



The Fox and the Tiger

The Chinese Fairy Book

Chinese

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Once a fox met a tiger. The latter bared his teeth, stretched out his claws, and was about to devour him. But the fox spoke and said: "My dear sir, you must not think that you are the only king of beasts. Your courage does not compare with my own. Let us walk together, and do you keep behind me. And if men catch sight of me and do not fear me, then you may devour me." The tiger was willing, and so the fox led him along a broad highway. But the travelers, when they saw the tiger in the distance, were all frightened and ran away.

Then the fox said: "How about it? I went in advance, and the men saw me and had not as yet seen you."

And thereupon the tiger drew in his tail and ran away himself.

The tiger had remarked quite well that the men were afraid of the fox, but he had not noticed that the fox had borrowed the terror he inspired from him.

Note: This universally known fable is traditionally narrated. Animal fables are very rare in China.

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