



FABLES

An Allegory for our Times

By Geraldine Gray, WM College Creative Writing Student

The Hippopotamus was the laziest animal in the jungle, but he thought that he should be king, because his parents had always told him that he was a wonder and he had been to a very good school.

Now it so happened that there was a great argument about whether the kingdom should remain in a confederation of other neighbouring kingdoms or become independent. There was a vote of all the animals in the kingdom and Hippo joined forces with Snake and Fox and to everyone's surprise this coalition won the argument.

Sturdy King Horse and the stately Queen Lioness skulked off to lick their wounds whilst Hippo, Snake and Fox vied amongst the animals as to which of them should be king. Whilst most animals considered Snake to be too devious and unreliable and Fox dishonest and wily, they all loved Hippo because he was amusing, and he told funny stories and made them laugh.

Hippo became King and moved into his palace and thought to himself: Now that I am King, I am going to have parties and enjoy life, and everyone will love me and I will get other animals to do the boring bits of being a monarch. But sadly, there came a great pestilence to the land and the animals became sick and many died, so the animals called upon King Hippo to help them.

He promised hospitals but did not have enough doctors and nurses. He had sent them out of the kingdom because they were foreigners. He did not have enough equipment because

he had spent the money on vain projects. Worst of all, he did not heed the warnings of the wise owls to socially distance himself from the sick animals, so he caught the pestilence and suffered grievously. After that he was such a sad, chastened and miserable Hippo that all he wanted was to crawl back into the muddy river and cry.



After AESOP

The Tom Cat and the Wise Owl

By Geraldine Gray, WM College Creative Writing Student

One moonlit night Tom Cat met Solomon Owl on top of a tree.

“You must be a great hunter with your sharp beak and talons,” said Cat to Owl.

“You must be a great hunter with your sharp teeth and claws,” said Owl to Cat.

Thereupon the pair debated as to who was the better hunter and decided to have a competition to resolve the matter.

All night the single-minded owl hunted and at sunrise returned to the tree with a mighty haul of prey. Meanwhile Tom Cat set out, determined to win, but on his way he passed a pub and his mates invited him in for a pint or two or... Several hours later, staggering out, he encountered a beautiful lady cat who lured him into some bushes for a tryst.

As the sun rose, Tom discovered that all the forest creatures had crept back into their holes, so he returned to the tree chastened and empty handed; the loser.

The Moral: Never put off until tomorrow what you must do today.

