In the early times some were clever and some were foolish.
The Cat was one of the clever ones. The Mice were mostly foolish.
But one little mouse was not so foolish.
Her name was Mabella, and her father had taught her cleverness.
Her father always told her, “Mabella, when you are out and about,
keep your ears open and LISTEN.

Mabella, when you are out and about,
keep your eyes open and LOOK AROUND YOU.

Mabella, when you are speaking... Pay attention to what you are SAYING.

Mabella, if you have to move... Move FAST.”

One day the Cat came to the mouse village and said,
“Dear mice, I come to offer a special invitation.
It has been decided that the MICE may join the secret CAT SOCIETY.

The mice were VERY excited to hear this.
“We get to join the SECRET Cat Society!”

“And mice, my dears, when you have been initiated into the secret
Cat Society, you will know ALL THE SECRETS OF THE CAT!”

“Come to my house on Monday morning and we will hold the initiation ceremony.”

Monday morning bright and early, all the little mice were there.
“Oh my, you have ALL arrived! How delicious...I mean, How delightful.”

“You must all learn the secret Cat Society song.
The song goes like this...and the Cat drilled them all in singing

“When we are marching,
we NEVER look back.
The Cat is at the end...
Fo Feng!
FO FENG!

The little mice all shouted loudly on the last “FO FENG!”
“Now line up in a straight line.”
Mabella got to march in front, because she was the smallest of them all.

And at the end...came the CAT.
Remember...called the Cat. “Never ever look back!”

Off they started. Mabella was leading the way so proudly.

“When we are marching,
we never look back.
The Cat is at the end....fo feng!
FO FENG!”

Every time the mice would shout ‘FO FENG!’ the Cat would “Fo Feng” the last mouse in line.
Mabella was marching happily on.
“When we are marching
we never look back.
The Cat is at the end...fo feng!
FO FENG!”

Suddenly Mabella remembered something.
Her father had always told her,
“Mabella, when you are out and about
Keep your ears open and LISTEN!”

She was not listening at all. Mabella stopped singing for a moment and listened.
She did not hear a long line of mice singing behind her. She heard a FEW mice singing.
She heard the Cat’s voice getting closer each time they sang “FO FENG!”

Then Mabella remembered something else her father always said,
“Mabella, when you are out and about
Keep your eyes open and LOOK AROUND YOU.”

Mabella turned her head just a little to the left. Just a little to the right.
She did NOT see a long line of mice.
She saw a SHORT line of mice and the CAT VERY CLOSE!

Then she remember that her father had said.
“Mabella, when you are speaking. Pay attention to what you are SAYING!”

She listened to her song.
“When we are marching
We NEVER look back.
The Cat is at the end...fo feng!
FO FENG!”

“When the Cat is free....? What does THAT mean? No one is watching the CAT!”

Mabella turned right around. There was the Cat!
She had just FO FENGED the mouse behind Mabella!

Now Mabella remembered the LAST thing her father had told her.
“Mabella, if you have to move. MOVE FAST!”
Mabella DOVE into the bushes...so fast...so fast...
that the Cat pounced on nothing but thin air.

Mabella lived to tell this story.
She told it to her children. And her children’s children.
Limba parents are STILL telling this story to their children.

It is good to remember the things Mabella’s father taught her.

“When you are out and about, Keep your ears open and LISTEN.
When you are out and about, Keep your eyes open and LOOK AROUND YOU!
When you are talking...pay attention to what you are SAYING.
And ...If you have to move. Move FAST!”

Limba grandparents say, “If a person is clever...
it is because someone has taught them their cleverness.”