



# The Fox and the Mole

## A Peruvian Folktale

Érase una vez (once upon a time), Fox and Mole, who were great friends, were awake at night, enjoying the light of the full moon. Fox asked his friend, “Mole, what do you wish for the most?” “Worms!” replied Mole. “I dream of eating worms for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. I wish I had worms to eat all day long... What about you?” Fox shared his craziest dream of all. “What I wish,” he said, “is to go to the moon! What a wonderful place it must be.” Then he added, “Hey! I have an idea! Let’s go to the moon together. Will you come with me, Mole?” Mole thought that was the craziest thing he had ever heard. “The moon is so high,” he said. “It’s impossible.”

“Don’t worry, I have a plan,” said Fox. “We’ll wait for the crescent moon. Then we can tie a very long rope to the moon and climb up the rope; it will be easy!”

Mole just frowned.

“Did you know that there are worms on the moon?” asked Fox.

Mole became excited, “Really?” “Oh yes,” said Fox. “Worms everywhere! You can eat them for breakfast, lunch, and dinner!”

And so, Fox convinced Mole to join him on the moon.

The next night, Fox and Mole started working on braiding the pampas grass into the longest rope in the world. They worked for many nights, waiting for the crescent moon to appear in the sky. Finally, the moon was just in the right shape.

Fox and Mole went to see Bear in his cave.



“Dear Bear,” they said, “you are the best tree-climber of all. Please climb to the top of the highest tree and tie this rope around the moon.”

Bear said he would try, and he climbed up to the tallest tree that they could find. At the top of the tree, Bear reached and stretched as high as he could, but he couldn't reach the moon. It was too high.

So, Fox and Mole asked Llama for help.

“Dear Llama, you are the best mountain-climber of all. Please climb to the top of the highest mountain and tie this rope around the moon.”

The Llama said she would try. The Llama climbed up to the top of the highest mountain. When she got to the top, she went to the edge of and stretched her neck as far as she could. But she couldn't reach the moon. It was too high.

Finally, Fox and Mole asked Condor for help.

“Dear Condor, you can fly higher than anybody else. Please fly as high as you can and tie this rope around the moon.”

The condor said he would try. The condor grabbed the rope with his beak and flew high into the sky. Up he flew in great big circles, each circle higher than the last. When he flew as high as he could, he stretched his neck and, at last, he tied the rope around the moon.

“Hooray!” shouted Mole. “Thank you, Condor!” shouted Fox. He tied the other end of the rope to a tree and started climbing. “Come on, Mole,” Fox yelled. “Let's go!!” Mole was nervous, but he closed his eyes and thought about all the worms on the moon. Then he opened his eyes and slowly, carefully, he climbed up the rope.

They climbed until they were higher than the highest trees.

“Oh! Looking down makes me feel scared,” cried Mole. “Fox, are we almost there?”

“Higher, Mole,” replied Fox. “Think of the worms! Just don't look down!”

They kept climbing until they were higher than the highest mountains.

“Hey, Fox,” shouted Mole again. “Are we almost there? It's cold up here and I get dizzy every time I look down.”

“We're almost there, Mole!” shouted Fox. “Just keep thinking about the worms, and remember, don't look down!”

But Mole looked down anyway, and he got so dizzy that he let go of the rope and fell to the ground. He hit the Earth so hard that he went deep into the ground. Mole was very embarrassed and wanted to hide. That's why Mole still lives underground to this day. And Fox? Well, Fox climbed all the way to the moon and lived there happily for the rest of his life.

