

The Fox and the Crow

There once was a big black crow sitting high up in the trees. In his beak he had a nice, round cheese. Along came a fox, as clever as they come, "Mmmm," he thought. "I'd like to have a bite of that cheese. It will be easy to get some...."

"Oh crow," called fox, "if your voice is half as beautiful as those fine feathers I see, it would please my ears to hear you sing a little melody!" Well, the crow had never heard anyone say such a complimentary thing. So, he opened up his beak and he began to squawk and sing.

Down fell the cheese into the waiting mouth of the fox below. "Oh no!" squawked the crow, "you've stolen my dinner!" "Not at all!" said the fox, licking his lips. "It was a fair enough trade! Vain crow, with your head up in the trees! You got the compliments, and I got the cheese!"

The Girl and Her Bucket

A young girl was going to a market with a bucket of milk on her head. "With the gold that I get from the sale of this milk, I'll buy a red hen," she said. "The hen will lay eggs, they'll hatch and then I'll have many chicks to raise. I'll feed them well and when they're grown, they will each lay eggs, and those eggs will hatch and I will have more hens, who'll lay more eggs that will hatch into chicks...

Before long I'll be rich and I'll wear fine clothes with emeralds and rubies from my collar to my toes. And, one day perhaps I shall visit the Queen. I shall bring her rare gifts from China. I'll enter the court with my arms full of treasure. Bowing low I shall say, "FOR YOUR MAJESTY'S PLEASURE!"

And, forgetting about what she was doing, the girl bowed low. With that move of her arm, she knocked off the bucket and spilled her fantasy load. "Oh dear," she cried, "my dreams are splattered in puddles of milk on the road...."

The Man, the Boy, and the Donkey

A man and his son were going with their donkey to market. As they were walking along by his side a countryman passed them and said, "You fools, what is a donkey for but to ride upon?" So the man put the boy on the donkey, and they went on their way.

But soon they passed a group of men, one of whom said, "See that lazy youngster, he lets his father walk while he rides." So the man ordered his boy to get off, and got on himself. But they hadn't gone far when they passed two women, one of whom said to the other, "Shame on that lazy father to let his poor little son trudge along."

Well, the man didn't know what to do, but at last he took his boy up before him on the donkey. By this time they had come to the town, and the passersby began to yell and point at them. The man stopped and asked what they were angry at. The men said, "Aren't you ashamed of yourself for overloading that poor donkey of yours -- you and your big son?"

The man and boy got off and tried to think what to do. They thought and they thought, until at last they cut down a pole, tied the donkey's feet to it, and raised the pole and the donkey to their shoulders. They went along amid the laughter of all who met them until they came to a bridge, when the donkey, getting one of his feet loose, kicked out and caused the boy to drop his end of the pole. In the struggle the donkey fell over the bridge, and his forefeet being tied together, he was drowned.