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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Old Granny Fox: Reddy Fox Brings Granny News (1/29)

Pray who is there who would refuse
To bearer be of happy news?

—Old Granny Fox.

Snow covered the Green Meadows and the Green Forest, and ice bound the Smiling Pool and the Laughing Brook. Reddy and Granny Fox were hungry most of the time. It was not easy to find enough to eat these days, and so they spent nearly every minute they were awake in hunting. Sometimes they hunted together, but usually one went one way, and the other went another way so as to have a greater chance of finding something. If either found enough for two, the one finding it took the food back to their home if it could be carried. If not, the other was told where to find it. For several days they had had very little indeed to eat, and they were so hungry that they were willing to take almost any chance to get a good meal. For two nights they had visited Farmer Brown's henhouse, hoping that they would be able to find a way inside. But the biddies had been securely locked up, and try as they would, they couldn't find a way in.

"It's of no use," said Granny, as they started back home after the second try, "to hope to get one of those hens at night. If we are going to get any at all, we will have

to do it in broad daylight. It can be done, for I have done it before, but I don't like the idea. We are likely to be seen, and that means that Bowser the Hound will be set to hunting us."



"Pooh!" exclaimed Reddy. "What of it? It's easy enough to fool him."

"You think so, do you?" snapped Granny. "I never yet saw a young Fox who didn't think he knew all

there is to know, and you're just like the rest. When you've lived as long as I have you will have learned not to be quite so sure of your own opinions. I grant you that when there is no snow on the ground, any Fox with a reasonable amount of Fox sense in his head can fool Bowser, but with snow everywhere it is a very different matter. If Bowser once takes it into his head to follow your trail these days, you will have to be smarter than I think you are to fool him. The only way you will be able to get away from him will be by going into a hole in the ground, and when you do that you will have given away a secret that will mean we will never have any peace at all. We will never know when Farmer Brown's boy will take it into his head to smoke us out. I've seen it done. No, Sir, we are not going to try for one of those hens in the daytime unless we are starving."

"I'm starving now," whined Reddy.

"No such thing!" Granny snapped. "I've been without food longer than this many a time. Have you been over to the Big River lately?"

"No," replied Reddy. "What's the use? It's frozen over. There isn't anything there."

"Perhaps not," replied Granny, "but I learned a long time ago that it is a poor plan to overlook any chance. There is a place in the Big River which never freezes because the water runs too swiftly to freeze, and I've found more than one meal washed ashore there. You go over there now while I see what I can find in the Green Forest. If neither of us finds anything, it will be time enough to think about Farmer Brown's hens to-morrow."

Much against his will Reddy obeyed. "It isn't the least bit of use," he grumbled, as he trotted towards the Big River. "There won't be anything there. It is just a waste of time."

Late that afternoon he came hurrying back, and Granny knew by the way that he cocked his ears and carried his tail that he had news of some kind. "Well, what is it?" she demanded.

"I found a dead fish that had been washed ashore," replied Reddy. "It wasn't big enough for two, so I ate it."

"Anything else?" asked Granny.

"No-o," replied Reddy slowly; "that is, nothing that will do us any good. Quacker the Wild Duck was swimming about out in the open water, but though I watched and watched he never once came ashore."

"Ha!" exclaimed Granny. "That is good news. I think we'll go Duck hunting."