



Aesop's Fables

21. THE CROW AND THE PITCHER

By Tracey Hammett

This is the story of a pitcher and a Crow, and a pitcher is a jug, in case you didn't know.

Old Mr Crow was a big black bird with a big black beak and he lived at the top of a tree. He was a clever old creature. 'There's no problem you can't fix if you only take the time to think about it!' he would say.

And over the years Old Mr Crow had managed to solve lots of problems: just through taking the time to settle his feathers and think.

When he wanted to feast on a juicy clam that was hiding inside its tightly shut shell, Mr Crow solved the problem by dropping the shell from a great height so it hit the ground and burst open. 'This clam sure tastes delicious!' he cawed.

'Go, go Mr Crow, you're the smartest bird we know!' chirped the Sparrow Sisters.

Walnuts were even trickier for a crow to crack open, but Mr Crow solved that problem too. 'I'll let the cars that drive by do the work for me,' he cawed. Then he plucked a walnut from the tree and

dropped it in the road, just by the crossing. A car drove over it and cracked the walnut open. When the traffic lights turned red and the traffic stopped Mr Crow hopped into the road and pecked up the tasty nut.

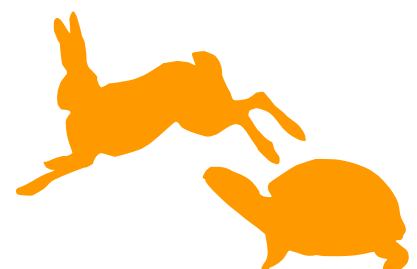
'Go, go Mr Crow, you're so clever don't you know!' chirped the Sparrow Sisters.

Then one day Mr Crow came across a problem he thought he couldn't solve...

The weather had been hot and dry for weeks and all the water had dried up in the pond. Mr Crow was very thirsty. He flew for miles looking for water but wherever he went the streams and ponds were dry.

Then, as he was flying by a farm house, he noticed a pitcher in the garden. 'Maybe that pitcher will have water in it,' he thought.

So he flew down to look. There was a little bit of water at the bottom, not much, but enough for a crow. Mr Crow put his beak in eagerly...but the pitcher was tall and the water was shallow and his beak couldn't reach.





'I can see the water, but I can't drink it!' he said to himself. 'And without the water I will die of thirst. This is a problem!'

Mr Crow settled his feathers and thought for a while...and as he was thinking, his black beady eyes spotted a small stone. 'Hmm,' he thought, 'I wonder if that stone can help me solve my problem?' Then he had an idea...he picked the stone up in his beak and he dropped it in the pitcher... this made the water in the pitcher rise, just a little.

'I need more stones,' thought Mr Crow. He flew around the yard searching for stones and, one by one, he dropped them into the pitcher. Each time the water rose a little but each time he dipped his beak in but it wouldn't reach the water.

Mr Crow worked all day...flying backwards and forwards picking up stones and dropping them in. Then, at last, as the sun was setting, he looked into the pitcher and saw that he had almost filled it with stones. Now the water had risen high enough for his beak to reach.

'Go, go Mr Crow, you're so clever don't you know!' chirped the Sparrow Sisters.

'A problem's not a problem if you take the time to think,' said Old Mr Crow as he settled down to drink.