

The Doe and the Fawn

A young fawn once said to his mother, "You are larger than a dog, and swifter, and more used to running, and you have your horns as a defense; why, then, mother, do the hounds frighten you so?" She smiled and said, "I know full well, my son, that all you say is true. I have the advantages you mention, but when I hear even the bark of a single dog, I feel ready to faint and fly away as fast as I can."

Moral: No arguments will give courage to the fearful.

The Wolf and the Kid

There was once a little kid whose growing horns made him think he was a grown-up billy goat and able to take care of himself. So one evening when the flock started home from the pasture and his mother called, the kid paid no heed and kept right on nibbling the tender grass. A little later when he lifted his head, the flock was gone. He was all alone. The sun was sinking. Long shadows came creeping over the ground and a chilly little wind came creeping with them, making scary noises in the grass. The kid shivered as he thought of the terrible wolf. Then he started wildly over the field, bleating for his mother. But not halfway, near a clump of trees, there was the wolf! The kid knew there was little hope for him. "Please, Mr. Wolf," he said, trembling, "I know you are going to eat me. But first please pipe me a tune, for I want to dance and be merry as long as I can." The wolf liked the idea of a little music before eating, so he struck up a merry tune and the kid leaped and frisked gaily. Meanwhile, the flock was moving slowly homeward. In the still evening air, the wolf's piping carried far. The shepherd dogs pricked up their ears. They recognized the song as one the wolf sings before a feast, and in a moment, they were racing back to the pasture. The wolf's song ended suddenly, and as he ran with the dogs at his heels, he called himself a fool for turning piper to please a kid, when he should have stuck to his butcher's trade.

Moral: Do not let anything turn you from your purpose.

The Hunter and the Woodman

A hunter, not very bold, was searching for the tracks of a lion. He asked a man who was felling oaks in the forest if he had seen any marks of his footsteps or knew where his lair was. "I will at once show you the lion himself," said the man.

The hunter, turning very pale and chattering with his teeth from fear, replied, "No, thank you. I did not ask that; it is only his track I am in search of, not the lion himself."

Moral: A hero is brave in deeds as well as words.

The Boy and the Nettles

A boy, stung by a nettle, ran home crying to get his mother to blow on the hurt and kiss it. "Son," said the boy's mother when she had comforted him. "The next time you come near a nettle, grasp it firmly and it will be as soft as silk."

Moral: It is often wise to use all your might.

The Vixen and the Lioness

The fox once observed to the lioness that foxes were very much to be envied in the matter of fruitfulness: Almost every year, for instance, she brings into the world a good litter of cubs while some people only have one at a time and not more than twice or thrice in their lives. This sneer was too pointed to be passed over in silence by the lioness, who replied with a good deal of fire, "What you say is true; you have a great many young at a time, and often. But what are they? Foxes. I have but one, but remember that that one is a lion."

Moral: Value is in the worth, not in the number.