

The Fox and the Stork

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Old Mister Fox was at expense, one day,
To dine old Mistress Stork.
The fare was light, was nothing, sooth to say,
Requiring knife and fork.
That sly old gentleman, the dinner-giver,
Was, you must understand, a frugal liver.
This once, at least, the total matter
Was thinnish soup served on a platter,
For madam's slender beak a fruitless puzzle,
Till all had passed the fox's lapping muzzle.
But, little relishing his laughter,
Old gossip Stork, some few days after,
Returned his Foxship's invitation.
Without a moment's hesitation,
He said he'd go, for he must own he
Never stood with friends for ceremony.
And so, precisely at the hour,
He hied him to the lady's bower;
Where, praising her politeness,
He finds her dinner right nice.
Its punctuality and plenty,
Its viands, cut in mouthfuls dainty,
Its fragrant smell, were powerful to excite,
Had there been need, his foxish appetite.
But now the dame, to torture him,
Such wit was in her,
Served up her dinner
In vases made so tall and slim,
They let their owner's beak pass in and out,
But not, by any means, the fox's snout!
All arts without avail,
With drooping head and tail,
As ought a fox a fowl had cheated,
The hungry guest at last retreated.
You knaves, for you is this recital,
You'll often meet Dame Stork's requital.