

UNCLE COCK AND SNEAKY FOX

One day Fox was very hungry and went to look for food, but found not even a mouthful. Then he got tired, and, as he was going along the edge of a forest, he saw Cock resting in a tree top, scratching himself with his beak. Thinking he wanted to eat Cock, Fox thought it would search for a clever means, went to the base of the tree, and said, "Uncle Cock, What are you doing sitting in the tree top? Haven't you yet heard the news that will make us happy?"

Cock said, "No indeed, I haven't heard it. Quickly tell me what news you have."

Fox said, "To tell the truth, the reason I came here today was to announce the good news to you. The meeting of the representatives of all the creatures actually ended yesterday, and according to what the meeting decided, every creature will live in peace and harmony for a long time; hereafter in this animal island no one will need to be afraid of anyone at all. Everyone may do whatever he wishes and live happily. So, come down and we'll offer each other congratulations, in summation of that happy assembly."

Cock had perceived early on that Fox was a clever deceiver, and he said to the Fox, "Fox, my good friend, you've come to bring me this good news. Thank you. Thanks a lot!" While saying that he stretched his neck out and looked off into the middle of the forest. Fox, not knowing what he was doing, said, "What are you looking at? Come down quick!"

But Cock said, "Oh, not far away there are two wolves, their mouths wide agape, running in this direction." Fox got scared, and, his whole body shivering, he said, "Be well, I'll see you later. I'm about to run off quickly." As he was about to flee, Cock quickly asked, "Good friend. Why do you have to run away? Didn't they say at the meeting of the animals that no one had anything to fear and that we should live in peace and harmony?"

Fox hurriedly said, "There are those that think that carnivorous wolves can live in peace with creatures, but I don't trust them," and turning around, he fled to the opposite upland in a single breath.

—Stag lha rgyal, *Qinghai Folk Literature* 2, 1994