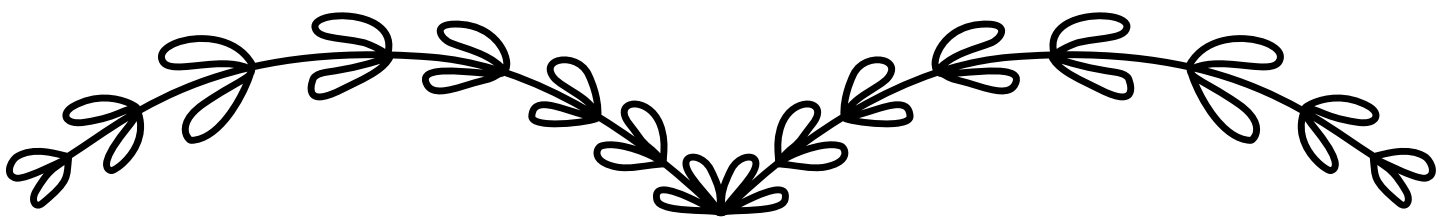




Aesop's Fables

Part 1



Contents

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| The Grasshopper and the Owl | 1 |
| The Spider and the Fly (1829) | 3 |
| The Crow and the Fox | 5 |
| The Dog and the Bone | 6 |
| The Rooster, the Dog and the Fox..... | 7 |

The Grasshopper and the Owl



There once lived an old owl who had become rather grouchy in her later years. She didn't like anything that disturbed her sleep. One warm afternoon, while she was snoozing in her cosy nest inside a hollow tree, a loud sound woke her up.

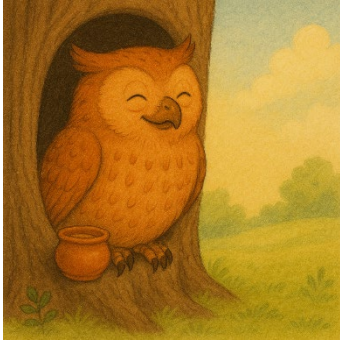
It was the cheerful chirping of a grasshopper nearby, singing happily in the sunshine. To the owl, however, it was frightfully loud. She emerged from the hole in the tree, her orange head twitching with annoyance. "Kindly go away at once," she called out. "Have some manners and let an old owl sleep in peace!"

The tiny grasshopper paused his song and replied that he had every right to sing wherever he liked, especially since it was daytime. Then he started chirping again, even louder than before. The sleepy owl knew there was no use arguing. It was still bright outside, and owls don't see very well in the daytime. But then she had a sneaky idea.

"Dear grasshopper," she said in a gentle voice, "I must admit, now that I'm wide awake, your song is starting to sound rather lovely. I think I'd like to sit here and listen to it properly. Oh! I just remembered, I have a small pot of nectar here in my tree. It's scrumptious, and I've heard it makes grasshoppers sing better than ever. Would you like a taste?"



The foolish grasshopper, feeling very flattered, believed every word. He gave a little bow and leapt across to the owl's tree. With a few quick hops, he was right beside her.



Now that he was close enough, the wise owl opened her sharp eyes, gave one quick bite, and gobbled him up in an instant.

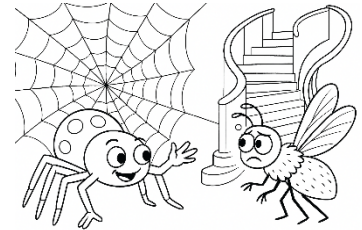
The moral of the story is: Be careful when someone is too full of flattery because they might not mean what they say.

The Spider and the Fly (1829)

"Will you walk into my parlour?" said the Spider to the Fly,
"Tis the prettiest little parlour that ever you did spy;
The way into my parlour is up a winding stair,
And I have many curious things to show when you are there."

"Oh no, no," said the little Fly, "to ask me is in
vain,

For who goes up your winding stair can ne'er
come down again."

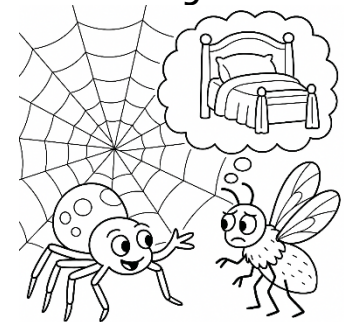


"I'm sure you must be weary, dear, with soaring up so high;
Will you rest upon my little bed?" said the Spider to the Fly.

"There are pretty curtains drawn around; the
sheets are fine and thin,
And if you like to rest awhile, I'll snugly tuck
you in!"

"Oh no, no," said the little Fly, "for I've often
heard it said,

They never, never wake again, who sleep upon your bed!"



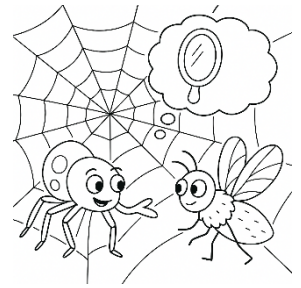
Said the cunning Spider to the Fly, "Dear friend what can I do,
To prove the warm affection I've always felt for you?
I have within my pantry, good store of all that's nice;
I'm sure you're very welcome—will you please to
take a slice?"

"Oh no, no," said the little Fly, "kind sir, that
cannot be,
I've heard what's in your pantry, and I do not
wish to see!"



"Sweet creature!" said the Spider, "you're witty and you're wise,
How handsome are your gauzy wings, how
brilliant are your eyes!

I've a little looking-glass upon my parlour shelf,
If you'll step in one moment, dear, you shall
behold yourself."



"I thank you, gentle sir," she said, "for what you're pleased to say,
And bidding you good morning now, I'll call another day."

The Spider turned him round about, and went into his den,
For well he knew the silly Fly would soon come back again:

So he wove a subtle web, in a little corner sly,
And set his table ready, to dine upon the Fly.

Then he came out to his door again, and merrily did sing,

"Come hither, hither, pretty Fly, with the pearl and silver wing;
Your robes are green and purple—there's a crest upon your head;
Your eyes are like the diamond bright, but mine are dull as lead!"

Alas, alas! how very soon this silly little Fly,

Hearing his wily, flattering words, came slowly flitting by;

With buzzing wings she hung aloft, then near and nearer drew,

Thinking only of her brilliant eyes, and green and purple hue—

Thinking only of her crested head—poor foolish thing! At last,

Up jumped the cunning Spider and fiercely held her fast.

He dragged her up his winding stair, into his dismal den,

Within his little parlour—but she ne'er came out again!

And now dear little children, who may this story read,

To idle, silly flattering words, I pray you ne'er give heed:

Unto an evil counsellor, close heart and ear and eye,

And take a lesson from this tale, of the Spider and the Fly.

The Crow and the Fox

One sunny morning, a crow found a large piece of cheese in a field. She picked it up in her beak and flew to the branch of a tall tree to enjoy her prize.



A fox, who was passing by, looked up and spied the crow with the cheese. His mouth began to water. He wanted that cheese for himself.

“Oh, what a beautiful bird you are!” called the fox. “Your feathers are so sparkling and glossy. I’m sure your voice is just as lovely. Won’t you sing me a song?”



The crow felt flattered. She wanted to show off her beautiful voice. She opened her beak to sing, and the cheese fell straight down.

Quick as a flash, the fox scurried forward, snapped up the cheese, and trotted away. The crow watched him go, feeling foolish.



Moral: Don’t be fooled by flattery.

The Dog and the Bone

One sunny morning, a little dog was trotting cheerfully through the village when he caught the delicious smell of fresh meat coming from the butcher's shop. The kind butcher noticed the dog and tossed him a large, juicy bone. The dog's eyes lit up with delight as he grabbed the bone in his mouth and set off for home, his tail wagging proudly.



His path took him across a narrow wooden bridge over a still pond. As he padded over the bridge, he glanced down and saw another dog in the water below, holding what looked like a much bigger bone. It was just his own reflection, but the little dog didn't realise that. He thought, "That bone looks better than mine. I must have it."

Eager to snatch the larger prize, the dog opened his mouth to bark. In that moment, his bone fell into the pond with a splash. Realising what had happened, he jumped in after it, but the pond was deep and the bone was gone. Wet and shivering, the little dog climbed back onto the bank, sad and sorry for what he had done.

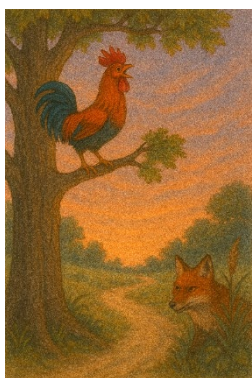


He had lost a perfectly good bone because he wanted more. The little dog learned the hard way that it is foolish to be greedy.

The Rooster, the Dog and the Fox

Once there was a dog and a rooster who were the very best of friends. They lived together on a farm and spent every day side by side. One morning, they decided they wanted to see a bit more of the world. So, they packed up and set off down the road that led to the woods, feeling happy and excited for their adventure.

The two friends walked all day, enjoying the sunshine and the fresh air. But as the sky turned pink and the sun began to set, they both felt tired. Just then, the rooster spotted an old hollow tree by the side of the road.



“This will do nicely,” he said. “I can perch up on that branch, and you can curl up down below in the hollow.” The dog wagged his tail in agreement. It was the perfect place for a good night’s sleep.

As soon as the sun rose the next morning, the rooster woke up and stretched his wings. For a moment, he forgot where he was. He was so used to waking up the farm that he stood tall on his branch, puffed out his chest, and crowed as loudly as he could.

“Cock-a-doodle-doo!”

But instead of waking up the farmer and his family, he woke up a sleepy fox hiding nearby in the bushes. The fox licked his lips. “Mmm, rooster for breakfast.”



The fox trotted over to the tree and looked up at the rooster. In his smoothest, friendliest voice, he said, “Welcome to our woods, good sir. I’m so pleased you’re here. I’ve always wanted a new friend. Would you come down and say hello?”



Now, the dog had told the rooster many times to watch out for tricky, sneaky foxes. So the rooster gave a polite smile and replied, “How kind of you! I’d love to be your friend. Why don’t you go around to the door of my house, down at the bottom of the tree? My servant will let you in.”

The fox’s eyes glowed. “Two roosters?” he thought. “Even better!” He crept eagerly around to the base of the tree.

But as soon as he peeked inside the hollow, the dog leapt out with a fierce bark and growl. The fox yelped in shock and turned tail, running as fast as he could back into the woods.



And the moral of the story is: If you try to trick others, you might get a big surprise!