

## **The Man And The Doukana Tree**

by Sir George Webbe Dasent  
from *Ananzi Tales*

There was once a man and his wife, who were very poor, and they had a great many children. The man was very lazy, and would do nothing to help his family. The poor mother did all she could. In the wood close by grew a Doukana Tree, which was full of fruit. Every day the man went and ate some of the fruit, but never took any home, so he ate and he ate, until there were only two Doukanas left on the Tree. One he ate, and left the other. Next day, when he went for that one, he was obliged to climb up the tree to reach it; but when he got up, the Doukana fell down; when he got down the Doukana jumped up; and so it went on until he was quite tired.

Then he asked all the animals that passed by to help him, but they all made some excuse. They all had something to do. The horse had his work to do, or he would have no grass to eat. The donkey brayed. Last came a dog, and the man begged him hard to help him; so the dog said he would. Then the man climbed up the tree, and the Doukana jumped to the ground again, when the dog picked it up and ran off with it. The man was very vexed, and ran after the dog, but it ran all the faster, so that the man could not overtake him. The dog, seeing the man after him, ran to the sea shore, and scratching a hole in the ground, buried himself all but his nose, which he left sticking out.

Soon after the man came up, and seeing the nose, cried out that he had 'never seen ground have nose'; and catching hold of it he tugged till he pulled out the dog, when he squeezed him with all his might to make him give up the Doukana. And that's why dogs are so small in their bodies to this very day.