

A COLLECTION OF
STORIES
FROM
WEST AFRICA

Compiled and Illustrated by
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**CHAMELEON, HAWK
AND MAN'S DOUBLE TONGUE**



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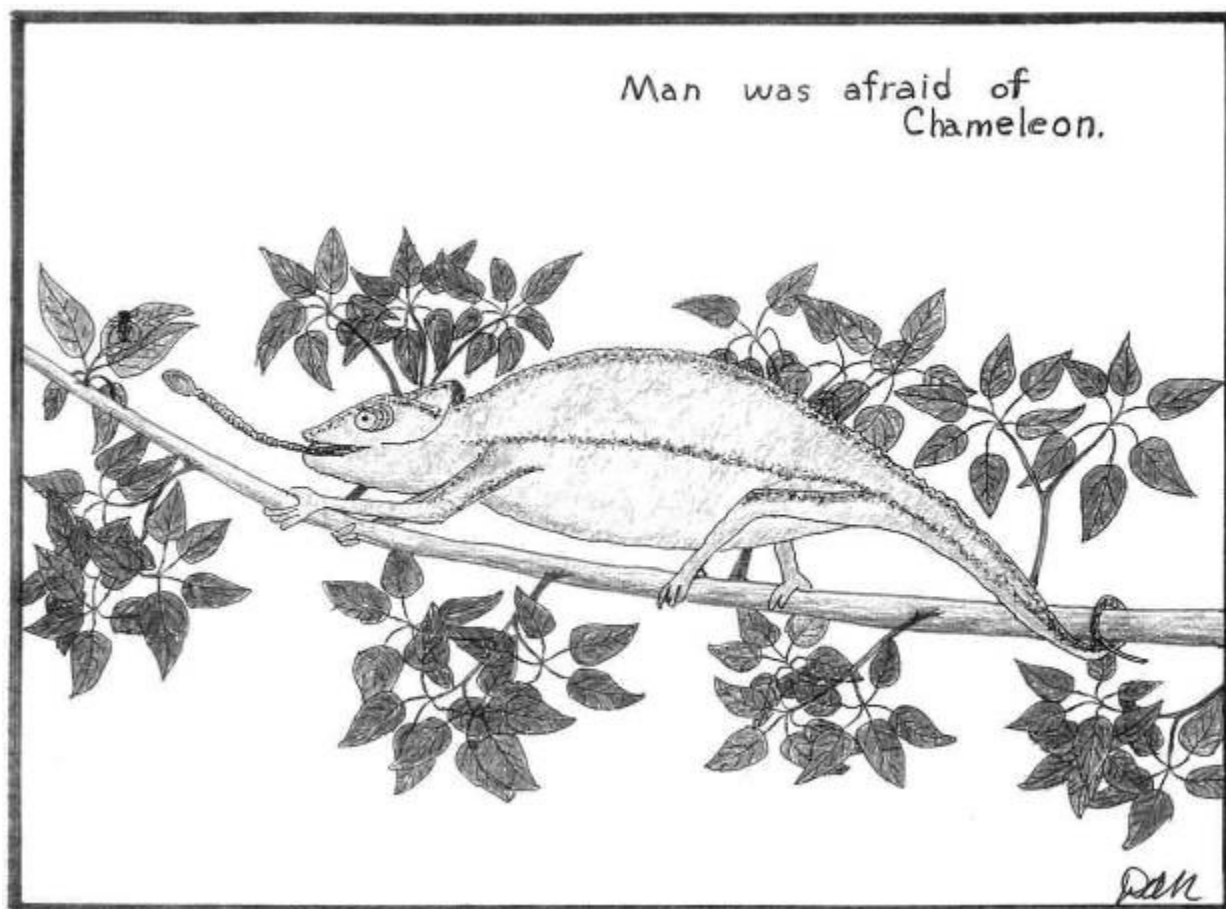
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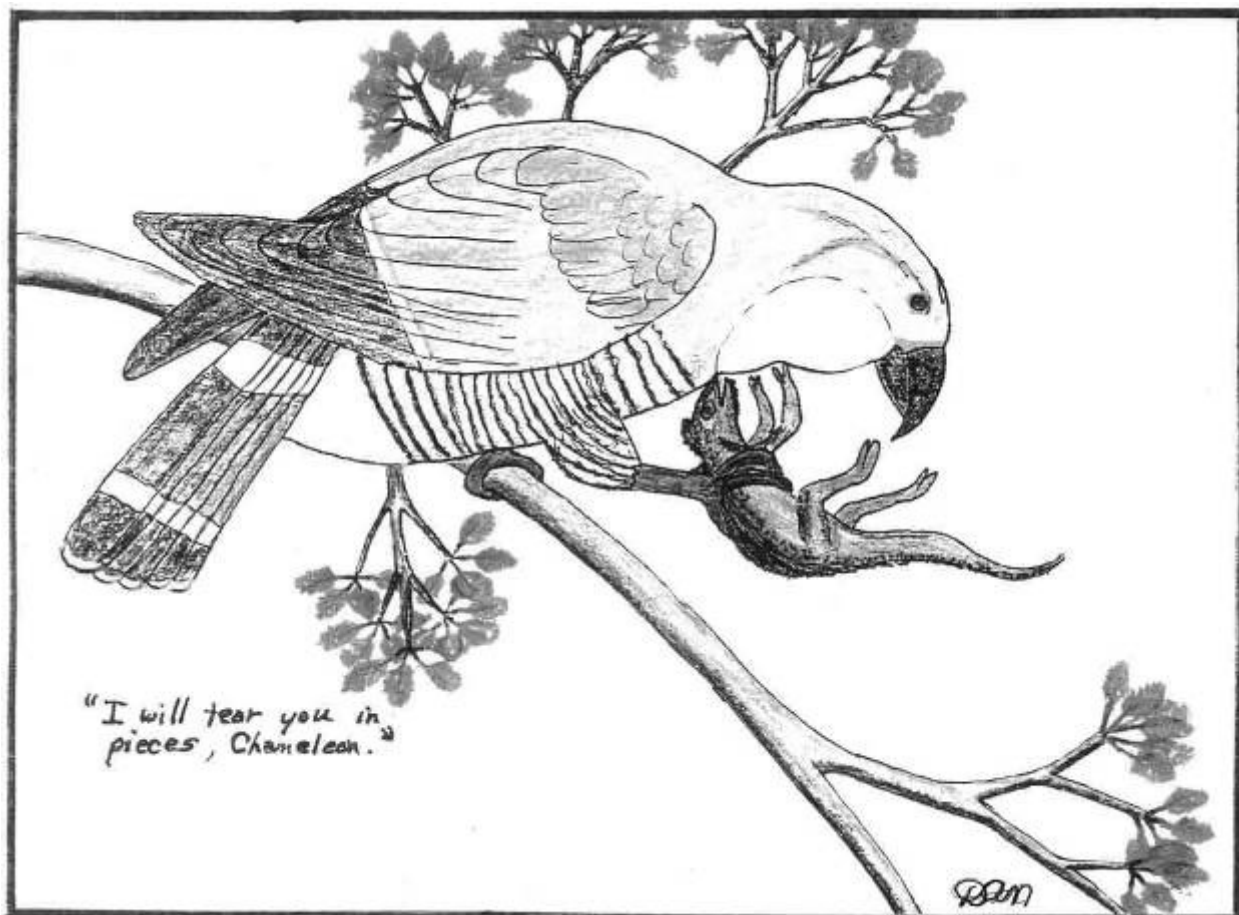


CHAMELEON, HAWK AND MAN'S DOUBLE TONGUE

Note to the reader. Words and phrases typical of West Africa are retained and indicated by italics.

Man was very much afraid of Chameleon, for he would suddenly jump down from a tree and cling to man's back and could not be pulled off until the thunder and lightning frightened him into letting go. Man thought that he suffered much from Chameleon.

One day Hawk spied Chameleon on a branch of a tree. Hawk swooped down and grabbed Chameleon with



his strong sharp claws and carried him high up into the air to the top of a very tall tree. The people were very glad.

"Oh, great Hawk," the people exclaimed. "We thank you so much, oh great Hawk, for saving us from Chameleon. He often grabs us in his sharp claws and we cannot get him off until there is thunder and lightning. We thank you great Hawk."

Chameleon began to beg Hawk, "Hawk, please let me go. I am not a good dinner for you."

Hawk replied, "Oh, no, Chameleon, you see how the people praise me for catching you."

Chameleon begged again, "But, Hawk, I am just skin and bone. There is no good meat on me."

The people kept on praising Hawk. "Great beautiful Hawk, we praise you for your goodness in catching terrible Chameleon."

"See how the people praise me? They will praise me still more when I tear you in pieces."

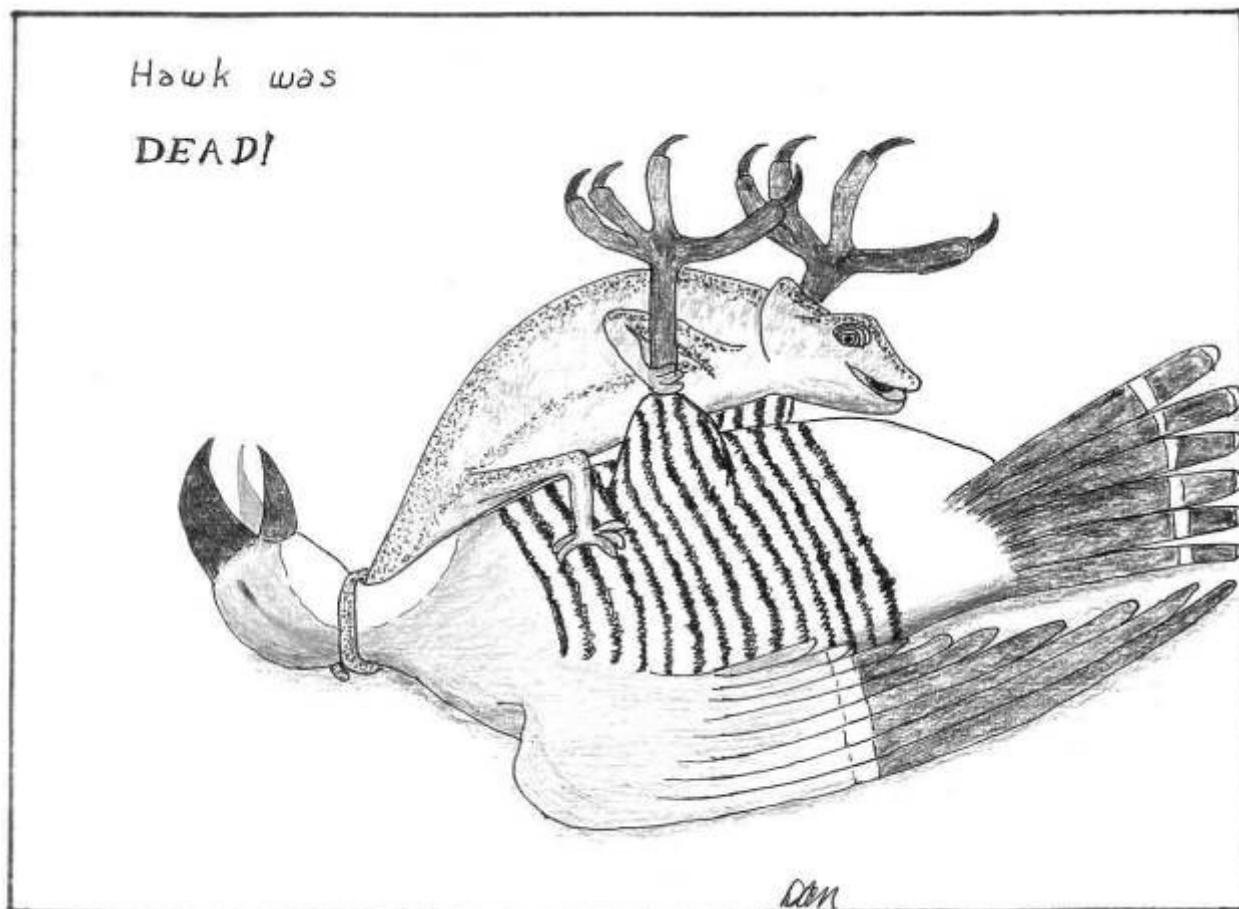
"No, Hawk, the people have double tongue. They will soon curse you."

"Not when I have delivered them from so great an enemy as you, Chameleon."

"You will soon see that man cannot be trusted," said Chameleon.

Hawk bent his head down to tear Chameleon in pieces with his terrible beak, but Chameleon flipped his long tail up and around catching Hawk's neck. Before Hawk could tear Chameleon in pieces, he was being choked by Chameleon's tail which he made tighter and tighter around Hawk's neck. Hawk's claws began to loosen. Chameleon was free and quickly he grabbed Hawk's wings pulling them back farther and farther while his tail tightened still more about Hawk's neck.

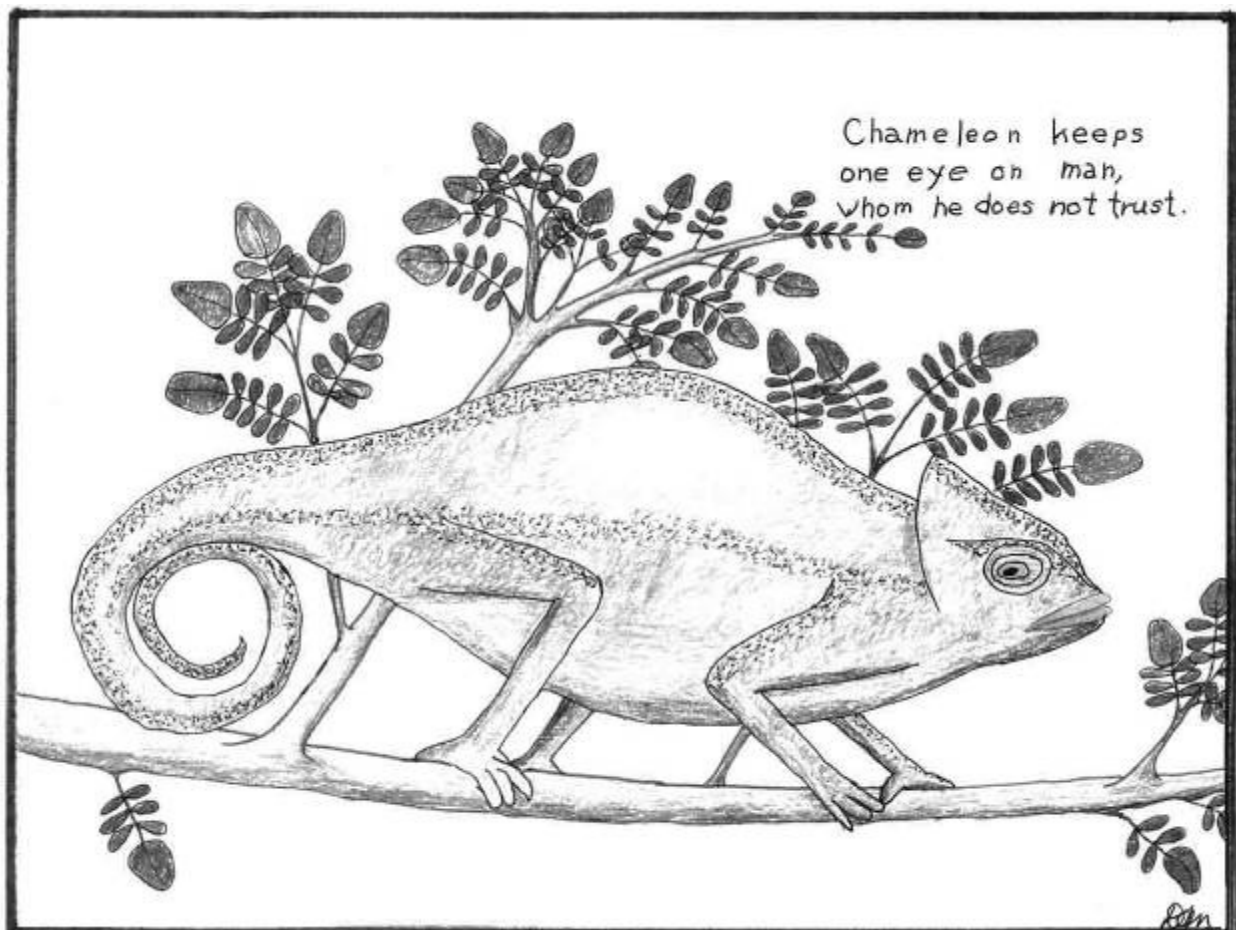
Man watched in surprise as Hawk and Chameleon fell from the branch in the tall tree to the ground where



the battle still raged. But soon Hawk was dead and Chameleon slowly walked over to a tree and slowly he climbed to a branch on the tree.

"Oh, great Chameleon," the people cried, "Thank you so much for delivering us from terrible Hawk, who was always stealing our chickens. Oh, wonderful Chameleon! Thank you, Chameleon!"

Chameleon slowly closed one eye, then turned it down to look at Hawk. He only said one word to Hawk.



"Fool!" But Chameleon kept his other eye always on man for he knew that man could not be trusted.

What does God say? "The heart is fooled more than anything else, and is very sinful. Who can know how bad it is?" (Jeremiah 17:9). cf James 1:8

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