



Why Giraffes Have Long Necks

Izuchukwu Saviour Otubelu

Animals

Giraffe wanted to know why the sun shone in the day and the moon at night. He wanted to know why the leaves on trees were green and not any other colour. He wanted to be able to see the roofs of Man's houses and know what they were made of. Unfortunately, he had a short neck and could not see much above him.

'Is it true that the sky is blue?' he asked Eagle on a beautiful Thursday morning.

'I'm late for a meeting, please. Don't bother me with your silly questions.'

But Giraffe would not give up. He wanted answers. Was the sky really blue like he had been told? Where did the birds build their nests? Was it true that the Creator lived in the sky? He had heard of aeroplanes that flew across the sky but he had never seen one.

'Good morning, Monkey. You always jump from one tree branch to another. Tell me, what beautiful sights have you seen up there?'

Monkey didn't say a word. He merely grabbed a bunch of bananas and ate them hungrily.

Giraffe decided to climb the top of an Iroko tree, where he could see things for himself. He was not a very skilled climber, but he had watched Okonta the palm wine tapper climb palm trees on several occasions, and he had somewhat learnt the art.

'Oh! Look at me!' he cried. 'This is beautiful. Look at the birds in the sky. Such lovely sight!'

Suddenly, it felt as if the tree was quaking underneath. Horrified, Giraffe looked down to see Amadi the lumberjack. He was whistling a familiar tune as he cut the tree with an axe. Giraffe begged him to stop, but it appeared Amadi did not hear him, as he carried on with what he was doing. In the end, Giraffe fell off the tree

with a thud and was badly hurt. Monkey, Vulture and some other animals had a good laugh at him, but he got up slowly and walked away.

In despair, Giraffe knelt down and prayed to the Creator to grant him his wish, so that he would be able to see the beautiful sights of the world. But he wasn't sure if his prayer was answered. Just then, he heard the sound of a helicopter. He didn't want to climb a tree again for fear of what had happened to him earlier. Thus he resolved to stretch his neck in an attempt to see the moving helicopter. Unknown to him, his neck grew longer bit by bit as he stretched it.

When he woke up the next morning, he discovered that his neck was a few inches longer. What in the world was happening to him? The other animals were astonished and they stared at one another.

In no distant time, Giraffe's neck grew very long and his legs too grew much longer than they had been. Now he could see treetops without climbing anything. He could see kites soaring in the air. He could see the beautiful rainbow in the sky. What was more; he could eat the juicy fruits that hung from tree branches, as well as flowers and leaves. He could not hide his excitement. He knew that the Creator had answered his prayer and he was grateful. Some of the animals grew envious of him.

Well, Giraffe chose to be unselfish. Several times, he allowed Tortoise, Snail, Cat and some of the other animals to climb on his back, so that they could see the beautiful things he saw. And sometimes too, he plucked some ripe delicious-looking fruits and gave them to eat. He knew that his new appearance was a gift from the Creator, and he was going to use it for the common good.

Read more fairy tales on Fairytalez.com