**Fables**

**The Ant and the Chrysalis**

An Ant nimbly running about in the sunshine in search of food came across a Chrysalis that was very near its time of change. The Chrysalis moved its tail, and thus attracted the attention of the Ant, who then saw for the first time that it was alive. “Poor, pitiable animal!” cried the Ant disdainfully. “What a sad fate is yours! While I can run hither and thither, at my pleasure, and, if I wish, ascend the tallest tree, you lie imprisoned here in your shell, with power only to move a joint or two of your scaly tail.” The Chrysalis heard all this, but did not try to make any reply. A few days after, when the Ant passed that way again, nothing but the shell remained. Wondering what had become of its contents, he felt himself suddenly shaded and fanned by the gorgeous wings of a beautiful Butterfly. “Behold in me,” said the Butterfly, “your much-pitied friend! Boast now of your powers to run and climb as long as you can get me to listen.” So saying, the Butterfly rose in the air, and, borne along and aloft on the summer breeze, was soon lost to the sight of the Ant forever.

“Appearances are deceptive.”

**The Ant and the Dove**

AN ANT went to the bank of a river to quench its thirst, and being carried away by the rush of the stream, was on the point of drowning. A Dove sitting on a tree overhanging the water plucked a leaf and let it fall into the stream close to her. The Ant climbed onto it and floated in safety to the bank. Shortly afterwards a birdcatcher came and stood under the tree, and laid his lime-twigs for the Dove, which sat in the branches. The Ant, perceiving his design, stung him in the foot. In pain the birdcatcher threw down the twigs, and the noise made the Dove take wing.

“One good turn deserves another”

**The Ass in the Lion’s Skin**

An Ass once found a Lion’s skin which the hunters had left out in the sun to dry. He put it on and went towards his native village. All fled at his approach, both men and animals, and he was a proud Ass that day. In his delight he lifted up his voice and brayed, but then every one knew him, and his owner came up and gave him a sound cudgeling for the fright he had caused. And shortly afterwards a Fox came up to him and said: “Ah, I knew you by your voice.”

“Fine clothes may disguise, but silly words will disclose a fool.”

**The Bald Man and the Fly**

A FLY bit the bare head of a Bald Man who, endeavoring to destroy it, gave himself a heavy slap. Escaping, the Fly said mockingly, “You who have wished to revenge, even with death, the Prick of a tiny insect, see what you have done to yourself to add insult to injury?’ The Bald Man replied, “I can easily make peace with myself, because I know there was no intention to hurt. But you, an ill-favored and contemptible insect who delights in sucking human blood, I wish that I could have killed you even if I had incurred a heavier penalty.”

“Revenge will hurt the avenger”

**The Bear and the Two Travelers**

TWO MEN were traveling together, when a Bear suddenly met them on their path. One of them climbed up quickly into a tree and concealed himself in the branches. The other, seeing that he must be attacked, fell flat on the ground, and when the Bear came up and felt him with his snout, and smelt him all over, he held his breath, and feigned the appearance of death as much as he could. The Bear soon left him, for it is said he will not touch a dead body. When he was quite gone, the other Traveler descended from the tree, and jocularly inquired of his friend what it was the Bear had whispered in his ear. “He gave me this advice,” his companion replied. “Never travel with a friend who deserts you at the approach of danger.”

“Misfortune tests the sincerity of friends.”

**The Bee and Jupiter**

A BEE from Mount Hymettus, the queen of the hive, ascended to Olympus to present Jupiter some honey fresh from her combs. Jupiter, delighted with the offering of honey, promised to give whatever she should ask. She therefore besought him, saying, “Give me, I pray thee, a sting, that if any mortal shall approach to take my honey, I may kill him.” Jupiter was much displeased, for he loved the race of man, but could not refuse the request because of his promise. He thus answered the Bee: “You shall have your request, but it will be at the peril of your own life. For if you use your sting, it shall remain in the wound you make, and then you will die from the loss of it.”

“Evil wishes, like chickens, come home to roost.”

**The Boys and the Frogs**

SOME BOYS, playing near a pond, saw a number of Frogs in the water and began to pelt them with stones. They killed several of them, when one of the Frogs, lifting his head out of the water, cried out: “Pray stop, my boys: what is sport to you, is death to us.”

“One man’s pleasure may be another’s pain.”-

**The Cat and Venus**

A CAT fell in love with a handsome young man, and entreated Venus to change her into the form of a woman. Venus consented to her request and transformed her into a beautiful damsel, so that the youth saw her and loved her, and took her home as his bride. While the two were reclining in their chamber, Venus wishing to discover if the Cat in her change of shape had also altered her habits of life, let down a mouse in the middle of the room. The Cat, quite forgetting her present condition, started up from the couch and pursued the mouse, wishing to eat it. Venus was much disappointed and again caused her to return to her former shape.

“Nature exceeds nurture.”

**The Dog and the Hare**

A HOUND having started a Hare on the hillside pursued her for some distance, at one time biting her with his teeth as if he would take her life, and at another fawning upon her, as if in play with another dog. The Hare said to him, “I wish you would act sincerely by me, and show yourself in your true colors. If you are a friend, why do you bite me so hard? If an enemy, why do you fawn on me?’

“No one can be a friend if you know not whether to trust or distrust him.”

**The Dog and the Wolf**

A gaunt Wolf was almost dead with hunger when he happened to meet a House-dog who was passing by. “Ah, Cousin,” said the Dog. “I knew how it would be; your irregular life will soon be the ruin of you. Why do you not work steadily as I do, and get your food regularly given to you?” “I would have no objection,” said the Wolf, “if I could only get a place.” “I will easily arrange that for you,” said the Dog; “come with me to my master and you shall share my work.” So the Wolf and the Dog went towards the town together. On the way there the Wolf noticed that the hair on a certain part of the Dog’s neck was very much worn away, so he asked him how that had come about. “Oh, it is nothing,” said the Dog. “That is only the place where the collar is put on at night to keep me chained up; it chafes a bit, but one soon gets used to it.” “Is that all?” said the Wolf. “Then good-bye to you, Master Dog.”

“Better starve free than be a fat slave.”

**The Dogs and the Fox**

SOME DOGS, finding the skin of a lion, began to tear it in pieces with their teeth. A Fox, seeing them, said, “If this lion were alive, you would soon find out that his claws were stronger than your teeth.” “It is easy to kick a man that is down.” The Eagle and the Fox AN EAGLE and a Fox formed an intimate friendship and decided to live near each other. The Eagle built her nest in the branches of a tall tree, while the Fox crept into the underwood and there produced her young. Not long after they had agreed upon this plan, the Eagle, being in want of provision for her young ones, swooped down while the Fox was out, seized upon one of the little cubs, and feasted herself and her brood. The Fox on her return, discovered what had happened, but was less grieved for the death of her young than for her inability to avenge them. A just retribution, however, quickly fell upon the Eagle. While hovering near an altar, on which some villagers were sacrificing a goat, she suddenly seized a piece of the flesh, and carried it, along with a burning cinder, to her nest. A strong breeze soon fanned the spark into a flame, and the eaglets, as yet unfledged and helpless, were roasted in their nest and dropped down dead at the bottom of the tree. There, in the sight of the Eagle, the Fox gobbled them up.

**The Fox and the Grapes**

One hot summer’s day a Fox was strolling through an orchard till he came to a bunch of Grapes just ripening on a vine which had been trained over a lofty branch. “Just the thing to quench my thirst,” quote he. Drawing back a few paces, he took a run and a jump, and just missed the bunch. Turning round again with a One, Two, Three, he jumped up, but with no greater success. Again and again he tried after the tempting morsel, but at last had to give it up, and walked away with his nose in the air, saying: “I am sure they are sour.”

“It is easy to despise what you cannot get.”

**The Fox Who Had Lost His Tail**

A FOX caught in a trap escaped, but in so doing lost his tail. Thereafter, feeling his life a burden from the shame and ridicule to which he was exposed, he schemed to convince all the other Foxes that being tailless was much more attractive, thus making up for his own deprivation. He assembled a good many Foxes and publicly advised them to cut off their tails, saying that they would not only look much better without them, but that they would get rid of the weight of the brush, which was a very great inconvenience. One of them interrupting him said, “If you had not yourself lost your tail, my friend, you would not thus counsel us.”

**The Hares and the Frogs**

The Hares were so persecuted by the other beasts, they did not know where to go. As soon as they saw a single animal approach them, off they used to run. One day they saw a troop of wild Horses stampeding about, and in quite a panic all the Hares scuttled off to a lake hard by, determined to drown themselves rather than live in such a continual state of fear. But just as they got near the bank of the lake, a troop of Frogs, frightened in their turn by the approach of the Hares scuttled off, and jumped into the water. “Truly,” said one of the Hares, “things are not so bad as they seem: “There is always someone worse off than yourself.”

**The Wolf and the Kid**

A Kid was perched up on the top of a house, and looking down saw a Wolf passing under him. Immediately he began to revile and attack his enemy. “Murderer and thief,” he cried, “what do you here near honest folks’ houses? How dare you make an appearance where your vile deeds are known?” “Curse away, my young friend,” said the Wolf.

“It is easy to be brave from a safe distance.”

**The Lion and the Eagle**

AN EAGLE stayed his flight and entreated a Lion to make an alliance with him to their mutual advantage. The Lion replied, “I have no objection, but you must excuse me for requiring you to find surety for your good faith, for how can I trust anyone as a friend who is able to fly away from his bargain whenever he pleases?’

“Try before you trust.”

**The Lion and the Mouse**

Once when a Lion was asleep a little Mouse began running up and down upon him; this soon wakened the Lion, who placed his huge paw upon him, and opened his big jaws to swallow him. “Pardon, O King,” cried the little Mouse: “forgive me this time, I shall never forget it: who knows but what I may be able to do you a turn some of these days?” The Lion was so tickled at the idea of the Mouse being able to help him, that he lifted up his paw and let him go. Some time after the Lion was caught in a trap, and the hunters who desired to carry him alive to the King, tied him to a tree while they went in search of a wagon to carry him on. Just then the little Mouse happened to pass by, and seeing the sad plight in which the Lion was, went up to him and soon gnawed away the ropes that bound the King of the Beasts. “Was I not right?” said the little mouse, after the lion had gotten out for a freedom.

“Little friends may prove great friends.”

**The Lion in Love**

A LION demanded the daughter of a woodcutter in marriage. The Father, unwilling to grant, and yet afraid to refuse his request, hit upon this expedient to rid himself of his importunities. He expressed his willingness to accept the Lion as the suitor of his daughter on one condition: that he should allow him to extract his teeth, and cut off his claws, as his daughter was fearfully afraid of both. The Lion cheerfully assented to the proposal. But when the toothless, clawless Lion returned to repeat his request, the Woodman, no longer afraid, set upon him with his club, and drove him away into the forest.

**The Lion’s Share**

The Lion went once a-hunting along with the Fox, the Jackal, and the Wolf. They hunted and they hunted till at last they surprised a Stag, and soon took its life. Then came the question how the spoil should be divided. “Quarter me this Stag,” roared the Lion; so the other animals skinned it and cut it into four parts. Then the Lion took his stand in front of the carcass and pronounced judgment: The first quarter is for me in my capacity as King of Beasts; the second is mine as arbiter; another share comes to me for my part in the chase; and as for the fourth quarter, well, as for that, I should like to see which of you will dare to lay a paw upon it.” “Humph,” grumbled the Fox as he walked away with his tail between his legs; but he spoke in a low growl. “You may share the labours of the great, but you will not share the spoil.”

**The Monkey and the Dolphin**

A SAILOR, bound on a long voyage, took with him a Monkey to amuse him while on shipboard. As he sailed off the coast of Greece, a violent tempest arose in which the ship was wrecked and he, his Monkey, and all the crew were obliged to swim for their lives. A Dolphin saw the Monkey contending with the waves, and supposing him to be a man (whom he is always said to befriend), came and placed himself under him, to convey him on his back in safety to the shore. When the Dolphin arrived with his burden in sight of land not far from Athens, he asked the Monkey if he were an Athenian. The latter replied that he was, and that he was descended from one of the most noble families in that city. The Dolphin then inquired if he knew the Piraeus (the famous harbor of Athens). Supposing that a man was meant, the Monkey answered that he knew him very well and that he was an intimate friend. The Dolphin, indignant at these falsehoods, dipped the Monkey under the water and drowned him.

**The Monkeys and Their Mother**

THE MONKEY, it is said, has two young ones at each birth. The Mother fondles one and nurtures it with the greatest affection and care, but hates and neglects the other. It happened once that the young one which was caressed and loved was smothered by the too great affection of the Mother, while the despised one was nurtured and reared in spite of the neglect to which it was exposed.

“The best intentions will not always ensure success.”

**The Nurse and the Wolf**

“Be quiet now,” said an old Nurse to a child sitting on her lap. “If you make that noise again I will throw you to the Wolf.” Now it chanced that a Wolf was passing close under the window as this was said. So he crouched down by the side of the house and waited. “I am in good luck to-day,” thought he. “It is sure to cry soon, and a daintier morsel I haven’t had for many a long day.” So he waited, and he waited, and he waited, till at last the child began to cry, and the Wolf came forward before the window, and looked up to the Nurse, wagging his tail. But all the Nurse did was to shut down the window and call for help, and the dogs of the house came rushing out. “Ah,” said the Wolf as he galloped away,

“Enemies promises were made to be broken.”

**The Shepherd’s Boy and the Wolf**

A SHEPHERD-BOY, who watched a flock of sheep near a village, brought out the villagers three or four times by crying out, “Wolf! Wolf!” and when his neighbors came to help him, laughed at them for their pains. The Wolf, however, did truly come at last. The Shepherd-boy, now really alarmed, shouted in an agony of terror: “Pray, do come and help me; the Wolf is killing the sheep”; but no one paid any heed to his cries, nor rendered any assistance. The Wolf, having no cause of fear, at his leisure lacerated or destroyed the whole flock.

“There is no believing a liar, even when he speaks the truth.”

**The Kid and the Wolf**

A KID, returning without protection from the pasture, was pursued by a Wolf. Seeing he could not escape, he turned round, and said: “I know, friend Wolf, that I must be your prey, but before I die I would ask of you one favor you will play me a tune to which I may dance.” The Wolf complied, and while he was piping and the Kid was dancing, some hounds hearing the sound ran up and began chasing the Wolf. Turning to the Kid, he said, “It is just what I deserve; for I, who am only a butcher, should not have turned piper to please you.”

“In time of dire need, clever thinking is key or outwit your enemy to save your skin.”

**The Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing**

A Wolf found great difficulty in getting at the sheep owing to the vigilance of the shepherd and his dogs. But one day it found the skin of a sheep that had been flayed and thrown aside, so it put it on over its own pelt and strolled down among the sheep. The Lamb that belonged to the sheep, whose skin the Wolf was wearing, began to follow the Wolf in the Sheep’s clothing; so, leading the Lamb a little apart, he soon made a meal off her, and for some time he succeeded in deceiving the sheep, and enjoying hearty meals.

“Appearances are deceptive.”

Сергей Голубев