

Gossip wolf and the fox (The fox and his cousin)

The she-wolf brought forth a young one, and invited the fox to be godfather. "After all, he is a near relative of ours," said she, "he has a good understanding, and much talent; he can instruct my little son, and help him forward in the world." The fox, too, appeared quite honest, and said, "Worthy Mrs. Gossip, I thank you for the honour which you are doing me; I will, however, conduct myself in such a way that you shall be repaid for it." He enjoyed himself at the feast, and made merry; afterwards he said, "Dear Mrs. Gossip, it is our duty to take care of the child, it must have good food that it may be strong. I know a sheep-fold from which we might fetch a nice morsel." The wolf was pleased with the ditty, and she went out with the fox to the farm-yard. He pointed out the fold from afar, and said, "You will be able to creep in there without being seen, and in the meantime I will look about on the other side to see if I can pick up a chicken." He, however, did not go there, but sat down at the entrance to the forest, stretched his legs and rested. The she-wolf crept into the stable. A dog was lying there, and it made such a noise that the peasants came running out, caught Gossip Wolf, and poured a strong burning mixture, which had been prepared for washing, over her skin. At last she escaped, and dragged herself outside. There lay the fox, who pretended to be full of complaints, and said, "Ah, dear Mistress Gossip, how ill I have fared, the peasants have fallen on me, and have broken every limb I have; if you do not want me to lie where I am and perish, you must carry me away." The she-wolf herself was only able to go away slowly, but she was in such concern about the fox that she took him on her back, and slowly carried him perfectly safe and sound to her house. Then the fox cried to her, "Farewell, dear Mistress Gossip, may the roasting you have had do you good," laughed heartily at her, and bounded off.

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