

A Modern Fable – The Boy Who Cried Wolf
By Chris Wong

A long time ago, a lonely little shepherd boy was forced to take care of the village's sheep. He sat on a rock up on the hill, watching the sheep huddle together and the village's children playing with each other. Bored out of his mind, he decided to play pranks on the villagers as entertainment to cure his boredom.

He stood up, grinning and walking to the edge of the hill. Thinking of the villagers' reactions, he chuckled before clearing his throat to get ready. He inhaled deeply and loudly yelled "Wolf!" repeatedly until he heard the villagers' loud chattering and their weapons' clanking noises.

When the villagers finally rushed up the huge hill, they were confused about where the "wolf" went. The shepherd boy giggled slightly at their discussion, waiting for them to notice that it was a prank. After around ten minutes, the villagers saw the shepherd boy's face, which looked like a fresh red tomato from keeping his laughter in. They realized that the wolf was not real and that the boy was bluffing.

The shepherd waited for all the villagers to leave before laughing manically, rolling on the floor. He loved how much joy the prank gave him so he made the decision to trick the villagers again. The mischievous shepherd boy repeated the process two more times. Each time the villagers were even more irritated and enraged and hated him more every time they found out it was a lie and stared at his smug and sly smile.

Until one day, a real, fierce and frightening wolf leapt out of the bushes, preparing to eat all the quivering sheep surrounding the shepherd boy whose eyes widened as he panicked, trying to figure out what to do. He kept yelling "Wolf!" but nobody came. The shepherd boy thought nobody heard him so he screamed louder.

"WOLF!!" Each shout was more desperate and louder than the last. He and the village's sheep slowly backed away together as the wolf came closer by a few steps. They continued this cat and mouse chase until the sheep stopped suddenly. The shepherd boy looked behind him at them in frustration. "Hey! What gives?" He exclaimed. He stared at the sheep for some time before looking behind them. It turned out that they were blocked off by mountain walls. The shepherd boy looked at the wolf which was rapidly approaching, looking at him hungrily. He breathed heavily while frantically looking for an escape but they were completely blocked off.

Fortunately, while the shepherd boy and the sheep were being chased, a villager heard his pleas and reluctantly climbed up the hill to shut him up. The villager witnessed the scene and quickly picked up a weapon dropped earlier and dashed to rescue the boy. The shepherd boy closed his eyes and clenched his teeth as he awaited his death. After a long while, he opened one eye hesitantly. Seeing the villager in front of him, tears immediately rushed out of his eyes as he struggled to find proper words. He repeatedly apologized to the villager while bowing rapidly, trying to show gratitude and hoping that the villager

would forgive him after the pranks that he pulled on the village.

“I’m sorry! Please forgive me, I was bored and didn’t have anybody to play with so I tricked you all to entertain myself!” he cried out as tears continued to fall from his eyes.

The villager looked at him warmly as he patted the shepherd boy on his head. “It’s okay, just don’t do it again,” the villager reassured him softly. “I won’t! I promise!” the shepherd boy cried. The villager took the shepherd boy back to the village safely with all the sheep. The other villagers looked at the crying shepherd boy in confusion with a hint of hatred.

The villager explained what had happened and why the childish shepherd boy had pranked them. They all stared at him with concern and comforted him. The village decided to assign another child to care for the sheep with him and the shepherd boy wasn’t lonely and never lied again.