

THE FOX AND THE CROW

A CROW stole a piece of cheese one day, and flew with it up into a tree, so as to eat it at her leisure.

As she sat there, holding it in her beak, a Fox chanced to pass by, and looking up saw her. “How good that cheese smells!” thought he; “I’ll have it, sure as I’m a Fox.”

Coming close to the tree, he said, “My dear Madam, what a beautiful creature you are! I was not aware till this moment what rare beauty your family possesses. What eyes! What glossy feathers! What grace of form! Is your voice as charming to hear, as your person is to look upon? If it is, you well deserve to be called the Queen of Birds. Will you not do me the favor to sing to me?”

Now it is well known that the Caw! Caw! of the Crow family is not musical. She ought to have been on her guard, but so delighted was she with the flattery of the Fox that she forgot to be wary. She opened her mouth to show the Fox the sweetness of her voice, when—down fell the bit of cheese, which was exactly what was expected.

The Fox ate it at one mouthful, then stopped to say, “Thank you, madam. I am quite satisfied. Your voice is well enough, I have no doubt. What a pity it is you are so sadly wanting in wit!”

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The Crow learned that we do well to be on our guard when people flatter
us.