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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Old Granny Fox: The New Home In The Old Pasture (29/29)

Who keeps a watch upon his toes
Need never fear he'll bump his nose.

—Old Granny Fox.

Now there is nothing like being shut in alone in the dark to make one think. A voice inside of Reddy began to whisper to him. "If you hadn't tried to be smart and show off you wouldn't have brought all this trouble on yourself and Old Granny Fox," said the voice.

"I know it," replied Reddy right out loud, forgetting that it was only a small voice inside of him.

"What do you know?" asked Prickly Porky. He was still keeping Reddy in and Granny out and he had overheard what Reddy said.

"It is none of your business!" snapped Reddy.

Reddy could hear Prickly Porky chuckle. Then Prickly Porky repeated as if to himself in a queer cracked voice the following:

"Rudeness never, never pays,
Nor is there gain in saucy ways.
It's always best to be polite
And ne'er give way to ugly spite.
If that's the way you feel inside
You'd better all such feelings hide;

For he must smile who hopes to win,
And he who loses best will grin."

Reddy pretended that he hadn't heard. Prickly Porky continued to chuckle for a while and finally Reddy fell asleep. When he awoke it was to find that Prickly Porky had left and old Granny Fox had brought him something to eat.

Just as soon as Reddy Fox was able to travel he and Granny had moved to the Old Pasture. The Old Pasture is very different from the Green Meadows or the Green Forest. Yes, indeed, it is very, very different. Reddy Fox thought so. And Reddy didn't like the change,—not a bit. All about were great rocks, and around and over them grew bushes and young trees and bull-briars with long ugly thorns, and blackberry and raspberry canes that seemed to have a million little hooked hands, reaching to catch in and tear his red coat and to scratch his face and hands. There were little open places where wild-eyed young cattle fed on the short grass. They had made many little paths all crisscross among the bushes, and when you tried to follow one of these paths you never could tell where you were coming out.

No, Reddy Fox did not like the Old Pasture at all. There was no long, soft green grass to lie down in. And it was lonesome up there. He missed the little people of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest. There was no one to bully and tease. And it was such a long, long way from Farmer Brown's henyard that old Granny Fox wouldn't even try to bring him a fat hen. At least, that's what she told Reddy.

The truth is, wise old Granny Fox knew that the very best thing she could do was to stay away from Farmer Brown's for a long time. She knew that Reddy couldn't go down there, because he was still too lame and sore to travel such a long way, and she hoped that by the time Reddy was well enough to go, he would have learned better than to do such a foolish thing as to try to show off by stealing a chicken in broad daylight, as he had when he brought all this trouble on them.

Down on the Green Meadows, the home of Granny and Reddy Fox had been on a little knoll, which you know is a little low hill, right where they could sit on their



doorstep and look all over the Green

Meadows. It had been very, very beautiful down there. They had made lovely little paths through the tall green meadow grass, and the buttercups and daisies had grown close up to their very doorstep. But up here in the Old Pasture Granny Fox had chosen the thickest clump

of bushes and young trees she could find, and in the middle was a great pile of rocks. Way in among these rocks Granny Fox had dug their new house. It was right down under the rocks. Even in the middle of the day jolly, round, red Mr. Sun could hardly find it with a few of his long, bright beams. All the rest of the time it was dark and gloomy there.

No, Reddy Fox didn't like his new home at all, but when he said so old Granny Fox boxed his ears.

"It's your own fault that we've got to live here now," said she. "It's the only place where we are safe. Farmer Brown's boy never will find this home, and even if he did he couldn't dig into it as he did into our old home on the Green Meadows. Here we are, and here we've got to stay, all because a foolish little Fox thought himself smarter than anybody else and tried to show off."

Reddy hung his head. "I don't care!" he said, which was very, very foolish, because, you know, he did care a very great deal.

And here we will leave wise Old Granny Fox and Reddy, safe, even if they do not like their new home. You see, Lightfoot the Deer is getting jealous. He thinks there should be some books about the people of the Green Forest, and that the first one should be about him. And because we all love Lightfoot the Deer, the very next book is to bear his name.