry in her hand until she realised that the song had stopped. Expecting the worst, Lazy Leopard turned to face Peacock, who looked stunned.

“Leopard! You tricked me into performing so you could eat the strawberries!?! How dare you? Leopard, I spent time collecting those! Time! You owe me a lot.” Peacock shrieked.

“Actually, you said I could eat them. Remember?” Leopard defended herself. Peacock suddenly realised what she had agreed to and her face turned a startling shade of scarlet.

“Well, I never! You have cheated me for my strawberries, you did! I will not offer you anything again. I shall never, I repeat, NEVER, be fooled by your flattery again!”

And with that she stormed off empty handed, leaving Lazy Leopard scoffing the very last bit and inhaling the sweet, delicious scent.

