



THE CROWS AND THE COBRA

Once upon a time there were two crows who lived in a deep forest, close to a big city. They were madly in love and had just gotten married, and every day they would fly around, cawing happily, as they looked for a place to build a nest for their new family. They looked and looked for the perfect place, and one day they found a beautiful, tall, tree with strong branches on the edge of the forest. They loved it immediately, and they decided to make their nest in its crown. They started building at once, taking turns flying back and forth to collect good building materials so they could make the best nest possible. They collected all the best twigs and roots, and little by little, they finished construction.

One day, while Mrs. Crow was sitting on her eggs, her husband flew off to find her some yummy food in the forest. He found her all the best worms and was in a very good mood, but as he returned home he noticed that their tree was hollow and below them lived a very large, very scary cobra.

They both got very scared, of course, because their babies were about to hatch and they knew that a cobra would love to make their helpless newborns his lunch. But the crows didn't know what to do! They had no way of protecting the nest from such a dangerous creature. They thought and thought, and finally Mrs. Crow got an idea. She had heard stories of a wise old jackal who lived in

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the forest below them. They would ask him for advice!

And so Mr. Crow went to find the wise jackal. He didn't know exactly where to look, but soon enough he could hear jackals barking and quickly flew in their direction. Before he knew it, he was sitting with the wise jackal and explaining his problem.

"Please, advise me on what to do," the crow begged the jackal. "We can't live like this! Every day, we'll be worried. Please, please tell me how we can protect our children and make sure that terrifying snake doesn't eat them!"

"Don't give up, my friend," the jackal said in a deep, calm voice. "Even the strongest enemies can be overcome. You just need to use your common sense."

"But how can we overcome a cobra?" the crow asked. "He's so much bigger and scarier than we are!"

"You must fly to the city," the jackal said, "and find a house where some rich but careless person lives. Then, you must find something very expensive of his. Once you find it, you must steal it in a way that he will notice. Make sure that you're very loud so you get his attention! Then, once he sees you, fly as slowly as possible towards your nest. As you pass it, I want you to make sure the humans can see you, and throw this expensive thing into the hollow of the tree where the cobra lives."

Mr. Crow was worried, but the jackal promised it would work, so the crow thanked him for his advice and flew off with a flap of his wings. When he got home, his wife was sitting on their eggs nervously. Mr. Crow told her the plan, and they decided to listen to the jackal and try the plan.

On his way to the city, however, Mr. Crow saw a princess from up high who was swimming in the lake. She had five royal servants with her, who were keeping the princess safe and making sure no one stole the treasures she had left in the grass. The shiniest of them all was a beautiful golden necklace dotted with pearls. Mr. Crow couldn't look away, it was so beautiful!

In a heartbeat, the crow dove down, grabbed the necklace, and flew back up above the servants' heads with the jewel in his beak. He circled them to make sure they saw him, just as the jackal had told him to do. They were very angry

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indeed, and picked up some stones to try to hit the crow with. He took off, trying to fly slowly, and a few of the servants chased after him.

Just as he'd been told to, Mr. Crow waited for the humans to catch up and then dropped the stolen necklace into the hollow where the black cobra was sleeping. Then he flew high up to a safe branch and sat so he could watch the royal servants. Shouting and bemoaning their loss, they ran directly to the tree. Immediately the irritable cobra slithered out of its hollow to see who was making such a racket. When it saw the servants, it got ready to fight. It straightened up, stretched out its neck and hissed angrily. The servants, knowing their princess would love to have a pet cobra, caught it in a bag, found the necklace inside the tree, and took them both away.

Happily, the crow returned to his nest, and he and his wife never again had to worry about the safety of their family.