



The Red Dragon

An Aboriginal Legend

Retold by Agor

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NARRATOR 1:

Long, long ago, many animals on earth did not look the way they do today.

NARRATOR 2:

Some animals were much taller or thinner than they are now.

NARRATOR 3:

Some animals had more legs than they do today.

NARRATOR 4:

Two of the animals that lived at that time were the hippopotamus and the rhinoceros.

NARRATOR 5:

And they were both so vain that they drove the other animals crazy talking about themselves.

HIPPOPOTAMUS:

Just look at my body. See how trim and fit I am?

RHINOCEROS:

Am I good-looking, or what?

NARRATOR 1:

Rhinoceros would turn around and around so everyone could see his handsome face.

RHINOCEROUS:

Lucky me! My left side is just as awesome as my right side.

NARRATOR 2:

Before you knew it, the elephant would start bragging too.

ELEPHANT:

Take a look at my teeth. They are the best!

NARRATOR 3:

Then Elephant would smile and show off his two rows of shiny white teeth.

NARRATOR 4:

Life went on that way -- boring... boring... boring – for a long time.

NARRATOR 5:

Then, one day, the animals looked up at the sky.

NARRATOR 1:

What an un-real sight! A red dragon was flying toward Earth, screaming at the top of his lungs.

DRAGON:

The world is coming to an end! The world is coming to an end!

NARRATOR 2:

The lion sighed.

LION:

Oh, boo-hoo. We've heard that story before. The chicken once squawked the same thing -- and nothing happened.

DRAGON:

This is the real deal. Honest!

NARRATOR 3:

Everyone asked dragon where he had heard the story.

DRAGON:

Do I have to tell you *everything!* Well, if you must know -- a wizard told me.

ALL ANIMALS:

Ooooooh. Then it must be true. What should we do?

NARRATOR 4:

The dragon, who really wanted friends, tried to be helpful.

DRAGON:

You could climb on my back. I'll take you to another world.

NARRATOR 5:

By now, the animals were getting scared. They all rushed to climb on the dragon's back.

NARRATOR 1:

Except the lion, who spoke with a roar.

LION:

I am king of the jungle and that makes me "top dog" around here! I'm not scared of anything. I'm staying right where I am.

NARRATOR 2:

Tiger got down from the dragon's back. He called...

TIGER:

Tigers are as brave as lions. I'm staying too.

NARRATOR 3:

Finally, though, all the other animals were ready to go. The dragon jumped into the air and flapped his wings as hard as he could.

NARRATOR 4:

THUD! The dragon came back down again. He tried to take off again and again, but he had a very heavy load.

DRAGON:

Geeeee! This is awfully hard.

NARRATOR 5:

Eventually, however, the dragon lifted into the air. He flew higher and higher.

NARRATOR 1:

But the animals on his back weren't happy. They were all squished together. Soon, they started pushing and shoving.

SNAKE:

Hey! Get your tail out of my eye!

GIRAFFE:

Look out! Your paw just missed my nose!

ELEPHANT:

Move over. I don't have any room!

NARRATOR 2:

The little mouse squeaked...

MOUSE:

Oooooooh, were going awfully high!

NARRATOR 3:

The Red Dragon was getting annoyed.

DRAGON:

Ya' know, I'm trying to do you guys a favor! Do ya' think you could give me a break and settle down so I can fly?

NARRATOR 4:

Not one of the animals paid a bit of attention to him. He soon became so tired he could hardly flap his wings.

NARRATOR 5:

Next thing anyone knew, Red Dragon was falling from the sky.

NARRATOR 1:

The animals all started to freak out as they slid off the dragon's back and fell to the ground.

ALL ANIMALS:

Oh, no! Help us! Someone help us! We're going to die!

NARRATOR 2:

WHACK!!! The dragon hit the ground hard. Nobody died, but they all landed with a loud crash.

NARRATOR 3:

The snake's legs fell off, and he slithered away into the grass.

NARRATOR 4:

Rhinoceros got a large bump on his nose. It turned into a horn.

NARRATOR 5:

Hippopotamus rolled and rolled down the hill. He got bigger and bigger, until he plopped into a big river. He was so embarrassed about his size that he wouldn't come out.

NARRATOR 1:

Elephant fell with his mouth open. All his shiny teeth broke, except for two that got stuck in the mud. As Elephant tried to pull them out, they stretched and stretched into two long tusks.

NARRATOR 2:

Poor giraffe! When she fell, she got her head stuck in a tall tree. Her neck stretched and stretched until her body hit the ground.

NARRATOR 3:

All of the animals changed in some way – except Lion and Tiger.

LION AND TIGER (together):

Ha, ha, ha! How silly they all look! They should have stayed here with us.

NARRATOR 4:

That made crocodile mad.

CROCODILE:

What's so funny? How would you like it if a gorilla landed on *your* face?

NARRATOR 5:

Worst of all was the rhinoceros! He was furious about losing his handsome face. That is why, even today, you must be very careful around rhinos.

RED DRAGON:

I don't think these animals are very good friends to have after all. I will go look for friends in another world.

