

THE CROW AND THE FOX

Once upon a time, there was an old, tall tree in the middle of a thickly forested district in a land called Yuyi Loma Gyayba. Crow built a nest at the top of that tree, and Fox gouged out a hole and made a den at its foot.

One day Crow brought a piece of meat and was ready to eat it at the top of the tree, when Fox, at the base, saw the piece of meat in Crow's beak. He could not help but feel greedy to eat it and in a low voice he flattered Crow, saying "Say, Uncle Crow, listen to me. The color of your body is dark gold. In this world there has never been such a beautiful winged creature, nor will there be later."

Crow felt proud and sat there flapping his wings, while looking at his own body with a smile. Since Fox was unable to eat the piece of meat it said again, "Say, listen to me once again, Uncle Crow. According to what is said, you're the nephew of the Kalapingka-bird. Among all the winged creatures of this world these days, it's said no one hears such an eloquent and beautiful voice as yours. But black-headed Tibetans have a saying:

If the ears do not hear what is close,

Talk of what is far away is probably a lie.

Who knows whether that's true or not? But if it's true, sing a song today, in your beautiful voice and eloquent tones! I'll turn my ears towards you and listen."

Crow grew proud like before, turned his face to Fox, and thought, "If I don't sing such a beautiful and pleasing song that he has never heard before, later this stupid Fox and the other birds will ridicule me." When he crowed and gaped, the piece of meat he was holding in his mouth fell. Fox took it and with a laugh he entered his den.

—Chab 'gag Rdo rje tshe ring, *Qinghai Folk Literature* 1, 1971