

# **TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD VISAYAN FOLK-TALE**

Превод от испански: Б. Л. Максфийлд, У. Х. Милингтън, 1906

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One day Truth started for the city to find some work. On his way he overtook Falsehood, who was going to the city for the same purpose. Falsehood asked permission to ride on the horse with Truth, and his request was granted.

On the way they questioned each other as to the sort of work they wanted. Truth stated that he intended to be a secretary, so that he might always be clean and white. Falsehood declared that he would be a cook, because then he would always have plenty of fine things to eat.

As they were riding along, they met a man carrying a corpse to the cemetery. He had no one to help him, and Truth, in his great pity for the man, jumped off his horse and helped him. After the corpse was buried, Truth asked: "Did you pray for the repose of the soul of the dead?" "No," was the reply, "I do not know how to pray, and I have no money to pay the priest for candles." Then Truth gave the man all the money he had, that he might have prayers said for the dead man, and went back to his companion.

When dinner time came, Falsehood was very angry at finding out that Truth had given all his money away, but finally proposed that they should go to the river and catch some fish for dinner. When they arrived at the river, they found some fish which had been caught in a shallow pool near the bank, and caught all they wanted. But Truth was very sorry for the fish, and threw his half back into the river. Falsehood murmured at him and said: "It would have been better for you to give them to me. If I had known that you would throw them into the river, I would not have given you any of them."

Then they rode on. As they were going through a thick wood in the heart of the mountain they heard a noise as of crying, far away. Truth went forward to find what it was, but Falsehood, trembling with fear, hid himself close behind his comrade. At last they saw seven little eagles in a nest high in a tree. They were crying with hunger, and their mother was nowhere to be seen. Truth was sorry for them, and killed his horse, giving some of the meat to the young eagles, and spreading the rest on the ground beneath the tree, so that the mother-bird might find it.

Falsehood hated his comrade for having killed the horse, because now they were obliged to travel on foot. They went down the mountain, and entering the city, presented themselves before the king, desiring to be taken into his service, the one as secretary and the other as cook. The king granted both requests.

When Falsehood saw that his former companion sat at the table with the king and was always clean and dressed in good clothes, while he himself was dirty and had to eat in the kitchen, he was very angry and determined to do something to ruin the one whom now he hated so bitterly.

One day the king and queen went to sail on the sea. As they were far from land, the queen dropped her ring overboard. When Falsehood heard of the accident, he went to the king and said: "My Lord, the King, my friend—your secretary—has told me that he was endowed with magic powers and is able to find the queen's ring. He says if he does not find it he is willing for you to hang him."

The king immediately sent for Truth, and said to him: "Find the queen's ring without delay, or I will have you hanged early to-morrow morning."

Truth went down to the shore, but seeing how impossible it would be to find the ring, began to weep. A fish came near, and floating on top of the water, asked, "Why are you weeping?"

"I weep," Truth replied, "because the king will hang me early to-morrow morning unless I find the queen's ring, which has fallen into the sea."

The fish swam out and got the ring and gave it to Truth. Then he said:

"I am one of the fishes which you found on the bank of the river and threw back into the water. As you helped me when I was in trouble, I am very glad that I have been able to help you now."

On another day, Falsehood went to the king and said: "My Lord King, do you remember what I told you the other day?"

"Yes," replied the king, "and I believe you told me the truth, as the ring has been found."

"Well," replied Falsehood, "my friend told me last night that he is a great magician and that he is willing for you to hang him in the sight of all the people, since it will not hurt him."

The king sent for Truth and told him: "I know what you have said to your friend. To-morrow I will have you hanged in the sight of all the people, and we will see whether you are the great magician you claim to be."

That night Truth could not sleep. About midnight, as he was in great distress, a spirit suddenly appeared to him and asked what was the cause of his grief. Truth related his trouble, and the spirit said: "Do not weep. To-

morrow morning I will take your form and wear your clothes, and let them hang me.”

The next morning, just at dawn, the spirit put on Truth’s clothes and went out to be hanged. Many people came to see the hanging, and after it was over, returned to their homes. What was the astonishment of the king and those with him when, upon their return to the palace, they found Truth there before them, alive and well!

That night the spirit appeared to Truth and said: “I am the spirit of the dead man for whom you gave your money that prayers might be said for the repose of his soul.” Then it disappeared.

*Thus we see that those who help others when in trouble shall themselves be aided when they are in difficulty.*

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