

# FOUR Little FOXES

Answer these questions.

1. ~~What~~ What has the speaker found? Where are they?

Ans The speaker has found four new-born fox cubs in a valley.

2. the four little foxes saw their mother go - what have the 'little foxes' seen? Where has their mother gone?

Ans The little foxes have seen their mother get caught in a trap. In saying that the cubs 'watch their mother go' the speaker means that the cubs watched their mother die ~~in~~ a slow and painful death.

3. Who do you think is responsible for what happened to the mother?



a. the speaker  
b. a fox hunter or trapper/a  
farmer protecting his livestock

4. What does the speaker mean when he asks March to 'walk softly' and 'step softly'?

Ans In asking March to 'walk softly' and 'step softly', the speaker is appealing to March to be gentle and show mercy on the fox cubs by holding back its cold, frosty winds and dangerous hurricanes. The speaker asks March to do these things because the fox cubs are lying alone in the freezing cold without any food or shelter. If



the weather continues to be stormy and frosty, the cubs will possibly die.

5. The speaker tells us that the foxes are 'new-born' and are thus, helpless. In what other ways does he describe how weak and vulnerable they are?

Ans The speaker describes how weak and vulnerable the fox cubs ~~are~~ are by using these words and phrases — 'new-born', 'thin', 'blue foxes', 'whimpering with pain' and 'shivering in the rain'.

6. Which line tells you that the fox cubs mistake the speaker for ~~the~~ the speaker for



their mother? Why do they do so? ✓

Ans The line, "the thin blue foxes suckled at my arm" tells us that the foxes mistook the speaker for their mother. They do so because previously, their mother ~~at~~ was their one source of warmth and comfort and so when the speaker tried to shelter them and keep them warm, they mistook him for their mother.

7. We know that spring is a season that is associated with pleasant weather and abundant sources



of food. And yet, the speaker appeals even to spring to be gentle with the foxes. Why does he feel the need to do this?

Ans The cruel killing of their mother has left the cubs in such a sorry state that even something as gentle and pleasant as spring can be too hard for them to take. The poor little things cannot do anything for themselves because they are so small and thus have to depend on the mercy of others to survive. Therefore, the speaker feels that he must appeal even to spring to be gentler than it already is to the cubs.