Rabah Kheddouci

The garden of wolves

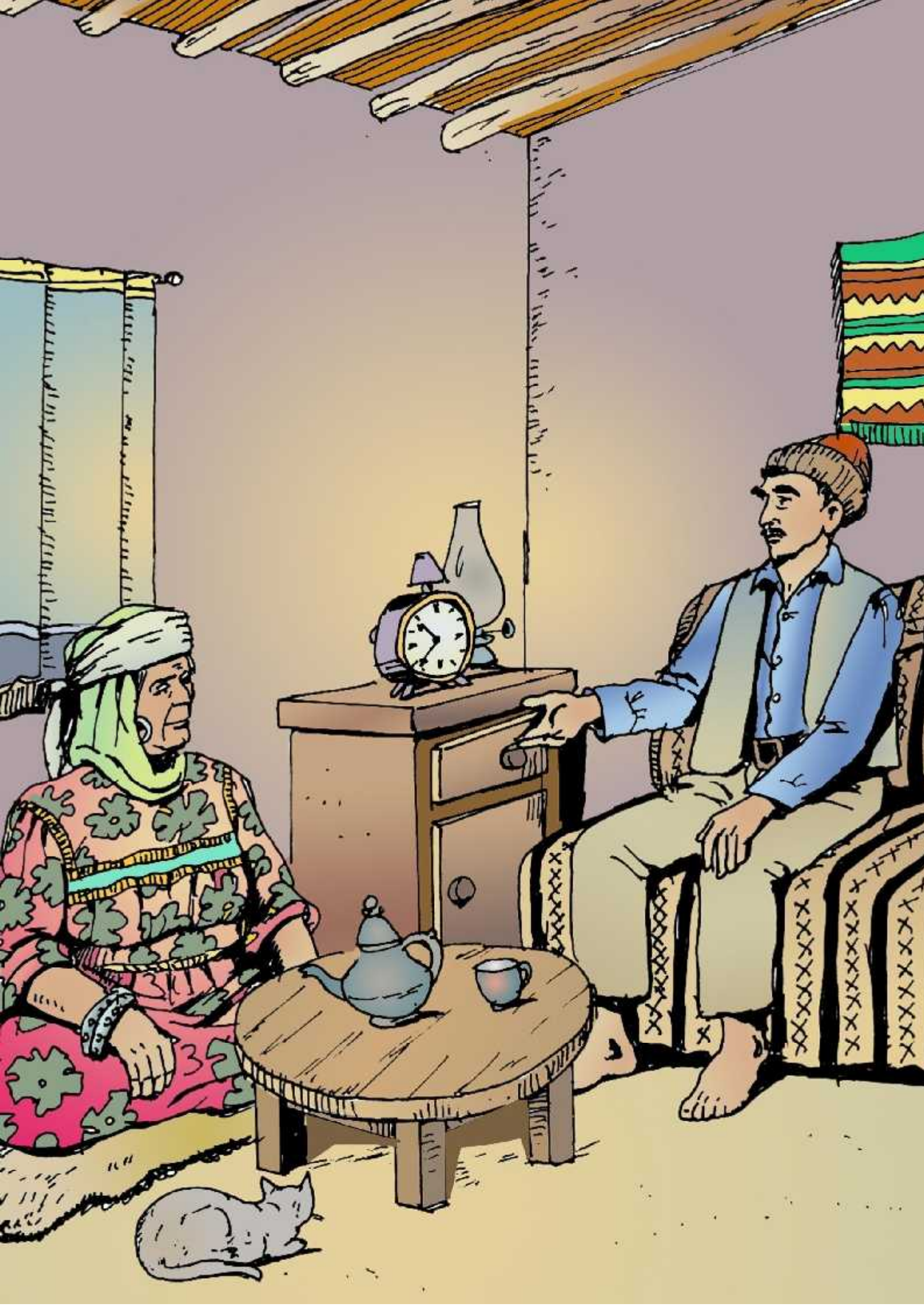
Translated by:
Belkacem Meghzouchene

Publications of EL-hadhara

Publications of EL-hadhara
BP 04 (A) Birtouta Alger
Tél: 0663.18.12.10
Email: kheddoucir@gamil.com

ISBN:978-9931-357-55-1

In this third tale, a man and his wife lived in the countryside. They had devised a plan to eliminate both the wolf who threatened the goats and the fox who attacked the hens. Would the couple succeed in this dangerous operation? If yes, what would happen next as the forest would be evacuated from its wolf and fox?



Every night, the shepherd Kaddour would tell his wife Aldjia the story of the wolf who attacked the flock of goats to devour one goat each time.

From her side, Aldjia informed her husband Kaddour that every month a fox would take away a hen from the henhouse and kill it. Altogether, they thought about a trick to seize both the wolf and the fox.

Kaddour proposed his trick:

- I will wear the skin of the ram with its head, and I will walk behind the flock of the goats. And when the deceitful wolf comes to attack me, I grip its foot and I put the rope around its neck.

His wife Aldjia said:

- I will dig a hole at the door of the henhouse, and when the sly fox arrives by night, it will fall into the hole.

The two rose to execute their plans. The husband wore the skin of the ram and went out to march between the goats on his two hands and two feet as if he were a ram. When he reached the woods, he saw a wolf drawing closer, happy to see a ram.

The happy wolf said:

- I miss the meat of the sheep. It is very delicious.

The wolf attacked the skin of the ram and Kaddour clutched the leg of the wolf, quickly put a rope around its neck and dragged it to the house. From her side, his wife Aldjia dug a great hole in the path of the fox. And when the cunning animal appeared by night, it cautiously closed in on the hens, saying:

-Today, I choose a rooster. I am fed up of hens…

Suddenly, the fox fell in the hole and could not get out of it.

Kaddour and Aldjia felt happy as their schemes succeeded. Yet, they wondered what they should do with the captured wolf and fox. The couple did not want to kill the two animals by beating them, nor did like to let them starve to death.

Kaddour thought a lot before he said to his wife:

- I'm going to take the wolf and the fox to the director of the zoo in Algiers. I will sell them to him, so that the visitors of the zoo can enjoy seeing them.

His wife agreed upon the idea, and then she said:

-Do not forget to set a high price for the fox and the wolf!

Kaddour executed his idea. He rented a car and transported the wolf and the fox to the great amusement of his neighbors. In the evening, he came back with a good amount of money.

28 Algiers

In the following week, Kaddour captured a she-wolf and his wife trapped a female fox. Like the first time, Kaddour had sold them to the director of the same zoo. He would do so, capture and sale, until the nearby woods were emptied of the wolves and the foxes. Therefore, he no longer worried about that these beasts preyed on his flock of goats and the hens. Thus, the livestock and the poultry of Kaddour lived in peace, not fearing the gone wolves and foxes, and started to spend the nights in the woods. As the days passed by, they got accustomed to living in the woods and forgot to go back home. Moreover, they were scared at the thought of joining again the stable and henhouse, because they remembered how in the past Kaddour was slaughtering some of them during the celebrations of weddings and *Sacrifice Feasts* and *Ashura*…

Kaddour tried to bring the goats back home but he failed. Aldjia tried to return the hens to the henhouse but she fell short, too. Their money began to decrease day after day, and the poverty soon knocked on their door.

Serhane gave a piece of advice to his father Kaddour:

-What don't you go back to the zoo to buy a wolf and a fox, and then release them in the woods? This way, the goats and the hens will fear them and will be compelled to turn back home!

His father smiled and said:

-It is a clever idea.

In the morning, Kaddour got ready to leave the village towards Algiers. Unfortunately for him, he came back in the evening alone, with neither the wolf nor the fox.

He told his wife:

- The director of the zoo refused my demand of buying a wolf and a fox.

His son asked him:

-Why?

- He told me that the law did not allow my request, and I need an authorization similar to that of a passport…

After a short moment of silence, Kaddour resumed talking:

-When the director saw my miserable situation, he had pity on me, and he proposed to me to work as a warden in the zoo!

A week after, Kaddour and his family moved to the town and he became a warden of wolves and foxes in the zoo.

A few days later, Kaddour would speak to the wolves:

-Once, I had been a guardian against you, and now I'm watching over you! I had been fearing you, and now I am afraid for you! Good heavens! How things turn upside down!

After a period of time, Kaddour and his wife felt boredom. They missed the breeding of goats and hens. Kaddour bought four goats, three hens and one rooster. He released his animals in the zoo, so that the goats grazed beside the area of wolves and the hens pecked at the earth in front of the area of foxes, only small hedges separated between them…

Everybody got accustomed to watching this sight. The hens and the goats dared to come near the hedges, gazing at the beautiful eyes and the slim muzzles of the wolves and the foxes, moving closer, as if they had already befriended each other!

But the wolves and the foxes were delighted to discover the splendor of the rooster, the kindness of the hens, and the elegance of the goats. The wolves and the foxes wondered how they had ignored all these beauties for such a long time! They almost jumped over the hedges to apologize for their previous misbehaviors!