

### THE HUNTER AND THE FOX

Once upon a time there was a hunter who lived near a forest. He had survived a dreary and heart-rending winter. But it was springtime and all of life was awakening.

One afternoon, on the clear air, the hunter heard the call of a fox seeking a companion with which to dance along the forest paths and bask in the warm spring sunshine. Tho' he was tired and depressed, the call of the fox stirred him and he went out, seeking a glimpse of the creature. Coming softly around a bend, he spied her among a den of foxes, males and vixens, cavorting to the tuneful birds in a clearing in the fragrant evergreens. The sight of the fox pleased him and awakened instincts of the hunter--long sublimated by the harsh winter. She was sleek and slim with shining hair, and he admired her gracefulness as she pranced and danced with abandon in the joy of springtime.

The fox seemed to sense his presence and his interest, and when, ere long, he once again sought to find her, she flirtatiously appeared in the open area and repeated her plaintive calls. There seemed to be a mutual need for recognition and juncture.

As the spring flowed into summer, the hunter increasingly walked in the wood and the vixen danced and pranced delightedly, aware of his presence and responding to it. As the interplay between them heightened, the lure of the chase deepened and the hunter wanted to capture the fox and hold it subject to him, for he felt the sly fox was teasing him with her playfulness. Yet, he did not want the chase to end, for he was enjoying its give and take. Too, he no longer wanted to be the predator, to see the fox beaten down and forlorn or its body cold and listless, devoid of its spirit. He sensed that the fox, too, was enjoying their interaction, nor did she want the chase to end--for they both would be the victims. The hunter and hunted--they had formed a special bond with one another.

So the tale ends for now. There may be another winter or eternal springtime, or they may grow old and enjoy the chase until they can no longer walk in the woods or dance in the glens. Whatever the future, they will cherish forever the memory.