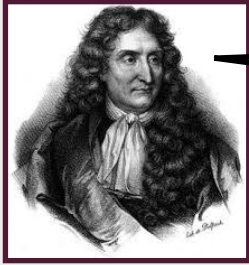


Jean de la Fontaine



Bonjour! I wrote fables like Aesop... but as poetry and in French. I also wrote my fables about 1000 years after Aesop did. Enjoy my poem *The Cicada and the Ant* below...

The Cicada having sung his song
All summer long
Found himself without a crumb
When the North Wind did come,
Not one small morsel could he find
Of fly or worm of any kind.
Starving, he went to see his ant neighbour
To tell him he was at death's door
And begging him for a grain or two
So he might survive all winter through
Until the coming of the spring.
'By August I'll pay back everything,'
Said he, 'interest and principal, both,
Upon my insect oath.'
Now the Ant may have a fault or two
But lend is what he will not do.
'What did you do last summer?'
Asked he of this would-be borrower.
'Why, night and day, you surely won't mind,
I sang to comers of all kind.'
'You sang? I'm glad you had that chance:
Well now you can run off and dance!'