

# The Utter Chaos

short story.

Old Blue was napping on the front porch of the farmhouse beside his favorite bone when Bippity Boo and the other puppies came tearing around the corner, tripping over each other in their haste, and rolled to a stop right in front of him.

"Whatever are we going to do?" yelped Bippity Boo. "The coyotes are coming! Run for your life!" Then they took off toward the barn to warn the other animals.

At that, Rosie, the mamma cat, ran to gather up her kittens. As she passed the pig pen, she yelled out, "Warning, warning! The coyotes are coming!"

In a panic, the pigs ran willy nilly around the pen. They slipped and slid in the mud, grunting as they knocked into each other.

The horses in the field saw all the commotion and yelled, "Hey, pigs, what's up?"

"Save yourself! The coyotes are coming!" came the cry.

One after another, all the animals at the farm heard the news and quickly made preparations for the evil coyotes.

All except Old Blue. He was wise about the ways of puppies. And he knew full well that coyotes don't call ahead to let you know they're coming.

"Hold up there, Bippity Boo," called Old Blue amidst the chaos. "How do you know the coyotes are coming?"

"Because Crafty Crow told me," she exclaimed.

Right then and there, Old Blue knew something was up. "Really," he drawled. "And just where did he tell you this?"

"On the deck where we were eating," said Bippity Boo.

Old Blue took Bippity Boo around to the deck. There, having a lively party, were a flock of crows feasting on the dog food.

"What a great trick that was," one crow squawked, "fooling everyone into thinking the coyotes were coming so we could eat all the dog food!"



**MORAL:** Stay calm, even in chaos, to find the truth, as things are not always what they seem.

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## personal reflection.

Poor Bippity Boo! If only she had stopped to think, she wouldn't have caused such utter chaos at the farm. But that's the way it is with puppies: they go full force with the emotion of the moment, even if it is illogical.

**Unfortunately, we often tend to do the same ourselves.** How many times have you seen a group of people in utter chaos over something that turns out to be insignificant?

As an example, take the media. They try to do this to us all the time, just for ratings. If something horrific happens somewhere, that night on the local news there's always a segment about, "Can it happen here?"

They try to get everyone riled up and, unfortunately, many people simply let themselves be manipulated. Rather than stopping to find the truth, they find themselves panicking over a situation they really know nothing about.

**If you're wise, though, you'll take time to stop, think, and seek the truth.** A calm mind is critical when everyone else seems to be losing theirs!

But how do you stay calm and collected, especially in stressful situations?

The first thing to do is to stop and take a deep breath. This action relaxes your muscles, sends some extra oxygen to your brain for clarity in thinking, and gives you a moment to consider your options.

Focus on separating the facts from the hearsay. **Once you've clarified the real problem, you can seek an appropriate solution.**

Now, isn't that much wiser than simply running to and fro in a panic? Things always turn out better when you take a moment to think before acting.

### Self-Reflection Questions:

- Have you ever found yourself in a panic over something that later turned out to be nothing?
- How might you have changed the outcome if you had stopped to think first?
- How can you help yourself stay calm in stressful situations?