

## The Fox and the Crane

There was a fox who just loved to make fun of other people. One day he invited a crane to dinner.

"I have made some delicious soup especially for you," he said. But when they went to the table, the crane saw that the soup was in a very shallow dish and she could not drink a single drop with her long, pointed bill. The fox laughed when she tried.

"So you don't like my soup, all the more for me!" He lapped up every last drop.

The crane was so upset, she made up her mind to get her own back.

"Do come to dinner with me. I know you like soup so I have made some especially for you," she said. The fox licked his lips, thinking how stupid the crane was. But when he came up to the crane's table, he saw that she has put the soup in a jug with a long, thin neck and his tongue could never reach it.

"Tit for tat," snapped the crane. The fox went home hungry with his tail between his legs.



There was once a Prince who wanted to marry a Princess; but she had to be a real Princess. He travelled all over the world to find such a lady; but there was always something wrong. He found lots of princesses, but he could never be sure whether they were real or not. He came home to the castle feeling very sad and thinking he'd never find the right Princess for him.

One evening, a massive storm thundered. Through the rain and wind, the King heard a knock at the door. It was a Princess, soaked to the skin with water trickling down from her hair. She said she was a real Princess.

The old Queen-mother knew how to test whether she was telling the truth or not. She took a hard dried-up pea upstairs and made a bed piled high with 20 mattresses. Underneath the mattress at the very bottom, she placed the hard pea. The Princess would sleep in this bed that night.

The next morning she was asked how she had slept. "Oh, very badly!" she replied. "I haven't slept a wink all night. I was so uncomfortable, and I'm bruised black and blue all over."

Now it was clear that the lady must be a real Princess, since she had been able to feel the tiny little pea through the twenty mattresses. None but a real Princess could have had such a delicate skin.

The Prince knew then that he has found his wife, and they lived together happily ever after.

## The Lion and the Mouse

A lion was dozing in the shade after a large meal, when a mouse ran across his tummy. The lion felt something tickling him so he put out his paw and picked up the little mouse, who squeaked in terror.

"Oh, please don't eat me, I'll make such a very small mouthful. Let me go, and one day, I'll do you a good turn," said the mouse.

"You! What could you ever do for me?" the lion laughed. But he wasn't hungry so he let the mouse go. Some weeks later the mouse heard the lion roaring with pain. The fierce lion had been caught by hunters and was tied up with rope. When the mouse saw this, he started chewing the rope with his sharp little teeth. When the lion was free, the mouse looked up at him.

"There, you see! You'd be in big trouble if it weren't for me!" he said. Even though he was small, the mouse could still save the lion's life. The lion walked slowly away without a sound.

