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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Old Granny Fox: Granny And Reddy Fox Go Hunting (2/29)

When you're in doubt what course is right,
The thing to do is just sit tight.

—Old Granny Fox.

Jolly, round, bright Mr. Sun had just got well started on his daily climb up in the blue, blue sky that morning when he spied two figures trotting across the snow-covered Green Meadows, one behind the other. They were trotting along quite as if they had made up their minds just where they were going. They had. You see they were Granny and Reddy Fox, and they were bound for the Big River at the place where the water ran too swiftly to freeze. The day before Reddy had discovered Quacker the Wild Duck swimming about there, and now they were on their way to try to catch him.

Granny led the way and Reddy meekly followed her. To tell the truth, Reddy hadn't the least idea that they would have a chance to catch Quacker, because Quacker kept out in the water where he was as safe from them as if they were a thousand miles away. The only reason that Reddy had willingly started with Granny was the hope that he might find a dead fish washed up on the shore as he had the day before.

"Granny certainly is growing foolish in her old age," thought Reddy, as he trotted along behind her. "I told

her that Quacker never once came ashore all the time I watched yesterday. I don't believe he ever comes ashore, and if she knows anything at all she ought to know that she can't catch him out there in the water. Granny used to be smart enough when she was young, I guess, but she certainly is losing her mind now. It's a pity, a great pity. I can just imagine how Quacker will laugh at her. I have to laugh myself."

He did laugh, but you may be sure he took great pains that Granny should not see him laughing. Whenever she looked around he was as sober as could be. In fact, he appeared to be quite as eager as if he felt sure they would catch Quacker. Now old Granny Fox is very wise in the ways of the Great World, and if Reddy could



have known what was going on in her mind as she led the way to the Big River, he might not have felt quite so sure of his own smartness. Granny was doing some quiet laughing herself.

"He thinks I'm old and foolish and don't know what I'm about, the young scamp!" thought she. "He thinks he has learned all there is to learn. It isn't the least use in the world to try to tell him anything. When young folks feel the way he does, it is a waste of time to talk to them. He has got to be shown. There is nothing like experience to take the conceit out of these youngsters."

Now conceit is the feeling that you know more than any one else. Perhaps you do. Then again, perhaps you don't. So sometimes it is best not to be too sure of your own opinion. Reddy was sure. He trotted along behind old Granny Fox and planned smart things to say to her when she found that there wasn't a chance to catch Quacker the Duck. I am afraid, very much afraid, that Reddy was planning to be saucy. People who think themselves smart are quite apt to be saucy.

Presently they came to the bank of the Big River. Old Granny Fox told Reddy to sit still while she crept up behind some bushes where she could peek out over the Big River. He grinned as he watched her. He was still grinning when she tiptoed back. He expected to see her face long with disappointment. Instead she looked very much pleased.

"Quacker is there," said she, "and I think he will make us a very good dinner. Creep up behind those bushes and see for yourself, then come back here and tell me what you think we'd better do to get him."

So Reddy stole up behind the bushes, and this time it was Granny who grinned as she watched. As he crept along, Reddy wondered if it could be that for once Quacker had come ashore. Granny seemed so sure they could catch him that this must be the case. But when he peeped through the bushes, there was Quacker way out in the middle of the open water just where he had been the day before.