

The vain crow

(Time – 1.43)

In a daring raid, a crow swooped through an open window, grabbed a hunk of cheese from a farmer's table and flew away. With the cheese still safe in his beak, he settled on a high branch. Just as he was about to tuck in, there was a voice: 'Crow.'

The crow saw a fox below. 'Well that was nifty work, to steal a treasure from under the farmer's nose. I'd have been proud of myself, if I'd done it, and we foxes are expert thieves.' The crow hopped along the branch delightedly.

'And now I look,' said the fox, 'you're a striking creature. People go on and on and on about the peacock but what good are they, strutting about and shrieking? Waste of space, if you ask me! You – you're smart and you're beautiful.' The crow liked that.

'You have black silken wings, eyes like jewels, and your claws – I mean, your talons – why, I bet in a fight you could take out an eagle!' The crow puffed out his chest.

'You know, I don't think I've ever heard you sing. A bird like you,' said the fox, 'I bet you've got a wonderful voice. Have you got a wonderful voice?' The crow nodded his head up and down. 'You have?' said the fox. 'Would you do me the honour of singing for me now?'

The crow eagerly threw back his head, opened his beak...and down tumbled the cheese into the fox's mouth.