

MRS FOX'S WEDDING

Version #1

Once upon a time there was an old fox with nine tails. He did not believe that his wife was faithful to him and wanted to put her to the test. He stretched himself out beneath the bench, did not move a limb, and pretended to be stone dead. Mrs. Fox locked herself in her room in mourning. As soon as it became known that the old fox had died, suitors began to appear. The maid, Miss Cat, heard someone knocking at the front door. She opened it, and there stood a young fox, who said:

What are you doing, Miss Cat?
Are you asleep, or are you awake?

She answered:

I'm not asleep; I am awake.
Do you want to know what I am doing?
I am cooking warm beer with butter in it.
Would you like to be my guest?

"No thank you, Miss," said the suitor. "What is Mrs. Fox doing?"

The maid answered:

She is sitting in her room
Mourning and grieving.
She has cried her eyes red,
Because old Mr. Fox is dead.

He told Miss Cat that he was there to court the widow. The maid went to check on Mrs. Fox, but she refused to see him unless he had nine tails like her "dead" husband.

Soon afterward there was another knock at the door. Another fox was there who wanted to court Mrs. Fox. He had two tails, but she would not speak to him either. Then others came, each with one additional tail, but all were turned away until finally one came who had nine tails, just like old Mr. Fox. Mrs. Fox demanded Miss Cat open up the door and throw out the old Mr. Fox's body.

Just as the wedding began, the body of old Mr. Fox began to stir. He attacked the entire party with blows and drove them all out of the house, including Mrs. Fox.

Version #2

Following the death of old Mr. Fox, the wolf presented himself as a suitor. Miss Cat, Mrs. Fox's maid, opened the door. The wolf greeted her, saying:

Good day, Mrs. Cat,
Why are you sitting alone?
What good things are you making there?

The cat answered:

Bread and milk.
Would you like to be my guest?

The wolf asked if the widowed Mrs. Fox was home.

The cat said:

She's upstairs in her room
Mourning and grieving,
Bemoaning her plight,
Because old Mr. Fox is dead.

The wolf answered:

If she wants another man,
Just have her come downstairs.

The cat ran upstairs to speak to Mrs. Fox and knocked on the door with her five golden rings.

Mrs. Fox, are you in there?
Do you want another man?

Mrs. Fox asked, "Is the gentleman wearing red breeches, and does he have a pointed little face?"

"No," answered the cat.

"Then he's of no use to me."

After the wolf had been sent away there came a dog, a deer, a hare, a bear, a lion, and all the other animals of the forest, one after the other. But each one lacked one of the good qualities that old Mr. Fox had had, and the cat had to send each of the suitors away. Finally a young fox came.

Mrs. Fox asked, "Is the gentleman wearing red breeches, and does he have a pointed little face?"

"Yes," said the cat, "that he does."

"Then let him come upstairs," said Mrs. Fox, and she told the maid to make preparations for the wedding feast. "Cat, sweep out the kitchen and throw the old fox out the window. He brought home many big fat mice, but he ate them all alone, and never gave me one."

Then Mrs. Fox married the new young Mr. Fox, and everyone danced and celebrated.