

## Story Text

### Reynard the Fox

Strolling home one day, Reynard the fox came across a well. Looking down it he saw another fox looking up at him. He smiled, and the fox smiled back. He waved a cheery paw and the fox waved too. I would very much like to meet this stranger, thought Reynard, so he hopped into the bucket and lowered himself into the well. He was not particularly happy when half way down he was hit by another bucket going up, and even less happy when he reached the bottom. It was dark down there, and there was no sign of the friendly fox. The walls were slimy and slippery and he could see no way to get back up again. Reynard was not happy.

Before long a wolf walked by and stopped to look down the well. Seeing Reynard, he was surprised and wanted to know what he was doing down there.

'Why,' said Reynard, 'I am in heaven down here!' 'In heaven?' said the wolf, suspiciously.

'Why, yes,' said Reynard, 'and it is a wonderful place. I'm surprised you don't want to be down here too.' Well, if Reynard got to go to heaven then the wolf didn't see why he shouldn't go too.

'How did you get there?' he demanded.

'Well,' said Reynard, 'the only way to get to heaven is to be sorry for all the bad things you have done, and not just a little bit sorry, but really very sorry indeed.' The wolf thought for a moment about what bad things he might have done. 'You haven't been very friendly to me,' the fox reminded him. 'You need to be sorry for all the times you have tried to trick me or to hurt me. If you aren't sorry enough then you'll never get into heaven, and you won't believe just how wonderful it is down here.'

Now the wolf very badly wanted to get into heaven. Eagerly he said sorry to the fox for all the times that he had tricked him or tried to hurt him. 'Are you really sorry?' said the fox.

'Really very, very sorry,' said the wolf. So the fox told him to get into the bucket. As the wolf climbed in, the bucket started to drop and fox's bucket began to rise. Wolf was very surprised half way up to be hit by fox travelling upwards.

'Where are you going?' he cried. 'Don't you want to stay in heaven?'

'Oh, I would love to,' said fox, 'but there is only room for one at a time in heaven, and now

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it's your turn.' And the fox travelled up to the top of the well, jumped out of the bucket and carried on his way home to his family. Wolf on the other hand was disappointed with what he found at the bottom of the well, and soon realised that Fox had got the better of him once again. He waited there in the bucket all day until at last in the evening the monks came to draw water. As they lowered the bucket the wolf rose slowly to the surface. The bucket travelling down hit him firmly between the eyes and as he hauled himself over the edge of the well the monks were waiting, and they beat him with great sticks until he was black and blue all over. He slunk back to his family, vowing never to trust the fox again.