

Reynard the Fox and the Fishermen

Adapted by Mistress Dervila ni Leanon

Based on A Harvest of World Folktales, page 304

French

Time: About 2:00

Reynard the fox was starving! He had been hunting for three days, and found nothing, not even a mouse. He knew his wife and children were hungry too, so he kept on hunting, but still he found nothing. He was crossing the road when he smelled fresh fish.

“So, fishermen are near, [*snif sniff*] and with a good catch. I must fool them somehow so I can get some fish.” He thought a minute, then lay down stretched out and stiff in the muddy road.

When the fishermen walked up, one of them saw him, and said

“Look! A dead fox in the road! Fortune smiles on us, brothers, it’s Reynard the fox! Now our hens are safe! I’ll tan his skin so that his own mother wouldn’t recognize him.” And he threw the fox into the cart with the fish. As the fishermen walked along, another fisherman said to the first

“I’ll give you thirty herrings for the fox. His skin will look very good on my wife’s shoulders. Her hair is as red as his.”

“Done!”

Meanwhile, Reynard had nosed open a basket of fish and eaten his fill. Then he wound a triple necklace of eels around his neck and jumped out of the cart.

“Foolish fishermen, I’ve eaten your fish and taken your eels! Catch me if you can!” Oh, the fishermen tried, but Reynard slipped away back to his castle. And there his wife and children ate a joyous feast.

Full bibliography of source:

Rugoff, Milton, editor. A Harvest of World Folk Tales. New York: Viking Press, 1949. SBN: 670-00220-8.bibliography of source

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