

# The lion and the three bulls

- A folktale from Somalia



Once upon a time, there was a big beautiful forest in Somalia. In the middle of the forest, surrounded by tall trees, was a green, open pasture with a river flowing through it. There lived three bulls; a white bull, a black bull and a brown bull. They were best friends and lived happily together.





One day, a lion paid them a visit. The three bulls were *very* frightened, so they came close together and got ready to fight the lion. Even though the lion was strong, the three bulls *together* were stronger than him!





‘Hey, relax, I won’t hurt you,’ said the lion and sat down.

‘You see, I live on the other side of the forest, where it’s so lonely and deserted. Can’t we live here together, be friends and watch out for each other?’ The bulls thought it was a good idea to have a lion as their friend, as a lion could protect them against the dangerous animals out there.





One afternoon, the white bull was out on the pasture while the other two were having a nap. The lion went to the two resting bulls and whispered cautiously in their ears: 'You know what? The white bull is so bright that his body glows in the dark of the night. The dangerous animals will easily notice him, come here and eat all of us. I think we should chase the white bull away from us.'







When the two bulls heard this, they became very afraid.  
'The lion has a point,' they said and chased away the  
white bull.





It did not take the lion very long to find the white bull alone by the river, and the lion ate him up.





After a while, the lion went to the brown bull and whispered in his ear: 'You know what? The black bull is so dark that he is easily spotted in daylight. All the dangerous animals out there will notice him. They will come here and eat all of us. Let us chase him away.'





When the brown bull heard this, he was very frightened.  
He agreed to do as the lion said.





It did not take the lion very long to find the black bull all by himself. He pounced at the black bull and ate him. Then the lion went back as if nothing had happened.





Now, the brown bull was left alone with the lion.  
And it was his turn to be eaten up.





The lion hunted down the brown bull who fought back as best as he could. But without his friends, he was not strong enough to fight the lion. The lion dug his sharp claws and teeth in the brown bull's flesh and ate him up.





Taking his last breath, the brown bull said:

*‘It’s not today that I am dying; I died the day I chased away my friend.’*









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