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There was once a princess, and she had no husband, and she was very beautiful. And her mother summoned all the animals, and said to them, "The man who shall cut down this baobab tree at one stroke with a sword, I will give him my daughter."

First came the elephant — he was king of the beasts — and he gave a blow with the sword, but made no impression on the tree. Then came the rhinoceros and tried, but it beat him; and the hippopotamus came, but it beat him; and the lion came, but it beat him. And all the animals came, but it beat them.

Then the tortoise came, and all the beasts laughed at him and jeered him, and said to him, "It beat the elephant, and are you going to cut it down?"

"I will try," said he.

And he made a feast and spread it under the baobab tree, and his friends the white ants ate into the baobab tree till it was ready to fall. Then he said to all the beasts, "Come and see." They came, and the tortoise took his sword, and gave one blow, and down it fell.

The princess cried, and said, "The beautiful elephant failed to cut down this tree, and it has been cut down by this ugly tortoise."

Her mother said, "Never mind."

The tortoise took his wife. But his wife did not love her husband, the tortoise, and told stories of him to her mother, but her mother said to the girl, "It will not do to hate a husband for being ugly."

She left off till night came, and then the girl threw her husband on the floor. Mr. Tortoise cried out, and people came and said to her, "It will not do to part with your husband."

Then they loved each other very much, and made a promise to each other that they would never leave each other all their lives.