

Story #237 (Tape #7, Summer 1970)

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The Puzzled Ones

*J. Cheney
Fuchs + ev*

Two friends were once very poor. They decided to steal someone's ox. They came to a field where a farmer was plowing on a slope. One friend said to the other, "I shall go behind this hill and start shouting and I shall make that farmer come to me. When he comes to me, go and take one of his oxen and go away with it."

"All right."

The one approached the farmer from the lower side of the field, without being seen, and the other went behind the hill. The latter shouted three times, "I am puzzled. I am puzzled. I am puzzled."

The farmer stopped to listen. He thought, "Why is this man puzzled? What is he talking about? He is invisible, but he is puzzled. Why?" He tried to see him, looking around, and he repeated, "I wonder why this invisible fellow is puzzled?" He could not wait any longer; he left the team of oxen and went to find out why the man was puzzled. He went and went, and he got close to him, but the fellow kept shouting, "I am puzzled. I am puzzled," until the farmer got close to him.

"Why are you puzzled?"

"Why shouldn't I be puzzled, O friend? There is a farmer down there plowing with only one ox. That is what puzzles me.

"Where is this?" asked the farmer

"On the other side of the hill."

When the farmer returned, he saw that there was really just one ox left
He then shouted, "I am also puzzled! I am also puzzled!" (I was watching
these people and I found it very funny [narrator's comment])