

A Well of Trouble

“Hot, hot, hot!” complained Tricky Fox. He walked slowly. His feet hurt. He had spent the whole, hot day looking for water.

Speedy Sparrow darted down. “Tricky, you look tired! You look thirsty!” The little bird flew around the fox’s head.

“I am looking for water,” said Tricky. “Can you tell me where to find it?”



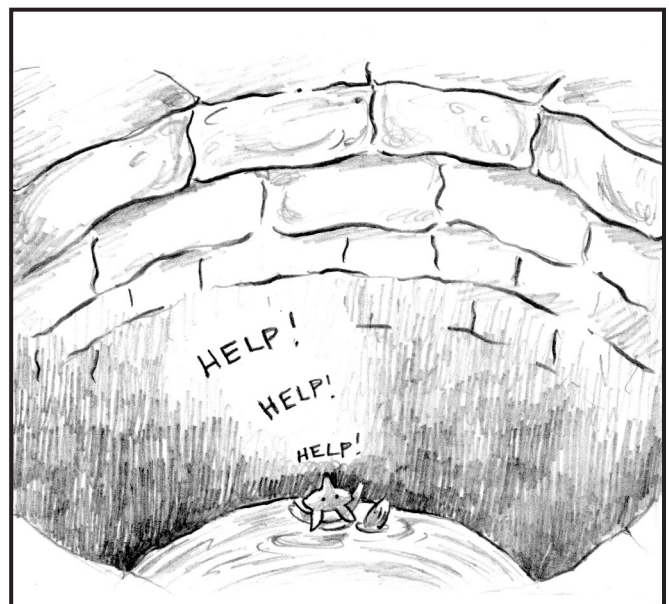
Speedy flew up to the branch of a tree before she answered. She knew that Tricky was full of tricks. He might even try to eat her if she got too close! “Keep going down that path,” said Speedy. “There’s a deep well at the end.” Then she flew away.

“A well!” said Tricky. “What good news! I am such a lucky fox.” Tricky started to trot. The sun was hot. Tricky knew that soon he would get a nice, cold drink of water from the well.

At the end of the path was the well. “Hooray!” said Tricky. He looked over the edge. “Oh, no!” said the thirsty fox. “It is too deep. I cannot reach the water.” He tried to lean down into the dark, cool well. Suddenly, there was a huge SPLASH! Tricky had fallen into the well.

“HELP!” cried Tricky. “HELP! HELP! HELP!” But nobody could hear him.

Tricky took a long drink of water as he stood at the bottom of the well. He was standing in the water. After the hot sun, it felt good. But Tricky knew he was in trouble. He also knew that he had played tricks on a lot of animals. None of them would want to come close enough to help him.





Tricky thought and thought. Then he waited. Finally, he heard a voice. It was Greta Goat. "Hello, Greta!" Tricky called.

Greta looked over the edge. "Tricky! What are you doing down there?"

"Oh," said Tricky. "It's such a hot day. This well is so cool and shady. So I jumped in. It's nice down here."

"I see," said Greta. She started to leave.

"And," Tricky called, "the water here is the best in the woods! Did you know that? I have never tasted water this sweet. Why, it almost tastes like..." Tricky thought hard, "...it almost tastes like HAY."

Greta looked down again. "Really?" she asked. "That sounds great." She looked at the water. Then she jumped down. She drank for a long time.

"This is good water!" said Greta. "I'm not sure it tastes like hay. But it sure tastes good on this hot day!" She looked up to the top of the well. "Now, how do we get out?"

Tricky smiled. "I will show you!" He jumped onto Greta's back. Then he climbed up to her head. He scrambled up her long horns. Then Tricky jumped up and climbed out of the well.



"But how do I get out?" Greta called.

"You will have to find your own way out," called Tricky. "Goodbye!" And the fox was gone.

Greta started to bleat. "Help, help!" she bleated. At last, her friend the farmer found her. "Greta! How did you get down there, you silly goat?" He ran to get help. The farmer and his helpers lifted Greta out of the well.

"I am a silly goat!" thought Greta that night. She ate her sweet hay. She chewed and thought. "But now I see two things," Greta told herself. "I will never trust that fox again. And I will always look before I leap!"

