

The Raven and the Fox

HIGH up on a tree, the large black Raven was sitting. In his beak, he had a big piece of cheese which he wanted to save for dinner. He was happily looking around and very proud of his treasure.

- 5 At this moment, the Fox came out of the wood. At once he saw that the Raven had a tasty-looking bit of cheese and he made up his mind instantly that this was just right for himself. But the tree was certainly very high, and the cheese very safe in the Raven's beak.

"Good morning, my dear Raven", the Fox said. "How well you look today! How prettily your black feathers reflect the light of the sun!"

- 10 The Raven looked at the Fox, a little surprised.

"What a strong, well-shaped beak you have got", the Fox went on. "I am sure you can sing beautifully with it! It is surely the greatest pleasure to listen to your song! How I would like to hear your sweet notes!"

- The Raven, still not quite sure of himself, but flattered by the compliments of the Fox, opened
15 his beak very wide and let out a shrill, croaking sound. At the same time, the cheese fell out and landed in front of the Fox.

Without another word or look at the Raven, the Fox picked up the cheese and went away with it

After a fable of La Fontaine

Vocabulary: beak: 'the hard horny mouth of a bird, bill'; proud: '*stolz*'; treasure: '*Schatz*'; tasty: 'tasting good'; to make up one's mind: 'to decide'; instantly: 'at once'; to flatter: '*schmeicheln*'; to croak: 'to make a deep noise such as a frog or raven makes'.

Questions:

1. What do the words *proud* and *flatter* mean?
2. Why was the raven happily looking around in the beginning of the fable?
3. How did the fox try to get the cheese?
4. How did the raven feel while the fox was talking to him?
5. Why did the author, La Fontaine, choose a raven and a fox for his fable?
6. What is – in your own words – the message ("moral") of the fable?