

THE
FOX
AND THE
FLOCK



The fox was well known and loved by all in the forest. While many of her cousins used their wit to play little tricks on others, she instead used her cleverness for the good of her woodland home.

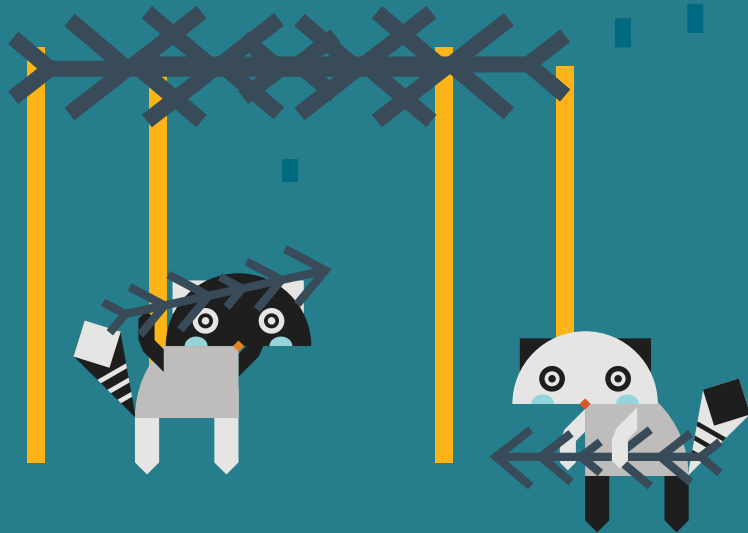
She loved the forest more than anything, and because she spent her days wandering its every inch, she knew it better than anyone. She knew in which direction every pine bough tilted, where the mushrooms thrived after heavy rain, and how the river ran from the old oak tree in the north to the blackberry bushes in the south.





One morning the fox climbed out from her den and, wiggling her snout, she noticed something was off. *How unusual, at this time of year, for the breeze to blow in from the meadow*, she thought. Looking to the right, she saw the maple saplings in the distance. Now, something was definitely wrong — the saplings were normally *left* of her den, she was sure. The fox ran all over the woods, and everywhere she went, the whole forest was backwards: The pine boughs pointed east instead of west, the mushrooms grew on the opposite side of the logs, and the river flowed south to north, from the blackberry bushes toward the old oak tree. Something she could not explain had flipped the world overnight.

“It is nearly Sukkot,” they responded. “That means it is time to head south for winter.”



None of the other creatures seemed to notice, busy as they were excitedly preparing their *sukkahs*; it was almost Sukkot. Many of the animals called after her, inviting her to help. But the fox knew where she was needed. At the old oak tree, which she was sure marked the forest’s northernmost edge, the fox looked up to see all of her bird-friends filling its branches. “Birds, what are you doing *here*?” the fox asked.



“Oh no!” the fox exclaimed. What she had feared was true: With the world topsy-turvy, the birds were on the verge of flying off in the wrong direction. Knowing that the birds were without her thick coat or ability to dig a den to stay warm in the cold months, she hurriedly explained to them that they were in fact heading north, toward cold and ice. Wiggling her snout in the air, she already felt a foreboding chill. “We must move fast. The snow will soon begin to fall.”





The birds followed the fox from the old oak, past the mushrooms and the maples and the pines, past the *sukkahs* of the moles and the beavers and squirrels, to the blackberry bushes at the southern-most edge of the woods. She had led them as far as she could go.

“See you next year, my friends,” the fox called as the birds swooped south, away from the coming snow. And, having rescued her friends from danger, the fox returned to celebrate Sukkot with all her fellow animals who would soon hibernate in warmth and safety through the winter.





In a **COMMUNITY**, everybody depends on one another, and everyone's actions make a difference. This Sukkot, let's give thanks for the way we all take care of each other.

Chag Sameach!





Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia

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