

Safety in Numbers

A dog and a cockerel, who were the best of friends, longed to explore the world. They decided to leave the farmyard and to set out into the world along the road that led to the woods. The two comrades undertook their unremarkable journey in the best of spirits.

At nightfall, the cockerel (looking for a place to roost, as was his custom), spied a hollow tree nearby that he thought would be an excellent place to lodge for the night. The dog could creep inside the deep trunk and the cockerel could fly up onto one of the branches. The friends, contented with their plan, slept comfortably.

With the first glimmer of dawn, the cockerel awoke, forgetting where he was for a moment. Thinking that he was still in the farmyard, where it had been his duty to wake the household at daybreak, the cockerel stood upon his tiptoes and flapped his wings, crowing loudly. However, instead of awakening the farmer, he awakened a fox in the woods nearby. The fox immediately had rosy visions of a very delicious breakfast. Hurrying to the tree where the cockerel was roosting, he said very politely:

“A hearty welcome to our woods, honoured sir,” greeted the fox. “I cannot tell you how glad I am to see you here. I am quite sure we shall become the closest of friends.”

“I feel highly flattered, kind sir,” replied the cockerel slyly. “Please go around to the door of my house at the foot of the tree; my porter will let you in.”

The hungry but unsuspecting fox went around the tree as he was told and, in an instant, was greeted by the dog.

