

The integrity of the fox

The fox and the rabbit agreed to farm together. They planted a big field with wheat. At the end of spring, the wheat had ripened and was yellow like gold. (pg1)

The rabbit said happily to the fox:

The wheat is ready for harvest my friend. Let us both take our sickles and harvest it.

The fox replied:

You are right my dear rabbit. The time of work and weariness has come.

And they went towards the field of wheat. The rabbit carried his sickle, but the fox did not carry anything. When they arrived the fox said:

Here is the wheat my friend. Take your sickle and harvest the ears of wheat, while I take on the difficult job. I will steady the mountain so that it does not fall on us.

The rabbit looked at the mountain and asked worriedly: Really? Is it possible that the mountain could fall on us?

And the fox replied: Do you doubt my words? Don't you see how the mountain sways towards us?

And the rabbit said: Alright, I will go and harvest the wheat by myself. (pg2)

The rabbit went with his sickle and started harvesting the stems of the golden wheat under the burning sun. He loved the wheat and he loved the work. Work meant the world to him. And he who does not work is not needed in this world.

Meanwhile the fox laid back in the shade, claiming that he was stopping the mountain from falling down. And every now and then he gave a false gasp, to convince the rabbit that he was actually holding the huge mountain on his shoulders.

- Ouch, my back hurts. How heavy this mountain is!

And he asked the rabbit to bring him water. He called to him: I am thirsty! Give me some water. I cannot leave my place. If I move, the mountain will fall on us. (pg3)

And the good rabbit went and brought him water. And the rabbit harvested with his sickle. He harvested all the wheat, while the fox was sitting in the shade. (pg4)

Then came the time to make the hay and the rabbit said to the fox:

I already harvested all the wheat and now comes the time to make hay. Come on my friend, so we can do this together.

And the fox replied: Of course, of course my friend. Of course we will work together to make the hay. Yoke the donkey and start threshing. Meanwhile, I will drive the flies and insects away from the donkey with this fan. You know that if the donkey gets irritated by the flies, he will run off taking the yoke with him. Do you want this to happen, so that we can no longer thresh the wheat?

The rabbit wanted to get the work done quickly. So he put the yoke on the donkey and began to work. Meanwhile, the fox sat down and fanned himself from the heat, pretending that he was chasing the flies away from the donkey. **(pg5)**

Every now and then he beat the air with the fan: Whoof ..Whoof...Whoof, pretending that he was beating flies and shouting: You damned creatures. Do you want to scare off our donkey? I will not allow you to do so.

The rabbit threshed the wheat, separating the chaff from the grain. And the fox was happily relaxing.

And when it was time to divide the harvest the fox said:

You know my dear friend, you have worked more than me. Therefore it is your right to take the bigger share. The rabbit was happy to hear these words from his friend the fox. And he said to himself: I doubted him, but he seems to be a good friend. **(pg6)**

The fox added: Since you worked more than me, you, my friend, should take this big pile of chaff, while I will take this small pile of grain.

The rabbit was surprised by this unfair division. Surprised and shocked. But he was afraid to refuse it. He feared that he would make the fox angry if he refused this division.

He said: If you consider this is a just division, then I will accept it.

Do you think it is fair, that you take the grains and I take the chaff?

The fox replied: What? Do you doubt that my division is fair? Do you accuse me of lacking integrity? I will not allow you to do so. I cut off the ears of the last one who accused me of lacking integrity and ate them in front him. Do you understand? **(pg7)**

The rabbit touched his two long white ears in fear and said to the fox:

No, my friend! I do not doubt your justness and integrity. I am not able to do this.

The fox replied: O.K. Then I will go and get a sack in order to carry my wheat. I will be back soon. Watch the wheat until I am back. **(pg8)**

And the fox left to fetch a sack. When he was out of sight, the rabbit jumped quickly to his friend the loyal dog, told him the story and asked him for help:

My wheat, my friend...the wheat for the baby rabbits...The fox will take it.

I planted it, I harvested it and I threshed it. And the fox wants to take my wheat and give me only the chaff. **(pg9)**

And the dog said: This is what the damned fox did? Just like this? Alright, I will come with you and I will hide in the sack of wheat until he comes to take his share. And we shall see what he will do. And the dog and the rabbit left quickly and arrived before the fox. The dog hid inside the sack of wheat, leaving his two ears sticking out.

(pg10)

The fox arrived carrying a sack on his back. He was dancing around and singing happily from far away:

I am the sly fox

I scare the rabbits
They plant
They harvest
And I carry it all home
I scare the rabbits

When he arrived he said to the rabbit:

My division was a just one. And you got your full rights. Isn't it so, my dear rabbit?
And the rabbit replied: Yes, yes. The division was very fair. You have a great deal of integrity. You do not put your own interest above the law. Go now and take all the wheat, while I will take the chaff. The chaff is something great and useful.

The fox went very happily to the pile of wheat and started thinking of tricking and scaring the rabbit.

When he opened his sack and began filling it with the golden wheat, he saw something move in the pile of wheat. He stopped and asked the rabbit worriedly: What is it that moves there on top of the pile of wheat, my friend rabbit?
And the rabbit asked: Where?
And the fox replied: There, at the top of the pile of wheat!
And the rabbit replied: I do not see any movement.

The dog had already stopped moving his ears. So the fox resumed filling the sack with wheat. But for a second time he felt that something was moving above the pile of wheat. **(pg11)**

And the rabbit said: It is moving again!
What is that? Tell me by God what is this that looks like dog ears?!
And the rabbit replied: Dog? There are no dogs here. Ah, you must mean the scoop. This is the scoop, my friend. I put it on top of the pile of wheat
The scoop? And what is the scoop my dear?
You do not know the scoop is? The scoop is the tool that we use to weigh the wheat! Don't you know it? Weighing the wheat? I do not know it. This is the first time that I've worked in agriculture. But it is strange – it looks like dog ears.
Correct. Its form is a bit strange. But it is the scoop. The scoop for weighing the wheat. **(pg12)**

The fox approached the top of the pile of wheat in order to check it. The dog ears moved swiftly. He put his moist nose into the wheat grains and became aware that a dog was lying inside the pile of wheat and not a scoop.
He understood what was going on and realized that the rabbit was not as naïve as he thought. The rabbit had brought his friend the dog who would attack him, should he try to take the wheat with him. After realizing this, he decided to go back and he said:

- Listen, my friend rabbit. I have changed my opinion. I will take the chaff and you will take the wheat. I do not have a proper storing place for the wheat. And the birds will eat it if I put it in front of my house. So you should take it – I do not want it.
(pg13)

- No my friend fox. I want the chaff. You should take the wheat.

- I cannot do that. I cannot do that. I do not even want the chaff. You should take it my friend. You were doing everything. You planted, you harvested and you threshed.

- But why did you change your mind so quickly? What has happened?

- The truth my friend is, that I do not like the scoop that looks like the ears of a dog. I do not think that a thing that looks like dog ears bring good luck. That is what made me change my mind. I am afraid of dog ears, even more than I am afraid of bugs and scorpions.

- O.K. If you are generous to such an extent, I will take all the wheat. But don't you want to take only a full scoop of wheat? It is over there. Shall I fill it for you with wheat?

-No, my friend. No. I have enough wheat at home. And now I do not have any more time, I have to go. Goodbye, my friend!

And the fox left slowly. He stopped and sadly looked behind him to the pile of wheat that he had lost. **(pg14)**

The rabbit instead went to the pile of wheat and started filling his sack so he could feed his small children. Then he bent over and whispered in the dog's ear that was lying above the pile of wheat and said:

Had the dog not become a scoop
The wheat for the baby rabbits would have been lost

When the dog heard that, he jumped and howled, and when the Fox heard him he was scared and ran away. So when the rabbit saw him running he laughed out so loud that he even rolled on the ground laughing. **(pg15)**