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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Old Granny Fox: Granny Fox Admits Growing Old (13/29)

Who will not admit he is older each day fools no one but himself.

—Old Granny Fox.

Old Granny Fox is a spry old lady for her age. If you don't believe it just try to catch her. But spry as she is, she isn't as spry as she used to be. No, Sir, Granny Fox isn't as spry as she used to be. The truth is, Granny is getting old. She never would admit it, and Reddy never had realized it until the day after the great storm. All that night they had hunted in vain for something to eat and at daylight had crept into their house to rest awhile before starting on another hunt. They had neither the strength nor the courage to search any longer then. Wading through snow is very hard work at best and very tiresome, but when your stomach has been empty for so long that you almost begin to wonder what food tastes like, it becomes harder work still. You see, it is food that makes strength, and lack of food takes away strength.

This was why Granny and Reddy Fox just had to rest. Hungry as they were, they had to give up for awhile. Reddy flung himself down, and if ever there was a discouraged young Fox he was that one. "I wish I were dead," he moaned.

"Tut, tut, tut!" said Granny Fox sharply. "That's no way for a young Fox to talk! I'm ashamed of you. I am indeed." Then she added more kindly: "I know just how you feel. Just try to forget your empty stomach and rest awhile. We have had a tiresome, disappointing, discouraging night, but when you are rested things will not look quite so bad. You know the old saying:

'Never a road so long is there

But it reaches a turn at last;

Never a cloud that gathers swift

But disappears as fast.'

You think you couldn't possibly feel any worse than you do right now, but you could. Many a time I have had to go hungry longer than this. After we have rested awhile we will go over to the Old Pasture. Perhaps we will have better luck there."

So Reddy tried to forget the emptiness of his stomach and actually had a nap, for he was very, very tired.

When he awoke he felt better.

"Well, Granny," said he, "let's start for the Old Pasture. The snow has crusted over, and we won't find it such hard going as it was last night."

Granny arose and followed Reddy out to the doorstep. She walked stiffly. The truth is, she ached in every one of her old bones. At least, that is the way it seemed to her. She looked towards the Old Pasture. It seemed very far away. She sighed wearily. "I don't believe I'll go, Reddy," said she. "You run along and luck go with you."

Reddy turned and stared at Granny suspiciously. You know his is a very suspicious nature. Could it be that Granny had some secret plan of her own to get a meal and wanted to get rid of him?



“What’s the matter with you?” he demanded roughly. “It was you who proposed going over to the Old Pasture.”

Granny smiled. It was a sad sort of smile. She is wonderfully sharp and smart, is Granny Fox, and she knew what was in Reddy’s mind as well as if he had told her.

“Old bones don’t rest and recover as quickly as young bones, and I just don’t feel equal to going over there now,” said she. “The truth is, Reddy, I am growing old. I am going to stay right here and rest. Perhaps then I’ll feel able to go hunting to-night. You trot along now, and if you get more than a stomachful, just remember old Granny and bring her a bite.”

There was something in the way Granny spoke that told Reddy she was speaking the truth. It was the very first time she ever had admitted that she was growing old and was no longer the equal of any Fox. Never before had he noticed how gray she had grown. Reddy felt a feeling of shame creep over him,—shame that he had suspected Granny of playing a sharp trick. And this little feeling of shame was followed instantly by a

splendid thought. He would go out and find food of some kind, and he would bring it straight back to Granny. He had been taken care of by Granny when he was little, and now he would repay Granny for all she had done for him by taking care of her in her old age. "Go back in the house and lie down, Granny," said he kindly. "I am going to get something, and whatever it may be you shall have your share." With this he trotted off towards the Old Pasture and somehow he didn't mind the ache in his stomach as he had before.