

A COLLECTION OF
STORIES
FROM
WEST AFRICA

Compiled and Illustrated by
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**KONARABI, CROCODILE
AND HIPPOPOTAMUS**



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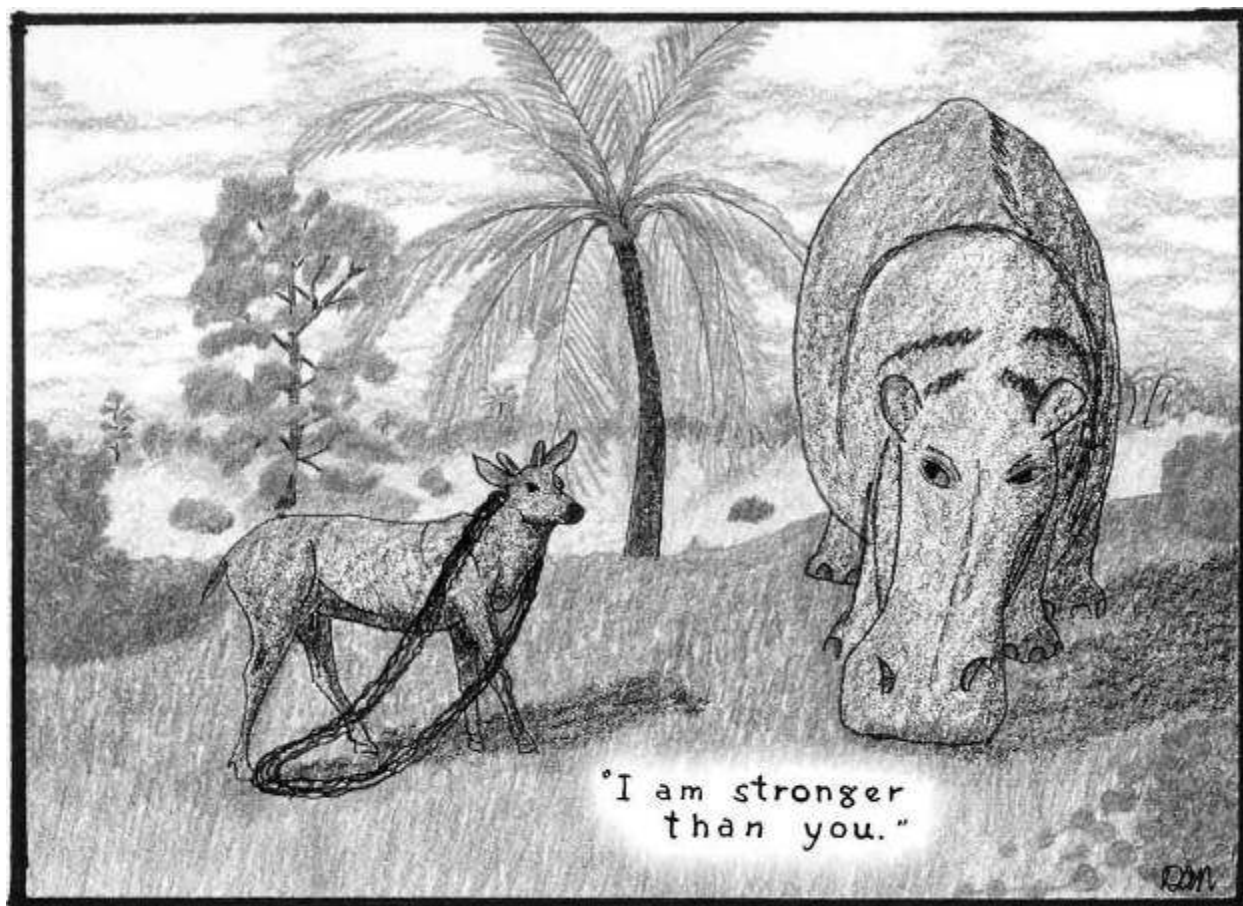


KONARABI, CROCODILE AND HIPPOPOTAMUS

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

The devil is a sly one. He does much of his work by getting God's people to fight and *palaver*. Because of our pride, we often make it easy for him. If friends fight, then the devil's work is done for him. Here is a story to show how he works.

Now Konarabi is a very small animal, something like an antelope, but less than two feet tall. He is not very strong but he is very clever and often plays tricks on the other animals.



One morning Konarabi was out in the bush. He was pulling down strong vines from the trees and cutting them off with his strong teeth.

Often he would laugh to himself, "Tee hee hee. Tee hee hee." Sometimes he would laugh out loud, "Ha ha ha ha." Then he would work hard twisting the pieces of vine into a very strong rope. The rope became longer and longer. Then he rolled it into a big roll. He could just manage to half carry, half drag it along.

Konarabi then went to Hippo, who was up on the hillside above the river where some luscious vines grew that Hippo liked.

He called to Hippo, "Hey, Hippo, you say that you are strong, but I am stronger than you are."

"Haw! Haw! Haw!" laughed Hippo. "Weak little thing that you are! Haw! Haw! Haw! How can you say that you are stronger than I am? Look how big I am. See my strong muscles. Haw! Haw! Haw!"

"Oh, but I am stronger than you are, and I can prove it."

"Haw! Haw! Haw!" laughed Hippo.

"I will put this rope around your neck and pull you into the river!" boasted Konarabi.

"Haw! Haw! Haw!" laughed Hippo. Go ahead and put your little rope around my neck and I'll drag you right over the hill. Haw! Haw! Haw!"

So Konarabi tied one end of his rope around Hippo's neck.

"Now, I will go down to the river," he said. "When you feel me pull, put all your strength to it, or I'll pull you right down into the river."

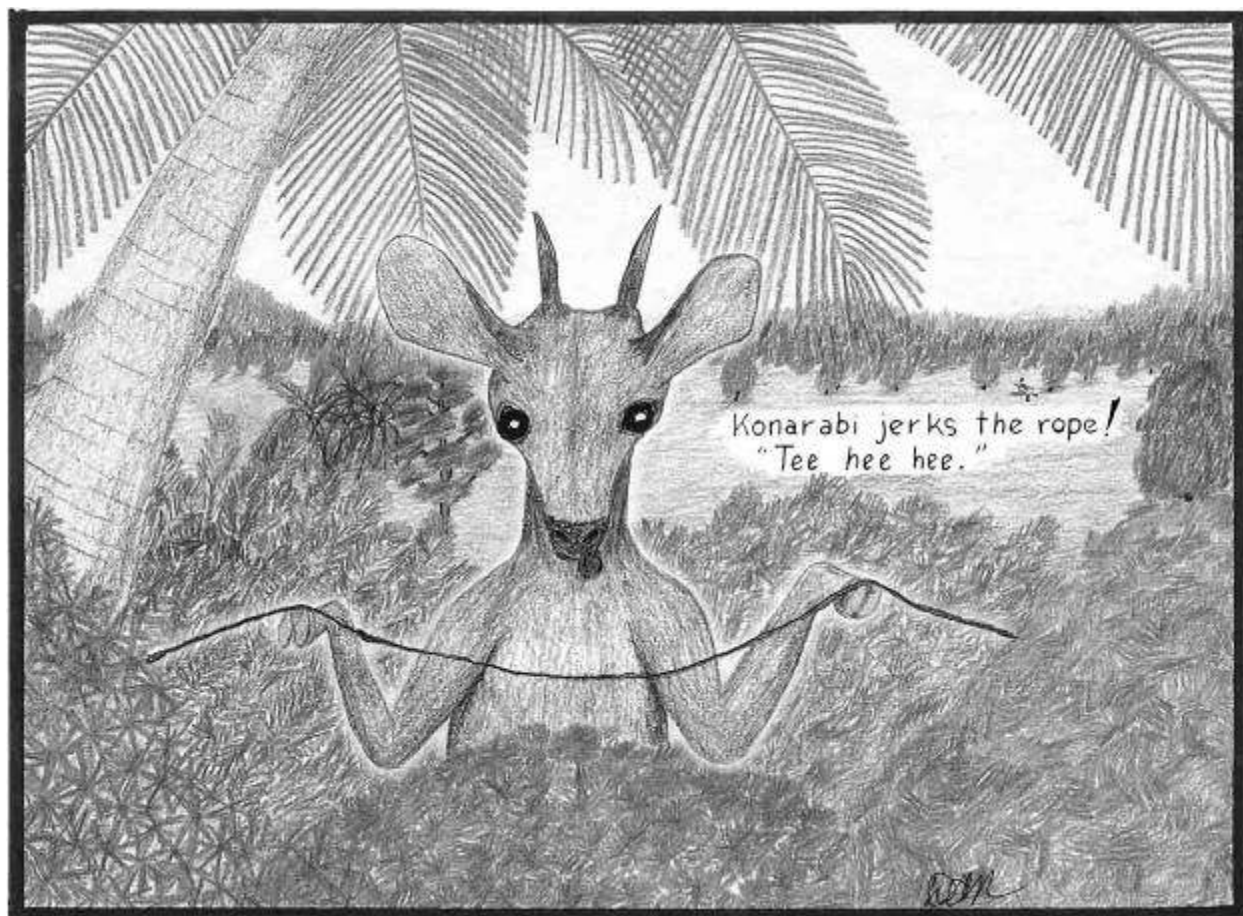
"Haw! Haw! Haw!" laughed Hippo. "I can pull you over the hill with one foot. Haw! Haw! Haw!"

Konarabi went down through the bush to the river. All the way down he kept chuckling to himself.

Crocodile was in the river. Only his eyes and nose showed above the water. "Hey, weak one," called Konarabi. "I, the strong one, have come to test your strength."



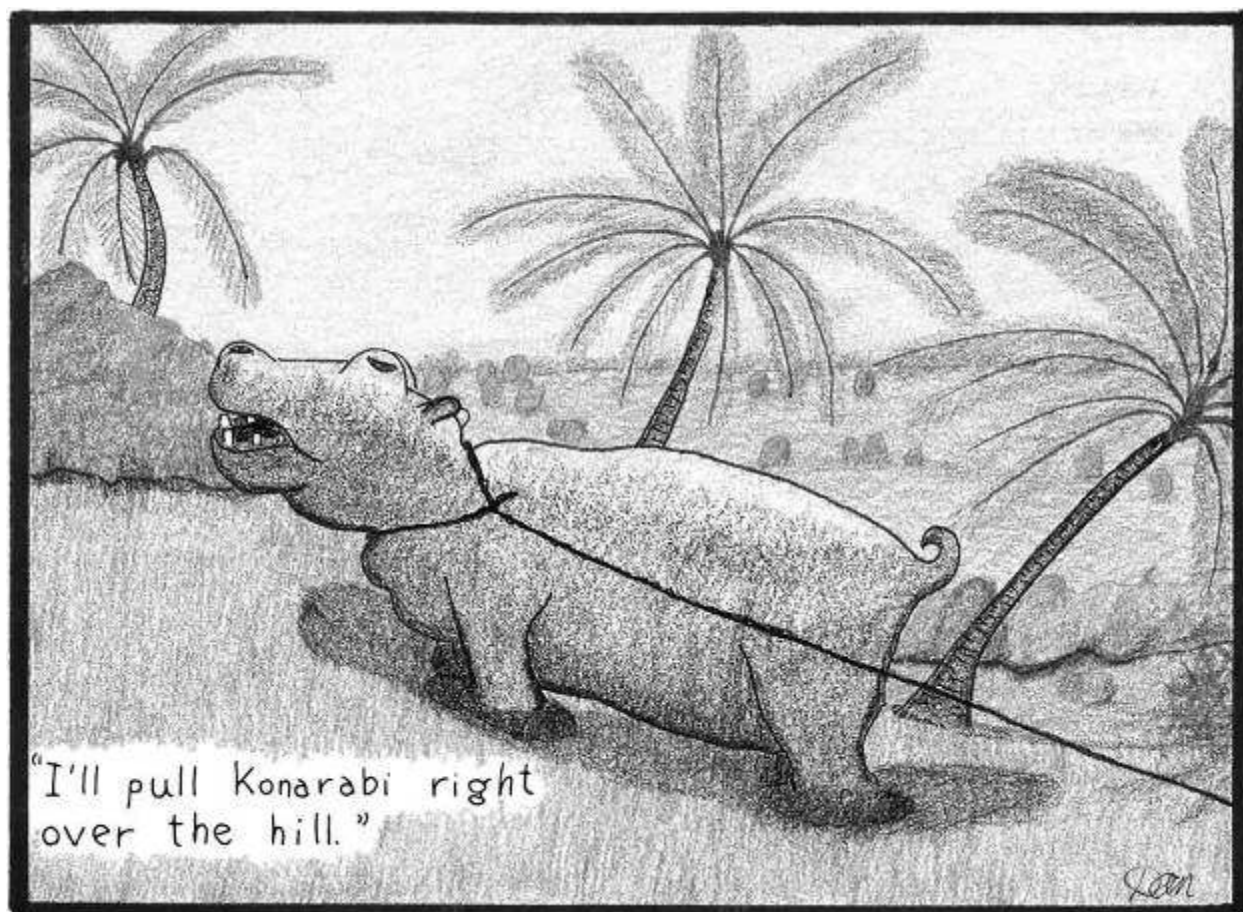
"Who dares to call me weak?" growled Crocodile.
"Who are you to call me weak, you poor little thing?"
"Let me put this rope around your neck, and I'll show you my power," declared Konarabi.
"I'll pull you right into the river," roared Crocodile.
"I'll pull you right over the hill," shouted Konarabi.
Crocodile allowed Konarabi to tie the end of the rope tightly around his neck.
"Get ready to get wet," said Crocodile. "I hope you do not drown before I pull you out on the other side of the river."



"I am going up the hill," said Konarabi. "When you feel me pull, then show me your power, or I will pull you right over the hill. Then you will know MY power."

As Konarabi went into the bush, he grinned wickedly to himself. First he jerked on the rope going to Hippo, then he jerked on the rope going to Crocodile. Hippo began to walk up the hill. Crocodile moved farther out into the river.

Suddenly the rope jerked tight - TWAAAANG!!!

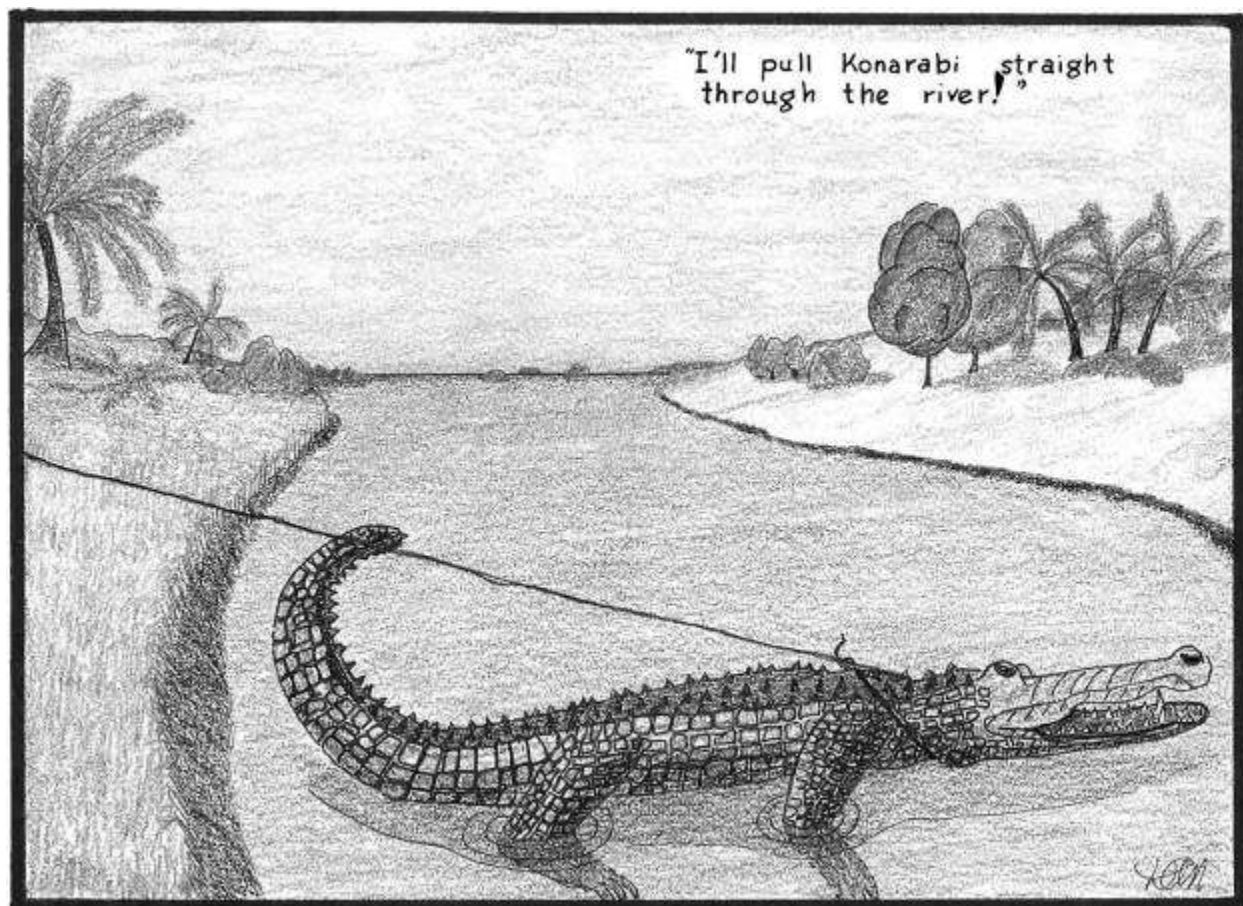


Hippo stopped. He pulled hard. "Hawrp! Hawrp! Hawrp!!!"

Crocodile pulled hard. His feet churned up the mud and rocks in the river.

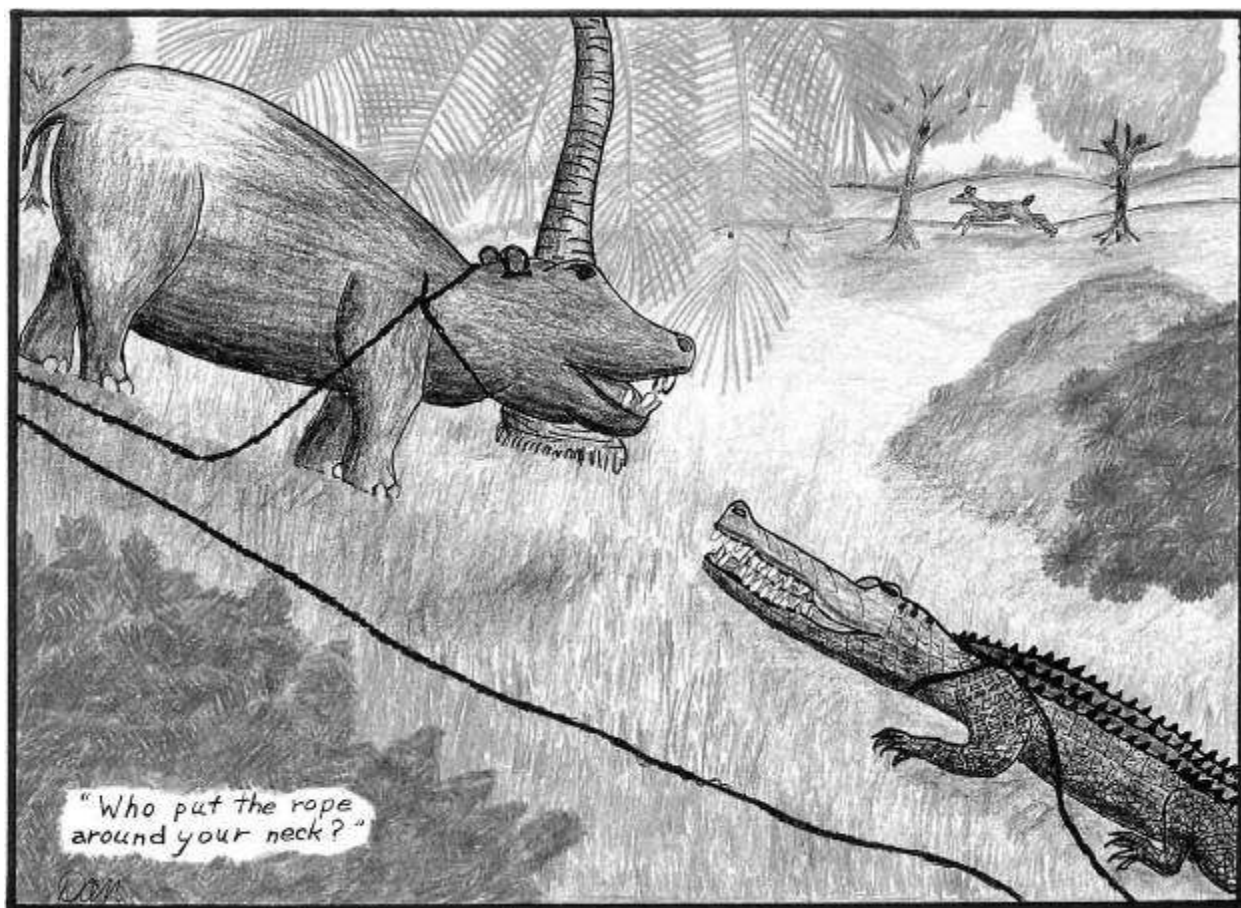
Konarabi squeaked, "Tee Hee Hee Hee," and then he scampered off into the bush. He went to a far far place and stayed there a long long time, all the while chuckling to himself over his cleverness.

Hippo pulled harder still, "Hawrp! Hawrp! Hawrp!" His great feet dug huge furrows in the ground. "Ayah!" he panted, "Konarabi *got some kind of power. Ayah!*"



Crocodile's tail thrashed back and forth and then curled up on his back as he used all his power to pull Konarabi into the river. "Ayah! Konarabi has power *for true-o*. Ayah!" Crocodile grunted as his feet turned over huge rocks in the river.

They pulled and they pulled. Hippo's neck was cut and bleeding. Some of Crocodile's scales were almost pulled off and he too was bleeding. Both were too ashamed to admit that such a small animal had such power.



Finally Hippo stopped pulling. "I must go to Konarabi and admit that he has power." Hippo came down the hill dragging the rope.

Crocodile stopped pulling too. "I will go to Konarabi and tell him that he is the strong one." So Crocodile went up the hill with the rope still around his neck.

When Hippo and Crocodile met, they just stood and stared at each other for a long time. Then they both said at the same time, "Who put the rope around your neck?"

Revelation 12:9 and 20:2,3,8 speak of the Devil as "that old snake" and "Satan" who tricks and fools the people of the world.

James 4:1-3 says, "What starts wars and fights among you? Is it not because you want many things and are fighting to have them? . . . You want something you cannot get, so you fight for it. ... You want these things only to please yourselves."

Are you letting 'that old snake' put a rope around your neck?

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