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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Old Granny Fox: Prickly Porky Enjoys Himself (28/29)

A boasting tongue, as sure as fate,
Will trip its owner soon or late.

—Old Granny Fox.

Prickly Porky the Porcupine was enjoying himself. There was no doubt about that. He was stretched across the doorway of that old house, the very house in which old Granny Fox had been born. When he had lain down on the doorstep for a nap and sun-bath, he had thought that the old house was still deserted. Then he had fallen asleep, only to be wakened by Reddy Fox, who had been asleep in the old house and who couldn't get out because Prickly Porky was in the way.

Now Prickly Porky does not love Reddy Fox, and the more Reddy begged and scolded and called him names, the more Prickly Porky chuckled. It was such a good joke to think that he had trapped Reddy Fox, and he made up his mind that he would keep Reddy in there a long time just to tease him and make him uncomfortable. You see Prickly Porky remembered how often Reddy Fox played mean tricks on little meadow and forest folks who are smaller and weaker than himself.

"It will do him good. It certainly will do him good," said Prickly Porky, and rattled the thousand little spears

hidden in his long coat, for he knew that the very sound of them would make Reddy Fox shiver with fright. Suddenly Prickly Porky pricked up his funny little short ears. He heard the deep voice of Bowser the Hound, and it was coming nearer and nearer. Prickly Porky chuckled again.

"I guess Mr. Bowser is going to have a surprise; I certainly think he is," said Prickly Porky as he made all the thousand little spears stand out from his long coat till he looked like a funny great chestnut burr.

Bowser the Hound did have a surprise. He was hunting Reddy Fox, and he almost ran into Prickly Porky before he saw him. The very sight of those thousand little spears sent little cold chills chasing each other down Bowser's backbone clear to the tip of his tail, for he remembered how he had gotten some of them in his lips and mouth once upon a time, and how it had hurt to have them pulled out. Ever since then he had had the greatest respect for Prickly Porky.

"Wow!" yelped Bowser the Hound, stopping short. "I beg your pardon, Prickly Porky, I beg your pardon, I didn't know you were taking a nap here."

All the time Bowser the Hound was backing away as fast as he could. Then he turned around, put his tail between his legs and actually ran away.

Slowly Prickly Porky unrolled, and his little eyes twinkled as he watched Bowser the Hound run away.

"Bowser's very big and strong;

His voice is deep; his legs are long;

His bark scares some almost to death.

But as for me he wastes his breath;
I just roll up and shake my spears
And Bowser is the one who fears.”

So said Prickly Porky, and laughed aloud. Just then he heard a light footstep and turned to see who was coming. It was old Granny Fox. She had seen Bowser run away, and now she was anxious to find out if Reddy Fox were safe.

“Good morning,” said Granny Fox, taking care not to come too near.

“Good morning,” replied Prickly Porky, hiding a smile.

“I’m very tired and would like to go inside my house;



had you just as soon move?”
asked Granny Fox.

“Oh!” exclaimed Prickly Porky, “is this your house? I thought you lived over on the Green Meadows.”

“I did, but I’ve moved. Please let me in,” replied Granny Fox.

“Certainly, certainly. Don’t mind me, Granny Fox. Step right over

me,” said Prickly Porky, and smiled once more, and at the same time rattled his little spears.

Instead of stepping over him, Granny Fox backed away.