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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Old Granny Fox: Old Man Coyote Does A Little Thinking (19/29)

Investigate and for yourself find out
Those things which most you want to know about.

—Old Granny Fox.

Never in all his life had Reddy Fox enjoyed a dinner more than that one he and Granny had stolen from Bowser the Hound. Of course it would have tasted delicious anyway, because they were so dreadfully hungry, but to Reddy it tasted better still because it had been intended for Bowser. Bowser has hunted Reddy so often that Reddy has no love for him at all, and it tickled him almost to death to think that they had taken his dinner from almost under his nose.

With that good dinner in their stomachs, Reddy and Granny Fox felt so much better that the Great World no longer seemed such a cold and cruel place. Funny how differently things look when your stomach is full from the way those same things look when it is empty. Best of all they knew they could play the same sharp trick again and steal another dinner from Bowser if need be. It is a comforting feeling, a very comforting feeling, to know for a certainty where you can get another meal. It is a feeling that Granny and Reddy Fox

and many other little people of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest seldom have in winter. As a rule, when they have eaten one meal, they haven't the least idea where the next one is coming from. How would you like to live that way?

The very next day Granny and Reddy went up to Farmer Brown's at Bowser's dinner hour. But this time Farmer Brown's boy was at work near the barn, and Bowser was not chained. Granny and Reddy stole away as silently as they had come. On the day following they found Bowser chained and stole another dinner from him; then they went away laughing until their sides ached as they heard Bowser's whines of surprise and



disappointment when he discovered that his dinner had vanished. They knew by the sound of his voice that he hadn't the least idea what had become of that dinner.

Now there was some one else roaming over the snow-covered meadows and through the Green Forest and the Old

Pasture these days with a

stomach so lean and empty that he couldn't think of anything else. It was Old Man Coyote. You know he is very clever, is Old Man Coyote, and he managed to find enough food of one kind and another to keep him alive, but never enough to give him that comfortable feeling of a full stomach. While he wasn't actually starving, he

was always hungry. So he spent all the time when he wasn't sleeping in hunting for something to eat.

Of course he often ran across the tracks of Granny and Reddy Fox, and once in a while he would meet them. It struck Old Man Coyote that they didn't seem as thin as he was. That set him to thinking. Neither of them was a smarter hunter than he. In fact, he prided himself on being smarter than either of them. Yet when he met them, they seemed to be in the best of spirits and not at all worried because food was so scarce. Why? There must be a reason. They must be getting food of which he knew nothing.

"I'll just keep an eye on them," muttered Old Man Coyote.

So very slyly and cleverly Old Man Coyote followed Granny and Reddy Fox, taking the greatest care that they should not suspect that he was doing it. All one night he followed them through the Green Forest and over the Green Meadows, and when at last he saw them go home, appearing not at all worried because they had caught nothing, he trotted off to his own home to do some more thinking.

"They are getting food somewhere, that is sure," he muttered, as he scratched first one ear and then the other. Somehow he could think better when he was scratching his ears. "If they don't get it in the night, and they certainly didn't get anything this night, they must get it in the daytime. I've done considerable hunting myself in the daytime, and I haven't once met them in

the Green Forest or seen them on the Green Meadows or up in the Old Pasture. I wonder if they are stealing Farmer Brown's hens and haven't been found out yet. I've kept away from there myself, but if they can steal hens and not be caught, I certainly can. There never was a Fox yet smart enough to do a thing that a Coyote cannot do if he tries. I think I'll slip up where I can watch Farmer Brown's and see what is going on up there. Yes, Sir, that's what I'll do."

With this, Old Man Coyote grinned and then curled himself up for a short nap, for he was tired.