The Fox's First Snowman

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On the first snowy morning of winter, a small fox with bright russet fur and a fluffy white-tipped tail trotted through the woods. His moss-green scarf flapped in the cold breeze. In his little brown satchel he carried three red berries and one crooked twig. "I found treasures," he said to no one at all. "Now what can I make?"

A tall grey-brown hare came hopping down the path, his red bobble hat bouncing with every step. He wore a mustard-yellow coat with shiny buttons. "Hello, little fox!" he called. "What are you making?" The fox tilted his head and blinked his big amber eyes. "I don't know," he said. "Something with my berries and twig?"

The hare clapped his long paws together. "I have an idea! The woodland creativity contest is today. We could build a snowman together!" The fox's ears pricked up with dark tips. "A snowman?" he asked. "What is a snowman? I have never made one." The hare grinned a cheerful grin. "Then today is a perfect day to learn!"

The hare led the fox to a wide, open clearing where the snow lay deep and soft. Other animals were busy nearby, patting snow and gathering pinecones. A sign on a stump said: WOODLAND CREATIVITY CONTEST. "Everyone makes something from snow," the hare explained. "The funniest and most surprising wins." The fox's tail swished with excitement and worry.

"First, we roll a small snowball," the hare said, kneeling down. He scooped up a handful of snow and pressed it into a ball. The fox copied him, patting carefully with his little paws. "It's cold!" he squeaked. The hare laughed. "Very cold! Now roll it along the ground. It will grow bigger and bigger."

They rolled the snowball round and round the clearing. The fox pushed with his nose and paws, and the ball grew from small to medium to big. "Look how fast it grows!" he said, his amber eyes shining. The hare rolled a second snowball, round and smooth. "This one is the middle," he said. "Help me lift it." Together, they plopped it on top.

"Now the head," said the hare, rolling a small ball. The fox set it gently on top and patted it into place. The snowman wobbled, then stood tall and proud. "It has no face," the fox said, walking around it. "How will it see?" The hare chuckled. "That is where your satchel comes in. We make the face ourselves!"

The fox opened his satchel and took out two small dark stones. "Eyes!" he said, pressing them in. "And a black nose?" The hare handed him a berry. "Perfect." The fox placed it in the middle. Then he used the crooked twig for a smile, slanting it up on one side. "It looks like it is laughing!" he said happily.

The hare found two twigs for arms and stuck them in the sides. The fox added a pinecone hat and a leaf bow tie. "Too plain," the hare said, tapping his chin. "What if we make it sit on something?" He rolled a flat snow log and plopped the snowman on top. "Now it can wave from a sled!" The fox giggled.

"Let's make it silly and surprising," said the hare. "What if we add antlers?" He tied two long twigs to the head, and the fox added more twigs branching out. Soon the snowman had giant deer antlers, a pinecone crown, and berry buttons down the front. "It is a snow deer fox hare person!" howled the fox, laughing.

The other animals gathered around, pointy ears and round ears all turning to see. "What in the woods is that?" asked a squirrel. "It's a Snow Creature Surprise!" said the hare proudly. The fox stood up straight. "We made it together," he said. "I did the face and the antlers and the buttons!" His tail wagged so fast it made little clouds of snow.

The judges looked at every snow sculpture in the clearing. Squirrels had made a snow nest. Rabbits had made a snow burrow. A badger made a snow tower. Then the judges came to the strange, funny, laughing creature with antlers and a pinecone crown. "Who made this one?" asked an owl, blinking slowly.

"We did!" said the fox and the hare together. "A fox and a hare," said the owl. "Two different animals, one big idea. That is the most creative thing here!" The judges whispered and nodded. Then the owl hooted, "The winner of the woodland creativity contest is the Snow Creature Surprise!" Everyone cheered, and the fox's heart felt warm.

The hare put a tiny leaf medal on the snowman's twig arm. "You did wonderfully," he told the fox. "I was nervous," the fox admitted. "I did not know what to do." The hare smiled his warm, patient smile. "That is why we did it together. New things are braver with a friend." They stood side by side, admiring their silly, wonderful snowman.

That evening, the fox walked home with his empty satchel and a full heart. "I built my first snowman," he told the moon. "And I made a friend." The next morning, he found a note on his doorstep. It said: SAME TIME NEXT SNOW? The fox laughed and tucked it into his scarf. He could not wait for more new things.

From then on, every winter day, the fox and the hare met in the clearing. They built snow mice, snow stars, snow boats, and one very wobbly snow bear. But the Snow Creature Surprise was always their favorite. "Trying new things is not scary," the fox told his friend, "when I have you beside me." And the hare nodded, and they began to build again.