

The Goatherd and the Wild

Goats

Aesop's Fables

Greek

Advanced
1 min read

A Goatherd was tending his goats out at pasture when he saw a number of Wild Goats approach and mingle with his flock. At the end of the day he drove them home and put them all into the pen together. Next day the weather was so bad that he could not take them out as usual: so he kept them at home in the pen, and fed them there. He only gave his own goats enough food to keep them from starving, but he gave the Wild Goats as much as they could eat and more; for he was very anxious for them to stay, and he thought that if he fed them well they wouldn't want to leave him. When the weather improved, he took them all out to pasture again; but no sooner had they got near the hills than the Wild Goats broke away from the flock and scampered off. The Goatherd was very much disgusted at this, and roundly abused them for their ingratitude. "Rascals!" he cried, "to run away like that after the way I've treated you!" Hearing this, one of them turned round and said, "Oh, yes, you treated us all right—too well, in fact; it was just that that put us on our guard. If you treat newcomers like ourselves so much better than your own flock, it's more than likely that, if another lot of strange goats joined yours, we should then be neglected in favour of the last comers."

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