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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Old Granny Fox: Reddy Fox Hears About Granny Fox (9/29)

Though you may think another wrong
And be quite positive you're right,
Don't let your temper get away;
And try at least to be polite.

—Old Granny Fox.

Sammy Jay hurried through the Green Forest, chuckling as he flew. Sammy was brimming over with the news he had to tell,—how Old Granny Fox had been caught napping by Farmer Brown's boy. Sammy wouldn't have believed it if any one had told him. No, Sir, he wouldn't. But he had seen it with his own eyes, and it tickled him almost to pieces to think that Old Granny Fox, whom everybody thought so sly and clever and smart, had been caught actually asleep by the very one of whom she was most afraid, but at whom she always had turned up her nose.

Presently Sammy spied Reddy Fox trotting along the Lone Little Path. Reddy was forever boasting of how smart Granny Fox was. He had boasted of it so much that everybody was sick of hearing him. When he saw Reddy trotting along the Lone Little Path, Sammy chuckled harder than ever. He hid in a thick hemlock-tree and as Reddy passed he shouted:

“Had I such a stupid old Granny
As some folks who think they are smart,
I never would boast of my Granny,
But live by myself quite apart!”

Reddy looked up angrily. He couldn't see Sammy Jay, but he knew Sammy's voice. There is no mistaking that. Everybody knows the voice of Sammy Jay. Of course it was foolish, very foolish of Reddy to be angry, and still more foolish to show that he was angry. Had he stopped a minute to think, he would have known that Sammy was saying such a mean, provoking thing just to make him angry, and that the angrier he became the better pleased Sammy Jay would be. But like a great

many people, Reddy allowed his temper to get the better of his common sense.

“Who says Granny Fox is stupid?” he snarled.

“I do,” replied Sammy Jay promptly. “I say she is stupid.”



“She is smarter than anybody else in all the Green Forest and

on all the Green Meadows. She is smarter than anybody else in all the Great World,” boasted Reddy, and he really believed it.

“She isn't smart enough to fool Farmer Brown's boy,” taunted Sammy.

“What's that? Who says so? Has anything happened to Granny Fox?” Reddy forgot his anger in a sudden great

fear. Could Granny have been shot by Farmer Brown's boy?

"Nothing much, only Farmer Brown's boy caught her napping in broad daylight," replied Sammy, and chuckled so that Reddy heard him.

"I don't believe it!" snapped Reddy. "I don't believe a word of it! Nobody ever yet caught Old Granny Fox napping, and nobody ever will."

"I don't care whether you believe it or not; it's so, for I saw him," retorted Sammy Jay.

"You—you—you—" began Reddy Fox.

"Go ask Tommy Tit the Chickadee if it isn't true. He saw him too," interrupted Sammy Jay.

"Dee, dee, dee, Chickadee! It's so, and Farmer Brown's boy only threw a snowball at her and let her run away without shooting at her," declared a new voice. There sat Tommy Tit himself.

Reddy didn't know what to think or say. He just couldn't believe it, yet he had never known Tommy Tit to tell an untruth. Sammy Jay alone he wouldn't have believed. Then Tommy Tit and Sammy Jay told Reddy all about what they had seen, how Farmer Brown's boy had surprised Old Granny Fox and then allowed her to go unharmed. Reddy had to believe it. If Tommy Tit said it was so, it must be so. Reddy Fox started off to hunt up Old Granny Fox and ask her about it. But a sudden thought popped into his red head, and he changed his mind.

"I won't say a thing about it until some time when Granny scolds me for being careless," muttered Reddy,

with a sly grin. "Then I'll see what she has to say. I guess she won't scold me so much after this."

Reddy grinned more than ever, which wasn't a bit nice of him. Instead of being sorry that Old Granny Fox had had such a fright, he was planning how he would get even with her when she should scold him for his own carelessness.